

Erasmus experience at Halmstad University, Sweden.

My choice of Halmstad was a last-minute change when my other option fell through. So luckily the process of enrolment was very easy and well structured.

There are many steps involved however and it does take time, but it is all online at <https://www.universityadmissions.se/intl/start> and with the documents we needed for filling in the Erasmus online portal you are already well prepared to get the process done, you just select classes available for Erasmus students, which you can check on the Halmstad uni website, wait until it is confirmed then send your documents through, I was ineligible for a few courses, I'm still not sure why, but there are many options, and once you are in Halmstad it is much easier to apply to extra courses.

The workload is quite light, in that there are not too many lectures during the week and they have no fixed weekly schedule, so it is very likely you will have time to travel Scandinavia without missing too many lectures, there is however a lot of home reading to do, but it's all very manageable. Due to the light schedule I added an extra class, which I found very enjoyable and it filled in time better, I had a few friends that got a bit bored with the light schedule in different courses, so adding an extra class is often a good idea. The Swedish language course was useful, and hilarious, the teacher is a strange English man, who will make you laugh and sometimes make you mad. But it's all in good fun, he is strict with attendance as class is every Friday which can interrupt travel plans, if you need the credit points it is wise not to make him angry.

In addition, I was able to extend my stay in Sweden, with the help of ERASMUS, so I could do my bachelor thesis. I found this to be a wonderful choice, as Halmstad made it possible for me to connect with an outside project called LIFE-Goodstream, which assisted me greatly during the process of the thesis. The Uni itself has very good facilities to undergo laboratory work, with trained staff to assist in teaching of the processes and steps involved in collecting and examining the data.

Getting accommodation should be done quickly, the student dorms are the best option for being involved in the social side of Erasmus, with many parties happening in the kitchens, the rent is expensive compared to Cottbus, but the option to share a room can make it cheaper. The company who runs the dorms can be a bit tricky, with many of my friends not getting their full deposit back despite there being no problems with the room, so where possible get an inspection of the room and record them saying it's fine.

The city is cute, and clean, it feels smaller than Cottbus. It's very much a summer city also, with famous beaches and hotels nearby, but in winter it is more empty, there are a few nice bars around, but everything is very expensive, especially alcohol, so bring as much as you can from Germany. There are nice places to ride your bike, run and enjoy the outdoors when the weather is nice, good rock-climbing facilities also a bike is a must for getting around, but there are many for sale when you first arrive.

The people are the best part of Halmstad, you will undoubtedly meet some amazing people. I recommend participating in the "nolling" which is the 10-day introduction, where you get to meet all the new exchange students and have a good time, with many parties happening in this time.

The university itself, is quite small, but very nice, I found the courses enjoyable as they were very hands on with many Lab days and field work in addition to theory, the exams were not too difficult if

you have some preparation, and you have 4 hours to complete them, which is way too much time. There is a student union that will organise some activities, I recommend the Moose safari!

I received 450 euro per month, which is enough to cover rent and some food and drinks, but depending on your personal habits, (drinking, eating, shopping or traveling a lot) this may not cover all of your expenses. The deposit for the dorms is also 400 euro which I was not expecting to pay, so that was a shock to my budget- so be warned.

In addition you can easily get by in Sweden with just English. And when it comes to travel, it is expensive to use the train network, use flixbus where possible, with enrolment in Halmstad uni you get to be apart of <https://mecenat.com/se> where you get good discounts on flixbus and other things.

All in all, I had a very good time in Sweden and I rate my experience at Halmstad Uni very highly, and I'm extremely happy I had this opportunity. I actually chose to return to do my bachelor thesis there, as I like the hands on study style and the friendly teachers.