

**Exchange university**

The Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO)

**Degree programme**

Master in Architecture

## Exchange study in AHO

### Before departure

When I accepted the offer from kth, I learned about the possibility of studying abroad on exchange. As an international student, it is a great experience to live and study in another country, and AHO is a very good school in Northern Europe, and the fact that Norway has a famous architecture firm, Snøhetta, and professors from Snøhetta teach at AHO was a big attraction for me. In addition, Norway is part of the Scandinavian region, which makes me feel at ease in living in a country that has similar habits to Sweden. I hope that as an international student I will be able to better understand the similarities and differences between the Nordic countries in terms of culture and architecture.

As a non-European country, you need to apply for an additional Norwegian visa to stay in Norway for more than 90 days. The visa application is slightly different from Sweden, but it is not that difficult to prepare according to the list of the Norwegian Immigration Service UDI. I don't know if it was due to the epidemic, but the waiting time for an appointment to exchange my visa for a residence card was very long and was not completed until the end of my exchange study, but it didn't affect my life too much.

### Upon arrival

Due to the quarantine requirement, I arrived in Oslo ten days early and spent ten days in the quarantine hotel. Luckily, the quarantine fee was covered by AHO, which reduced my financial burden to a great extent.

The student union of AHO organized a welcome week for international students before the official class, and arranged many activities for everyone to get to know each other. There was also a week-long workshop course for international students, where we were grouped together to participate in different workshops, which helped us a lot in making models in the workshop.

### Financials

I applied scholarship from Erasmus+. The cost of living in Oslo is a bit higher than in Sweden. If you live in one of the student houses at Sio, you will often have the opportunity to participate in free activities such as watching movies, hiking. And the canteen has a limited amount of free coffee after 4pm. If you can bring your own lunch, you can save money. The price of lunch in the canteen is much lower than in restaurants.

### Accommodation

I rented an apartment from SIO, which is the same type of organization as SSSB in Sweden, and the type of apartment and price is similar to SSSB. The apartment I lived in was a corridor room, 20 minutes walk from the school, and the price was 4900 NOK per month. If you want to live closer to the school, the rent will be higher.

## University and studies



AHO's campus is very small, and the school is small and compact, with only three programs, architecture, design and landscape architecture.

The architecture program at AHO is different from KTH in that there is one studio per semester, so it feels more compact than the program at KTH.

In the day-to-day study, the studio course includes lecture, project guidance and review of each stage. The elective course is similar to the seminar in kth, reading materials and seminars.

The courses are taught in English. About a month into the semester, the school offers a free Norwegian language course.

## Courses

The studio I chose is called In Balance: Arctic Cycles II and I chose this studio because it allows to go to the Arctic Circle to build buildings in the city of Vardø and to learn about climate analysis and sustainability of buildings. During the course of the study, the tasks at each stage were very clear and the final design was completed in a step-by-step manner. The studio students and teachers traveled to Vardø in late October and completed a refuge from raw material collection to final construction in ten days, and at the end of the semester we conducted in-depth research on topics of interest to us, which culminated in a thesis. The whole course was a very memorable experience.



For the Elective course I chose Urban Theory: Exploring the city through walking, because as an exchange student for one semester, I wanted to get to know Norway better in a short period of time. Our course was very interesting. Every week the teacher took us on a walk around different parts of Oslo and the seminar was held outdoors. The final paper was to choose a walking style that interested you to explore the city and describe the experience.

**City and country**

I think Norway and Sweden are very similar culturally, and Norwegian students are also very nice and easy to get along with.

**Leisure and social activities**

During the first week of school, the school organized a lot of activities for international students. Later on, some museum visits were also organized. In addition, the student housing organization Sio provided some free movie watching and hiking activities.

**Sustainability**

I flew to Oslo for personal reasons, but took the train for the return trip. In my daily life I mainly walk, but also take the metro and bus.

The school encourages sustainability, for example, there is a second hand trade and free food packages for expired food.

**Other recommendations and observations**

Enjoy the Norwegian summer and autumn, Oslo is very beautiful at this time of year.