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Introduction

I had always wanted to do a semester abroad, so I knew beforehand that I would accept the opportunity when it came. I choose Spain because I love the country, and it didn't disappoint. Santander is a very local area with mostly Spanish people, and a lot of them don't speak English, but I just found that charming and it was a great opportunity to learn the language. School wise, I had hoped for a more university-like experience – with lectures instead of class teaching - but Cesine and KEA are very similar in that department.

Questionnaire Study Abroad/Exchange

1. Where and when did you study abroad?

Santander, Spain from September 2022 to January 2023. (Cesine offered early examinations for international students, so they could go home in December)

2. What KEA program did you attend at the time?

BEIT

3. What classes did you take during your semester abroad? Please briefly explain what each class was about.

Social Media Management, which is about how to maintain a business account on Instagram.

Organisational Behaviour, which is about the internal environment in organisations, and how different factors influence employees.

Marketing Research, which is about information gathering and how to conduct research papers. The course taught us how to create questionnaires, analyse data and research papers, and the differences between different types of research.

Corporate Reputation Management, which is about how to maintain the reputation of a company.

I also had Spanish, which was a no-credit voluntary course. Cesine offers both on beginner and intermediate level. I choose beginner, but the teacher (Ana) only spoke Spanish, so it was still challenging as I hadn't learned any Spanish beforehand.

Academic Experience

1. How helpful was the receiving school in the process of choosing classes and settling you in?

At the time, Lea (who is no longer working for Cesine) was extremely helpful. She was easy to contact and quick to respond. She sent me more information about specific courses I wanted to know more about. The process of choosing classes itself was very easy as you just had to fill out a form.

It is possible to change courses or fix overlap in courses within the first weeks of classes.

2. What classes/study experiences did you find the most rewarding? Why?

I thought Organisational Behaviour was great. I find the psychological aspect of the course and business in general fascinating. The teacher (Mercedes) went through a lot of theory but made sure we understood. There is a lot of assignments in all courses at Cesine, so you get a lot of opportunities to use the theory in practice.

Marketing Research was also great. The teacher (Ivan) was very new, and I think we were his only class, but that just made the experience better as the teaching was more personalised. He also went through a lot of theory that was all very useful in regard to the subject. All the assignments allowed for the use of theory in practice.

3. What classes/study experiences did you find least relevant or least valuable to you? Why?

Corporate Reputation Management was weird. At first, the teacher (David) basically just showed us commercials on YouTube. I am still confused as to what theory we actually learned in class. He uploaded class notes, where you could find the information of the course, but in general the course was easily understandable.

Social Media Management is probably good for people who want to use Instagram as a business tool. The teacher (Raquel) forced us to create an Instagram, which we were to use for the duration of the semester. She wanted us to maintain the Instagram account as if it was a real business and analyse our progress in the assignments. The teacher also spent a lot of time reprimanding students that were talking, but with no luck – this was a waste of time for everybody. She seemed very passionate though.

4. What classes would you advice other KEA students going to the receiving school to choose or not to choose?

I would advise students to take Marketing Research. The course went through a lot of useful information and theory that can be used in a lot of aspects in the business world. The teacher was very nice, and he made sure that we knew that he was available if we were having doubts about something. He incorporated quizzes, so we could test our knowledge. You are able to work in groups in all assignments in this course (normally assignments are individual), which is nice since you will have a lot of assignments. I had 42 assignments divided between my 4 courses, but they are fairly simple, so the workload isn't too bad.

I probably wouldn't choose Corporate Reputation Management if I had the chance to start over. The lack of theory and the amount of time we spend watching commercials was pointless. I had really high hopes for this course, but the teacher didn't deliver.

Cultural/Personal Experience

1. What challenges did you experience culturally while being abroad?

It took me a while to get used to the schedule. At Cesine, you could have classes at 10:00, but also at 19:00. The classes only last for one hour and with the classes spread out throughout the day, you can experience a lot of free time in between the classes.

It is also important to remember siesta as stores will be closed in the middle of the day.

And the citizens of Santander don't speak English.

2. What was the best cultural/personal experience during your studies abroad?

Santander is such a lovely place. The weather was amazing, so we all spend a lot of time outside eating, drinking, surfing, hanging out on the beach etc. (FYI, the city is very hilly) I would definitely say that the other international students and the international community in Santander as well as the experiences we had together were the best parts of Santander.

(Cesine didn't really do a good job of integrating the international and national students, so I only really knew international students)



Santander is surrounded by beautiful views. I would also recommend seeing other cities in the region, Cantabria. I went to Comillas, Torrelavega, San Vicente de la Barquera, and Santillana del Mar.

3. What advice would you give other KEA students going to study abroad at the receiving school?

Make sure that you participate in some of the ESN (Erasmus Student Network) activities at the start of the semester as that is where you will have to opportunity to meet a lot of other international students from all of Santander's universities. ESN creates a monthly schedule, so you can see when activities are happening. Thursdays are when most students go out. There is an ESN WhatsApp group you definitely should be part of, and different sports have different WhatsApp groups as well, so you can meet up with other students and play football, volleyball, or surf etc.

Practical Experience

1. How was the application process?

a. What did KEA help you with?

b. What help did you receive from your school abroad?

The process is a bit time-consuming, but it is easily managed. I got all the information I needed from KEA quickly, and Lea from Cesine was very helpful with the student visa.

2. Did you have any practical difficulties settling down in at your destination?

No

3. Where did you live?

a. Was it difficult to find accommodation? b. Was it expensive?

I lived in an apartment 5 minutes away from Cesine, 10 min away from the city centre, 15 min from Sardinero (beach). My apartment was more expensive than other students (350€) but compared to rent in Denmark and the location it was worth it. If you don't necessarily want to spend your free periods on campus, which is very small, having an apartment close by is valuable. I found my apartment on a website called Fotocasa.

A lot of students (on behalf of their landlords) write about available accommodations at the beginning of the semester in the ESN WhatsApp group, so if you haven't found any accommodation before moving contact the group.

4. What kind of expenses did you have in general?

a. Did you spend more or less money than you budgeted with?

Personally, I could easily live off my SU.