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Studying in Wrexham

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Croeso to all interested persons!

I would like to give you a brief overview of what you can expect if you choose Wrexham as a place to study. I also want you to read my report of my experience.

How to get there:

We, that was Jens, Thomas and me, went by car. The cheapest way to get Britain is by ferry. We took the shortest route which is from Calais to Dover. It is the most used route and therefore not the cheapest. Once on the island it was a bit strange for us to get used to the traffic system of the UK, but everything was manageable. Although it did not take long, only about four or five hours, to get from Dover to Wrexham in the North of Wales, I would recommend to plan the trip in advance thus avoiding stress and saving money as you are sometimes able to get special offers booking the ferry early.

Other possibilities to travel are by plane or train. Airlines such as Ryan Air or Easyjet are cheap possibilities. NEWI offers a shuttle service from Manchester and Liverpool Airport you can use for free. Another way to travel by plane, which offers more links to Europe is to go via London's airport Stansted. From there you can go by train for about £30 to Wrexham. Going by train will be very expensive if you do not book early (same procedure you know from booking a flight). For instance it might be possible to go from Wrexham to London for just £12. Mind the special booking conditions. You are not able to buy cheap tickets in rush hours.

Since the tunnel is finished you have the choice using a third way to go to the UK. But I would not recommend using the Eurostar, because it is the most expensive way to travel.

Accommodation:

You can choose between two kinds of accommodation: One would be a student hostel, similar to those you know from Germany, and the other would be private housing.

To live in one of the two student homes, Carlton or the enclosed student village at NEWI, would mean a high standard of living. These homes offer you a single room with private facilities. You share the kitchen with your five other floor mates. It sounds good but costs £59 per week.

I have to mention that it was not possible to rent a room at Carlton for just the winter term, they asked for paying the full academic year. But as I was told by senior students it is possible to rent a flat for the summer term without paying the whole year.

The cheaper possibility I chose is private accommodation. Prices start from about £35 but most tend to be £40 per week (for a large room). You share a complete house with other students. It was hard to find a room for just the first half of the year. However, shortly before the term begins it is easier to bargain with the landlords.

The furnishing like bed, desk and a cupboard are included in the accommodation, but you have to ask whether you have to bring your own utilities for the household. In this point offers differ.

To search for this kind of accommodation see the WebPages of NEWI. A few links are given where you can ask for rooms.

NEWI:

The education system of the UK differs from ours, but the context of the subjects is almost the same. So you will get along with the system quite well. If you stay for just one semester you can take the modules of your preference. It would be to your benefit to hear something again you did not feel too confident in or just to attend something you are interested in. If you stay the whole year you are able to reach the bachelor grade. In this case you have to choose the modules out of the third year. Moreover you have to complete a project work like the German “Diplomarbeit“.

Studying the full year lasts for about 35 weeks. That means after subtracting the holidays and study weeks where you get prepared for the next term the whole year takes about 30 weeks of studying.

Each term can be divided into three sections: in the first you just study, in the second you have to prepare assignments and in the third you are learning for the examinations. The learning outcomes of the assignments are a useful base you can learn upon for the exams. So it is a matter of course that these papers have to be prepared on your own as they will be graded and count at least 20 per cent in the final grades. The examinations are comparable to the German “Klausuren.”

I would recommend a Cisco course to you. The company Cisco has got a lecture room and a lab at NEWI. They offer a “private” module that is taught in a kind of extra night school. Lessons can be attended in the evening. In these courses you will learn about networking.

Surroundings:

Wrexham is situated in the North of Wales. It is just a short trip to Chester with its Roman remains, Liverpool with its docks and its several museums or Manchester with its large city. To the west a lot of castles are worth being visited. Conwy, Caernarfon and Beaumaris are massive and well remained castles where you will feel like you are in the dark ages.

Wales has got a very beautiful nature. You can enjoy it if you visit nearby Snowdonia National Park. And of course do not miss out on seeing the coast. It was a great trip to seaside towns like Llandudno. Of course you will enjoy this more if you go in summer.

Entertainment and shopping in Wrexham:

Wrexham is one of the biggest cities of Wales. The town of Wrexham has a cinema just around the corner from NEWI and offers student discount on tickets. There is also a swimming pool which has various slides and a jacuzzi. There are a huge number of bars and nightclubs in the town center which host kareoke nights, tribute bands and cheap drinks on Thursday nights. Also the students union of NEWI offers a varying program. There are many different shops in the town, too, where you can buy most things. There are also large supermarkets which are open 24 hours.

Sure there were difficulties to cope with, but I really liked it over there because you get the chance to get out of your every-day studying life and to experience something new!

Sincerely yours

Arne Loehr