



IT University Travel Report

Host University: ISCTE University Institute of Lisbon

Study Programme at IT University : Bsc in Digital Design and interactive technologies

Activity Abroad: Summer course in Digital marketing (6 ECTS)

Exchange Period: Summer 2022

Your stay abroad

Please describe your stay abroad:

I took a course in Digital Marketing at ISCTE, Lisbon. ISCTE is a business school in Lisbon, and they offer several summer courses in different areas of business such as marketing, leadership and blockchain. My course lasted 3 weeks in July, and I had 3 hours of classes at uni each day in the afternoon.

I had a really good experience with ISCTE, and the communication was smooth throughout planning and during the trip as well. They had whole a team dedicated to facilitating the summer courses with a program coordinator and staff members who were also students at ISCTE. In addition to the academic content, ISCTE also put in a big effort to organize cool after-school events for the summer school students. Every day, the staff members would take us somewhere to experience the Portuguese food culture, beautiful sights of the city, surfing etc. Most of the activities would have a reasonable fee, and you could pick which ones you would like to join. They had one big trip, where we went to Algarve, and it was super beautiful, and the beach was amazing.

One thing I would say characterized the stay was the Portuguese personable and laid-back attitude. The teachers were very nice and interested in our involvement in the lessons, which constituted to an open learning environment. Moreover, the fact that all the staff members were quite young made the atmosphere relaxed, and reflected the activities they planned for us, which would often involve having a beer from one of the well-known Portuguese manufactures of ridiculously cheap beer.

For my accommodation, I had the option to stay in the dorm offered at ISCTE or find my own. I opted to find my own place and stayed at a modern student housing in Benfica. Each day I would take the

metro to university, and it would take about half an hour. A thing to beware of is that Lisbon is known to be the city of seven hills, so walking around is quite a workout and biking culture is not very developed there for that reason. Fortunately, the metro system is rather well-functioning in Lisbon, and an unlimited transportation card was included in the summer school stay.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

My initial motivations for going abroad were to experience a different culture, learn about how digital design can be used in digital marketing, and meeting other students from all over the world. I had heard great things about Lisbon, and how they had great weather, beautiful beaches and delicious food and drinks, in addition to being quite affordable.

I was keen on the idea of being an international exchange student, because, even if you go on your own, you will meet a lot of other people in the same situation, and who are also curious about experiencing the city. Moreover, because you are amongst people with similar goals as you, and you spend so much time together, I feel like you make strong friendships more easily.

I am glad that I chose to go to Lisbon and all of my expectations were met. I enjoyed the sunny days in the city, the amazing views, the inexpensive restaurants and cafés, and making new friends from around the world. Academically, I did not really know what to expect as universities differ a lot around the world, but I was pleasantly surprised by the professionalism of the university and course content.

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?

Personally, I made friends from all over the world, listened to stories of their country and I think that really enriched my world perspective. It is nice to know that when you are going to a new country, you have a friend who lives there, and someone to ask for information.

I also learnt a lot from planning the stay on my own and keeping track on information and deadlines in relation to the application process. I think that the organizational skills I learnt will also be beneficial in an academic setting. When I am doing my bachelor's next year, I think it will help me with planning my time more efficiently and have a better overview of the process.

In relation to the course content, I feel like the course was very relevant to my programme in understanding how to make a business out of digital design. I think the course has helped me become more realistic about what is required for a design to succeed and has given me tools for how to communicate my ideas to others from a business point of view.

Arranging your stay

Please give a short description of the process involved in arranging your stay:

I was a freemover, so I found the course and university by myself. I started planning the trip in March, where I was searching for summer schools online. I found this portal especially useful: <https://www.summerschoolsineurope.eu/>.

I had previously learnt it is a good idea to keep options open, because so many things must come together at the same time when planning an exchange. Because of that, I made a list of about 10 potential courses and then vetted each thoroughly, where I would check the ECTS points, course descriptions, start date, deadlines etc. anything that might make the course non-suitable. After that I shortened the list to 5, prioritized according to my interests, and wrote my pre-approval application based on those.

I think I had 3 of those courses pre-approved and then I just applied to my top priority. For me, it was nice to know that I still had 2 other options to fall back on, in case the first one did not go through.

After being admitted by both ITU and the university in Lisbon, I think the process is very individual to that respective university.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?

I think you should always check for safety in the country, recommended vaccinations and insurance coverage. On um.dk they have a good overview of important information for travelers, and make sure to sign up to Danskerlisten.

In my case, I was fortunate that ISCTE had made an extensive information booklet on the practical things in relation to my stay.

For keeping track on my planning, I liked using Notion and I made my budget in there as well.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I just searched for "student accommodation Lisbon" online. I did not do through research on this before I booked (everything gets sold out really fast in the high summer), but if I could go back, I would have preferred to stay closer to the city center i. e. Baxia. Most of Lisbon is well-connected through the metro lines, but since the metro closes at midnight, I think it is preferable to stay in walking distance to the city center, because night busses can be very unpredictable.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

All in all, I would say my stay in Lisbon was affordable. The flight and accommodation were probably the most expensive costs because it was in high season (approx.: flight = 3.900 kr. and accommodation = 4.500 kr.). Living costs are generally low, and it is cheap to eat and drink out in Lisbon. I was able to eat at a restaurant for like 10€ for a full meal with a drink.

Other than that, I think I spent about 250€ on after-school activities arranged by ISCTE, including a weekend trip to Algarve. I did something new every day and ate out, so I might not be representative for all. I did not really count my spending on the trip, but I still stayed within my personal budget.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?

I applied for SU Udlandsstipendium and ITU Travel pool. Both have an easy application process, and that is why I applied. Considering, I was only going on exchange for 1 month, the costs were not that high, and I did not need additional funding.

Recommendations for other students:

- Algarve is super beautiful and worth a weekend trip
- Eating the famous pastry, Pastel de Bélem
- The beaches at Cascais are better than those near the city center
- The amazing view from the Saint-Jorge castle
- The Portuguese eat a lot of fish, in particular codfish, and I recommend trying their fish cake called Pastel de Bacalhau