Hey Guys,

First of all, let me reflect back on the title of my essay. I was thinking about it a lot, then it suddenly just came to me, “The best decision of my life”. Before leaving Scotland, me and my Erasmus friends have been reflecting back on our time there and we all agreed on one thing, that going on Erasmus, to Scotland, to a small town called Paisley, was the best decision of our lives.

Before I say more about my actual Erasmus experience, I would like to state something, that I think is very important in order for you to understand how lifechanging this semester abroad was for me. I hate change, and I am usually terrified by it. It was the same with going on Erasmus. I had to apply very soon, I just started the university, everything was still so new, but it was already time for applying, if I wanted to go during the second year. I always wanted to try living abroad, and I made myself a promise before leaving high school that I will definitely apply for Erasmus, so I did. A lot of time has passed between me applying and moving abroad.

As the travel date was coming up I was preparing by getting down all the paperwork, exams, saying goodbye to my friends, shopping and stuff like that, I was excited but then during Christmas, reality hit me, I was starting to get afraid, actually I was terrified. I never lived without my parents, I was spending every day with my best friend, I couldn’t imagine it otherwise, and suddenly I just started to worry about leaving all that behind me, even if just for a few months. I left Hungary on the 5th of January, and that same day after arriving, and meeting with my flatmates, who later on became my family, all my fear went away from the moment I first met them, and I just knew, I am at the best place I can be, I am exactly where I have to be.

So, after this long and emotional introduction let me actually tell you about what a Hungarian person can do in Scotland. I was in my second year at Corvinus University, doing my bachelor’s degree in International Relations. When I was applying, all I knew was that I want to do my Erasmus somewhere where I can speak English 24/7, so the United Kingdom was kind of an
obvious choice. I have heard so many magical (I mean it) things about Scotland, I saw it in movies, series, so I just decided this is going to be the place where I will spend my Erasmus. What an excellent decision it was, if you chose Scotland, I promise you, there is no way you will regret it.

**University**

I was studying at the University of the West of Scotland, it has many campuses, I was staying at the one in Paisley, nice, little town just 15 minutes from Glasgow with train. The uni itself is so much bigger than Corvinus, I was really enjoying it, but of course I got lost many times during the first weeks, but I was never worried because the university has its own “Wayfinding” app, so I was never really lost.

I took up three courses, each for 10 ECTS credits. I had “Global Society” (GS) from the second and “Western Culture in Crisis” (WCIC) from the third year of the Society, Policy and Politics BA degree. Because of some timetable crashes, at the end, my third course was from a totally different degree (but still social sciences), “Criminal Justice Issues” (CJI) from the Criminal Justice BA degree. During the first few weeks I was enjoying every single class so much, it was so nice to finally learn in English, and also I was so lucky because all my tutors spoke “English English” and not “Scottish English” so I actually understood what they were saying. Of course, as the semester was going forward, I was getting tired, but still, I can say with total honesty that I don’t mind that I took up these particular classes because I learnt many things, I will be able to use later on. The only thing I have to mention is that I didn’t find any classes that could substitute any obligatory classes from the IR BA degree at Corvinus, but honestly I wasn’t worried at all because I would rather learn that material from home, since I will need it for my final exams at the end of my degree. During the semester for WCIC, I was working in a group and we had to hand in essays every two weeks or so, and also at the end of the semester I had a 2,500 words long assignment. For GS I had to work in a group too, in order to prepare a group poster by the end of the course, it was very nice because we could choose our topic as long as it was connected to the original topic of the class. My groupmates were so nice, whenever I had a question about the uni, or just the teaching system in general I could turn to them and they helped me in every way they could. Also from this course I had an exam, but
it was a closed book seen exam, which meant that we knew the essay questions before the exam so we could prepare for it at home. From these two modules I had lectures every week, and seminars every two weeks or so. For CJI I had to prepare two assignments, one 3,000 words long and one 1,000 long by the end of the semester, I really enjoyed working on them and doing research for them, but I could feel that I lack of some background knowledge since it was not what I was studying at home, but still I do not regret taking that course. I had lectures and seminars every week.

I was always studying in the library with my friends, because it is quite big, and it has many places where you can study in groups, also I could find materials for my essays that I had to write for Corvinus there, so it is a very well equipped library. There is a school canteen too, where you can buy breakfast, snacks, lunch and coffee of course, for a fair price.

Accommodation

All the Erasmus students I have met, were staying at the student residences of the university, it is not cheap, but I still think it was a good deal comparing to what I would have had to pay for renting a whole apartment by myself, also the University was 2 minutes away (I was staying at the Storie Street residences). The rooms were randomly handed out, so me being in the same apartment with two French girls, two German boys and one Dutch boy was a coincidence, yet it was the best thing that could have happened to me. These people became my family during our months there and we still keep in touch, because when you find good friends, you just cannot let them go. It was very nice because all our friends were staying in the same bloc as we were so we could hang out any time we wanted to.

About the Stories Street residences: The rooms are very nice, well equipped, modern. You have your own bathroom with a toilet and a shower. You share a kitchen with 5 other people, but for us it was never a problem, because every night someone else was cooking, so we could taste national dishes from other countries and also have dinner together as a family every single night. You can check out the rooms and the whole apartment on the accommodation’s website. If you wish to stay in the student residences you will have the opportunity to choose from 3 different types of accommodations, but you can find every information here:

https://www.uws.ac.uk/university-life/accommodation/
Scotland truly is magical, we had the opportunity to go on some organized trips, so we could see many parts of the famous Highlands. You can also rent a car to do a road trip in the Scottish Highlands, but it can be quite circumstantial if you are under 25, and also, they drive on the other side of the road. We were doing some sightseeing in cities close by, like Glasgow, or Edinburgh which is 1-1,5 hours away from Paisley with train. I saw a lot from Scotland, but you can never really get enough its beauty, so I will definitely go back later on to see more from it. You can check out my Instagram page if you wish to see some pictures about the places I had the chance to visit: https://www.instagram.com/linaleilaa/

No words can really describe how good my Erasmus experience was, I could go on and on about it. If you have any questions, or you just need some advice do not hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you all the best,

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