

Transcript

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Chris Bonham 0:21

Hello and welcome to this latest episode of the Study Abroad Podcast. In which we speak to students who have joined us at reading for their study abroad experience from one of our partner universities or elsewhere. Indeed. So we're joined today by another one of our current students. So I will pass over to her to introduce herself.



Adrijana Tomusic 0:46

Hi, my name is Adriana. I study English literature here in reading.



Chris Bonham 0:54

Fantastic. Adriana, welcome.

So, Adrijana, you've come from one of our European partner universities, haven't you?



Adrijana Tomusic 1:06

Yes, I come from Germany.



Chris Bonham 1:10

That's Tuebingen, if I remember correctly?



Adrijana Tomusic 1:14

Yes, yes.



Chris Bonham 1:16

Excellent. My memory serves me well. I do worry about it sometimes, but no, that's a positive side. So you've told us you're focusing on sort of English literature modules. Why? While you're here is, is that why you chose to come and join us at reading for our English literature offer, or was there another reason?

AT **Adrijana Tomusic** 1:39

That was also another reason in Tuebingen I study English and theology to become a teacher, but it's really hard to get like a study abroad opportunity where you can study both. So I choose just English and I chose the University of Reading first of all because of their location, they're really close to London and to Oxford, and it gives just a really good opportunity to travel on the weekends. And also what I really love, what I also looked online, is that Reading is a town where you can have a lot of social stuff going on. A lot of pubs and bars. If you want to go out, but also you have like a really big nature aspect. If you just want to have a calm day or like a calm work because I'm not really a big city girl, I love to have my calm days.

 **Chris Bonham** 2:30

And that's grand. And I will say it's very, very easy to do everything that Adrijana has said from Reading London is 25 minutes in one direction, Oxford 25 minutes in the other direction and it's quite easy to get out and about into the countryside from Reading as well. I know a lot of students in the past have said they quite enjoy walking along the Thames out to the village of Sonning. Is that something you've done, Adrijana?

AT **Adrijana Tomusic** 3:00

Yes, I love it. I like it a lot.

 **Chris Bonham** 3:04

So you once you get to Sonning, you've got a very traditional English pub and you've got the river and quite little village and the church and things like that. So it's very, very popular with, with quite a few students over the years. So obviously you're taking predominantly English literature modules with us, Adrijana, what has been your favourite of those and why?

AT **Adrijana Tomusic** 3:29

I think my favourite is Poetry in English, even though in my home university I try to avoid it because I don't really like poems. So I thought maybe that's a good opportunity to try it and challenge myself and I really love about this module that you can have a lot of discourses and everyone can bring their opinion in and no one

is really wrong, which I find is kind of like a safe space where you can really get. Into a topic without feeling scared. And also the professors here in the university are amazing. They if you talk to them and tell them your study abroad students and maybe you have a little bit of problems understanding stuff, especially in old poems where I sometimes struggle with the old words, they just text me. They say if you need any help, if you don't understand anything, just write me an e-mail we can meet and just explain everything to you which is really nice.



Chris Bonham 4:27

No, that's grand and that's definitely exemplifies the supportive academic environment we have here and the amount of understanding there is for study abroad programme and international students in general who are adjusting to studying in a different language, but also as, as you've said, Andrea are dealing with older vocabulary that say not in daily use anymore or if it had been, it has been in rare daily use? No, that's fantastic to hear. So you've been with us in Reading now for counting up my fingers in October, November. It's about 3 months now.



Adrijana Tomusic 5:04

Yeah.



Chris Bonham 5:06

What has been a highlight of your time so far with us?



Adrijana Tomusic 5:12

I think it is really hard to find one specific thing. Sadly I haven't gotten any tickets to the trips because I was a little bit late. But I would say the whole experience is a highlight. I mean, I love to go to the Study Abroad Office and just have a chat with you guys. I think you give us also a kind of safe space where we can just always meet you and feel so welcome without. Having the feeling that we may be disturb you guys or something which is some like an important thing if you're away from home and don't really have anyone connected with you here. But overall I would say like the whole experience also that you have with other study abroad students.




Chris Bonham 6:00

That's good. And it's it does emphasise, as you say, that you're all in the same boat.

You're one cohort. There's a good few 100 of you coming in every academic year. Who say coming in from home universities all over the world, and as you say, you might not have somebody from your home university with you. I will say we love having students come in the office. Our door is always open. We generally have biscuits to feed people with if they are hungry. And we're more than happy to provide a listening ear, so I'm glad that you've feel you've benefited from that, Adrijana. I shall pass this on to the colleagues and the rest of the team.

 **Adrijana Tomusic** 6:40
Great.

 **Chris Bonham** 6:42
So I think my final question, Adrijana is what hints and tips do you have for future Study Abroad Programme students?

 **Adrijana Tomusic** 6:47
Mm hmm. What's that? I maybe have 3 tips. The first tip is join societies. You meet so many great people and make new friends. I'm in the book club and also I'm doing cheerleading, so also with any sport club. If you don't have any experience, don't worry and don't be shy. Because my home university doesn't have the opportunity to have like sports societies or anything else. So I really wanted to have this. University feeling like the whole university experience? I got to experience here and join societies. Your whole team is gonna be so nice and they want to incorporate you. Also, every society has also as much as I know every society has also social gatherings. So you also go out with your team mates or from your social like the book club and really make great friends. Also one thing is, get to meet your flatmates, which was a really big thing for me because you live with you live with them. And you have to share kitchen. And what I was scared of is I think everyone is kind of scared of that, that you maybe don't get along with each other. So the first thing that I did was kind of funny when I moved in and I heard that everyone else moved in. I knocked on everyone's door and said, like, a nice hello and all, and asked them for the number that we can get a group chat immediately and kind of like. Got also into a habit to have like weekly flatmate nights, where we get to meet each other and like, have a drink and a little chat, which made everything a lot better. We're now so close and feel so comfortable to live with each other, which is so

important and I think my last tip is maybe for travelling. Get a rail card and if you want to buy tickets go to the counter to get your tickets and don't buy them online because I found out that if you buy day tickets. At the counter shop it is a lot cheaper than when you buy them online separately, yeah.



Chris Bonham 9:13

Now, and I think to address your last point first, getting a rail card to help you save money on train travel is a definite must. I will say that for students coming from locations where you're used to using public transport, you may find that the UK is a little bit more expensive than what you're used to. So definitely make use of those discounts. Speak to the ticket clerks at the ticket office railway station because they will be able to sell you the cheapest tickets. Make sure you're getting any discounts, that you're qualified for as a student or as a rail card holder. So definitely do that. And also as Adrijana says, get to know your flatmates. Adrijana, are your flatmates other Study Abroad Programme students or just other students?



Adrijana Tomusic 10:06

That all my flatmates are international. All study abroad students. I have two flatmates from Germany, one from Italy, one from Malaysia and one from Sweden. And for us it's also a little bit easier because we're all new here so. You kind of forced to get to know each other and find time to do stuff, but I think that made everything a lot easier and also WhatsApp chats are important like my flatmates lock themselves out a lot. So they just texted the group and we opened the door.



Chris Bonham 10:42

Excellent, it definitely has its uses. Then I wouldn't want you or anybody else to be locked out. Now Adrijana, that's grand. Thank you so much for sharing with us today your experiences and your hints and tips and your thoughts about your time with us at Reading. I will say in closing to folks listening, if you'd like some more information about joining us at Reading, please don't hesitate to reach out. We can be emailed in the Study Abroad Office via studyabroad@reading.ac.uk. And via our website we can also be booked for online advising appointments. Our Web address is studyabroad.reading.ac.uk. So thank you again, Adrijana. It's been very lovely talking to you this afternoon and thank you very much to those who are listening. Take care and bye bye.

AT **Adrijana Tomusic** 11:46
Bye.