

Experience Report – Semester Abroad

Kasetsart University, Bangkok (Thailand)

Host university: Kasetsart University (KU), Bangkhen Campus, Bangkok, Thailand

Faculty / programme: Faculty of Business Administration – Bachelor of Business Administration, International Program in Marketing (KUBIM)

Type of stay: Two semesters (one full academic year)

Period: August 2025 – April 2026 (two semesters)

Home institution: Hochschule Trier – Trier Business School

1. The university and my study programme

I spent two semesters at Kasetsart University (KU) in Bangkok, one of Thailand's oldest and most respected public universities. I studied at the Bangkhen Campus in the Chatuchak district, in the Faculty of Business Administration. KU is a large, green campus a little north of the city centre; even though it sits in the middle of a megacity, the campus itself feels surprisingly calm, with gardens, ponds and plenty of shaded places to sit.

My programme was the Bachelor of Business Administration, International Program in Marketing – known on campus as KUBIM. All courses are taught in English, and the student body is a mix of Thai students and exchange students from many different countries, which made it easy to settle in. The programme has a clear marketing focus but also covers the broader business fundamentals, so it fit well with my studies in Trier.

2. Preparation and the application process

The first step was the nomination through the International Office at Hochschule Trier. Once I had been nominated, Kasetsart's International Affairs Division and the faculty handled the rest of the admission. The application itself is done online and requires the usual documents – transcript of records, a copy of the passport, a passport photo, proof of English proficiency and proof that you have sufficient funds for your stay. The review took a few weeks, after which KU issued an official Letter of Acceptance.

That acceptance letter is the most important document, because you need it to apply for the **Non-Immigrant ED (Education) visa** at a Thai embassy or consulate. You are not allowed to study in Thailand on a tourist visa, so plan this step early – the visa can take a while and you may have to extend it once in Bangkok. I also arranged international health insurance before leaving and made sure my passport was valid well beyond the end of the stay.

My personal checklist before departure: nomination and KU application, Letter of Acceptance, ED visa, international health insurance, flights, a few passport photos for on-site paperwork, and downloading the apps you actually need in Bangkok (Grab for transport and food, and Line, which everyone in Thailand uses to communicate).

3. Courses and recommended lectures

Course selection is relaxed compared to Germany. You are usually not locked in before arrival; in the first week you can sit in on different lectures and then finalise your choices, so it is worth using that week to find the professors and topics that suit you. If your home university needs a Learning Agreement in advance, prepare a draft but expect to adjust it on site.

The courses I took were Consumer Behaviour and Service Marketing. I can recommend both of them – the professor was really nice, friendly and approachable, which made the lectures enjoyable and the material easy to follow. In general the marketing courses are practical and group-work heavy, so be ready for presentations and team projects rather than only final exams. Attendance matters – a minimum attendance rate is expected, so factor that into any travel plans.

4. Accommodation

For both semesters I lived at the Phuttachad (Puttachad) House dormitory, just off Ngamwongwan Road, very close to the university gates and within easy reach of the BTS Kasetsart University station. It was a simple but comfortable student dormitory – a private room with air conditioning, a bathroom and the basics, which is exactly what you need in Bangkok's heat. The location was the biggest advantage: I could walk or take a quick motorbike taxi to campus, and there were street-food stalls, small restaurants, laundry shops and convenience stores right around the corner.

I found the accommodation through the university website, which lists recommended dormitories – a straightforward and reliable way to arrange a room before arriving. There are plenty of dormitories and apartments along Ngamwongwan and Phaholyothin Road in a wide price range, so finding a room is rarely a problem. KU also offers on-campus dormitories. My advice is to book at least a temporary place before you arrive and, if you want, look around in person during the first days before committing for the whole stay.

5. Approximate costs (tuition and cost of living)

Tuition: As an exchange student through the partnership between Hochschule Trier and Kasetsart University, I did not have to pay any tuition fees at KU. I only continued to pay the regular semester contribution in Trier.

Cost of living: Bangkok is very affordable for students. As a rough monthly guide (figures in Thai Baht, THB; roughly 38–40 THB ≈ 1 EUR during my stay):

- **Accommodation:** around 4,000–6,000 THB / month for a dormitory room near campus
- **Food:** street food and canteen meals from about 40–60 THB each; eating mostly local, roughly 5,000–7,000 THB / month
- **Transport:** BTS, buses, Grab and motorbike taxis – around 1,000–2,000 THB / month
- **Mobile / SIM:** a student data plan is roughly 300–500 THB / month
- **Leisure & travel:** highly variable – weekends away and trips around the region add up but are cheap by European standards

All in, I spent around 18,000 THB per month (roughly 470 EUR), not counting bigger trips. On top of that there are one-time costs such as return flights from Germany (roughly 600–900 EUR depending on season), the ED visa fee, insurance and visa extensions.

6. Everyday study life and leisure

Daily life on campus was easygoing. Classes are in English, professors are approachable, and there is a strong international community, so you quickly make friends from all over the world. One thing to know in advance: undergraduate students at KU wear a university uniform,

which felt unusual at first but is completely normal there. The campus has canteens with cheap, tasty food, cafés, sports facilities, a library and lots of green space.

Outside of studying, Bangkok is endlessly busy. There are temples, markets like the huge Chatuchak Weekend Market close to campus, rooftop bars, malls and an excellent street-food scene. The international office and student groups organise activities such as trips, Thai language and cooking classes and a buddy programme, which are great for meeting people. The biggest bonus is location: from Bangkok you can reach the islands, the north of Thailand and neighbouring countries like Cambodia, Vietnam or Malaysia cheaply, so many weekends turned into short trips.

7. What was positive about studying abroad

- Studying entirely in English in a truly international group improved both my language skills and my confidence working across cultures.
- The marketing courses were practical and project-based, with a useful perspective on Asian and global markets that complements what I learned in Trier.
- Bangkok is affordable, safe to get around and incredibly well connected, which made everyday life and travelling easy.
- Living abroad for a full year made me far more independent and adaptable – probably the single most valuable outcome of the whole experience.

8. Negative experiences

Honestly, there were no real downsides for me. The only things to get used to are practical – Bangkok’s heat, humidity and traffic – and the bureaucracy around the visa and visa extensions, which takes a little patience and paperwork. None of this took away from a thoroughly positive year.

9. Recommendations for future students

- Start the visa process early – wait for your Letter of Acceptance and apply for the ED visa in good time.
- Don’t over-plan your courses before arrival; use the first week to attend lectures and then decide.
- Pick accommodation close to campus along Ngamwongwan Road – it saves a lot of time and money in Bangkok traffic.
- Install Grab and Line immediately; learn a few words of Thai – it is appreciated and helps off campus.
- Be open and say yes to the activities and trips early on; that is how you build your group of friends.
- Budget for travel – you will want to explore Thailand and the region, and it is cheap to do so.

10. Contact

I have chosen not to list a personal e-mail address, but prospective students with questions about the exchange are welcome to contact the International Office at Hochschule Trier, which supports the partnership with Kasetsart University.

I can wholeheartedly recommend the experience. A semester abroad at Kasetsart was one of the best decisions of my studies, and I would do it again without hesitation. **Highly recommended!**