

SEP Report

s1. Student Information

Faculty/Major	Chemical Engineering
Host University	Hamburg University of Technology (TUHH)
NUS Semester and Year of Exchange (eg. AY14/15 Semester 1)	AY14/15 Semester 2

2. Study at Host University

Please provide information on the academics at your host university:

- Studying or learning culture at your host university. How were classes conducted?
- What did you like most or dislike most about the academics at your host University?
- Advice on module registration and module mapping

The studying and learning culture in TUHH is a lot more interactive than here. The class sizes are a lot smaller and lectures are all held inside a classroom, allowing for much more interaction. Most modules consists of only 1 lecture session per week and no tutorials. My general opinion towards the European students are that they are rather passionate in their courses of study, but they are more relaxed in their studies and less stressed out, allowing themselves time to play. The professors are generally friendly and questions are always welcomed. They are also very flexible and any problems with timetable or anything else can be discussed.

I like the academics at TUHH because they offer very different styles and content of the subjects from NUS. The content is a lot less too and examinations are easier. This allow the students to learn at a comfortable pace and enjoy the subject more. However, the the school recently changed their module system and no one was sure of the examination process, making it quite confusing.

The international relations ladies both in TUHH and NUS are very nice and repond to queries very efficiently for chemical engineering. This allows any module mapping or exchange matters to be solved quickly and simply. One advice is to map quite a lot of modules prior to SEP because the changes in schedule and modules at the partner university are really quite significant. You do not want to end up with nothing to map to when you are there. A lot of patience is also required because it takes up quite abit of time. Try to allow for more flexibility in your module mappings.

Please list the courses that you took during SEP. (Please take note that the list of modules available to exchange students at the host university are subject to change. This table merely serves as reference.)

Host University			NUS Equivalent		
Module code	Course title	ECTS Credit	Module code	Course title	Modular credit
-	Biosystems Analysis and Engineering	3	CN4249	Engg. Design in Molecular Biotechnology	4
-	Human Resource Management and Organizational Development	2	EX2000	Exchange UEM	4

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-	Technical Microbiology	2	EX3001	Exchange Technical Elective	4
-	Environmental Aquatic Chemistry	3	CN4240 R	Processes for Effluent Control	4
-	Water & Wastewater Systems	6	EX3002	Exchange Technical Elective	4
-	German Level A2	4	EX2001	Exchange UEM	4

2. Accommodation

What kind of accommodation did you stay in during your exchange (eg. on campus / off campus)?

Would you recommend this accommodation to future outgoing students?

Do you have any other suggestions?

I stayed off campus but it was provided by the school. The campus was in the vicinity of TUHH. It was a 4-person apartment with a living room, 2 toilets and a kitchen.

This accommodation is really convenient! Although not on the campus itself, it is only around 15 minutes to school. There are also many convenience stores and malls around, even Asian supermarkets! It is near the train and bus stations and very easy to travel anywhere. There is even a music room and a laundry room at the basement of the building. It is around 300 euros per month excluding meals but the rooms are big and the facilities are not bad. It is one of the most convenient and value-for-money accommodation in my opinion. Many exchange students live there and this allowed for frequent interaction between the students, which I feel is very important and useful.

If the rent is too high, probably sharing an apartment with friends even closer to the school is possible. However, this is more troublesome and you will be staying away from the other exchange students.

3. Activities during SEP

Were there any activities organized by school/student group/external organizations at your host university which you would like to recommend to other students?

There was a TUHH student group that organized activities every few weeks for the exchange students (called 'Erasmus' in Europe). They put in effort to organize these for the students and it included a wide range of variety which I appreciate a lot. There were theme park visits to bar hopping to water activities and movie nights. They are also very helpful should you have any queries.

Aside from that, there were also other co-curricular activities at the school itself like rowing and music clubs. However, I did not get the opportunity to go for those so I do not know if there is a commitment or prior requirement for those activities.

One thing that is present in many European countries are the 'Free Walking Tours' organized by external organizations in a particular city. These groups organize an informative and often interesting

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walking tour of the main parts of the city for free and they rely solely on your voluntary donation at the end of the tour (hence it depends on how much you liked the tour and you pay what you think they deserve). These are very good for those on a budget and help you learn a lot more about a city. I went for many and I enjoyed most of them.

Generally, the exchange students at my host university were all very friendly. Many other gatherings were self-initiated when the student organization did not have any plans for us. On top of that, the school itself also have events such as a music concert and the festival selling food from all over the world. There are other movie nights and some modules even had excursions. I do recommend going for the excursions because most of our courses in Singapore do not have excursions and it was an experience seeing the lecture notes come to life there.

4. Cost of Living

Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?

Please list travel expenses separately.

Total = SGD 4755

(Breakdown) Approximately:

Accommodation = 300 euros/month for 5 months

German Health Insurance = 80 euros/month for 4 months

Hamburg Travel Pass (Compulsory) = 250 euros

German Visa = SGD 100

Flight = SGD 1550

Travel + Miscellaneous Living Expenses (Groceries, Toiletries etc.):

Approximately additional SGD 6000

5. Challenges

Did you face any challenging issues during your SEP stint? How did you overcome it/them?

My SEP journey was relatively smooth because I was lucky enough not to encounter things like theft or really bad accommodation on my travels. However, I would think my biggest challenge was being independent. I always had people looking out for me here in Singapore but it is really different in Europe when you have to do everything yourself, settle all the administrative matters (which were a real hassle), school without your usual companions and run other daily errands.

At the beginning, I was not very well-adapted, not knowing how to cook or do laundry and being overly concerned over every little administrative matter. However over time, you learn to cope with the lifestyle and become more confident in travelling and living independently. You will learn to arrange time and accommodate for any strikes (which do not happen in Singapore) or settle insurances and bank issues.

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Another point was that although SEP was really fun and enjoyable, I really did miss my loved ones back home. This is not so bad when you are busy travelling but happens especially when you are stuck in the school studying for exams or if you fall sick. It really helps to not forget your friends and family back home and skype them frequently and also to interact much with your exchange peers and neighbours.

6. Overall SEP Experience

Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience and attach some photos that represent your exchange experience.

This exchange has been invaluable to me and I really appreciate the 5 months I had there. I learnt many things, for example about Germany and Europe and learning to be independent, but most importantly, I learnt more about myself. I found out things about myself that I was not satisfied with. I believe that you will learn much about yourself and how to improve yourself when you have to live independently overseas for 5 months. I enjoyed visiting the sights and hope to return there again soon. Appreciate your time there because it really flies by quickly.

7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.

Remember to check all your emails (NUS and TUHH) and portals for any updates and you should be fine. TUHH's portal is not as organized as NUS so try to make sense of it. Enjoy your new company there but do not forget the people back home.