

Checklist – How to Succeed in Your Exchange Semester

Before the Exchange

Clarify your purpose and goals

- Define what you want to achieve academically, personally, socially, linguistically, and professionally.
- Identify the purpose of your stay and the outcomes you want.
- Decide which environments you want to explore and which people you want to meet.
- Choose the skills you want to develop: cultural knowledge, social skills, curiosity and openness, discipline awareness, communication in other languages, adaptability, teamwork, planning and organizing, creativity.

Prepare your mindset

- Reflect on the idea: “LUCK = preparation meeting opportunity.”
- Prepare yourself to be open, curious, proactive, and willing to step outside your comfort zone.
- Reach out to people in advance, including those who may seem “impossible” to contact.
- Form a clear picture of what you want to learn (studies, culture, language, geography).

During the Exchange

Put your plans into action

- Use your goals as a guide, but stay spontaneous when the right opportunities appear.
- Actively seek out situations, people, and environments that support your development.
- Take initiative in academic, social, and cultural contexts.

Document your experiences

- Write short daily notes about what you learned, with whom, and in what situation.
- Record short videos or audio clips to capture moments and impressions.
- Connect your experiences to the skills you aim to develop.
- Collect concrete examples you can later use in your CV, cover letters, and interviews.

After the Exchange

Reflect on your development

- Write down immediately how you have changed academically, socially, personally, and professionally.
- Describe the contrast between “before” and “after.”
- Document your reflections while memories are still fresh.

Finalize your story

- Explain how your skills developed and which situations shaped you.
- Write your personal story of what happened and what difference the exchange made.
- Consider the exchange “complete” only when you are satisfied with your documentation.

Summary:

Prepare thoroughly.

Follow your plan while staying open to spontaneous opportunities.

Document your experiences clearly.

Articulate your development and turn it into a meaningful story for your future.