

Memories for a lifetime: My year at the University of St Andrews



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Where can I best flourish personally – and expand my knowledge of finance through some hands-on experience? These questions were central to my search for a master’s degree course about a year ago. My choice fell on the Scottish idyll of St Andrews and its more-than-600-year-old university. Spending a year together with open-minded and highly motivated people from every corner of the world at such a magical place sounded very appealing. My year “in the bubble”, as St Andrews is jocosely described, was about to start.

More than just finance & management: Solving equations and understanding finance concepts are nothing unusual for a management-focused finance student. I will probably not remember all the formulas, but the sometimes challenging yet always educational and enjoyable hours I spent working in groups with my fellow students will stay in my memory, forever. Working closely with people from over a dozen nations is a far more valuable experience than any textbook can give me. The School of Management not only motivated me

to go beyond borders, it offered me a remarkably supportive environment.

Give your curiosity a go: St Andrews is known, above all, as the birthplace of golf, but this fact only scratches the surface of the place. Besides the odd golf swing, St Andrews inspired me to give climbing, tennis and hiking a go. As almost the whole social life of the University is organised by its over 150 clubs and societies, there are get-togethers, beach bonfires or discussion rounds, every day.

Why we are “forever Saints”: After about three weeks, the time had come for me to be “adopted”. Nothing unusual about this in St Andrews, where “academic families” are a long tradition. The renowned “raisin weekend”, in particular, brings a smile to my face. Here, my “academic siblings” and I solved a scavenger hunt, jumped into the ice-cold North Sea, and represented our family costumed in the famous foam fight. I also fondly remember evenings in charming pubs and restaurants, where global problems were solved, and visions of life were discussed. Since St Andrews is such a small town, yet full of magical spots, lovely traditions and remarkable events, I have already experienced the “forever Saints” spirit. Common memories create a shared identity, even with alumni one is meeting for the first time.

In closing, I would like to thank the British Chamber of Commerce in Germany for their support. These memories were also made possible by its ethos of building bridges. |