

My internship abroad

Me and 16 other students from the Friedrich-List-School had the opportunity to travel to Bournemouth, England, and gain some work experience in cooperation with English 2000 and KulturLife. We stayed there for three weeks, from the fourth to the 24th of March.

In order to take part in the program everyone had to write an application and fill out some paperwork. We also had a small interview with Ms. Neise, who is responsible for the students from our school taking part in the program. She also comes and visits the students in England to check in if everything is going well.

A few weeks before we started our journey, we were all informed about who our host families would be and where we would work. The internships were all very different from each other. From a call center, over real estate agencies and charity organizations to a cat café, everything was represented. On the day of our departure we all met at the check in at Frankfurt Airport and after a one-and-a-half-hour flight we landed at Heathrow Airport. From there we had to travel another two hours by bus to get to Bournemouth.

In Bournemouth, we were greeted by a woman from our language school: English 2000. She gave us our bus tickets, some instructions and sent us off to our host families, where we would live for the next three weeks.

My roommate Julia and I were welcomed wholeheartedly by the Gibbins' and their two children Ivy and Archie.

On Monday, our host mum Tracey drove us the English 2000 school, where we had one day of language lessons to prepare us for the next three weeks.

Tuesday was the day we were all really waiting for. We were excited to see our work places and meet our colleagues. My internship was at a charity organization called Hope Housing Training and Support Ltd. They house people with different issues, like homelessness, drug and alcohol abuse, unemployment and mental health problems. They also provide training and education to their residents to get their life back on track.

On my very first day at work I learned one preconception about Germans to be true, even though I never would have described myself with that word: punctuality. When the first members of staff arrived, they told me to wait for Tom, because he would give me a task. Tom came to work by bus and apparently, there was some kind of problem with his bus. So, on my first day at work I spent quite some time waiting. Luckily everyone was really nice and they small talked with me to past the time.

When Tom arrived, he explained to me how their filing system worked and showed me how to digitalize the files. I did that by going through each of the eighty files and transferring the data from there into the system on the computer. After he had explained everything to me, I was able to work independently. Each time I was done with one task Tom explained the next one to me. Even though they were all pretty similar it was great to be of help and I felt appreciated for my work.

On one day, there were computer problems, which unfortunately led to data being lost. Which meant I had to repeat some of the tasks I had already done.

All in all, the work wasn't too challenging, but pretty much what you'd expect to do in an internship. I felt welcomed at all times and was glad to have such nice colleagues.

Apart from work we were able to spend our free time (especially the weekends) the way we wanted. Some of us spent one weekend in London or visited the Jurassic coast. Others explored the local shops and pubs.

We had three great weeks with ups and downs, in which we got to know a different culture, see a different work routine and improve our social and English skills.

I would recommend it to everyone.