

SEP Report

1. Student Information

Faculty/Major	Chemical Engineering
Host University	Chalmers University of Technology
NUS Semester and Year of Exchange (eg. AY14/15 Semester 1)	AY15/16 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

Academic Year: is divided into 4 Study Periods (SP), so it is quarter system. SP 1 and 2 constitutes the Autumn term (Sem 1 in NUS), while SP 3 and 4 is under the Spring term (Sem 2 in NUS).

Credit system: Most courses are 7.5 credits, which is equivalent to one module in NUS worth 4 MCs. Exchange students are expected to study full time, which corresponds to 30 credits (4 courses) per semester. Nevertheless, students are allowed to take up to 45 credits per semester, which means a total of 6 NUS modules.

Module registration: The course search engine can be found [here](#) or [here](#). Most of the courses that are offered in English are Master level (second-cycle as they call it), but there are also some English Bachelor level (first-cycle) courses. One example is TEK255 - Managerial economics, is a first-cycle module, and it can be mapped to BSP1005 Managerial Economics in NUS.

The timetable is based on a [Block Schedule](#) system, so try to choose courses of a different Block to avoid conflict in your timetable. Nevertheless, Chalmers does not restrict you from taking courses that clash. Do note that the classes do not follow the block schedule strictly, so you can check the [TimeEdit](#) for a more accurate schedule (you might need to wait till the start of the semester for it to be updated).

I went on exchange to Chalmers in AY15/16 Sem 2, which was during my 3rd year of chemical engineering studies. I registered for 2 technical electives and 3 UEMs. From what I experienced, the classes here are quite small (~<20 students per class), and there are fewer lessons. Most of my courses have lectures but no specific tutorial lessons. Each lecture was typically 1hr 45 mins long with 15 minutes of break. In general, while there are less tutorials, there is greater emphasis on projects and assignments which may constitute a large part of the grade. What I like about the culture here is that the content taught is less, but there is more time and freedom to explore certain topics through the projects.

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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	Credit	Module code	Course title	Modular credit
KBT245	Green chemistry	7.5	CN4248	Sustainable Process Development	4
TIF165	Nanotechnology for sustainable energy	7.5	EX2000	Exchange UEM	4
KKM067	Ecodesign	7.5	EX3001	Exchange Technical Elective	4
TEK255	Managerial economics	7.5	BSP1005	Managerial Economics	4
TEK250	Industrial management	7.5	EX1000	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?

Upon acceptance from the university, you can start to apply for student housing through the [SGS](#). This is a housing agency contracted by Chalmers. Apartments such as Rotary are within 5 minutes walking distance to Chalmers. Some are located further away from campus but are all within 30 minutes of travelling time. The apartments are usually single room, with shared kitchen and some also have personal washrooms. The SGS are quite affordable, from around 3000 to 4000 SEK (500 to 650 SGD). Some of the more popular ones are at Ostkupan and Olofshöjd. The application is also based on a queue system, with some priority to non-EU exchange students, but it may still take some waiting time to be allocated a room. So don't be too picky on which room to get.

Alternatively you can search for rental rooms using these portals:

- Find Accommodation in GÖTEBORG! Facebook page
- [Boplatz Göteborg](#)
- [Housing Anywhere](#)

Naturally, SGS housing would be the ideal choice as you would get to experience student life with other international students. I know some exchange student who did not secure SGS housing before arriving in Gothenburg. So they booked AirB&B / hostel/ hotel for the first few weeks and after arriving, they approached the SGS housing office and were able to get a room within a few weeks.

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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?

CIRC (Chalmers International Reception Committee) organises many activities in the first month of school which are highly recommended. It is optional and when you sign up, you will be assigned to your orientation group. Besides the reception and school tour on the first day, there are many other fun activities like Ikea tour, Tram Race (like Amazing Race to explore the city), Swedish Sittning (Swedish dinner with lots of singing), international dinner and many more. There are plenty of opportunities to interact and make friends with other international students. CIRC also organises trip to Swedish Lapland, where you get to see the northern lights and many other activities. So look out for that!

4. Cost of Living

**Please provide an estimation of how much money you spent during your SEP?
Please list travel expenses separately.**

Here a breakdown of my monthly expenses:

- Accomodation: 3000 to 4000 SEK
- Travel: ~450 SEK ([Gothenburg municipality 30 days](#) or [Gothenburg municipality 90 days](#))
- Meals: 1000 SEK
- Groceries: 600 to 800 SEK
- Phone: 50 SEK (for [1GB of data](#))
- Total: 5000 to 6000 SEK (~1000 SGD)

Food was the second largest contributor to my expenses after accommodation. On campus, there are lunch meals for 41 SEK (~7 SGD for 1 lunch set with salad and bread). There are plenty of microwaves in school, so most students will cook and pack lunch to school.

In terms of currency exchange, the rates in Singapore are not that good. In Sweden, the main money changer is [this company](#), but they also charge an additional 50 SEK commission. I exchanged 1000 SGD beforehand and when in Sweden, I used your debit/credit card for most transactions. Remember to activate your card for overseas use, and if you need more cash, you can draw it from the ATM (called Bankomat in Sweden) at a fixed service charge of (5 SGD for POSB and it may be a better deal than the money changers). Even though Chalmers states on its [website](#) that exchange students can open a bank account, the banks will generally require proof of stay of more than 6 months to be eligible.

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5. Challenges

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

One of the greatest differences when I initially arrived in Gothenburg was the short day times. The sun rises at 8am and sets around 4pm in January. So, initially there was lack of outdoor activities available (due to snow and short day time). The cold temperature was tolerable (lowest temperature was -20C), as most houses/ trams/ buses have good thermal insulation and heating. Another, challenge was to live independently. This was especially with cooking my own meals, which can be quite time consuming.

6. Overall SEP Experience

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

My exchange trip was an amazing experience. During my half a year stay, I was had to learn to live independently, which was an important lifeskill. It is also very interesting to experience the culture in Sweden and it's a great opportunity to travel and explore Europe.

7. Suggestions for future outgoing students

Please share any other suggestions for future outgoing students.

Try to keep an open mind and a positive mindset, and make full use of this opportunity to immerse in a difference culture, make friends with people of other nationalities and gain new perspectives and experiences.