

Were you satisfied with the studies/work placement/thesis supervision? How did they meet your expectations?

I went to university which couldn't offer me courses related my studies in Finland. Anyway most of the courses I took (3/4) were very interesting. I also learned some very useful things. At least I'm satisfied. Most of my courses were like I expected.

My favourite course was Intercultural Communication. In that course came out many new things about different cultures and we also learned how we should act when we enter to new culture or how we should communicate with different people to avoid conflicts.

Thai language was also very nice course. It's great we had the opportunity to learn something and then also use it in our daily life.

3. FACILITIES AT HOST ISTITUTION

		5	4	3	2	1	
Guidance by International Coordinator	provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not provided
Student services	excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	poor
Libraries	excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	poor
Access to computers	excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	poor

Your comments on facilities.

In PSU (Prince of Songkla University) the staff were very helpful. There study lot of international students and all courses should be in English. Of course some teachers can't speak so good English but they do their best. PSU also organized some activities that we got in to Thai culture even better. PSU is different than universities in Europe but in my opinion it's just part of studying abroad.

PSU was quite big area. There was seven buildings for classrooms and offices, student dorms, canteen, gym and places for playing football, tennis, volleyball, badminton and basket ball. There was sports hall where can also play some sports inside. In one building there was a nursing room where was also doctor once a week.

In PSU we also had to wear uniforms. Girls have black knee-length skirt, white t-shirt and PSU's buttons, pins and belt. Boys have long black pants, long-sleeved white shirt, tie and PSU's pins and belt. Both, boys and girls, have to wear also black shoes. There is many opinions that one have to wear uniform but at least one don't have to think what put on in mornings. Anyway there was some variety of using uniform: someone use flipflops and someone shorter/longer skirt etc. Anyway one wasn't allowed to take part of exam without proper uniform. Exam rooms were quite cold but we weren't allowed to use any jacket or scarfs.

PSU also arranged some activities for exchange students. We had opportunities to take part to Thai cooking class, sightseeing, homestay, buddy program, Vegetarian Festival and Loi Krathong Festival, feedback evening, farewell dinner etc. Many of them was free of charge. Only homestay and cooking class cost little money. Those activities were very nice and gave us opportunities to get in to Thai culture even more. In Loi Krathong Festival we did our own lucky Krathongs and also let some lighters up.

Especially homestay was very interesting. Then we were over night with some Thai family. Some of us were alone in that family and some went there with 4-6 persons group. I was there alone. Unfortunately my homestay weekend wasn't that good because it was raining so hard. Anyway I got such a nice family and had really fun time with them. I know I can visit there anytime I'm in Phuket. I was part of family. We slept on a floor and mama also taught me to make some food.

4. LIVING IN THE HOST COUNTRY

		5	4	3	2	1	
Accommodation	excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	poor
Contacts with local students	many	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not at all
Free-time activities	many	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	not at all
Cost of living	expensive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moderate

Could you please comment.

I love living there. Even though many of us thought apartment/house would be quite cheap, we noticed soon the prices was almost like in Finland or other European countries. Of course there is still some cheaper options. Our house (3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms) was 20 000 THB/month, so that was quite cheap but we didn't have a pool.

In the beginning of our studies PSU organized buddy program where everyone who wanted got a local student as a buddy. That was the point when most of us really got know some locals. We got many new friends who helped us with problems and getting in to Thai culture. With them we had opportunity to go for dinner to very local restaurants. We couldn't do that by ourselves because menus were only in Thai.

In Thailand many people don't make food by themselves. It's usual that also locals goes out for lunch and dinner. That's probably because it's cheaper to go some restaurant than buy food from the store. In our house there wasn't heating plate in the kitchen. We only had microwave oven, electric kettler and sandwish maker. That's one of the reasons we ate only breakfast at home. Restaurants in Kathu were very cheap. One can get very good portion and it costs less than 100 THB which is about 2,5 euros. At PSU canteen one portion was only 30-45 THB.

In Phuket there is lot of activities one can do. There is many nice areas and beaches behind tourist zones. It's also cheaper there. We also got some discounts eg. for diving courses and gym. We had chill-out evening in Surf House where was also Raya Divers talking about their company. There was also toss-up where three students won surfing course and one student won Open Water Diver - diving course. In Surf House there was also free flowriding (kind of surfing) every Friday for girls.

The best way to get around is to rent a scooter but one has to be very careful in Thailand's traffic. Also some renters try to cheat tourists (when one has white skin he/she is a tourist). Almost all students rented a scooter from same place which was quite trustful. Anyway in the end there came out some problems so I wouldn't suggest that renter to anyone.

Please describe your exchange period as a whole? Your suggestions and comments?

First of all I enjoyed my exchange period very much. I experienced and learned many new things. I got many new friends: from Thailand and from other countries. I don't think I got any culture shock, I just took everything with open mind and positive attitude. I wasn't even homesick! When the time was slipped away and I noticed I have only one month left I just thought I don't want to leave. In the beginning I couldn't imagine myself to live and work some other country but now it's one of the options. I can't wait I can go to live abroad again more than month.

Before I flew to Thailand I worried most about my visa. There was many documents I had to sent, but in the end I got it and was ready to go. I'm not very worrying kind so I didn't do so many plans before my trip. I just went there and look how things are going. For example I noticed in the plane from Kuala Lumpur to Phuket that because of my multiple entry visa I have to leave from Thailand after 30 days. I didn't think that so much but when the time came I bought flight to Kuala Lumpur and spent there few days. I'm very thankful I had that kind of visa. Otherwise I maybe wouldn't experience that wonderful city where I'll definitely go again some day with more time!

Asia Exchange is very good option if one is looking forward to live and study somewhere in Asia. Then one can be sure she/he will get help when needed and one doesn't have to go alone; there is students from other countries also. In my period there was more than 80 international students. Half of them were Germans which was good for me. First I was little afraid there will be lot of Finns and I'd

like to use more English when I'm abroad. Most of the time I hung out with Germans so I used English all the time and I can understand some German also.

When one goes to Thailand, one has to remember it's not like Europe. People don't speak always good English (if they speak that at all), lifestyle is more relaxed, if one asks the way somewhere Thais answers even they don't know, food is different, climate is different etc. Thais always smiles. If there is some problems one shouldn't get angry. Things will be solved easily with friendly and smiling attitude. Angry attitude makes things just worse. Thais love the King and one can see that everywhere. Even in cinema they play first national anthem and shows short document of the King and people have to stand during that.

Like I already said, every problem can be solved with friendly behaviour and money. One time there was a police check where we had to stop. My friends didn't have driving licence with them so they had to pay a fee. Anyway they didn't have enough money with them and when they were friendly and said they're students in PSU, polices were fine also with that money they had. Many times in those police checks, polices stops only tourists (even though Thais drive without helmet and whole family on a same motorcykle).

I think only thing I won't miss is all kind of insects in Thailand. Those were so big and I hate cockroaches even they don't do anything. There was also many dogs running all around. One can't know if they're wild or not. One of our teacher told us Thais take a puppy and when it's not so nice anymore they bring them to university or temples where monks take care of them. Because of Buddhism Thais can't just kill them.

My suggestion is that where ever one wants to go to spend exchange period, do it with open mind, positive attitude and try to take off everything you can. In the end time flies so fast. That period can be the best time of your life (at least at the moment) and you will always remember that. It can teach you lot about the world and yourself. And if one has the opportunity to live abroad he/she should jump on it. One shouldn't be afraid to go alone. I went to Phuket all alone and didn't know anyone before but I got know some of my friends already on the first day I was in country and I never felt lonely.

Thank you for your answers!