

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 Friedl. 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:	Hog, Chelsea
Studiengang:	Bachelor Education Sekundarstufe I
Studienfächer: (bei Lehramtsstudierenden) ,	Englisch Geschichte
ggf. Abschluss:	
Name der Praktikumseinrichtung :	VEDI - Vocational Education Development Institution
Praktikumszeitraum von - bis:	08. 02. - 17.03.2020
Erhaltene Förderung:	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Andere, und zwar: Engel-für-Kinder Stiftung×

1) Summary

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

I applied for a stay with Team X in the semester break between February and April 2020, as I wanted to be back for the regular start of the semester.

After my interview with Ms Martin and Mr Zeck (the two project coordinators) I received an email, telling me that I got a place at the VEDI, the Vocational Education Development Institution in Vientiane. Prof. Dr. Martin organised three workshops to prepare us for our time and tasks in Laos.

The internship was a great experience. Although I couldn't finish it (due to the worldwide COVID-19 outbreak) it is an experience I do not want to miss at all. I did not have many expectations in advance which was great as I could dive into Laos from the beginning. The only thing I expected was to experience a lot of cultural challenges or 'shocks.' However, I did not experience as many cultural shocks as I expected, which was fine.

I enjoyed working and teaching in Laos. The weeks were pretty intense when it came to workload. Challenging, but still good to learn a lot.

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.

I first heard of the "Teaching in Laos project" in 2018. I was interested in it since then but focused on other study-related projects and processes. However, in fall 2019 I decided to apply again as I wanted to spend my semester break productive and in a warm region. The "Global English(es) course" of Prof. Dr. Martin motivated me in several ways. It was the final impulse to apply, I believe. The application process was easy but time-consuming. When I received an email, telling me that I got a place, I was more than happy. Prof. Dr. Martin organised three workshops to prepare us for our time and tasks in Laos. The workshops were held on three Friday afternoons and took a couple of hours. The workshops were very helpful. Knowing about essential things (also from previous volunteers) before flying to Laos was very good. Whenever one of us had questions, Ms. Martin, Ms. Friedl or former Teams provided helpful answers.

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 VEDI - Vocational Education Development Institution is located in Vientiane, the capital of Laos. It is a training-institution for students who want to become e.g. a chef, constructor or tourist manager (there are many more fields trained - I just wanted to mention some). The VEDI is like a "Berufsschule" in Germany, as many practical and theoretical fields are trained.

The students are usually between 17 and 30 years old, are having lessons between 90 min and 120 min. This depends on the class-size and subjects.

The English lessons we volunteers had with our Lao-tandem partners had usually between 40 to 50 students. Luckily, all of us shared an office with our tandem-partners. This was nice, as we spend time, worked and had lunch together. We also had the chance to ask questions or get help all the time.

VEDI has a wonderful restaurant, where students practice their cooking skills. As a volunteer, you will have lunch there. It's very nice and everybody is particularly welcoming.

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?

One of the tasks was to give English lessons to the VEDI teachers and staff. It was my job to teach the elementary class in 90 min units.

Ms. Martin provided us with the course-book TopNotch as this works best for Lao English learners. Usually, 8 to 13 people attended the classes. The teachers were particularly motivated to learn English. I always tried to integrate some interesting and exciting task to get everybody activated and to talk. Including games, as the previous team did was very helpful too.

As my tandem-partner did not teach English yet, we only taught English one time in a tandem-lesson. The other times I helped out Lena Koch and Ms. Vankham in their tandem-lessons.

At the beginning of our stay, we planned the 'English Clubs' for students by arranging interviews and student groups after the interviews. The clubs were optional for the students. Depending on their English level, they were categorised into a 'Games Club' or a 'Conversation Club.' During the activities, the students learned not only English but also new concepts of learning and teaching. The majority of them enjoyed the classes. Unfortunately, we only had a few classes as we had to return back to Germany 4 weeks earlier due to Coronavirus.

As I was the meeting and minutes manager, it was my job to organise meetings and write the protocol of them. During Ms. Martins stay in Laos I arranged her meetings at the VEDI and our team meetings.

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.)?

First of all, you are teaching adults. This means that the students you have are usually motivated and interested in learning. Often the students are very fast in learning new things which means, that teaching happens faster too.

Teaching in Laos means teaching in a new cultural context. This was new to me. After the first two weeks, you get a feeling on what you can expect and whatnot. As the students are very respectful and kind you will find your way. One good thing is that you can experiment with new methods, games and tasks —> this means that you can develop your personal and professional teaching experience.

As I am only in my fifth bachelor semester, I didn't have my ISP so far. It's not needed for teaching at the VEDI but is definitely helpful. As one of my team members (Lena Koch) already finished her ISP, I learned a lot from her!

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.

Laos is beautiful but can be very overwhelming in the beginning - as a lot of things are different from what you know or expect. We lived in the capital, Vientiane - which is not as interesting as other places in Laos.

Lao people often share bedrooms - Germans usually don't. It was new to me to share a bedroom with two other people, sometimes a bit challenging. Everything took time but worked well in the end.

Working in Laos is not living in your own bubble. It means spending time with Lao friends. We got in touch with Lao traditions, Lao food and other parts of Lao culture.

7) Practical tips for future volunteers

Before our stay, I applied (successfully) for a “PROMOS” scholarship. An internship at the VEDI is only supported with accommodation and lunch. Flight costs and other food need to be covered by the volunteers. With the PROMOS scholarship, the majority of flight cost was covered.

I also applied for a DAAD scholarship “Lehramt. international” - but was like my team colleges refused.

Many former volunteers wrote that you shouldn't take clothes that we're expensive, are white or precious to you. This is true if you work in a more rural area and do the washing yourself. I hesitated to take my favourite clothing with me and regret it. We brought our washing to the laundry shop and the washing was done perfectly. We only had some language issues.

For all the coffee lovers out there: I love coffee. Instant coffee is something you can do - but it is very (very) sweet. The little VEDI Café makes nice cold and hot Lao Coffee (strong black coffee with condensed milk) if you're after a more European Coffee -> the Café Amelia and Café Sinnouk have nice Coffee.

I took some nuts to Laos as the previous team recommended it to me. I would also recommend it to you, just in case you want to have some healthy snacks. Almost every snack contains a lot of sugar, healthy snacks are hard to get around the VEDI and as you often work long it is good to have something nutritious with you.

If you want to have a relaxation or treat yourself ;) there is a nice massage salon “Manee Spa” close to the VEDI.

It is helpful to have an offline translation app because Lao don't speak English often.

8) Miscellaneous

The only big problem I had while teaching at the VEDI was the use of projectors. Each room has one. But often the connection between it and my laptop was not working. So, I decided to use a flipchart to write down things. It excluded some methods but to be able to write down things was more important than nice pictures.

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

Achern, 8. Mai 2020

Chelsea Jlog

Place, Date

Signature