

Finlande – LAUREA University of Applied Sciences

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¹ To update the agenda just click right on your moose

I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back in time, would you go to this university and why ?

My experience abroad was amazing, even with the Covid-19. I discovered a lot of places and different landscapes and made great friends. If I had to go back in time I would definitely stay on my choice. The university was great, the administration is really reactive and ready to help you if needed. The student associations also organize a lot of cool events and are here to help. And mostly, the country and the region of Helsinki-Vantaa have a lot to offer.

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

Help : Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?

You don't need a visa if you are from the European Union.

2. The flight

Help : what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket

I booked my flight in November with Air France, after finding a flat, from Montpellier to Helsinki. I booked both ways because it was cheaper but before booking the return keep in mind that it can be cancelled or you might want to stay longer.

3. My luggage

Help : what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)

Even if the winters in Finland are getting Hotter with global warming, you still need to get prepared to face the first months. You need a scarf, gloves, a beanie and a good winter jacket. Also take some thermo t-shirts and pants to wear underneath your clothes on the cold days or in Lapland if you are planning to go there. For Lapland also, if you have skiing clothes and enough space in your luggage, take them. Don't forget to take a swimsuit for the sauna. Take an Ethernet wire if you have one so you can connect to internet in the

HOAS. apartments. Finally, if you have a luggage scale, it's convenient to take it will make your packing before coming back way easier.

4. Bank account

Help : did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.

I didn't need to change bank (Banque Populaire du Sud) but I needed to change my credit card. Check that you can pay with your card without fees.

5. Insurance

Help : What insurance did you subscribe to ?

I took an insurance from La MATMUT for Erasmus students.

B. Housing

1. Where to live

Help : Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)

It depends if you prefer to be close to everything or to live in a large apartment. For the first option, the best place to live is for me Pasila, It takes you 5mn of train to go to the center of Helsinki and about 20mn to go to the university, you have trains all the time to go anywhere, green spaces to go for a walk or for a run and the most important, the Biggest Mall of the Northern Countries where you can find restaurants, a cinema, indoor surfing and Beach Volley, all kinds of shops and around 4 different supermarkets to find everything that you need 24/7.

If you don't mind being a bit far away from the city and having a large flat, then Espoo is cool. It takes you 20mn train to go to the university, 25mn train to go to the center of Helsinki and you are close to Ikea and to a lot of green spaces. I cannot tell you much more about it as I was living in Pasila.



2. Find a flat or a room

Help : How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation

I found a flat with HOAS which is a students housing company. They partner with LAUREA to offer a certain amount of furnished rooms for Exchange students. I advise you to apply for a flat as soon as you are accepted in the university. Most of the flats they offer are shared apartments, you can also ask for a studio but it's more expensive and they might still provide you with a shared apartment.

3. Cost

Help : How much should I plan for a room?

My rent was 423€, and all the exchange students I know that rented from HOAS had rents between 420€ and 450€. If you rent from a private source it might be way more expensive as it's Finland and Helsinki's region.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

Help : How was the process, what did you have to do?

The process was easy and clear. You will receive all the needed information by e-mail. You will receive a link to the Laurea's online registration platform where you have to fill in some info and provide a motivation letter. After that you will need to register for classes. It's a bit blurry as some classes sometimes disappear and some other come out of nowhere so make sure that you have a backup class in case one of yours disappear. But once there you can still change classes during the first week so it will be okay.

B. Information on the university

1. Class

Help : for each class tell us how was the class, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?

International Marketing Project (10 ECTS): *This class was the longest in time. It started the second week of January and ended in the end of May. This project was interesting. We worked as a project team with Finnish and international students for a company to complete a marketing mission. I liked the fact that it's a project and not a regular lecture with an exam in the end. The team goes through the project and the teacher is here to help and advise. I would recommend it.*

Marketing Project (5 ECTS): *This class was very short. It started middle March and ended middle May. It's kind of the same as the first one but the task you have is easier and doesn't*

require as much efforts (for my case it was doing a marketing plan). I like that we had some marketing lectures in the beginning before starting to work on the project.

Digital Analytics and Customers Insights (5 ECTS): This one is an online class where you take Google Analytics certifications. It is very interesting if you are interested in Digitalization and data management. The class is composed of the certifications and written/video materials. I recommend it because you can manage your schedule on your own but you still have to work regularly not to have to do everything in the end.

Digital Services Business and Marketing (10 ECTS): This one was supposed to be a face-to-face class but turned out to be online. It's focused on digital marketing, the materials are very interesting. Like the one before you also take certifications, from Hubspot Academy this time. I recommend it because you learn a lot of useful things and you can put the certifications on your CV.

2. Exam

Help : How was the exam?

In the two projects, the "exam" was an oral group presentation of the project to the teacher and the company.

For the two other ones, there were no exams but assignments during the semester that make a final grade.

IV. When I live there

A. Safety

Help : Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid

Finland is a very safe country, I cannot think of any places where I didn't feel safe.

B. Phone and Internet

Help : How to be able to call and have internet

In France I was using Free Mobile and it works really well in Finland, I didn't have any problem with calling or 4g. In the HOAS flats, you have free internet through a wire, but you can use a routeur to have WiFi.

C. Events

Help : How to know about the events?

You will always be updated on the upcoming events through the Facebook and WhatsApp groups of the student association. If you take their subscription you will have reduced prices on all the events and trips so I recommend you to take it. Also there is an mobile app named KideApp listing all the upcoming students events from Laurea and other universities.

D. Sports

Help : What sport can I do ? and how?

If you take the students association subscription it gives you access for free to a lot of sports classes and gyms from Laurea ad partner universities. Otherwise you can easily find football or basketball fields, green spaces to run, forests to go hiking or swimming pools.

E. Eating

Help : Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. an international house buffet)

Finnish food is not the greatest but they have great cinnamon rolls or Kanelipujas! Apart from this, you can find cuisines from all over the world easily. If I have to name THE fast food, it's HESBURGER. You will find one in every street corner. They have a lot of cool cafes, especially in front of the sea which really cool. The Regatta café is a place where you have to go, not especially for the coffee but for the place that is really cool, you can sit outside around a fire and grill sausages. I also recommend you when the weather is good (April may) to do a barbecue next to a lake.

F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

Help : How did you get access to the bus, car or bike

I was studying in Tikkurila Campus in Vantaa, the fastest way for me was by train. I just had to take a 8mn to 12mn train to get to the campus which was really close to the train station. Train is actually most of the time the fastest and more convenient way to move around.

G. Travels

Help : What do you recommend and what do you not recommend

I highly recommend you to do the Lapland trip from the student union. It's an experience you don't want to miss, you will know it when you're there. The university also organizes a trip to St Petersburg in Russia and a Cruise to Stockholm, Sweden but I cannot say anything about them as they got cancelled because of the Coronavirus.

I also recommend you to go to Tallinn in Estonia, it's 2h ferry from Helsinki and it's cheap to go there. If we put the cheap alcohol aside, the Old City of Tallinn is really nice to visit. The in the cities that are close to Helsinki, you can go to Porvoo Turku and Tampere by bus or train. These cities are cool for a daytrip.

H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

Help : What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time

I would have liked to know that global warming impact a lot Finland, the winter was not as cold as it should have been (around -2 to 2° instead of -10°) and it almost didn't snow.