

學校簡介：

漢堡大學位於德國第二大的北部城市漢堡市，是一所具有八個學院的綜合型大學。本校地處市中心，搭車到中央火車站只需十分鐘，交通便利。校區周圍環境優美，不僅有公園相伴，走路 20 分鐘便可抵達漢堡著名的人造湖——阿爾斯特湖（Alster Lakes），下課後無論是去市區逛街、用餐還是購物，都非常方便。

課程學習：

在課程方面，德國學校的課程通常分為 Lecture（講座）和 Seminar（研討會）兩種。以我的系所來舉例，Lecture 通常是大班課程（約 50-60 人），主要通過老師授課、期中和期末的報告/考試來評分。Seminar 則是小班課程（約 10-15 人），主要以討論課為主，通過交作業和課堂口頭報告評分，沒有期末考試。兩者各有優缺點，取決於每個人所喜好的學習方式和時間安排。

漢堡大學各系所的英文課程選項較少，且不同學院或不同學位階段的學生無法跨選課程，這是我認為比較可惜的部分。在選課時，我除了參考課程大綱，還會考慮上課時間的安排，盡量集中課表便能靈活地運用課後時間。

此外，漢堡大學也有提供語言課程，以我有選修過的英文和德語課程為例，英文課程須先按能力分級測驗結果才能選擇相對應的課程。德語課程是與外部的語言機構合作，也是依照程度分班，只不過選課方式則較為不同，必須透過線上登記課程提交表單後再交由學校抽籤分班。

生活學習：

在德國的生活，從天氣、文化、交通乃至當地人的生活模式、習慣都和台灣相當不一樣。首先天氣的部分，在出國前我從來沒有到低於攝氏氣溫 10 度以下的地方生活過，也因為緯度關係，德國的冬天較為乾冷、日照時間短，因此不僅要適應並學習如何在寒冬下保暖、在雪地行走不滑倒，同時也需學習在冬季時不憂鬱的方法。文化上，德文不僅學習困難，德國人也是歐洲人裡比較不好親近的族群，許多時候他們並不會主動幫助他人，因此作為外來者，必須保持樂觀心態，更積極主動尋求幫助以適應生活，且由於德國前幾年的難民政策，有許多外來移民，小偷不少，一方面必須適應並與之共存外，出門在外也須多加戒備提防被偷東西。交通上，德國國土廣袤，從漢堡至其他城市旅遊時，需搭乘德國鐵路 DB，由於德鐵是出名的狀況多，時常會有諸如火車誤點、班次變更、火車臨時更換月台、罷工列車停駛等等的各種問題，這時候就很考驗自身的應變能力。在飲食方面，德國是著名的美食沙漠，加上人力成本高昂，外食非常昂貴，如果是在台灣習慣外食生活的人到歐洲生活都得學習煮飯的技能，如果用浮誇一點的說法，不自煮

就只能等著窮死或餓死。然而德國的超市並不若台灣有各式各樣的蔬菜水果，許多平時使用的調味料也只能到亞超尋求類似口味的替代品，再加上當地人的飲食習慣，喜歡吃起司、醃製肉等等，因此作為留學生，大家都必須得花不少時間心力在鑽研吃飯、煮飯。

個人成長與交換具體效益：

1. 學術和專業發展

- **多元學術資源：**交換學生能接觸到不同的教育體系和學術資源，學習不同的知識和思維方式。
- **跨文化學習：**在異國環境中學習，學生有機會接觸到不同文化的觀點，這不僅有助於理解多元文化，還能培養跨文化溝通的能力，對未來的職業生涯尤其重要。

2. 個人成長

- **獨立性和適應力：**身處異國他鄉，不管在課業或旅遊方面，需要學會獨自處理和解決問題並適應不同的生活，使我變得獨立的同時也大大提高生活能力。
- **跨文化理解與包容：**在完全不同於東方的歐洲文化背景下生活和學習，讓我更能體會與西方文化間的差異，進一步提升國際視野。
- **語言能力提升：**在無法使用中文的地方旅遊或長時間生活，與人交流是不可避免的事，不管透過身體語言，或是開口練習用外文表達需求等等，長期下來語言能力一定會進步許多。

3. 提升自我認知和人生經歷

- **探索新興趣與熱情：**在異國生活，學生可能會接觸到新的活動、愛好或興趣，以我個人來說生活上我嘗試精進自己的廚藝，學習基礎的德文，探索漢堡市區，和朋友到漢堡市立公園野餐到聖誕節期間到處逛各樣的聖誕市集，上網查各種攻略文章，到各地旅遊，參觀教堂、博物館學習新知等等，這些跨越舒適圈的新嘗試不僅開闊眼界並發現自己之前未曾接觸過的領域，這些自我覺察和成長過程對於個人往後的人生十分重要。
- **拓展人生視野：**從台灣到千里之外的歐洲生活和旅遊，以前只能透過課本、書籍、網路上看到的圖片和建築物突然變成活靈活現的眼前景象，本來就是一件非常神奇美好的事，可以說是個人的一種夢想和自我實現。此外到各地旅遊並與來自不同背景的人互動，從中能訓練應變處事和溝通能力，

並進一步深刻地理解自己的價值觀、文化背景，這些都是非常難能可貴的經驗。

感想與建議：

我作為交換學生在歐洲生活將近一年的時間，這段期間遭遇了各種大大小小的困難和挑戰，很難透過文字一一盡述，然而綜觀這段時間，我認為出國交換是一種對於自我成長很好的歷練，也是 CP 值很高的一項學習體驗，收穫絕對會比出發前預想的多很多，尤其在現今網路資訊發達的全球化時代，踏出舒適圈並不會太困難，最困難的反倒是剛開始跨出的那一步，只要評估過能力，保持熱忱，建立好的心態，這絕對會是充滿驚奇的一年。

University Overview:

Hamburg University is located in the northern German city of Hamburg, the second-largest city in Germany. It is a comprehensive university with eight faculties. The university is situated in the city center, just a ten-minute ride from the central train station, making transportation very convenient. The campus is surrounded by beautiful scenery, with parks nearby, and within a 20-minute walk, you can reach the famous artificial Alster Lakes. Whether it's shopping, dining, or strolling around the city after class, everything is very accessible.

Course Structure:

In terms of courses, German universities typically divide lessons into *Lectures* and *Seminars*. For example, in my department, *Lectures* are usually large classes (around 50-60 students) where grading is based on the professor's lectures, midterm, and final reports or exams. *Seminars* are smaller classes (about 10-15 students) focused mainly on discussions, with grading based on assignments and oral reports in class, with no final exams. Both formats have their pros and cons, depending on individual learning preferences and time management.

One downside I noticed is that there are fewer courses available in English at Hamburg University, and students from different faculties or academic levels cannot cross-register for courses, which is a bit of a pity. When choosing courses, I not only consider the course syllabus but also try to align the class schedule so that I have more flexibility in using my free time after classes.

Additionally, Hamburg University offers language courses. For example, the English courses require students to take a proficiency test before selecting the appropriate course, while German courses are organized in collaboration with external language institutions, also categorized by proficiency level. However, the enrollment process differs as students need to register online and submit forms, after which the school conducts a lottery to assign classes.

Living and Learning:

Life in Germany is quite different from Taiwan in terms of weather, culture, transportation, and local habits. First, regarding the weather, before coming to Germany, I had never lived in a place with temperatures below 10°C. Due to Germany's northern latitude, winters are cold and dry with short daylight hours. Not

only do you need to learn how to stay warm during the cold winter and avoid slipping on snow, but also how to cope with the winter blues.

Culturally, learning German is challenging, and Germans tend to be less approachable compared to other Europeans. They often don't offer help unless directly asked, so as an outsider, you need to maintain an optimistic attitude and proactively seek help to adapt to life here. Moreover, due to Germany's refugee policies in recent years, there are many immigrants, and thefts are common, so while adjusting to this new reality, you also have to be extra cautious to avoid being pickpocketed.

In terms of transportation, Germany is vast, and traveling from Hamburg to other cities often requires taking Deutsche Bahn (DB). The trains are notorious for frequent disruptions, such as delays, changes in schedules, last-minute platform changes, and even strikes, all of which test your ability to adapt and manage your time effectively.

Food-wise, Germany is often referred to as a "culinary desert," and due to high labor costs, dining out is very expensive. Those accustomed to eating out in Taiwan will need to learn how to cook. If I were to put it dramatically, if you don't cook for yourself, you'll either go broke or starve. The supermarkets here don't offer the same variety of fruits and vegetables as Taiwan, and many common seasonings can only be found at Asian grocery stores. Additionally, local diets often consist of cheese and preserved meats, which requires international students to spend considerable time and effort learning to cook and adjust to local eating habits.

Personal Growth and Benefits of the Exchange Program:

1. Academic and Professional Development:

- *Diverse Academic Resources:* Exchange students have access to different educational systems and resources, allowing them to acquire new knowledge and ways of thinking.
- *Cross-cultural Learning:* Living and studying in a foreign environment offers the opportunity to encounter different cultural perspectives. This not only helps with understanding multiculturalism but also develops cross-cultural communication skills, which are particularly valuable for future careers.

2. Personal Growth:

- *Independence and Adaptability:* Living abroad, whether for studies or travel, forces you to learn to handle and resolve problems on your own while adapting to a new lifestyle. This experience enhances your independence and practical life skills.

- *Cross-cultural Understanding and Tolerance:* Living and studying in a completely different European cultural context allows me to understand the contrasts with Eastern cultures more deeply and broaden my international perspective.
- *Language Proficiency:* In a country where Chinese is not spoken, communication with others becomes unavoidable. Whether through body language or practicing foreign languages, long-term exposure naturally improves language skills.

3. **Enhanced Self-awareness and Life Experience:**

- *Exploring New Interests and Passions:* Living abroad, students often try new activities, hobbies, or interests. For me, I've worked on improving my cooking skills, learned basic German, explored Hamburg's city center, enjoyed picnics in Hamburg's public parks, visited Christmas markets, and traveled to various places. These experiences expanded my horizons and helped me discover new areas of interest. The process of self-awareness and growth is invaluable for my future life.
- *Expanding Life Vision:* Living and traveling across Europe, what I once only saw in textbooks, images, or online is now right in front of me. It's like a dream come true. Traveling to different places and interacting with people from diverse backgrounds has honed my ability to think on my feet and communicate effectively. It also gave me a deeper understanding of my own values and cultural background, making this experience an extremely rare and precious one.

Reflections and Suggestions:

As an exchange student living in Europe for nearly a year, I encountered numerous challenges, both big and small, during this period. It's hard to fully describe all of them in words. However, looking back on this time, I believe that going abroad for an exchange program is an excellent opportunity for personal growth, and it offers a high return on investment in terms of learning. The gains are definitely much greater than I initially expected. In today's age of advanced internet and globalization, stepping out of your comfort zone isn't that difficult—what's truly challenging is taking that first step.

So, once you've assessed your capabilities and built a good mindset, setting out with courage and enthusiasm will surely lead to a year full of surprises and discoveries.