

Fall 2018 - Exchange Report

I did my Beedie exchange at Lund University in Sweden during the fall 2018 semester, from August to December. I am a business student at SFU concentrating in Marketing, and at Lund I studied in their school of Economics and Management.

Before moving to Sweden for my exchange I had absolutely no idea what to expect.

I signed up for four courses and was given the option to choose two backups for each selection. Surprisingly, I got into all the courses I had chosen as my first choice. While researching courses, it is important to read the course descriptions carefully. I had done my course selection months prior to starting my exchange, and mostly chose whatever would work with my schedule and relate to my major.

For packing, I packed some summer clothes and didn't bring a winter parka thinking that I would buy a new one when I got there. I realized that the warm, summer weather in Sweden would only last a few weeks before it got cold and rainy - sort of like the weather in Vancouver. If I could do it again I would pack my winter parka to Sweden and bring two large suitcases with me, instead of just the one big suitcase that I brought. Even though I had planned to do minimal shopping during my exchange, I still needed some extra space to bring things back home.

My flight to Copenhagen was about 17 hours total, including a 5 hour layover in Toronto. Since I arrived on welcome day, there were student ambassadors from the university who greeted us and directed us to the train station. They were super friendly and helped me with my luggage and ticket, which cost about \$20 from Copenhagen to Lund. After arriving in Lund, one of the first things that students do is get a bike, as it is the easiest method of transportation there. I purchased a cheap bike at a second hand bike shop, and got additional accessories such as a basket, lights, and bell to add on to it. At the end of my exchange I returned the bike back to the shop and was given back 50% of what I paid for. Some students sell their bikes on Facebook for a higher price.

Before going to Sweden, I had heard that people in Sweden rarely used cash and most places only accepted credit cards. I brought some cash with me just in case, which was useful because some

Housing from LU Accommodation is very limited, and many students struggle with receiving housing from the school. In my application, I chose about 5 buildings I wanted to live in. I am very happy with the building choice that I got, which is called Eddan. This building was great because it was only for international students and was brand new. I lived in a corridor room with my own washroom, and shared the kitchen with five other corridor mates.

The education system in Lund was quite different than what I was used to in Vancouver. There are no set days of the week that the lectures are held on, and so you always have to check the schedule online because your lecture could be on a different day each week. I had a lot of group assignments, and not as much individual homework. The final exam was always worth the most towards my final grade. I found school in Sweden to be very relaxed and the teachers were always willing to answer any questions and offer help if you needed any. Because I had quite a relaxed timetable, I was able to spend some weekends travelling and exploring different cities in Europe. This was my first time in Europe so I was very excited to travel and make the most out of my time there. I did mostly solo trips as many of my friends had already visited the big, popular destinations in Europe and sometimes our schedules wouldn't match up well. Solo travelling gave me a lot more independence, and gave me a new perspective on being alone.

I found Swedish people to be very friendly and welcoming. Everyone in Sweden speaks English very well and it is possible to live in Sweden without speaking any Swedish at all. The weather there is similar to Vancouver as it can get quite gloomy and rainy. It gets rather windy and cold during the winter months.

The biggest challenge I faced during my exchange is the feeling of being out of my comfort zone, especially being in a different country that spoke a different language. Even though everyone in Sweden spoke English, the street signs, labels at the grocery stores, and other public signs were in Swedish. I found myself relying a lot on google translate to understand what I was reading. Another challenge was getting along with some of my corridor mates. This was my first time living with so many people, and I learned that not everyone thinks the same way, and sometimes you have to adapt and/or compromise with other people's way of living.



