

# ERASMUS Student Report

As a student of Leibniz University of Hannover, I feel glad to have been given the opportunity to do an internship in University of Aberdeen, Scotland during my third semester of Master of Natural and Medicinal Products (winter semester 2017/2018). This report should summarize the processes that I had been through for the placement, making it a very valuable and important experience in my life.

## Preparation

Since the beginning of our master, our head of department had always encouraged us to have an internship abroad. They gave us several university options and let us choose our own supervisors. In this regard I chose University of Aberdeen based on the research they are doing, specifically the research of Prof. Marcel Jaspars.

Once I made the decision on it and got approval from my head of department, then came the application process, which was quite straightforward, as all the required documents were listed and the staff at the International Office in University of Hannover were very responsive and helpful.

As a non-EU student, I also needed to apply for UK visa to stay in Scotland. The visa application process was quite complicated because I had to apply online and then go to visa office in Düsseldorf to submit the necessary documents and to get my picture and fingerprints taken. Thankfully my visa application was accepted, and I received the visa within 15 working days after the submission.

## Accommodation

The host university helped us a lot in finding our accommodation. They offered a range of accommodation to choose from. I opted for their student halls, as the student halls are quite close to the university and it allowed me to integrate easier with the other students. I had my own bedroom, which was quite spacious and bright. I shared the kitchen and two bathrooms with other 6 ERASMUS students from different countries with different cultural backgrounds and we were all studying different kinds of things.

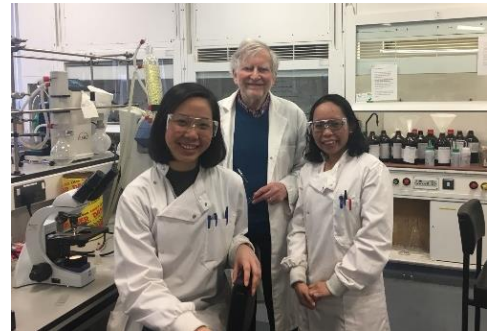
Because the all the student halls are in the same area, sometimes it could be a bit noisy during the night, especially on the weekend. In the middle of the student halls area, they have a main building which has a small convenient store where we could find everything we need, such as food, drinks, stationary, even bedding, and a cafeteria which was very accessible and open most of the time, lastly the reception. In every second week they also have dog therapy, where you can play with the dogs and chat with other people too.

In my opinion staying in the student halls has more advantages, as you could always connect with the local students and have a better social life, so you don't feel too lonely being abroad on your own.

## Academic

As one of the top 200 best universities in the world, Aberdeen University has a lot to offer in terms of academics. I worked under the supervision of Prof. Marcel Jaspars and Dr. Hai Deng in the Marine Biodiscovery Centre (MBC), part of the chemistry department. Their laboratory is adequately equipped, both for chemistry and microbiology work, which makes it very convenient. The laboratory had plenty of PhD students from all over the world and visiting scholars from Nigeria, Egypt and Chile. During my placement I had the opportunity to work with many people with different perspectives, which broadened my knowledge.

Apart from research, I went to several lectures which were helpful for my research and had the honor to join a 3-day workshop by Prof. Michael Goodfellow, Emeritus Professor in taxonomy from Newcastle University. I would suggest new students who opt for an internship to research the topic they want to work on very carefully and thoroughly, so that the internship is much more enjoyable.



## Everyday Life and Leisure Time



Aberdeen is the third largest city in Scotland and has a lot to offer. The main transportation in Aberdeen is bus, but due to its high cost, students in Aberdeen mostly walk to their destination. The city itself has a wide range of museums, parks, restaurants, bars, cinemas, shopping malls, night clubs and cafés. One hour from Aberdeen there is a small town called Stonehaven, famous for its fish and chips, ice cream and most importantly the Dunottar Castle.

Scotland is famous for its beautiful sceneries such as, High Land, Isle of Skye, Inverness, Oban and many more. I would think myself as quite lucky, as me and two of my friends made a road trip from Aberdeen to Isle of Skye and Glenfinnan Viaduct.



## Conclusion

I would like to conclude my internship in University Aberdeen as an undoubtedly life changing and one of the most valuable experience not only for my educational journey but also for my future career. I learned a lot during my 6 months of internship and it showed me, that there is so much more to discover outside my comfort zone. I consider myself to be very lucky to be given the opportunity to participate in the Erasmus program. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to Erasmus for the funding and to make all my exchange possible, all the staffs in Leibniz University of Hannover who helped me from the very beginning until the end, staffs at the International office in University of Aberdeen who made my placement much easier, my supervisors and coworkers in MBC, and finally the person who inspired and encouraged me to go for internship abroad, Prof. Dr. Andreas Kirschning.