

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.

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Studiengang:	Bachelor of Arts – Profilerung Europalehramt
Studienfächer: (bei Lehramtsstudierende n), ggf. Abschluss:	Alltagskultur und Gesundheit, Englisch
Name der Praktikumseinrichtung:	Lao-German Technical College
Praktikumszeitraum von - bis:	15.04-05.07.2019
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"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Andere, und zwar: BHS Corrugated

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?

I really didn't know what to expect when I left Sikeud Lower Secondary school (Ban Phang Heng) and started the second part of my internship at the Lao-German Technical College (Vientiane). It is a different working atmosphere and I struggled with the transition from institution to the next institution. I felt very comfortable in Sikeud and now I had to adapt again to another school.

Before coming to Lao PDR I had some doubts, if I can teach at different schools abroad with my felt zero experience in didactics (I have done the OEP before). But I recognized that I am not alone. We always helped each other in our team. Furthermore, you have to be aware that you mustn't reinvent the wheel. I was very tense, if I could fulfil the expectations.

All in all, this practical training was a very formative time for me. There are highs and ups. But you are not alone and you can help each other and be there for each other.

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.

Teaching English in Laos caught my attention the first time when former volunteers introduced their work at the practical training abroad event from the AAA. I applied for this project via mail and in written form. Afterwards I was invited for an interview by Johannes Zeck. The interview was held in English by him and Prof. Dr. Martin at the PH Karlsruhe. I recommend you to inform yourself about this project adequately, get in contact with former volunteers, search through the website and blog posts and think about what you can contribute to the development of the project and how this stay abroad can contribute in your personal life and your path as a teacher.

All accepted volunteers got invited for preparing workshops at the PH to find out about the history of the project, the land Lao PDR itself and your assignments during your stay.

The support of the PH was disappointing for my EULA stay abroad, unfortunately. I had several questions about upcoming exams and the general organization of my stay. No one was able to answer my questions and if they were answered another person asserted me different. So, no one was in the know. Some employees were friendly, some didn't even try to help me and disposed me and treated me very unfriendly.

The support from BHS wasn't lacking. My questions about BaföG or Kindergeld were answered immediately and certificates drawn if necessary.

3) The Training Institution

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

I worked at the Lao-German Technical College in Vientiane. This school has a special Training and Recruitment Programme offered by BHS Corrugated (Weiherhammer).

You are accommodated in Vientiane in a local standard bungalow, if you are doing voluntary service. The bungalow is located next to the college. It takes one minute to walk to the campus. There are three bicycles for the volunteers provided by BHS.

The director Mr Khamsavay speaks English and you can contact him if necessary. Some teachers take over additional tasks for school organization and attend meetings that concern school coordination regularly. If one of those teachers is your tandem-partner, it is possible that your lesson is cancelled spontaneously because this additional work isn't scheduled far ahead. The work has to be done when it appears.

You have a german contact person at the LGTC - Mr Franz. He is responsible for communication/organization between LGTC and BHS. He can also speak Lao, so if you have any problems with your students, you can ask for Franz' help as an interpreter.

If you have any questions about the bungalow ask Ms Moukdala or Ms Akina.

The pupils often come from provinces far away and have a long way to school. The College is equipped with blackboards, tables and benches. There is a didactics room, which provides a laminator, printer + copier and different kinds of material to support your teaching such as big rulers, pens, glue and paper.

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?

We had our team-colleague Siegfried Hadatsch to introduce us to our new workplace and tasks. We could always ask him questions. He guided us through the campus, introduced us to the teachers and helped us to get a first orientation. So, you are not thrown into the cold water. Hence, you have your team surrounding you. You are not alone.

My tasks consisted of planning and designing lessons with my tandem-partner as well as observe these planned lessons. Moreover, I had additional English lesson with teachers from the college in a beginner class. I also taught the beginner BHS students twice a week split into two groups. Additionally, I was responsible for the blog of the website, which means to coordinate the organization and communication between the volunteers and the project management.

The cooperation with the lao teachers filled me with joy, was fun and I made a lot of new friends. There were some misunderstandings due to the language barrier and the new culture you have to adapt to. But don't be intimidated by this. Everything can be solved. Just

be patient and don't be afraid to ask again, if something is unclear. I have spent twelve weeks in Vientiane. This time was so intense and informative that I don't want to miss it by any means. I recommend you to spend as much as time as possible with your fellow teachers. Not only your personal development will benefit from this but also your tolerance and acceptance will profit. Be open and embrace all possibilities and opportunities that arise.

The cooperation within the team of three volunteers worked out very well. In general it is to say, be ready for compromises, do not insist on your opinion and be aware that you are living in a developing country for the next months. Sometimes you need to downgrade your demands. You are all sitting in one boat and you should help each other and nothing else. You are spending so much time together and you share a special experience abroad. To sum this up, be a team player and consider the others' opinion.

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.)?

The clocks in Lao PDR are working differently. In Germany everything is scheduled far ahead and planned in every single detail, everything has to work immediately and has to be done after a special process. In comparison to this a lot of decisions are made spontaneously in Lao. I learned from this, not to take myself too serious. This voluntary service helped me to improvise during class much easier and be spontaneously if there was time left over or too short.

During my voluntary service in Sikeud, I started thinking about myself and about me as a future teacher and I realized some things. A lot of things happened in my private life and vocationally. Through my work at the primary school in Sikeud, I started thinking about switching to teaching in primary schools not secondary. I thought about this before I started to study at the PH and I decided for secondary schools. It was so much fun to work with the children and I felt like I was home. I have not made a decision yet, but I would have never thought about switching, if I hadn't been distributed for primary schools during my service.

Then switching to the college. Most of the pupils are young adults. The age gap isn't that big anymore. I figured that lessons can also be a lot of fun with them and as rewarding as with children, but in a different way. There are also eager to learn English with you.

I learned from my tandem-partners also methodologically and didactically, because they have so much teaching experience. You learn to hop into lesson sequences spontaneously and you can practise your standing in front of a class. Furthermore, I learned how important it is to visualize content. Otherwise no pupil would have understood me.

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.

I experienced lao people as a very guest-friendly and joyful. I have been invited several times to weddings and Baci celebrations, even though I didn't know the host that well or at all. I liked to attend this celebrations and I have always felt very welcome and comfortable. Everyone is really happy and excited if a german can speak some lao words or sentences.

It is unbelievable how fast you adapt to a new and different culture and start to live and work in Lao. If you spend time with the lao people and see how they live here, you start reflecting about your own life. I realized that I live way to privileged in Germany. I have become aware how many things I own, a real consumption victim. Do we need all those material things to be happy? Being in Lao PDR showed me: No, we do not. I wish that everyone who thinks about applying for this project achieves this life-changing finding.

I said in the interview with J. Zeck and I. Martin that I am hoping to find out about myself and hopefully return as a whole new, improved person and this is what is going to happen at the 20th of August 2019.

7) Practical tips for future volunteers

Take enough sweets and chocolate with you. You can buy chocolate here, but it is very expensive.

Bring clothes with you, that you do not mind getting dirty and washed-out. Besides the washing machines here have made holes into my clothes. So, take enough t-shirt with you.

Also, take enough cosmetic products with you. The most products here contain bleaching.

I recommend you the Alliance International Medical Center, if you have any issues concerning your health. I went there to recover from a scooter accident and I felt very comfortable there, because everything seemed to be clean, the doctors can speak English and I had the feeling they really knew what they were doing.

8) Miscellaneous

Visit the Bacan Café in Vientiane. It turned out to be our favorite café. The food is delicious. The owners are very kind and friendly. Try the brownies from their bakery. I can only recommend them to you.

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

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

Karlsruhe, 12.11.19 

Place, Date

Signature