

PH Zug

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I spend one semester at PH Zug in Switzerland. Before I describe my experience with PH Zug, I would like to write something about my accommodation in Zug. I got an offer to stay in the Kloster Maria Opferung – monastery, which is two minutes far away from the PH. When you are in the hurry for your class and you can run, the PH can be reached in 32 seconds – proved many times! So, the distance from PH is just amazing and it saves you a lot of time. Living in Kloster Maria Opferung is smooth and ok. Biggest advantage of staying in the monastery is the price. Renting one room costs 450 CHF per month and the only additional money is 1 CHF for using the washing machine every time you need to wash your clothes. In the room you have a bed, table, chair, wardrobe, and that's just enough – all you need. You can easily use the kitchen, bathroom and washing room, everything is close. Rooms in the monastery are quite small, but you spent most of the time at school or outside, so it is no problem. Accommodation in the monastery is the cheapest that we could find, and we were so lucky that PH Zug offered it to us. Besides the 450 CHF for accommodation, I needed to pay 60 CHF per month for “Zugerpass” to be able to use the public transport. For food and other necessary things, I usually spent around 300 CHF, but I wasn't trying to save as much as possible so it could be less if you would try hard. In every shop you can find some stuff with discount or migros budget section has your back.

PH Zug is a wonderful place to study. I decided to study at the PH Zug, because I liked the size of the school and the city. Also offered **friendly atmosphere** caught my attention and that is actually the best thing I will remember about PH Zug. All teachers are very **friendly and helpful** with everything you need even though you don't speak their language. All the students speak very good English as well and they are not shy to speak with foreign students not only during the lectures. Lectures are **effectively planned** and **well managed** – teachers focus on the **practical experience**, they offer a lot of **teamwork** and **active exercises** during classes. School is **well equipped**, so the **conditions for studying are perfect!** But not only for studying, everyone can join sport classes, use piano rooms or take a break in the crypta – so there are great

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conditions for **selfcare** as well. Speaking about food and coffee, all meals in mensa that I have tried were **delicious**, so if you have the opportunity to pay 8 CHF for one lunch, I would highly recommend it. Usually, I could save a half of my lunch for the dinner and that saved a lot of my money and time which I would have spent on cooking as well. All PH Zug facilities are handy, always clean, near each other and easy to use. Only unideal thing about PH Zug and Switzerland overall is that it is basically **expensive**. But PH Zug offers a refund for one month of traveling expenses in the canton Zug and also for Halffare card that is quite needed to have. At the end you need to pay 75 CHF for using the PH-structure, which is quite a lot – but I understand why. In the school you can find basically **everything you may need** during your school days. From my point of view PH Zug provides **simply good environment to learn how to be a good teacher**.

Very big part of my stay was practice in ISZL, which was absolutely amazing. Before I came, I didn't have any idea how international school works and I didn't know that I will have the opportunity to become part of one international school for a while. At ISZL I could work with an amazing teacher who was definitely someone I could learn many things from. She was always willing to help me and she let me do many things. Every time I was there, I could try something more or different which was very useful for my future job. ISZL overall is perfect place to learn new things. Inquiry based learning opens door for the kids and teachers as well. Teaching there was completely different from what I have ever experienced, and I will draw from it for the rest of my life. The biggest challenge was the language, because my mother tongue is Czech language and at ISZL I had to teach in English. At the beginning I couldn't imagine how hard would it be, and it is still hard now after the three months, but I definitely did make a progress and now I can imagine teaching English lessons or other subjects in English quite easily. I will be glad for this experience forever.

When I wasn't at the PH or at ISZL, I often spent time with other Erasmus students which I got to know better thanks to our buddies from the PH. Our buddies helped us even before we came – we could ask them which bus we need to take from the train

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station to the PH (line number 11) or afterwards for example, where to go partying in Zug (Chicago!!!). In the beginning our buddies organized party for us and we could ask them whatever we wanted, which was very helpful. I definitely recommend trying hard not to be shy and ask whatever comes to your mind, because there is no point to be scared or embarrassed. Every time I asked something, everybody was very open-minded and willing to help me. Also people from the international office and all PH teachers in general were very nice and I didn't have any problems with anybody. Only thing I would highly recommend is to ask about the exams and ending of the subjects because sometimes it wasn't clear at all and believe me, you don't want to be surprised with German exam two weeks before you are leaving. So make sure that you know what to expect and also ensure the teachers what you need. Sometimes you need a grade sometimes you don't and everything need to be clear so that your stay is smooth.

Some positive points about my stay... Highlights were definitely hikes that we made with other Erasmus students – some of them were recommended by our city guide – Tery on our very first day of school. Perfect was that they were cheaper thanks to half fare card. I loved sport activities for one credit and the choir with the final concert as well. Best thing about the PH are piano rooms where I spent a lot of time.

Negative things – confusion at the beginning about the money and migration office. That should have been better thought out and better explained. Also, the first meeting should have been made in English the whole time – especially because some of us just couldn't understand German. Also, it should have been clearly said that we need to pay 75 CHF in the end, because that was kind of surprising, and not in a good way. Last negative thing – or maybe just thing that could be improved – is the Studying abroad – teaching diversity module, which is supposed to help us with our issues and possible problems. It was nice and I learned a few things from it, but it took us so much time to complete all the written tasks and that was from my point of view unnecessary. I have spent hours just reading some self-developing books and trying to summarize them – I didn't really see the connection – how should it help my stay. Also materials

for the Research and development project should be in English and better explained.
Otherwise I evaluate all the courses very well.