

## **Erasmus Report**

I consider Erasmus+ as a continuation of my pursuit to stand apart from the stereotypes. My decision to study in Germany for a postgraduate program stemmed from my desire to learn more combined with an affinity for International exposure and Intercultural exchange. Now, after what I would call a 'dream-come-true period' I spent in Leibniz Universität, I am glad that my decision was right for me and my love for the subject Geodesy and Geoinformatics has grown leaps and bounds. As I came to know about the opportunities presented to the students by Erasmus+ program, I had no second thoughts in applying for the same and building on the skills that I have acquired.

I opted a study program at an English speaking country like UK since language is one of the crucial factors in delivering an all-round experience and I always wanted to have a closer look at the English system of education. I wished to explore new places; get to know more people and study new topics. I found that Newcastle University with its great reputation and excellent track-record in the area of Geomatics is a perfect choice for Erasmus study. I had also learnt that the department offers undergraduate, MPhil and PhD programs and that the quality of research is outstanding. I was also impressed by the practical approach to studies that reinforces the tagline of the University-'Excellence with a Purpose'. From the module catalogue, I understand that there is a great choice of topics and I am certainly interested to explore further. I love teaching and dream of pursuing a career in the academic side; so it was really beneficial to learn at a place of rigorous research with an excellent faculty team. I had also attended a seminar on 'Communication the English way' as a preparation for my study at Newcastle. I contacted the student coordinator in my department and expressed my desire to apply for Erasmus program. It was followed by submitting an application via the International Office of our university.

I was extremely happy to receive the offer letter from Newcastle and the International Welcome week was scheduled to be held from 20th September 2017. One of the first tasks at hand was to apply for the accommodation. I was granted the UK visa and it was time to start my preparations for my short stay at Newcastle. Meanwhile I also received the news that I was allocated an accommodation facility on campus. I also got the Learning agreement signed from both the universities and submitted all the initial documents as a precursor of my stay abroad. I flew from Berlin to Newcastle and captured my moving day in my phone as a part of 'moving day video' competition announced by Newcastle University. Today, those moments bring a broader smile onto my face as I also bagged the prize for the best moving day video.

I had signed up for 'meet and greet' at the airport and the student representatives enthusiastically welcomed the incoming students with welcome kits. Transport was arranged to our place of stay and we received the key to our residences. International

welcome week can be remembered as a great week full of fun and energy. Many programs were organized like bowling, buffet, walk around city and campus etc. It was an excellent opportunity to meet new people and make friends. We also visited Whitby, a seaside town which serves fantastic fish and chips and is famous for its literary connections with Bram Stoker's novel- Dracula. Clubs and societies fair was also held which inspired students to sign up for the activities of their choice. We also had a grant and official international welcome party with good food and music.



Introduction sessions for Erasmus students, briefings about the studies and life in Newcastle etc. were held and the new students received their identity cards. Every Erasmus student was assigned a personal tutor and a face-to-face meeting was held to finalise the module choices. Then began the period of study. Greatly structured classes, well documented lecture slides available online via Blackboard, excellent hands-on lab sessions and outstanding tutoring sessions- that is Newcastle education in a nutshell. The lecturers were accessible and cleared all doubts with ease. Almost all the classes were 'Recap'ed and were available online. I had opted for subjects like Advanced Geodesy, Applied Geospatial Data Handling, Spatial Data Modelling and BIM, Geospatial Informatics etc. and I was really happy about my choices. As one of my earlier choices was unavailable, I could easily switch to a new subject of my interest by filling out the 'During Mobility' part of my Learning Agreement and getting it approved by the home and host universities. A round-the-clock library system and accessible computers greatly aided in my studies. My residence was just a few steps away from the main Library and the flatmates were really friendly and pleasant. There were also places for worship and good communities for students who wanted to exercise their faith. Not to be missed are the events conducted by the student's union including events like 'Give it a Go' where students get an opportunity to experience unique

events like surfing, golf, horse riding etc. I also like to look back at my enthusiastic trips to Durham, Manchester etc..

Exams were held during the second week of January and put the knowledge we acquired to test. I bid farewell to Newcastle with a heavy heart because even though short, the time spent there was awesome. Before leaving, I also received a certificate of my Erasmus studies in Newcastle and got my confirmation of stay signed. The results were published during the last week of February and I was glad to receive good scores. I contacted my department for the credit transfer and my scores were converted to German grades. I also took part in the EU survey for Erasmus+. As I reflect on my Erasmus days now, I recommend my fellow students to take up this incredible opportunity. Not only you get to have an ever memorable experience but also you get your exchange studies financially aided. I would like to wholeheartedly thank the representatives of my department in both universities, the members of international office of Newcastle and Leibniz and all my friends who made this Erasmus semester an enriching experience in my life. I am positive that the multifaceted aspects I was exposed to during this program would definitely help me in the days to come.