

# Exchange student report

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## General Information

<b>University</b>	<b>Essec Business School</b>
<b>Country</b>	<b>France</b>
<b>City</b>	<b>Cergy</b>
<b>Residence</b>	<b>Cergy Le-Haut</b>
<b>Period</b>	<b>24<sup>th</sup> August 2016 – 20<sup>th</sup> December 2016</b>

## Preparation

As soon as I got accepted to do my exchange at ESSEC Business School, I received an email from the university in which all procedures to follow prior to the arrival were explained quite clearly.

First step: complete administrative information on the ESSEC website by logging in with the details they give you. You will need to upload a copy of your ID/passport and proof of English proficiency (for IBEB students this can be requested at the information desk in H6)

Second step: look for housing and/or apply for housing in one of the three residences of ESSEC. ALEGESSEC will send you a brochure with all the information necessary and you can decide if you want to live in one of the student residences. ESSEC main campus is located in Cergy (I would suggest you look this up on google maps to avoid unpleasant surprises once you arrive) approximately 40 min by train from Paris city center. Rents in Cergy are much cheaper than in Paris, and this is where most exchange and international students will be living.

Furthermore, the French government provides subsidies for students to pay for part of the housing (if you need a visa to study in France, check if you are entitled to the APL subsidy. For all other students this subsidy is guaranteed). For this you will need a copy of your birth certificate (translated in French), so make sure to have it upon arrival.

Third step: choose your courses. This is done online, and you will be provided with a temporary course outline in May/June. However, make sure that the courses you choose are confirmed, as some changes can still occur before the registration open. Once a course is full it is not possible to register anymore, hence I would suggest you to register during the very first round, in the first weeks of July. Make sure to check your ESSEC email regularly (try to forward it to your normal email address) so that you will not be missing on important info and deadlines.

## Arrival

The arrival is perfectly organized by ESSEC and you can request on their website a free pick-up service that from Charles De Gaulle airport takes you to Cergy.

I would suggest this option especially if you are traveling alone and have quite some

luggage with you. Once you will get to the university you can set up all the first formalities, such as getting a mandatory house insurance, pick up your keys if you booked a room with ALEGESSEC, get your student card, and in case you want open a bank account. Banks will be present for the first week at the university to assist the new students.

## **Courses**

### Purchasing Management – 4ECTS

This course was about the main aspects of purchasing (Suppliers, Product, Transport and Price) and how to make decisions concerning different purchasing options. This course was the easiest I took and the professor is very friendly. However, I didn't really like the subject itself probably because I wasn't interested enough. If you are interested in the management side of logistics and supply chain you should take it. For this class there is a presentation and an exam, which are both extremely easy to pass.

### European Economics – 4ECTS

This course applied the mainstream economic theories from macroeconomics and microeconomics to European countries. It mainly focused on the financial crisis and the Euro sovereign debt crisis and how it affected European countries and which decisions were taken by the governments, the European Union, and the ECB to recover. Most theory is already covered in the first two years of IBEB, thus the class was also quite easy., but at the same time interesting because you could see how the theoretical concepts are applied in the real world.

### People and Organization – 4ECTS

This course was one of the most interesting I took, and the professor was very competent and prepared. It is basically a mix of Human Resources and Psychology applied to a business organization. You will do case studies, and learn about leadership, people management, organizational culture, and other key concepts. The class was not too challenging, however I did need to prepare a lot for the final exam as you needed the relevant material from the whole course.

### Communication – 4ECTS

This course consists on the Promotion part of the Marketing Mix. You will analyze thoroughly all the different ways to promote, by using case studies and real companies examples. The class is quite interactive, and I personally found it quite easy, especially after having taken Marketing at ESE in my first year.

### Advanced Business French – 4ECTS

At the beginning of the year they will place you in a French level course, if you don't agree with the one they assign you to you can request a change during your entry exam. It worked for me, and I was placed in the C1 class. More than a language class, it was a business class in French. We analyzed cases, and gave presentation

about various topics.

### Mergers and Acquisitions and Private Equity– 4ECTS

This course was the only very challenging course I took. I really enjoyed it, however the teacher was a bit disorganized hence it might be difficult to follow. It is worth taking if you have an interest in M&A and corporate finance , but take into account that it will be quite a lot of work (at least 4/5h per week on top of classes compared to max 1h for the other courses) so only subscribe if you are really motivated and committed.

## **Monthly Finances**

Living in France is quite expensive, and you will realize very soon that especially Paris as a city can be very expensive when going out or even getting a coffee.

Some guidelines from my own experience:

Monthly expense

- Rent : 600€ - 212€ APL subsidy (you will get this subsidy per each complete month that you pay rent, however it will be transferred to you quite late i.e. end of January/beginning February, so you will have to anticipate the money yourself)
- Navigo Transport card: 73€ (unlimited transport within all of the Ile de France – Parisian area)
- Groceries: ~200€
- Travelling: ~200€
- Phone contract: 20€ (50GB in 4G/ month at 19,99 with Free mobile! Highly recommend)
- Internet contract: 15€ (internet in Le-Haut residence is not included in the rent)
- Going out (clubs, activities, student parties): 150€
- Gym: 0€ (there is a very small gym in most of the residences and a brand new gym that opened while I was on exchange on campus free for students)

Total: ~ 1260€/month

## **Daily life**

You will soon realize that living in Cergy is not quite the same as living in Paris, but you can still try to make the most out of your time abroad. I travelled a lot around the Parisian area, and went away for at least one weekend per month. Furthermore, when I was staying in Cergy, and especially in the first month when the weather was still nice, I would try to go to Paris as much as possible. Finally even in Cergy, there are a lot of nice places to go to, my personal recommendations are the Axe Majeur and the port (especially in summer where you can enjoy bars and restaurants outdoor) and at ESSEC there is a student pub which is open 99.999% of the times and it's a good place to hang out in the evenings (with a good beer for 2€!) or where to get sandwiches during lunch time.

All of the classes are mandatory! You can only skip two per course, so take this into account when making your schedule. Even though the school has a good reputation, the courses are not as hard or demanding as at ESE, thus there is a lot of free time to enjoy.



Lake, park and stairs at the Axe Majeur (Cergy)



RER Station at Cergy Le Haut (the ESSEC Residence Cergy Le-Haut is 5 min walk from the station, and a train ride to Paris is approximately 40min)





View of Paris from the top of the Pantheon



ESSEC main building (Cergy)