

Erfahrungsbericht über ein Auslandspraktikum

Bitte reichen Sie Ihren unterschriebenen Bericht in ausgedruckter spätestens vier Wochen nach Ende Ihres Aufenthalts (Zeitraum des Volontariats) im Akademischen Auslandsamt bei Frau Rüppell-Wee. Laden Sie außerdem den unterschriebenen Erfahrungsbericht ausschließlich als pdf Scan im alfresco Kursraum hoch.

Dieser Erfahrungsbericht soll zudem insbesondere zukünftigen Studierenden helfen, sich ein Bild von dem Auslandsstudium an Ihrer Gastschule zu machen. Behalten Sie dies beim Verfassen des Berichts im Hinterkopf. Wir würden uns deshalb sehr freuen, wenn Sie uns die Erlaubnis erteilen, diesen Bericht auch anderen Studierenden – wenn gewünscht auch gerne in anonymisierter Form – zugänglich machen zu dürfen.

Name, Vorname:	Pelka, Thomas
Studiengang:	HMM (Hohenheim Master of Management MSc)
Studienfächer: (bei Lehramtsstudierenden), ggf. Abschluss:	/
Name der Praktikumseinrichtung:	Lao-German Technical College, Vientiane, Laos
Praktikumszeitraum von - bis:	18.02.2019 – 13.04.2019
Erhaltene Förderung:	<input type="checkbox"/> PROMOS <input type="checkbox"/> Reisekostenzuschuss AAA <input type="checkbox"/> Reisekostenzuschuss Freunde und Förderer <input type="checkbox"/> Reisekostenzuschuss aus Mitteln des Landes <input type="checkbox"/> Keine Förderung über die Hochschule <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andere, und zwar: Engel-für-Kinder Stiftungx

Note: You may adapt the spacing for points 1 – 8.

1) Summary

Summarize your stay abroad briefly. Did it meet your expectations? How would you assess your internship abroad?

Since my stay in Laos was the very first time I visited an Asian country and as well for me the very first experience in teaching, the 2 months there were overwhelming. Since you are not only making vacation in Asia but you're really integrated in the everyday life – your work together with people who are employed by the government, manage a household and get to know Lao people of all ages – I already knew it will be a great experience. But it was even more adventurous, challenging and fun that I thought. It's even hard to immediately adapt to the German way of life again.

I learned a lot about teaching, presenting myself in front of large groups without sharing a first language, Lao and Buddhist culture, managing spontaneous situations that do not go the way I planned and simply about myself. I got to know a lot of great people (the Lao people are very caring and friendly), from the Lao people I worked and spent time with to my teammates I also shared work and free time with.

2) Preparations for the stay abroad

Please include the following topics: process of application, contact with the training institution, private preparations, support with the preparations by the PH and the training institution.

When I became aware of the project I immediately I informed myself a lot about it on the project-blog and about the country and culture on the internet and continued search while I wrote my application letter. After that I got invited to the PH Karlsruhe for an interview by Prof. Dr. Martin and Mr. Zeck. We had a detailed and very informative interview for about an hour. Thereafter I continued my desk research to be sure if I really want to take up this challenge (after my first searches and the interview my doubts were already pretty low) in case I got accepted.

After getting accepted we (the whole to-be Team VIII) had 3 workshops (each about 7 hours), where Mr. Zeck and Prof. Dr. Martin as well as former volunteers helped us prepare for our stay by providing us additional information about the project, the country, the legal regulations and the Lao culture.

3) The Training Institution

Please describe the training institution shortly (type of institution, structure, employees, location, student body, if it is a school, etc.).

The Institution I worked at was the LGTC (short for Lao-German Technical College), which is a vocational college where a little over 1000 students are trained. It is located in Vientiane, the capital city of Laos, about 100m away from the cross-border river MeKong. As you can see from its name, it's a technical school – the technical topics are divided into 6 sections: automotive section, heavy machinery, agricultural machinery, welding and plumbing, electrical section and general mechanics. The last two sections are those who are working together with the German company BHS Corrugated (a major project partner). The students are theoretically educated in the school, as well as practically by being installed in internships by different companies.

4) Course of the internship

Describe the course of the internship; What tasks did you have? What was the cooperation with the colleagues and other interns like? Did any particularly positive or negative situation arise?

My tasks during my stay were teaching the pre-intermediate BHS student class, the elementary teacher class and working together with my tandem teacher. In the pre-intermediate BHS student class and the elementary teacher class, we worked with the course and workbooks to provide grammar and vocabulary, but also focused on a lot of free speaking by playing different classroom games. With my tandem partner we worked on preparing lessons, by going through the upcoming exercises, preparing additionally teacher material and working on pronunciation. I also have been hospitation at the lessons of my tandem partner to give her possible feedback (as she also could give me on my BHS student classes) or to help her with the lessons content, e.g. introducing new words and reading out dialogues, which most of the time was meant to provide correct pronunciation.

Regarding the cooperation with the colleagues everything worked very nice. As I mentioned before, Lao people are very caring and friendly, the teachers at the LGTC are like a big family, they help out each other, they are participating at cultural events together, they do sports together, etc. and they invite you to join this little kind of family while you are working there. By that you get a very close relationship to the other teachers there. With the other interns it's actually quite the same - we cooked together, went to the city together, went on vacation and sightseeing together.

The downsides are that everything there can be very spontaneous (but that is also the part where it gets challenging – in a positive way), you can rarely rely on schedules and plans.

5) **Assessment of the internship**

How has the experience been different from those made in Germany? How can this internship be viewed as more valuable compared to one done in Germany? What did you learn (methods, special knowledge, inter- or trans cultural experiences, personal development as a teacher, etc.)?

Since I have not had any comparable experiences, I cannot say much about that. But as I mentioned in 1), I learned a lot. On many different levels.

6) **Stay in the host country**

Please include the following topics: personal experiences and impressions, life outside the training institution, special challenges or difficulties, unexpected or rather elusive experiences.

The impressions that stayed with me the most are the friendly people, the spontaneous and easy way of life, the many different locations and sights I got to see, the beautiful nature.

I would describe the Lao way of life as really relaxed. A good example is that when you stroll down Vientianes' Night Market you don't get straitened by pushy vendors as in other countries. As well Lao is not that crowded and overrun with tourists as many other countries so you can just experience a true cultural experience. One of my best experience definitely was going hiking with my teammates in the beautiful lao nature.

7) Practical tips for future volunteers

- Don't be too afraid of sicknesses, it went very well for all of us. Nevertheless, take a good travel pharmacy with you, get the vaccines which are considered important and conclude travel health insurance. After that, you won't have to worry about anything.
- Get to know about the structure of the project (For the LGTC: BHS Student-class, Teacher class, Tandem-teaching).
- Try to get a general overview of the books you are going to work with.
- Don't worry too much about potential hardships, you will handle it and if you need help you got your teammates, your lao colleagues and the project leaders to turn to.
- Don't bring too many clothes with you, it will save you a lot of stress regarding packing and you can buy a lot on the local markets.

8) Miscellaneous

You are welcome to hand in selected pictures from your stay via Email. Future volunteers can access them along with your final report.


Declaration of consent

I hereby give consent that this report will be made accessible to other students of the PH Karlsruhe and the foundation Angels for Children for informational purposes with my name being

- anonymous
- visible only as a hard copy in the Academic Exchange Office of the PH Karlsruhe
- visible as a hard copy in the Academic Exchange Office of the PH Karlsruhe and as a pdf file on the project website www.thelaosexperience.com

Stuttgart, 24.11.2019

Place, Date



Signature