

Host University: University of Copenhagen

Preparation (planning, organization, and application with the host university)

Due to the fact that my stay in Copenhagen was part of my double degree programme I did not have to apply separately for the exchange there. This made the prior planning and organisation a lot easier. Still it was a lot of organising and paperwork before and at the start of the stay in Denmark.

Lodging

Finding accommodation in Copenhagen was a real challenge, especially at the beginning of September when all the new students and exchange students start their studies. I tried with the housing foundation first, which has a really annoying first come first serve system which is basically a roulette. One has to be really lucky to find nice and affordable accommodation with them at least at the beginning of September. But also the private housing market is really tough especially as a student coming from a different country. After three months sharing rooms with friends (which I luckily already had coming there with a double degree) I finally found a really nice flat. Most of my friends ended up paying between 4000 and 5000 DKK (equivalent to ca. 535 to 670 €) per month for their rooms, some lucky ones found cheaper accommodation. However, in the end it is lucky to find something in the beginning at the semester at all.

Studies at the host university

Once you get through all the administrative stuff and you're correctly registered in their system, Copenhagen is a great University to study at. The negative things first: UCPH has (like everything in Denmark) an online system where you and all the information about you as a Student is registered. Here you apply for your student ID, register for your courses and exams... quite handy actually. Unfortunately, it happens too often that some information in the system might be incorrect and then it is quite difficult to fix it since only very few people seem to have the administrative rights to change information in the system. However, the system was introduced new when I started studying there so maybe by now they handle it better. Another thing is that they are quite fussy with their rules and deadlines, so it is really important to make yourself familiar with that, it can save you a lot of trouble.

Now to the positive things: UCPH is a great University to study at! The quality of teaching is very high. Classes are smaller and more familiar which makes it easier to get to know your fellow students and professors. Also they are often more practical with a focus on teamwork, presentations, discussions etc. to engage the students more into the teaching process. There is also always a reasonable amount of coffee breaks to keep the students awake and focused during the actual lessons. Furthermore, the professors actually seem mostly really enthusiastic about teaching (and don't just see it as an annoying side activity from their research), they can even win prizes for the best evaluation by the students of their class. I personally also really liked the block system they have with

4 blocks throughout the year and a maximum of two classes per block, which gives you the opportunity to really focus on what you're doing. The university itself is really well equipped and quite modern. Also the libraries are really nice and a highlight for me was that you're allowed to take everything in there for example coffee and food, which is essential for me while studying. Furthermore there are often electric kettles and microwaves around. It is maybe not that cheap to buy food in the canteen but if you're well organised and bring your own food and teabags/coffee you can have a nice warm meal and tea/coffee whenever you want. Often there are also couches around if you need a break and sometimes even such things as nap-rooms or free massage stairs when you really need a break from in a tough study phase (or just some fun ;-)).

Daily life and free time

Daily life in Copenhagen can be expensive but it doesn't have to be if you know where you can get stuff cheap or even for free. Generally, restaurants, pubs and other activities are expensive. However, there are a lot of options to get cheap stuff. For example the *folketshus* in Norrebro offers a lot of sport activities as well as other events on donation basis, they also have cheap coffee, great for studying. Other great places for studying or hanging out with cheap coffee are *retro norrebro* or *studenterhuset*. Another great place to go

to is *folketskokken* in norrebro which offers a donation based vegan dinner every Tuesday. A great place for cheap drinks are the Friday bars, which every university has (and sometimes even companies) or *studenterhuset*. If the weather is good, just have a drink on *dronningen louses bro* ;-). Copenhagen is also famous for its awesome fleamarkets, where you can get everything second hand and super cheap!! They are usually during the weekends. (check out: <http://markedskalenderen.dk/marked/kategori/loppemarked>)

Finally, dumpsterdiving is a really common thing to do among students and it can save you a lot of money! It is a legal grey-zone in Denmark and you will be surprised what you can find in supermarket or apartment bins! =D Also try *torvehallen* every morning at quarter past 9 ;-)

Apart from that Copenhagen is a city that has a lot to offer, there are free concerts sometimes and especially during summer there are free events around all the time (e.g. distortion)! Especially in Christiania there are free concerts/jam sessions every Sunday =)



For once a not so cheap suggestion but definitely try one of the craft beer bars with beer from *mikkeller* or *to ol* the beer is famous and very good!!

Also everything here is accessible by bike and the bike paths everywhere are awesome. And it doesn't take too long to get out of the city to relax at one of the nice beaches.

Summary (best and worst experience)

The worst part about living in Copenhagen was definitely the room search in the beginning and the missing amount of sunlight during winter. However, apart from that Copenhagen is definitely a truly great city to live in! It is very beautiful with a great atmosphere and a lot of alternative cultural things going on.

