

Report of stay abroad in Brighton, UK

5th March – 2nd April 2016

Rahmenvorstellung

Mein Name ist Marleen Lewe, ich bin 19 Jahre alt und komme aus Dülmen. Ich bin im zweiten Lehrjahr meiner Ausbildung zur Industriekauffrau bei BASF Coatings, derzeit im Marketing mit Fokus auf Social Media eingesetzt. Zwei Tage in der Woche besuche ich das Hansa-Berufskolleg mit den Hauptfächern Geschäftsprozesse, Wirtschafts- und Sozialprozesse und Steuerung und Kontrolle.

Vom 05. März bis zum 02. April 2016 werde ich einen Auslandsaufenthalt in Brighton, England machen. In der ersten Woche werde ich einen Sprachkurs im ELC (English Language Centre) Brighton und in den drei folgenden Wochen werde ich ein Praktikum im Brighthelm URC & Community Centre im Bereich Marketing absolvieren.

Meine Erwartungen

Dass es in der heutigen Zeit immer nötiger wird, Englisch zu sprechen, ist bekannt. Dies wird mir auch immer wieder im beruflichen Alltag bewusst, da BASF Coatings international aktiv ist.

Mein hauptsächliches Ziel des vierwöchigen Aufenthaltes in England ist, genau diese Fähigkeit weiterzuentwickeln – sicherer im Umgang mit der englischen Sprache zu werden.

Dabei wird mir sicherlich der einwöchige Sprachkurs an der ELC (English Language School), Brighton weiterhelfen. Durch den Sprachtest vorab werden wir in verschiedene Gruppen eingeteilt sein, die dem jeweiligen Sprachniveau angepasst sind.

Doch selbstverständlich ist dies nicht mein einziges Ziel des Aufenthaltes.

Genauso wichtig ist es mir, international Kontakte zu knüpfen und vielmehr deren Kulturen kennenzulernen. Dabei steht besonders die englische Kultur im Vordergrund.

Diese werde ich hoffentlich durch die Unterkunft in meiner Gastfamilie kennenlernen. Ich hoffe, dass ich gut mit meiner Gastfamilie auskommen werde und sie mich einerseits an ihrem Leben teilhaben lassen, mir andererseits aber besonders die Freiheit geben, alles zu erkunden und kennenzulernen.

Um die Arbeitswelt in England kennenzulernen, wird das Praktikum im Brighthelm Community Centre mir weiterhelfen. Ich hoffe, dort einen tieferen Einblick in deren Arbeit zu erlangen und, soweit möglich, selbst aktiv mitwirken zu können.

Angst vor dem Auslandsaufenthalt habe ich nicht. Ich freue mich viel mehr auf eine spannende Zeit, in der ich mich weiterentwickeln kann. Sowohl in der englischen Sprache, als auch in meiner sozialen Kompetenz.

The stay abroad

The host family

Me and seven other students from Germany – had a safe journey from Dortmund to Brighton on Saturday, 5th March 2016.

My host family, David and Ayiesha and their son Morgan, are very experienced in hosting students from different countries. When they spoke to me, they always spoke very clearly and slowly so that I could understand them better. They are really lovely people and they have done their best to make an easy start possible for me. David and Ayiesha showed me the city on the first day and told me which buses I have to take, which was very useful.

I also got to know the other students that David and Ayiesha were hosting: Jessica (33, from France), John (25, from Turkey) and Guiliano (20, from Spain). The three also are very nice people and confirmed my very positive first impression of my host family. After the first week another lovely guest, Fina (50, from Spain) arrived.



The city Brighton



Together with the immediately adjacent Hove, Brighton makes up the Unitary Authority Brighton and Hove in South East England. The two cities together have about 270,000 inhabitants. As in the whole United Kingdom, the currency is the pound and they drive on the left side. These are two of the most unfamiliar facts of the UK for me, but I got used to them very fast.

“Vibrant, colourful and creative, this is Brighton.” (visitbrighton.com)

During the four weeks we explored Brighton and we all agreed, that these are the right words to describe the city. People from all cultures, ages and styles clash together here.

We did a lot of sightseeing, like visiting the Seven Sisters Cliffs, the Royal Pavilion, the Brighton Pier or the Marina. There is a great shopping centre but rather all the Brighton Lanes with charming small shops and boutiques make up the city. There are many young people from all over the world who



study and learn English. Brighton offers them a wide range of pubs, clubs and bars for nice evenings.



Whether you want to go running or just sit and drink a coffee – the long beach with the big promenade offers opportunities for everybody. In Brighton the life plays on the streets. At any time at day or night you meet people on the streets that are very kind and helpful. I had the feeling, that the people have a much more positive mood than in Germany. Everybody says thank you and wishes a nice day. I think this is one of the most decisive factors which made me feel very comfortable.



The language course

During the first week we enrolled in a language course at the ELC (English Language Centre) Brighton. Based on a short test in advance we have been divided in different groups which were adapted to our speaking level. Our morning group was different from our afternoon group.

In my opinion the course has been very helpful. I have learned a lot, specially the most common and typical phrases to make conversation easy. The other students in my courses came from South Korea, Taiwan, Argentina, Switzerland and Oman. With a lot of group work and discussions we learned together and had a lot of fun.



The internship

In the following three weeks we did an internship with different companies.



I have been engaged at The Brighthelm URC Church & Community Centre, owned by the United Reform Church, which is a very intercultural and social place with lots of different fields. It offers a church, a community garden, a children pre-school and a Café, The Helm Café and many meeting rooms to hire. These are used for business meetings, little church-, sports- or self-help-groups. About 25 employees and 40 volunteers work at the Brighthelm. During the year many events take place at the Community Centre, like little concerts or exhibitions.

In the first week of my internship I got to know my colleagues, especially Sarah (supervisor for my internship) and Natalie (responsible for Marketing) – most of the time I worked together with her. During the three weeks of internship I was engaged in the marketing department with focus on social media.

In the first days I got to know their facebook pages “Brighthelm URC Church & Community Centre” and “The Helm Café” and created a new Instagram account “@thehelmcafe”. My main task during my three week stay, was to keep the pages updated and try to reach more people. Furthermore, I helped the team as much as possible: I created a new advertising sign for the campaign “Help the birds”. The aim of this campaign was to collect as many donations as possible, to buy food for the birds in winter.



In addition, Natalie gave me a very exciting project. On 31st March 2016 an art exhibition took place at “The Helm Café”. In occasion of the International Women’s Day (8th March) many local artists presented their work round about the topic feminism. Many artists were women, but there were also some male artist who showed strong, confidential female figures in their paintings or photographs.

My job for this great event was to publish it, to assume the whole marketing for it.

I think this was a very good opportunity for me to apply what I have already learned about marketing and to see the whole process from the beginning and organization of an event until the implementation.



In the middle of the second week of my internship at the Brighthelm URC & Community Centre, another Student, Stefania (22, from Italy), started her internship in Social Media Marketing. During the remaining 1 ½ weeks I worked together with her on different projects.

One big project was establishing profiles of some volunteers. We had interviews with the volunteers about their main tasks, their impressions etc. and wrote little articles about them. After that we published the articles and photos on our website, facebook and Instagram to push the volunteering at Brighthelm.

Regarding the profiles, we also created a new design for the pin board in the café with pictures and quotes of the volunteers.

We also started a call-out for artists. The artists got the chance to exhibit their work in the café and we got to do all the marketing for it. We wrote an advertisement and published it on our website. I also created a poster, which we published on facebook, twitter and Instagram. Unfortunately, I could not see results of the advertising campaign as it all happened on my last two days.

Conclusion

My stay in Brighton was a very good experience in general. All my expectations were met, mostly surpassed. I got to know many lovely people from all over the world. I improved my English just by speaking with all the others.

I could not imagine a better host family. Ayiesha, David and Morgan are such a lovely family with so much experience in hosting students from all over the world. We ate together nearly every day and talked about everything. They gave me all the freedom I needed to explore the city and gain experiences and at the same time they gave me a lovely home where I felt comfortable. They answered all my questions and made my stay very pleasant.

In my opinion Brighton is a beautiful city. I loved to stroll through the Lanes or to go shopping in the mall. Loved to go running through the promenade or just drink a coffee on the beach. The streets in Brighton always are full of happy people.

My internship at the Brighthelm URC & Community Centre was very interesting. I had my own projects with great support whenever needed. I was able to do much more autonomous work than I have ever expected. I had lots of fun with my colleagues and we also met after work in our free time.

I would really recommend this adventure to everyone who wants to gain experiences, meet many people and especially who wants to improve speaking English. I would do it again whenever it would be possible.