

**School of Business, Economics and Law
at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden**



**UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG**

Experience Report

Fall semester 2024

[REDACTED]
Master Business Administration – Accounting and Taxation

Courses:

GM0840 – Strategy and Leadership Practices

GM1217 – Project Management and Project Planning

GM0118 – International Strategic Management

Preparation and Accommodation

The preparation process for my exchange semester was straightforward. After being nominated by my home university in Cologne, I needed to fill out an application form for the University of Gothenburg. The communication from both universities was clear and efficient, making the entire process very smooth. Instructions were provided step-by-step, so there was no confusion. As part of the university application, I simply indicated my interest in student housing by checking a box, which made the process very easy. Shortly after, I was notified of my accommodation placement and given access to the SGS website to explore and select housing options. I was ultimately assigned a room in the SGS accommodation at Helmutsgatan.

I really liked living at Helmutsgatan because of its convenient location. The tram station right next to the accommodation made it easy to get around, with only a 15-minute ride to the city center and about 25 minutes to the business school. Additionally, having a supermarket and a gym nearby added to the convenience of daily life. The accommodation consists entirely of studio apartments where you live alone, but the building is full of students, creating a lively and social atmosphere. For students interested in flat-sharing, Olofshöjd is a more popular option. However, I found Helmutsgatan to be an excellent choice for its location and the balance of privacy and community it offered.

Courses and studying at the University of Gothenburg

The University of Gothenburg is one of two universities in the city, with its faculties spread across different areas. As a business student, I was part of the School of Business, Economics, and Law, often referred to as “Handels.” Handels is located near the popular Haga district and has a lot to offer, including a big library, a cafeteria, and even its own pub. The campus environment felt welcoming and provided plenty of opportunities to study and socialize.

The way courses are structured at Handels is different from Germany. Courses are either full-time (100%) or part-time (50%), lasting only a few weeks. This means students usually take one full-time course or two part-time courses at the same time. At first, the schedule seemed light, but I quickly realized that the workload could be quite heavy because of the focus on reading, self-study, and group projects. It's a good idea to stick to the recommended workload of 100% to avoid being overwhelmed, especially since course schedules often change during the semester. The exams are often quite long (4 to 5 hours), which reflects the generous Swedish

examination system designed to reduce time pressure. Students are given enough time to complete the tasks, and it's not always necessary to use the entire time.

The School of Business, Economics, and Law is well-organized and provides plenty of support for exchange students. Service centers are available to help with administrative tasks, and the staff are approachable and helpful. The emphasis on balancing studies with free time is a big part of Swedish university culture, making my time at Handels both productive and enjoyable.

GM0840 – Strategy and Leadership Practices

The course consisted of four lectures, four guest lectures and four seminars. The guest lectures were very interesting, including different companies and fields, like Volvo and the football club IFK Göteborg. We had to present every week at the seminars, which helped my presentation skills a lot. The final examination was a 4-hour written exam, which was based on the mandatory literature for the course.

GM1217 – Project Management and Project Planning

The assessments of this course consisted of two individual assignments, an interview with a project manager and a review of the guest lectures, as well as a group project with a presentation and a written submission. I really liked this course, because it gave a lot of practical insights into project management through the guest lectures, varying from private companies like Essity and Astra Zeneca to NGOs like save the children. The individual assignments had to be connected to the course literature, therefore this course also included quite a lot of reading, but I enjoyed it and learned a lot.

GM0118 – International Strategic Management

This course was the most demanding one. It consisted of lectures, guest lectures and seminars and was assessed through two group assignments, one individual assignment and a 5-hour open book exam. The course required quite a lot of reading and work to finish the assignments, but the articles, lectures and case studies (CEMEX, Tata/ Fiat and KONE) were very interesting.

Life in Gothenburg

Living in Gothenburg was an incredibly enjoyable experience. One of the highlights for me was embracing the Swedish tradition of "fika" – taking a break in the afternoon to enjoy coffee and cake. It was a simple yet great way to relax and connect with others.

The IntU association played a significant role in enriching my exchange experience by organizing a variety of activities for exchange students. Events like beer pong tournaments, the traditional Midsommar sittning, and other social gatherings were fantastic opportunities to meet new people and get to know the Swedish culture.

Gothenburg's location also made it an excellent base for traveling. Major cities like Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Oslo are all within a three-to-four-hour journey, making weekend trips easy and exciting. These travel opportunities added an extra layer of adventure to my exchange semester, allowing me to explore the region while studying.

Conclusion

Overall, my experience in Gothenburg was truly exceptional, and I would definitely choose it again for my exchange. Sweden is a wonderful country, and Gothenburg is a remarkably livable city. I had the pleasure of meeting many fantastic people from around the world, and I cherish the wonderful memories created during various events and trips.

Testimonial

My semester at the University of Gothenburg was a great mix of practical learning and cultural experiences. The courses, vibrant city life and traveling made it truly memorable.

