

Studying in Lund

Currently I am attending my second semester of third year in Sweden studying business with a marketing focus. When looking at the Lund Universities courses, one semester is obtained by reaching 30 credits with each full course being deemed a value of 7.5 credits. Courses at Lund University generally are only two months long compared to the full semester (4 months) length at the University of Ottawa. Therefore, the semester appears to be split up in two separate terms with 2 classes in the first term, and 2 classes in the second term.

Nearly all courses are organized with three main components in the economics/business department at Lund University. The three components are; lectures, seminars, examinations. The professor presents lectures to help clarify and teach and the material given in the assigned textbooks and other literature assigned. The lecture periods are generally two hours long with a short break in the middle. Depending on the setup of the course, each course ranges from having 2-4 lectures per week. Seminars occur various times throughout the semester and are put in place for students to collaborate on group work together. Deliverables for the seminars can be in the form of discussions, online group submissions, to class presentations and further discussion. Seminars at Lund University are mandatory; however, if you are not able to attend additional work will be assigned to that student to ensure they have still gained knowledge and insight about the specific topic. Lastly, examinations are present in nearly all courses which provide students the opportunity to display what they have learned throughout the course. The style of examinations is like most schools ranging from multiple choice to essay type questions. At Lund University, if you fail an examination, a retake exam will be available later in the semester. I am currently taking a course on economic change, labour market, and the population which consists of 22 hours of lectures, 3 seminars with a focus on discussion, and a final examination. This would be an example of a typical class outline.

Timetable

I arrived into the Copenhagen airport on January 9 (arrival day) with distinctive representatives from the school waiting for incoming students. They then helped us in buying our train tickets to Lund station and our journey began. From the train station there were more representatives that gave us a welcome bag and helped us set up everything from showing us where places were on campus, to setting up our student accounts, to getting phone plans and bedding. We then had a 10-day orientation week with many events to allow the exchange student to feel comfortable and to allow us to meet one another. During this week period I met an extremely large amount of people, many of whom I consider good friends today. After orientation week my first two classes of the first term began. Lund University has a large "do-it-yourself" outlook on classes and expect their students to do much of the readings before class. This also means that the number of hours in class compared to the University of Ottawa is much less. There is no official holiday break in the semester; however, many classes will end before the next begins and therefore it is likely students will receive a 1-2 week break in the middle of the first term to the second term during their semester. Exams will occur during various parts of the semester and will appear sporadic. Currently my last exam for the Fall semester occurs May 8. June 2nd is the last official day that the Fall term examinations occur. This date will be the general timeline in which incoming student can expect to finish the Fall semester.

Arrival Day

Looking back on arrival day (January 9), Lund University made it extremely easy to navigate around and get set up as a student. They recommend flying into the Copenhagen airport and taking the train over to Lund which take approximately 40 minutes. The university has representatives at both end addressing student concerns allowing for a smooth flowing setup. We then were bussed to the university where we were guided through a checklist on everything we needed as incoming students. This checklist included; campus maps, phone plans, bedding, university swag, student cards, information about various student clubs and organizations and more. They also had booths set up where students could get the keys with regards to housing. Generally, courses for the semester abroad were to be selected beforehand; however, representatives were also present to facilitate any questions and concerns in selecting and managing courses. Incoming students will also receive a booklet outlining all the orientation week activities. Activities during this week try and encompass the interests of all students and range from hikes to lunches to bar crawls. My advice is to participate in as many events as possible as it is a great way to expand your comfort zone if you are not comfortable and to meet many new people from all over the world.

Budgeting

In general, living abroad is expensive and this is certainly true in most of the Nordic countries. A plane ticket can be purchased round trip from \$700-\$1000 on average. I would recommend buying a one-way flight on the way here because of the lack of knowledge once your last exam will occur. Depending on the type of housing received, you can expect to pay \$500-\$800 per month. Almost all the students at Lund University use bikes as their main means of transportation. Bikes can be purchased second hand or at shops ranging from \$80-\$200+ depending on the quality. Textbooks can be rented out from the library free of charge for a two-week period which many students, myself included, take advantage of. They can also be bought online or at the bookstore on campus. Food prices are generally a little more expensive than Ontario grocery stores, however the prices are manageable. If you plan to travel to many other countries during exchange, even with the cheap flights and hostels it will become pricey. I would recommend budgeting around \$200-\$400 per trip taken depending on the length. Going out at night in Lund is cheaper if you go to the "student nations" (described in comments section) which run nearly every night of the week. In general, alcohol is expensive compared to Canada, therefore a good way to get cheap alcohol is to buy it at the duty free when travelling to other countries and bring it back if you plan on drinking during your time here. Over the duration of my exchange, I will have travelled to approximately 12 other countries. If you can come with over \$10,000 it will give you enough freedom to travel around, nevertheless the larger your budget, the more freedom you will have.

Application Procedures

Applying for your student visa can take a lot of time. I recommend doing so as early as possible because obtaining a student visa card in Sweden is the only valid form of identification other than an official passport. The application process is done online which is very straight-forward. After filling in the application, the Swedish embassy will send an email stating if you have been accepted for the visa. Finally, you will have to travel to the embassy to get your picture taken and will finally be given your official travel visa and new

piece of identification. A link to course registration will be sent to you by Lund University, which you will again follow a straight-forward online process. Later a confirmation email will be sent that you have been accepted to study these courses.

Housing in Lund can be hard to obtain. Many students do not hear back about housing until weeks before their departure. My suggestion would be to apply for your housing application as soon as it opens. I personally woke up at 3am right when the applications opened to ensure I was close to the top of the list for housing and received my first choice quickly. LU Accommodation provides housing for a large percentage of exchange students, however there are other companies that provide housing as the university does not directly provide any housing to students. A housing deposit will be required once accepting your offer but will be deducted from last months rent.

Housing

As stated above, almost all the housing is done through the intermediary company call LU Accommodation which is to be applied to online. Most of the housing is close to campus, either in walking distance or a short bike ride. The style of housing will range from common corridors that have single rooms and shared washrooms, showers, and kitchens to single flat houses with their own personal washroom and kitchenette. I chose this option and currently have 22 people on my floor and find it the best option as it allows for many social interactions and the ability to meet the people whom you will be living with for the whole semester. There is also apartment style housing which consists of 3-5 people living together in once house with shared kitchens and washrooms. Again, the housing depending on style will range from \$500-800 per month.

Comments/recommendations

Lund University is a student town with a heavy focus on student life. Within the university, there are 13 different 'nations' which are ran by students. The different nations have different focuses ranging from sports to the environment. It is very highly recommended to join a nation as many of the student bars, nightclubs, and events require you to be part of a nation. Choosing a specific nation gives you perks to that particular nations events; however, it does not limit you to only their events. Aside from joining a nation, I would recommend buying a bike soon after your arrival as transportation become much more efficient and practical.

My Experience

Looking back, I knew that coming from Ottawa to Sweden to study was going to be an enormous change: a change I was beyond excited for. During orientation week I tried to meet as many new people as possible, resulting in many of the best friendships that I have found to date. With a somewhat slower class schedule as I was used to, I used the opportunity to travel to Denmark, Italy, Norway, Germany, and more of Sweden with new friends that I had met during my first month here. This allowed me to build connections with so many extraordinary people that I never would have been able to so prior. Up-to-date, coming to Sweden has broadened my view of the European world and the values that the people here

have. Coming into Sweden I had high expectations; expectations that were very quickly exceeded. This exchange has been the highlight of my university career and I cannot wait to see what the second half has waiting for myself!