

In the summer semester of 2025, I studied at INSEEC Lyon in France. I was enrolled in the BBA3 program, and the semester was quite short—starting at the end of February and ending at the end of May, lasting a bit more than three months in total.

Please keep in mind that this report reflects my personal experience of the exchange semester. Your experience may differ, and I truly hope it will be more positive.

Accommodation

Finding accommodation proved to be a challenge. Here are some of the main issues I encountered:

- Renting for only 3–4 months is difficult. The longer your stay, the more options you will have.
- Renting without a French guarantor is often impossible. You should clarify this issue with landlords early on.
- Securing a place in a good area of the city turned out to be more important than I initially thought.
- Finding accommodation at a fair price is also difficult. Avoid anything that seems “cheap,” and if possible, visit the place before signing anything.
- High service fees are common. Besides a deposit, expect to pay a service fee, which can range from €100 to €1,500.

It was unclear when to start looking for housing—too early and the offers may not be available; too late and the good options may be gone. In France, tenants can move out with just one month’s notice, which makes short-term rentals tricky. I recommend starting your search about two months before your mobility, but be aware that many landlords will ask you to contact them closer to your arrival date.

Eventually, I rented a studio in a student residence (which, despite the name, is not exclusively for students). I found it through Studapart, a platform partnered with the university. I was only able to view the apartment through a WhatsApp video call prior to my arrival, and I was able to rent it without a French guarantor because I signed a commitment letter confirming my move-out date.

Initially, I was relieved to have found a place, but that feeling didn’t last. Upon arrival, I discovered a cockroach infestation on my floor, which had not been resolved before I moved in—and I had not been informed about it beforehand. On the second night, my parents’ car, which was parked outside the building under video surveillance, was broken into, and my father's belongings were stolen.

Luckily, I was able to move to another floor a week later, and I had no further problems with insects. However, that bad first impression stayed with me throughout my stay. Although the neighborhood seemed safe, I never felt completely secure in the city.

Many of my friends also experienced housing issues: from mice and dirty kitchens (due to roommates) to unsafe areas and unclean rooms upon arrival. Not everyone had these problems, but many were dissatisfied—especially considering the high cost of rent.

Here is the university’s official guide to finding accommodation, including websites and recommended neighborhoods: <https://www.inseec.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2022/02/Housing-student-guide-2022-2023.pdf>

University

As mentioned earlier, the semester lasted just under four months. To obtain 30 ECTS credits, I had to take 12 mandatory courses. Even if you don't need all 30 credits, you are still required to complete the full program. Twelve courses in 13 weeks is intense! Although the content isn't difficult and the courses are not particularly demanding, the workload is substantial.

You will constantly be engaged in group work. While there are four final exams, most subjects are assessed continuously through presentations, tests, quizzes, group projects, and online assignments.

The grading system in France is based on a scale of 0 to 20. Unfortunately, feedback is rare, and the grading is often non-transparent.

The university is conveniently located near the city center and easy to reach. However, most classrooms have no windows, natural light, or fresh air. If you have a full day of classes, it's possible you won't see daylight until the evening. Breaks are 15 minutes long after every two hours of class, and there is no longer lunch break or canteen on campus.

If you commute by metro, you will likely get off at the station Guillotière Gabriel Péri. Please be careful there—keep your belongings secure, avoid engaging in conversations (many people try to sell cigarettes), and stay away from this area at night.

Sadly, you will witness poverty and homelessness throughout the city, including around the university area.

City & People

Now to the positive part of my exchange semester 😊

Lyon is a beautiful city with so much to offer. There's always something new to discover on the weekends—you won't get bored! The city is full of lively bars, restaurants, boutiques, cultural events, parks, and more. It has a vibrant student population and is well connected to other French and international cities, making it easy to travel.

This semester, INSEEC hosted many international students, so it was easy to meet people from all over the world. I really appreciated this multicultural environment and enjoyed building friendships and learning about different cultures.

Conclusion

Although I can't say with full honesty that I would choose to do this exchange semester again, I certainly don't regret it. I met amazing people, made unforgettable memories, traveled, and gained valuable insights thanks to the university.

I wouldn't discourage anyone from studying in Lyon, but I strongly advise you to prepare thoroughly before your departure.