

# Final report

(Erasmus+ Internships – SMP)

## Personal data and general information on the internship

Name, surname: [REDACTED]

E-mail-address: [REDACTED]

Subject of studies: Psychology: Learning Sciences

Course of studies: Master

Time of internship: 12 months

Place of internship: Amsterdam, NL

„Internship title“: Project Management Internship at Bynder

Please prepare a detailed report on your experiences in your internship.

The report should have a length of at least **4 DIN A4 pages** (Times New Roman, 11pt, 1.5 line spacing). You are also welcome to add pictures (please do not exceed the maximum file size of 8 MB!), but the 4 pages minimum length of the report refer only to the written, continuous text.

When integrating photos and images to enhance your internship report, please note that your report requires the consent of the person(s) photographed when published and distributed.

In this case, it would be the publication of personal data.

(Further information regarding required consents and exceptions can be found in the Kunsturhebergesetz (KUG) and the Datenschutzgrundverordnung (DSGVO)).

This Datenschutzgrundverordnung also applies to personal names. If you want to give names, please do not give the full name of the person. Use only the first name or abbreviations such as "L."

Please provide information on the topics that you consider most meaningful and helpful from the following and structure your report in thematic paragraphs with expressive headings.

### 1. Planning and preparation

- How did you decide on your internship abroad?
- How did you decide on this country?
- How was the application process at the host institution?
- What helped you?
- What had to be organized in advance? How was your journey?
- Did you attend a language course?
- Was the preparation satisfactory? Was it sufficient?

### 2. Internship

- Which tasks were entrusted to you during your internship?
- Were you fully occupied during your internship?
- What did a typical working day look like for you?



- To what extent were you looked after and supported in the host company?
- How did you learn new things and what exactly did you learn?
- Were you able to improve your language skills during the internship?

### **3. Accommodation in the host country**

- How did you find accommodation and how would you rate it?
- What helped you?
- Did you have help from your host institution or other institutions?

### **4. Social interactions**

- How did the interaction with colleagues at the workplace develop?
- Have you established contacts with the local population outside the internship?

### **5. Everyday life and leisure**

- How did you spend your free time?
- Did you attend a sports or language class?
- What is the public transport system like? Did you use it as a means of transport?
- Do you have any tips for future students at your internship location?
- Can you recommend certain contact and information points?

### **6. Financing (voluntary)**

- How high was your cost of living compared to Germany?
- Did you receive a salary during your internship?
- How much money did you have to spend on your accommodation?
- Do you have any tips on how to do the shopping etc.?

### **7. SINIK: Intercultural Seminar at the LMU**

- Did you attend an intercultural seminar at the LMU before you started your internship?
- If so, was it helpful? Do you think this kind of intercultural preparation is useful?
- Would you recommend the seminar to other students?

### **8. Internship and studies**

- Were you able to apply what you learned during your studies or in previous practical experience?
- How has the internship changed your motivation to study, your study behavior and/or your attitude towards your future profession?

### **9. Conclusion**

- What expectations (of your internship, the country, the city, ...) did you have at the beginning of the internship? Which were fulfilled and which were not. Why?
- Were there any challenges or problems during the internship and which ones? What do you think - how could they have been avoided? How did you solve them?
- Can you recommend this position to other interns? Please give reasons.
- Would your receiving institution be willing to accept future interns?
- What has particularly influenced you during your internship? What did you learn beyond the contents of the internship?

Please save your report as a WORD document and upload it together with the other final documents in the MoveON portal using the form "Final Documents International Internships":

<https://lmu.moveon4.de/locallogin/5eafe3b31875ee63a679f8d5/eng>.



If you are looking for a little inspiration for your own report or would like to compare your experiences with those of other students, please feel free to have a look at our website ([https://www.s-a.uni-muenchen.de/studierende/praktikum/praktika\\_ausland/praktikumsberichte-neu/index.html](https://www.s-a.uni-muenchen.de/studierende/praktikum/praktika_ausland/praktikumsberichte-neu/index.html)).

Your information and tips are very valuable for the next generation of Erasmus+ interns.

Thank you very much for your support!

## **Final Report**

As a part of the Erasmus + Traineeship program, I had the opportunity to do a 12-month long internship as a customer onboarding/project management intern at Bynder – a software/technology company in Amsterdam, Netherlands. In this report, I will elaborate on my internship abroad period covering various topics such as planning and preparation, accommodation, social life, etc.

### **Planning and Preparation**

Back in 2017, when I was living in Istanbul where I was studying my bachelors, I had the chance to do an Erasmus exchange semester in the Psychology department of Leiden University in Leiden, Netherlands. After this fruitful lifetime experience, I learned how Erasmus exchange semesters can help you broaden your horizons, learn a lot about different cultures and countries, and grow as a person. Knowing that I benefitted a lot from the study program of Erasmus in the past, this time I decided to do an internship abroad as a part of the Erasmus + Traineeship program to gain professional experience in an international setting. Because I really enjoyed the culture and lifestyle in the Netherlands when I was studying there in the past, I also wanted to experience the work life in the same country again, but this time in a bigger city like Amsterdam. Although the job market is quite active and big in Amsterdam, the competition is also quite high when it comes to finding a good internship as the city is quite popular for internationals. After hundreds of applications and rejections, I finally managed to find my internship through an ad on LinkedIn. I applied for it with a CV and motivation letter and later had three online interviews (one with HR, two with my team) where I talked about my past experiences and proved my skills. What helped me in the process was my international background and relevant professional experiences as I studied abroad in different countries and worked in big organizations in the past. The tricky part with all my applications, including the internship I got as well, was the visa application process as I am a non-EU student in Europe. The visa needed to be arranged by my company and since I was going to be the first non-EU Erasmus intern in the company, the HR was not knowledgeable about the application. With extensive research and the files that I provided showing that I was going to do an Erasmus + Traineeship, we managed to get a student intern visa, which allowed me to work in the Netherlands. Once it was sure that all the documents were prepared and signed by all the parties and my visa was ready, I moved to Amsterdam and started working for Bynder.

### **Internship**

First, I started my internship in the learning and development team of Bynder where I was responsible for organizing the monthly online onboarding Bootcamp (EMEA) for the new hires; managing LinkedIn Learning and the internal learning management system (LMS); designing online courses on various topics for internal employees. After 6 months of working in the learning and development team, I found another opportunity in the customer onboarding team of my company which could help me grow even more professionally. The position was the project management/customer onboarding internship, and it was mostly about technical implementation of different Bynder modules and management of client projects. After an internal interview which I had with the

team manager and the support of my current manager in learning and development team, I transitioned to the customer onboarding team as a project management/customer onboarding intern. In my new role, I was responsible for technical implementation of different Bynder modules based on the requests of customer onboarding managers; presenting product demos in client calls; supporting customer onboarding managers in various topics; creating implementation guides for our partners; managing my own client projects. Especially after the transition from the learning and development team to the onboarding team, I was fully occupied everyday as the field was so new to me and there was a lot of new topics to learn. In a typical working day, I started to work around 09.00 checking the Trello board where I could see all the tasks given to me by onboarding managers and I was supposed to complete. Depending on the number of tasks, I could finish them until the lunch and walk time which started around 12.00. Coming back to work at 13.30, I attended 2-3 observation calls per day where I shadowed other onboarding managers to learn how they managed the client calls and communicated with the clients. Depending on how busy the day is, I also had 30 mins each day to read the knowledge base to learn more about our product. A typical workday would end around 17.45-18.00. What was exceptional during my employment at Bynder was that I was constantly being supported by my team members and managers. Since I supported over 90+ projects in 6 months only, I had the chance to learn a lot from various projects while interacting with different onboarding managers whose work styles varied from one to another. I mostly learned new things on the go, just jumping into the task, and finding my way through it with the support of knowledge channels and other team members. Shadowing was also another way to learn for me especially when it comes to learning how to communicate with the clients in the weekly calls. We also had team trainings where we developed project management and implementation related soft and hard skills. Through this experience, I developed my project management, communication, business operations, and change management skills, in addition to all the technical knowledge I developed through the implementations. Also, since I worked in an international team of mainly Dutch, French, and German speakers; English was the main communication language which we used to communicate in the team and with the clients. I can say that through such interactions, I also improved my English and French, which I later started using in French speaking projects.

### **Accommodation**

Amsterdam is one of the most challenging cities when it comes to finding an accommodation as the city is quite popular for foreigners to come and live in. I used Facebook groups to find an accommodation as there are many groups where people are advertising their rooms. Since I was still in Germany when I started looking for a room, I could not attend any in person viewings which made my situation a bit harder. However, after hundreds of messages followed by rejections, I found an affordable room (for Amsterdam prices) in the city center. Since then, I have been living in the same apartment with my two other Dutch flat mates. While finding a room, what helped me the most was the personalized message for each application I did. I also attached 1-2 photos of mine and mentioned who I am in general and what my interests are. Such personalized messages always help to establish a connection with the interviewers and make you stand out among the hundreds of messages they receive. I did not get any support from my company or any other institution.

## **Social Interactions**

Since we mostly worked from home, in the beginning I did not have a chance to meet my colleagues in person. However, the tasks I had required us to have a constant interaction, which helped me to slowly establish a bond with each of them. When I met them in person after a long time of working together online, I had the feeling that I already knew them for such a long time and felt comfortable in the team. We also started going to the office from time to time in the last months of the internship and had 3 team events which helped me even more to get to know them better. Overall, the constant interaction I had with them through project tasks also helped me to establish a bond with them and feel connected with my team. In addition to my colleagues, I also made some friends outside work through my flat mates, but honestly it was not easy to meet new people in the middle of a pandemic and lockdown. Therefore, I can say that socializing and meeting new people outside of work have been a challenge throughout the internship.

## **Everyday Life and Leisure**

Although the internship was quite busy, I managed to find some time for myself after work during the weekdays and weekends. Amsterdam is a very vibrant city with a lot of arts events, restaurants, bars, festivals, and parks, which is the reason I chose this city to come in. Whenever I had free time, I managed to go to some events and had gatherings in the parks as much as the pandemic measures allowed us to do so. As everyone knows, cycling is the main means of transport here in the Netherlands and I also cycled to travel in the city and to commute to work. My tip for future students would be to get a bike the moment they come to the Netherlands as it is a major part of your daily life here. Also, Netherlands is quite small compared to Germany with a very well-developed train connection system, so they should make sure to visit other Dutch cities which takes less than 50 minutes to go such as Utrecht, Leiden, and Rotterdam.

## **Financing**

As I am coming from Munich – an expensive German city to live in – costs of living did not change that much when it comes to shopping in supermarkets and eating out. However, my rent has substantially increased from 350 EUR to 625 EUR when I moved to Amsterdam. For Amsterdam standards, my rent was still quite affordable but knowing that the Erasmus grant did not even fully cover it, I had to go through some financial difficulties. I also got an internship allowance of 500 EUR from my company here in Amsterdam, but after getting used to well-paid working student positions in Germany, the amount I got from my full-time internship was not fair given that I worked a lot. To sum, a total of 995 EUR (495 + 500) is not enough for such a city like Amsterdam and honestly the students who are considering coming here for an internship should also have their own savings to spend from. I also recommend them to do an internship no longer than 6 months as 12 months is such a long time to do an internship which does not pay well.

## **Internship and Studies**

Thanks to my previous international work experiences in different kind of companies and locations, and the study program at LMU, which was also quite international with students coming from diverse backgrounds, I did not experience any difficulty adapting myself to the international and dynamic work life of my company in Amsterdam. From the first to the last day of my internship, I always strived to apply my personal and professional skills that I gained from my previous study and work experiences and develop them even more through this new experience. Project management, feedback, intercultural communication, collaboration, prioritization, and presentation skills were the ones that I could develop the most during the internship, in addition to technical skills I gained from the instructional design and module implementations. Also, this Erasmus internship experience has opened doors to a different career path for me as I just got a job in my current company as a project manager in technology implementation. As someone with Psychology background, this career shift without such an internship would not be possible.

## **Conclusion**

When I chose the Netherlands to come back again with another Erasmus program, this time through an internship, I thought that it would feel the same as before when I came back in 2017. However, what I realized during my stay here is that the Erasmus study and traineeship experiences are quite different from each other as you have more responsibilities and less chances to socialize and travel in traineeship. Also, as the time passes by, we all grow as a person and the experiences which were quite new and exciting to me back in 2017 did not feel the same anymore. This is probably because I already lived in other countries and had broader international experiences in the meantime. The main challenges that I went through during this time were financial issues as explained before and the visa problems as a non-EU person. To avoid financial problems, I would do the traineeship no longer than 6 months because 12 months is such a long time to work with very little salary as a qualified employee for such a long time. Now I am happy with the courage and endurance I showed during the last months since it got me a full-time position, but it was not an easy period of my life financially. Regarding the visa, there is nothing I could do as it was an essential part of my employment process. This position was a great opportunity as it allows you to develop your personal and professional skills such as project management, communication, and collaboration, and helps you to develop tech-savviness at the same time. Therefore, I can recommend this position to future students. If future students can apply to the position via LinkedIn or career page, I am sure that they can be considered in case that there is a match.

In conclusion, the main take away for me from this last 12 months is that I should never give up despite the difficulties, because all the challenges you face make you grow as a person and opens new doors for you in the future. I am very happy and grateful for this challenging but also the life changing traineeship experience I had here in Amsterdam and am looking forward to seeing what future holds with my new full-time position.