



University of Mannheim

DD experience sharing

Fall 2020 – Spring 2022

HSU, YIN-SO

Date: 2022/Nov./24

Before sharing the study experience in Germany, I would like to thank to whole IMBA family and especially 2019 batch classmates. Without any of you, my amazing journey won't be so completed. This is indeed a life changing choice in my life. Sometimes you have to leave away from your comfort zone to embrace uncertainty and during this venture, it's painful but you will definitely enjoy the gains afterward.

2021 disclosed new different era of the world, Covid pandemic changes the way how we live, study and communication, etc. and it is the most valuable experience or extra learning course that most of student wouldn't face before. We must be more resilient to adapt the new coming environment and technology and learn how to deal with myself most of the time.

Note: In this sharing, I will streamline the application process since it won't be the same as usual due to pandemic situation. Any information here should not be treated as normal practice but the overall direction should remain the same.

1. Preparation of the application

It is important to keep the application timeline in mind since you might need to prepare for the English exam and keep up with the study in IMBA. Once you are qualified with the application to Uni Mannheim then you need to prepare study plan and other documents for internal interview (Please always check with IMBA office for latest information). Once you were selected as the candidate and you will be proposed to Uni Mannheim and most likely you will be the Uni Mannheim Student and school will issue the confirmation letter soon. Then, as many seniors suggest you should prepare the documents for VISA as soon as possible, and it would take roughly 3 months and the appointment should be taken online. However, in my case, it only takes like 1 to 2 months since the severity of Covid is horrible outside of Taiwan, not too many people plan to go out back then. BUT in the end the ramping up number of cases in Germany which forced the city lock down and we did not have any vaccine in the market. Even worst, most of the courses switch to online and it makes no sense to lock there in Germany compared to Taiwan "Zero policy" environment. Therefore, I stayed in Taiwan for 1 years more from Fall 2020 to Fall 2021 until I fully vaccinated with 2 dozes. Due to that, I applied for student VISA twice in Taiwan but since it only issue for half years and I have to do it again in Germany. I want to deliver a message that it's really time consuming and costly for every application in Germany, you should be aware of that before you come here.

2. Study in Uni Mannheim

My experience would be special from other seniors since every courses, discussions, projects and exams were doing online. I would still emphasize again that deadline is the most important thing. You have to follow the timeline to select the courses and also registered for the exam if you want to take the credit or you can also participate/ audit the course without any credit.

Mannheim Master of Management program consist of 6 areas including Accounting and Taxation/ Banking, Financing, and Insurance/ Information systems/ Management/ Marketing and Sales/ Operations Management. You can always participate first few classes and decide whether you want to take it or not. Compared to NCCU IMBA course, Mannheim's courses are more intensive and students here much care about the score since

you have to attach your transcript when applying the job in Germany. Usually, the course structure contains lecture and tutorial, and the final grade will be decided according to group assignment, individual assignment and final test depends on the course, but you have two chances to participate the exam if you fail the first one. Due to this mechanism, student can take more courses as if no exam period confliction.

Some of the courses are truly intensive such as M&A, Corporate Strategy, etc. It takes whole three days from 8 to 6. Within the class, you will be put into breakout room to discuss with your teammate and generate one slide report. Also, the class invited guest from the industry and share some real case studies and student can do role play to represent buy side and sell side. I would say you will experience full MBA teaching style in this class.

Last, you might worry about the seminar and master thesis for the last two semesters. Why it takes 1.5 years to finish the degree? Because you only can write your master thesis after taking one related seminar. Most of the DD student will take the core courses and some interesting course at the first semester and take seminar during the second semester. BUT I think if you want to put yourself into limit, you can try to finish within 1 year. Besides, some seminar like financing area, they usually do it on summer break which means you can continuously write the thesis after 1st semester. Before doing that, you should well evaluate your time and ability, you might need to scarify your fun student life a bit.

3. Student life

Apart from the academy, you can also apply for working student job if you can manage your study well. Take me as example, I take the working student job for my last semester since I only deal with my master thesis and I spent 20 hours a week with the company and rest of my time, I will write my thesis.

Next, I also want to share some fun event and the organizer.

1. VISUM (International student Org.): Lots of drinking game, party, city tour, festival, running dinner, social event, language exchange, etc.

2. Uni Mannheim: Schneckenhof party every Thursday. (Outdoor), Step by Step (Related to career or job seeking)
3. FSBWL (MMM student): Similar with VISUM.
4. Nice to meet you Mannheim: Volunteering (Help refugee to know city Mannheim)

Last, Mannheim is quite closed to Heidelberg, and it is the place with lots of mountain and vineyard. Therefore, if you like hiking or tasting wine, I pretty sure you will love this city.

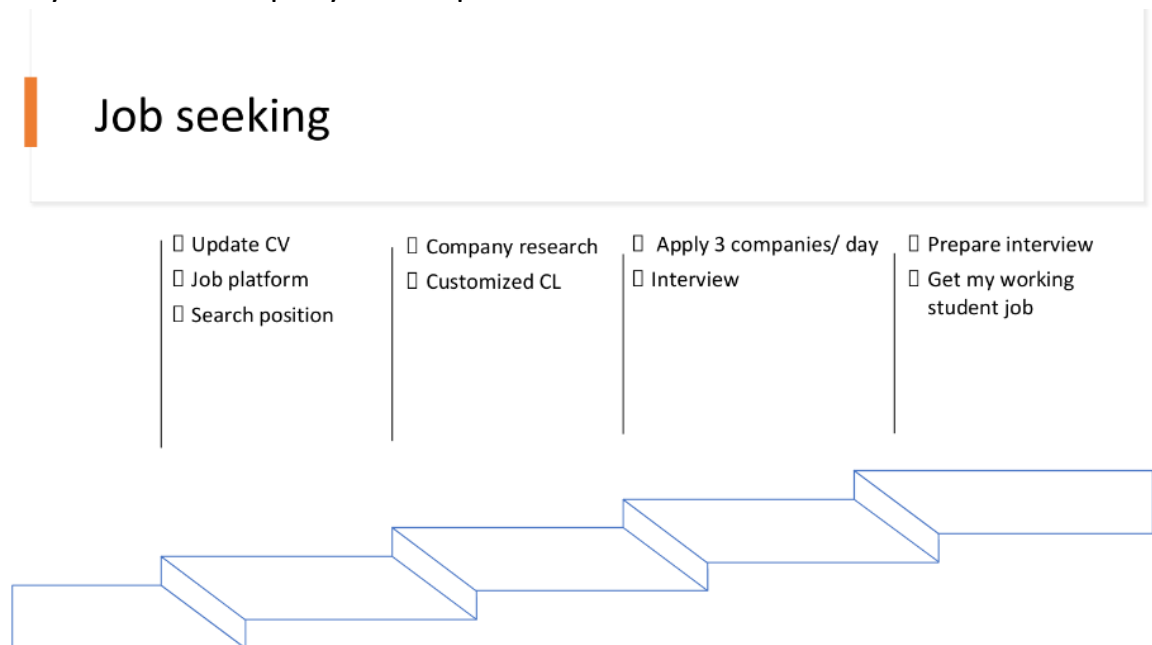
4. Tough time

1. VISA application: It takes time to get your VISA and only receive half years from Taiwan and you must apply again in German.
2. Block account application: You have to put around 13,000 + EUR (The amount changes from time to time) into online account to support your study.
3. Accommodation: I think it's the biggest issue for most of the student since it's high demanding from the international student from different school and school side is not really supporting.
4. Courses and exam: More competitive and intense. Online exam is stressful even it's open book exam but normally you don't have time to open it.
5. Master thesis: Uni Mannheim is an academic oriented school. Therefore, you only can write the academic thesis. However, you also can write with a company but it also needs lots of coordination between school and company.
6. Language: It's a bit hard if you don't speak any Germany especially when you want to buy some daily goods.
7. Finding job: I will talk more in next topic.
8. Inflation rate: Living cost is raising since Covid and war, etc.
9. Time Zone difference due to Covid pandemic.

5. Job seeking

If you plan to stay in Germany after graduation, I suggest finding some internship or working student job during your study. It is the fast way to continue work at the same company from my perspective. I will also take myself as example. Since I arrived in Germany at my 3rd semester and supposedly it was my last semester, but I didn't take seminar at 2nd

semester because I plan to extend one more semester to do working student job. Luckily, I follow with my plan, and I work and write my thesis at 4th semester and after graduation, I continue working at the same company. Below, you can find how I prepare within one month to get my job. Two things I want to highlight are cover letter and transcript. Almost every German company will request for these two documents.



6. Conclusion

Again, DD program is meaningful and life change experience for me. I won't say Uni Mannheim is the best option among the others but it's definitely worthy to challenge yourself with different culture, language and highly competitive environment. You always must evaluate yourself before making the choice, please don't just trace for the school reputation, it won't make you happy during the whole journey.

Last but not the least, I want to quote the saying but I forget where it's from. "It's always late but it's worthy to wait." I quite my job and study for 3 years without any income, sometimes I also learn how to stay alone when studying abroad and meet whole new friends, etc. Sometimes you feel life is so slow especially during exam period, but you will always find some good results in the end. Please keep patient and leave away from your comfort zone to embrace the new challenge.

Wish you also have a nice journey in NCCU IMBA and DD program.