

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

The preparation for the ERASMUS exchange was really straight forward. We were given specific instructions and feedback from both universities. Once we arrived to the BOKU we had the international introduction days where it was explained to us how the university worked, we got our student IDs and we even got some guidance for our daily life in Vienna. Overall it was really easy to understand but the process was very demanding in time and effort as everything was new.

### **Lodging**

I didn't use any accommodations provided by the university and I don't even know if they even do. Two months before moving to Vienna I started looking for a WG and I have lived in shared flats since I arrived to Vienna.

### **Studies at Host University**

The quality of the studies is extremely high at the BOKU. I learned like never before about water related issues and I also had to study like never before (around 4 to 6 hours in the library daily not including the lecture hours). I had 9 different classes and even though I learned a lot I was under very high stress as the daily university life was very demanding. Very good teachers and in summary a very high quality university that makes it by no means an easy place to study.

The only downsides of the BOKU are that the class schedules are super chaotic as they change every week and many times the classes overlap. This leaves no room for planning a routine and free time. At the same time bureaucracy is a nightmare: it is slow, complicated and really antiquated.

### **Daily life and free time**

Vienna is a wonderful city to meet new people from all over the world. Its museums, cultural activities and restaurants and bars are endless. After a year of being here I have not completely explored the city. You will never get bored in Vienna.

### **Summary (best and worst experience)**

There were many good experiences to name one.

The worst experience is getting an Austrian visa (if you are not European). The MA35 treats people like trash and they make you feel you are doing something wrong just for being in Austria. They make you feel unwelcome and uncomfortable the whole time. Even after you prove you come here just to study and that you have enough money to pay for everything you need they still make it as hard as they can to make you desist from getting a visa. They will ask for more documents than what they originally asked you for and getting those documents is neither an easy nor a cheap task. It was definitely one of the most stressful experiences of my life and I was about to drop the whole master program as my mental and emotional health were seriously affected.