

Work Placement Report – Joschka Ferch

Firstly I have to address how thankful I am for this opportunity and these experiences!

I have been staying in Leeds for three weeks, seeing a huge part of the city, their people and culture. After arriving on Sunday, the 29th of April, my co-students and me had a long walk through Leeds City, and arriving at our temporary home. After we got settled, our homeowner Carole took us to the next shop, to get the basics. Later that day we took another quick tour into the city, to have a drink together.

First week:

We started our first week by visiting the Leeds City College, to have a chat with Chezska Coward, who gave us a brief introduction to Leeds's culture, and some nice Inn's to check out during our stay. We also talked about the work placements, we were going to do in the following three weeks. We left the City College relatively early, and again just walked aimlessly through the City, having a look at everything that comes to our interest. Everybody planned their bus routes for the next morning, and we went to bed rather early, still a bit tired from the flight.

The first day I arrived at theDataShed, I barely made it in time. The reason some of the busses would just drive by, ignoring us come clear relatively soon: You always have to hold out your hand, to signal the bus driver that you want him to stop and pick you up.

Nevertheless I quickly got in touch with my co-workers, getting talked through their current project before noon. After setting up my machine, I noticed there was still much to learn before I could even start working on the project. I had to learn about Unit-Testing in general, and get to know more than just the basics of Python, which I had only read a bit about at that point in time.

So basically I had the whole schedule for the week planned.

Work itself was super convenient in theDataShed, in comparison to working in a financial company in Germany, where I have to check-in and out whenever I enter and leave my workplace, theDataShed's workflow is completely based on trust and convenience. You rather come and go, just so that you get your job done. At least that it – since I personally find relaxing in the office, just to calm down and/or take a break, very nice. The co-workers themselves were very nice and comforting. Especially George, James and Steward were always helpful and ready to answer my questions, and even ask a lot about Germany.

On Friday afternoon, after work, we went to a Local Pub, talked about what theDataShed has achieved in the last months. We were all laughing a lot, and were really talkative.

First weekend and second week:

On Friday, Robin and I were out partying, and Niklas and Max drove to Scotland, visiting a friend. Robin and I spend the rest rather boring weekend with cooking, and browsing some shops in the city, as per usual, and on Sunday, Niklas and Max returned.

The following, second week I spend learning more about Unit-Testing and Python, and also taking part in the meetings for the current project, theDataShed's team was working on.

Eventually, at the end of the week, I finally managed to find an ÜFL (Überraschung für Lea), which I was looking for everywhere.

Last, third week:

The last week I was writing some simple Unit-Tests for the project we were working on. Since I booked an appointment for my first Tattoo in Leeds in the first week, I had to set up everything for that as well.

I was talking to my tattoo artist and we were figuring out a good look.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, I sadly became sick and had to spend both days in bed, just to make sure I would not be ill for longer. Thursday, Mrs Bothe came for a short visit to theDataShed, had a short look at the office and a quick chat with Steward.

Because of my tattoo appointment, I was really nervous on Friday morning. After work I had to go shopping some basics for the last two days, and on Sunday morning, we finally flew back home, so I can see my beloved dog again.

All in all it was a great experience, and I cannot recommend enough to apply for such a great opportunity. I finally had the chance to try out all the English I have been learning for the past 14 years. It really helped me not just knowing the vocabulary, but getting the confidence to talk and even have small chats in English. In addition, you really notice what you have back home, all your friends and family you get to miss quite soon. Three weeks is a long time.