

Field Report Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (Campus Lillehammer)

I chose the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences in Lillehammer for my final semester abroad (SS 2024) of my studies in International Business. The semester times in Scandinavia are a bit different from those in Trier, so university started already in the middle of January and the semester officially goes until the end of June. However, I already had my final exams in the mid of May. There is an orientation day organized in the week before the courses start and the international office organizes several fun activities during the first two weeks of semester to participate in.

Preparation

After having applied for partner universities and having been nominated for the university in Lillehammer, there are some organizational things you have to be aware of. You can already start to look for the courses offered and decide which ones you want to participate in and after that you have to fill in the Online Learning Agreement (OLA) which will be signed by the sending and receiving institution. You also have to fill in the Grant Agreement and some small documents from the university in Trier. Throughout this whole process you will get guidance from Ms. Schätz-Al Mahamid and the international office in Lillehammer.

There will also be a catalogue of useful information sent to you by the international office in Lillehammer. For me, this one was very useful to read through before coming to Lillehammer as it gives you information about nearly everything you have to know and also apps you might need to download.

University and courses

There are a lot of courses taught in English which you can choose from depending on your interests. In the descriptions of the courses, you can see what you will learn and how the course will be examined.

I only had to take 18 ECTS during my second semester abroad, so I chose those two courses:

- Snow Business (15 ECTS)
- Nature-based and Ecotourism (7,5 ECTS)

There is also a Norwegian Language course which many people chose, and I only heard good things about it.

In general, the teaching was a bit different than I experienced it in Trier as it was mainly the professor standing in the front and talking and not that much interaction but that might also differ between the courses.

I enjoyed the Snow Business course most, as we also made some smaller field trips to ski destinations surrounding Lillehammer. There we had some talks with hotel managers and other actors and after that we got ski lift passes for free for this day so we could enjoy our afternoon skiing. The highlight in this course was the trip to Beitostølen, where we stayed overnight.

For the nature-based and ecotourism course we had to prepare three little presentations throughout the semester and write an exam in the end. For the snow business course, it was only an exam at the end.

I really enjoyed my time at the university in Lillehammer and the professors were always supportive and friendly. Also, the people at the international office were always there if we had any concerns or questions.

Dorms

There are many dorms in Lillehammer you can choose from. During the application process you can choose three ones you are interested in and then will be assigned to one of those. What I heard; everyone got their first choice.

There are rooms with an own or shared bathroom and a shared kitchen and furnished 1-room-apartments. I stayed in Smestad, which is situated in the middle between the city center and the university which was perfect for me as you could walk everywhere if you wanted to but there are also good bus connections.

In most of the dorms, you will live together with other internationals and Norwegians. What is important to know is that there is usually no kitchen equipment in the kitchen, so you have to buy it yourself after arrival. However, you might be lucky that people living there before you left some things behind you can use.

In terms of rent, most of the rooms are between 400 and 500€/month depending on which one you choose.

Free time activities (in Lillehammer)

Lillehammer is a small city, but you can find plenty things to do (mainly in nature). During winter, it is possible to do ice-skating on the lake or go skiing in Hafjell which is a 20-minute bus ride from Lillehammer. **Good to know:** For us, there was the possibility to volunteer at the Alpine Skiing WorldCup in Kvitfjell and get free ski passes. For volunteering at least 9 days, you even got a whole season pass for free. There are also lots of cross-country tracks in Lillehammer if you want to try that out.

Also good to know: In Norway there is BUA which rents out skiing and other outdoor equipment for free. You just have to buy a prepaid card with a Norwegian phone number and register at BUA. Then you can rent out for example skis for a week for free. This also gives you the possibility to try out multiple winter sports during your semester in Norway. There are also many options for hiking in both winter and summer: Balbergkampen, the ski jump, the Mesna trail, ...

The lake is also worth a visit when it is getting warmer or if you are in Lillehammer during summer as there are plenty of benches and BBQ places.

When you are in Norway you should also definitely travel around a bit to see more of that beautiful country. I visited Oslo and made two little round trips (Trondheim-Kristiansund-Molde-Ålesund and Bergen-Flåm). I also highly recommend visiting the Lofoten Islands which was amazing and definitely one of my highlights.

Conclusion

I really loved my semester abroad in Norway. The country and nature are amazing! I also learned new things at university especially related to tourism and Nordic countries and met lovely people. I can recommend spending your semester abroad in Lillehammer if you are into hiking and enjoy nature and beautiful landscapes.

Some impressions:

