

Final Report: Questionnaire

Four-week teaching practice programme at the PH Zug

Guest students who spend a four-week teaching practice programme at the PH Zug are kindly asked to write a final report of about **2 to 4 pages** (incl. pictures) about their experiences. This report shall be handed in to the International Office PH Zug for discussion on the evaluation session, prior to departure. Please include information to the following topics:

1. Information and support

- of the PH Zug / of the International Office PH Zug

Attending the PH in Zug has been a huge positive to my time here in Switzerland, experiencing the University lifestyle of teachers on the other side of the world was very eye opening. I noticed both similarities and differences in the way we are taught, classroom lessons as well as daily life of a tertiary student. Every student was extremely welcoming and friendly, always happy to help and have a chat, which was lovely. The support of the office was also extremely beneficial if I didn't know where to go and had any questions.

- of your classroom teacher

Over the course of the month, I have had a variety of teachers over the range of different classes I've taken. All of which have been very welcoming and inviting in each of their lessons. Each teacher has used English to the best of their ability to aid in our learning and comfort which is extremely helpful and kind of them to do, as well as incorporating instances for us to make new friends and talk about ourselves with other students. My music teacher has been very entertaining, using insight in the Indigenous Australians within his lessons to cater for us and our own prior knowledge we have of this topic. Overall, the staff here are wonderful!

- of your buddy

My two buddies, Jana and Miriam, have been lovely! They've taken us on days out to see specific sights and interests of Switzerland as well as been there for help and to answer any questions. We've caught up a lot of times to chat and have dinner, as well as chat in our group message to see how we're all going. We visited Jana's school during our practicum which was a great experience and made more friends through the connections of our buddies. This system of already having people to talk to when coming over was perfect, it gave us friends already and gave us assistance and guidance when starting at the PH.

2. Overall programme / living situation

- Teaching practice programme (school, subjects)

The school I am at; 'The International School of Zug and Luzern' (ISZL), is remarkable and honestly the best school I've been in for a placement so far. Firstly, the school itself is beautiful, location, architecture, design and environment are all stunning, as well as the teachers- every single member of the primary school sector of ISZL have been lovely. Each teacher I have seen have always said 'good morning' and have always wanted to have a chat. The principles (both Australian which is fun) have been perfect in settling us in and welcoming us into the school. My mentor teacher (Katherine)

has been amazing, she has gone above and beyond with her feedback, assistance and flexibility in her classroom, allowing us to teach as much as we can and form strong relationships with the children of the class. The students of my Grade 5 class are fantastic, they all have such strong and social personalities, being an IB school they have all travelled around the world, can speak a variety of languages and due to this have strong social skills that allow for humour, confidence and kindness to shine through when communicating, which was lovely when beginning at this school. ISZL has made such a strong impression on me, and opened my eyes to the International School system, I am interested in broadening my insight into this schooling type and of course would love to return to this school at any time I get when/if I return to Switzerland in the future.

I would highly recommend ISZL to continue to be a school for students at PH Zug, not only for International students like myself, but domestic students with an interest in this system too. It has been such a positive experience and I will miss it greatly and would love others to experience this school too.

- Programme at the PH Zug (lectures etc.)

The schedule we have been given to attend the PH once a week is perfect. It gives us an insight into the workings of Swiss University's/teachers education and really shows us what it's like if we lived over here. The classes are similar, yet different in a number of ways, but were very interesting to attend each week as they were a wide variety of areas – arts, sports, education, society etc.

We had been given detailed times and instructions of when and where to go which was lovely and had classmates that were very welcoming as well as the teachers in every lecture.

- Living situation (accommodation, costs, etc.)

Living with a Swiss host family has been the biggest highlight. Getting to experience, the 'Swiss' way of living has been such a great opportunity and I would much rather this than accommodation alone or in student housing. I am so grateful for the family I was placed with (Jonas Blum) and have formed such a strong bond with this family already. I plan to always stay in touch with them and can't wait to visit again or have them visit me in Australia. The cost was perfect, it covers everything and isn't too much for the month. I loved living with this family so much I'll be sad to go, though this has given me such a strong insight into the living of Switzerland, broadened my communication skills in English and has given me so many opportunities to do things I wouldn't have thought of.

3. Goals and professional benefit

- Personal goals for the placement

The goals for this placement were small when I was coming here, I didn't know what to expect from this school and thought it might've been quite German (which isn't a bad thing!). Though, surprisingly, when everyone spoke English – this shocked me, this benefit had given me a large boost of confidence when teaching in this school and a sense of excitement. My overall goals for this placement were of course; forming strong relationships with the staff and students, feeling comfortable within the school and getting to know all members of the school community and teaching a range of lessons in a range of subject areas, planning, teaching and revising these lessons.

- Achieved goals and newly acquired competencies

I'd say for this placement my achieved goals were definitely all areas of the ones listed above. I taught a wide range of lessons, where I planned well, received very informative feedback and overall enjoyed myself when in the classroom. I formed strong connections with all members of the school; teachers and students and overall really enjoyed my time here at ISZL.

- Benefit for your future studies and profession

The experience at ISZL has given me an insight into the ways IB/PYP schools function, in Switzerland and hopefully around the world (in Australia too). I have a new interest into this schooling type and have really benefitted from this whole experience as I have been teaching an extensive amount of lessons. It has provided me a once in a lifetime opportunity and I have loved every minute of it- it has expanded my view on education and I have benefitted strongly from this program.

4. Personal evaluation of the stay

- Recommendations for future students

When placing us at the schools, perhaps ask if the student teachers can be split up. As I was placed in the same class of 20 students with Sarah, it was a little crowded sometimes, and also gave me and her less chances to teach as we had to share the lessons around. It also evoked a sense of competition, it felt like we were both trying to show our skills in such a short amount of time (due to teaching less lessons) which made things a little uncomfortable and irritating.

I had an amazing time at my International school, though I have heard some students not having the best time in Swiss/German schools. If it is possible perhaps sending all students to an international school so they can teach a little more without the language barrier (all in separate classrooms). Though, I am speaking using an educated guess about the others, I've had an amazing time!

- Personal evaluation (3 positive and 3 negative points)

Positives:

1. Forming strong relationships with the students at my school. They were excited to see me and I was happy to wake up and head to school in the mornings. I was eager to talk to them and get to know every one of them.
2. My teaching is another personal point. I taught a wide range of lessons across a variety of learning areas, so having that chance to teach things like; Art, Maths, Writing, Drama, Inquiry etc. was amazing. I received great feedback from all of my lessons and improved as I went along according to my teacher.
3. My host family, they made the stay incredibly welcoming and involved a sense of safety and a homely environment. It showed me the Swiss way of living and introduced me to the language directly. My host brothers were incredibly helpful and really got to know me (as I did with them) and my parents were very caring and interested in what I was doing at school or personal travels on the weekend. My host mother found speaking English very challenging which was a struggle for her to speak to me and a struggle for me to understand her, though over the duration of the stay, I slowed down my speaking and pronounced words a lot clearer which helped her a lot and she spoke very well (improving vastly over the month). Though, when we didn't know how to say something one of us didn't understand, Google Translate helped a lot! The weekly visits to the PH were also very positive and enjoyable.

Negatives:

1. Organisation. Usually I am very organised though at some points, I found myself struggling to stay on top of things (mainly because the weekends were filled with sightseeing and travelling). This included lesson plans as well as replying to important emails.
2. Being in the same class as another student teacher was a negative point I had to overcome. If we were in a Swiss speaking school, that would have been great, though, being in a school where English is the main language everyone speaks and have two student teachers in the room was annoying. It felt like I miss opportunities to teach and get to know the teacher well as I felt like I was being cut off and not being able to speak as much and show my true side.
3. The last class on a Friday – Woodwork and art design, I think wasn't needed. It was mainly

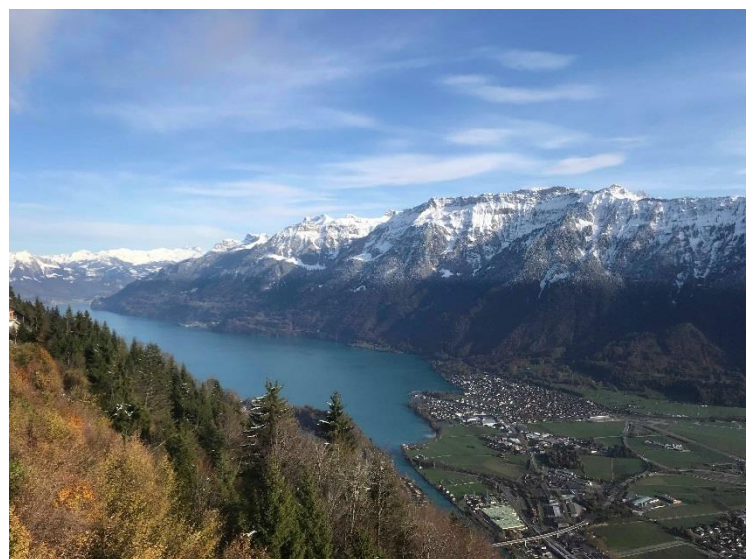
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spoken in German and whilst the teachers did their best to translate after they had given instruction and answered questions, we found ourselves being quite bored and uninterested as we couldn't understand what was being said for a large portion of this huge class. If this was replaced with maybe a compulsory German language class or even a bit more sport or practical subjects, that could've been something more beneficial (though this class was still good fun!).

Pictures of my stay and experience here:

Switzerland/Sight Seeing:



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