

**EXCHANGE REPORT**

Name

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Year and term for exchange

HT19-VT20

Exchange university

ETH Zürich

Degree programme

Molecular science and engineering

ETH Zürich - Switzerland

Before departure

I wanted to do an exchange and I thought there are different reasons to do an exchange, to have great experiences or to push oneself. There was a bit back and fourth between multiple schools but in the end I chose ETH because my brother lives in Zürich and I wanted to be able to be with him. I knew that the tempo on ETH would be slightly higher than KTH, but in the end how much worse could it be I thought.

Upon arrival

I arrived about 1.5 weeks before semester start. 1 Week before semester start ETH has something called ETH week where students work in project groups to solve a problem, so there are a lot of cool presentations and field trips intensive for 1 week. ETH also has some sort of reception for exchange students but I didn't know about that before I signed up for ETH week, they also have a intensive language course 1 week before semester start but I didn't participate in that either. Also during this time I fixed all the paperwork with the authorities and such.

Financials

Zürich is an expensive city that is a truth. But it shouldn't scare one away. I got around 3800 Swiss francs for the whole year and with the extra loan from CSN I managed to not blow a hole in my savings, while I also travelled the country a bit. I payed for lunch at school every day, it was 6.4 CHF which was about 65 SEK when I was there and for what one got and time saved from cooking I thought it was a bargain. Meat is very expensive there, so I just decided to not buy meat myself if it wasn't on sale. Also, if one was in school to long they started to serve dinner for the same price which is nice.

For the public transport it depends in which zone one lives in, in the zone for The main city it was around 70 CHF a month and where I lived I had to pay 90 CHF. If one wants to travel around in the country a lot I would recommend a half-tax card which costs 100 CHF but then all longer train trips costs half the

price. One trip back and forth to Zermatt (where the Toblerone mountain is) and the half-tax card has payed for itself.



Figure 1: Toblerone mountain (Matterhorn)

Accommodation

I got my accommodation though the university so I didn't stress more about that, it cost about 6250 CHF per month which wasn't bad at all I think, I lived a bit away from my campus which wasn't nice but it was also lovely living a bit outside the city with a nice view. I shared a kitchen with people but it was

okay since I didn't do much cooking, also there was shared showers per floor so around 3 showers on 10 people but it was okay and they got cleaned every other day by cleaners.



Figure 2: View from road to the train station each morning, also had view over lake from my studio.

Write here! How did you get accommodation? Was it possible to get help from the university? Did you live close to the campus? How were the housing conditions and costs? Feel free to insert pictures into the text.

University and studies

The university is huge, and the chemistry building is enormous. They have two campuses, one in the city centre and one a bit away, but there are shuttle busses between the two which takes about 15 min. All the chemistry courses I took was on the second campus called Hönggerberg. All courses I took only had 1 lecture and one exercise per week so there wasn't any extra stuff in the courses such as lab work or projects etc.. So, there was time to focus on the individual studies which was needed, I also managed to choose courses so I had Thursday and Friday completely off for studies/travels. The lectures was 2-3h and the exercise was either 1 or 2 hours, more or less the same concept as KTH has, all courses on a masters level was in English.

Courses

Some courses was harder than what they usually are at KTH but mostly because there was a gap in knowledge before starting the course.

The first semester I took the following courses:

- Enzymes – Liked it a lot, and it was easy to follow.

- Advanced methods and strategies in synthesis – Also a great course.
- Organic Synthesis: Methods and Strategies – A bit hard but learned a lot.
- Advanced Physical Chemistry: Statistical Thermodynamics – Interesting course but a bit hard.
- Advanced Magnetic Resonance – Really hard and would only recommend if one knows ones math and quantum chemistry.

The second semester corona happened and there was a big fuzz.. but I took a 13 credit project with in Bodes research group (he had the advanced methods and strategies in synthesis course). If one is going to stay for 2 semesters I would recommend doing a project for a professor of ones liking in a field of interest. I also took a course called proteins and lipids with the same professor that had the enzymes course but I couldn't take the exam because of the pandemic, same happened with my course in Electrochemical Energy Conversion and Storage Technologies.

City and country

I loved the city and the country it is very beautiful. The culture differs a lot from city to city as well so if one goes to Geneve it is more or less French and closer to the Italian border it is obviously more Italian. Zürich is close to Germany as well if one would like to go there. With the half-tax card, it wasn't too expensive getting around, especially since I hate taking busses and their train network works fantastic.

Leisure and social activities

They had a gym with a lot of sport activities which I enjoyed, which was completely free as well, otherwise I spent time with my brother and some friends I made during ETH week. In more or less every course I took there were new people so I didn't get to know my class at all but I also spent some time with the other exchange students in my house where I lived.

Other recommendations and observations

Have fun during the exchange at ETH. Sure it is a high tempo so one might think all time have to go to the school but the exam periods are really long so it will most likely be okay. So have fun during the stay and enjoy the country.