 UNIVERSITÄT LIECHTENSTEIN	ABSCHLUSSBERICHT Zuerkennung eines Zuschusses für einen ERASMUS Studienaufenthalt Studienjahr	Universität Liechtenstein
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von [REDACTED]
 an der Gastinstitution [Glasgow School of Art] [UK GLASGOW03]
 zu senden an die Universität Liechtenstein, International Office
 Postadresse Fürst-Franz-Josef-Strasse
 9490 Vaduz
 gesamter Studienaufenthalt von 14.09.2016 bis 20.01.2017

Studying and living in Glasgow was one of the best experiences I had so far. I was very lucky to do the exchange semester at Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow, U.K.

Accommodation:

I have first applied online for a place at the GSA Accommodation. However, after three months of waiting, they informed me that they did not have a place for me. They recommended to contact the student welfare, who sent me links and added my name to the flat share list. I eventually managed to find a place in West End of Glasgow. The student who sublet his room to me happened to be also doing an exchange semester in Paris. The location was very convenient, between Glasgow University and Glasgow School of Art (20min walk). It was also very close to the bus and subway station.

Few days after moving in the flat, the GSA Accommodation contacted me saying that there were places available.

Introduction to the university:


We had a couple of lectures introducing GSA to the exchange students. The first one was held in the Reid Building Theater where we were introduced to the staff of all the departments. They also talked about internships and jobs opportunities during the stay. Also, they are very strict when it comes to the safety of the students: before every lecture, we had a small presentation about safety, fire exists, emergency contacts...etc.

Mackintosh School of Architecture:

Unlike my home university, the MSA is not open 24 hours, but rather from 8am to 10pm. The main reason for that is the mental and physical safety of the students.

Unfortunately, we could not study at the Mackintosh School of Architecture built by the very famous Glaswegian architect René Mackintosh. The building was almost destroyed by a fire in 2006 and currently under renovation. The MSA had then to move to the Bourdon building which is where I studied. My first impression of the Bourdon building was not very good. I almost had breathing problems on our first tour organized by the head of the department Professor M. Baines. I wondered how people could work and study in such cramped spaces. Some rooms on the first floor did not have any natural ventilation. The first floor lecture hall was either super hot or super cold. The studio was the only open space with huge windows allowing natural light to come in. However, this first impression eventually started to change along the semester probably because I spent most of the time in the studios.

The workshop is not on the Bourdon building where the MSA is, but happens to be on the Reid Building. That could be quite challenging sometimes especially if you are used to constantly test your ideas using the hot wire foam cutter (for safety reasons, you can only use it in the workshop). However, what I have noticed is that it pushes you to develop new skills, find new materials and explore new methods.

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I was very impressed by the GSA library, which holds around 30 000 books! There is also the possibility to suggest buying new books by the students, and it usually takes around 15 to 20 days. You can borrow up to 20 books in 3 weeks. The library also organizes workshops to teach academic writing, Adobe suite software...etc.

The cafeteria of the GSA is the cheapest place to eat, especially if you are in a hurry. They serve a variety of delicious dishes for all tastes (including vegan). You can have a very satisfying good meal for only £3.50.

Attended Lectures / examinations:

The Urban Housing project was undertaken by groups up to 6 students and has proved successful in introducing, familiarising and opening up the city for study. The scope of the project oscillates between an expansive overview in the formulation of strategic design propositions and in the selected detail of built form and landscape, which anticipates the experience and character of a place within the city. Diversity is to be balanced with unity. The project necessitates identifying, investigating and creatively responding to a set of given and perceived contextual constraints in order to determine outline housing design strategies within one of the four sites.

Design Strategies are to be structured so as to orchestrate a set of additional conditions which in turn ought to engender meaningfully ordered arrangements of residential, community and commercial accommodation.

The project concluded with a Public Forum involving student presentations and an exhibition in the Lighthouse to be attended by a range of invited guests. This has been awarded the status of a certified CPD event promoted by the RIAS.

Travel:

I had the chance to arrive in Glasgow before the start of the semester. That allowed me to do some travelling in the beautiful Scotland. I managed to visit the scottish highlands, loch ness, loch lamond... etc. There is an online website called Scottish tours where you can book tours in the high lands, the west lands as well as Edingbrough. The website offers travelling by coaches with very affordable prices. I highly recommend to arrive earlier so you can have enough time to explore and wander around. Otherwise, there won't be enough time once the semester starts.

Also, I was very surprised when I realized that all the museums in Glasgow were for free. I highly recommend to take advantage of this offer, since they have great art galleries such as GoMA, Gallery of Modern Art, Kelvinbridge museum...etc.

Unlike Vaduz, the weather in Glasgow is very dramatic. You can witness the change of four seasons in only one day. However, the city has the most beautiful sunsets I have ever seen. The reflection of the last sun rays of the day on the honey-stoned facades creates a beautiful urban scenery.

This exchange semester was definitely a wonderful experience where I had to learn a lot about myself as well as other people and it has definitely broadened my perspective of thought.

Date: 07.02.2017

Signature:

