We use cookies to ensure that we deliver the best user experience of our website. If you would like to, you can change your cookie settings at any time. Continue

Undergraduate study in Modern Languages transcript

Video: **Undergraduate study in Modern Languages (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgyYkoc3ROU)**

Duration: 4:23 mins

Why Birmingham?

I chose Birmingham because it's one of the few universities that offers Law with languages, French in particular; its campus is beautiful and it's very close to the city centre on the trainline. It's very easy to get into the centre as well as enjoying campus university life.

You really get the best of both worlds. You get the campus and the city environments and it's very diverse and it's a very interesting place to learn.

The open day gave me quite an insight into the French course compared to other universities.

Firstly it was one of the few places that does offer French, German and Chinese together. But also, when I was 15 I came to visit Birmingham for a debating competition and I really fell in love with the place. From then on I really thought that Birmingham would be a really nice place to come.

I chose languages because after A Levels I knew if I didn't continue to study I would have lost the language completely and I was keen to eventually become fluent and to potentially live in France again.

Where did you spend your year abroad?

First of all I went to Beijing, which was incredibly scary but also very rewarding. It was a massive culture shock initially but then as time went by I actually developed this sense of feeling comfortable whilst being uncomfortable and I think that's equipped me for life beyond Uni.

I was a teaching assistant near Valenciennes. It was a rural setting but it was really very interesting. Living in a rural environment, I got to experience a lot of different aspects of the french culture that I wouldn't have experienced if I'd been in a big city. It's very intimate and it was very beneficial to my french as well.

In the second semester, I went to Erlangen in Germany. That was really amazing and I could feel that my German was really improving and that's really made me want to focus on German on my primary second language.

I was in Bordeaux and I had to study Law with the French students. That was going to lectures every day and taking part in the same exams which was really difficult but it was really good, prepared me well for fourth year and the listening part of the lectures, just absolute dictation, was really good. And generally living there is just a fabulous experience.

I was a British Council teaching assistant in a small town near Poitiers. I worked in three different secondary schools on a seven month placement.

Then I went to Dijon in France for a month. It was kind of like a little holiday at the end of the year abroad. We did do learning as well but the weather was just really lovely and it was just a really good end to my year abroad.

What are the strengths of the department?

The staff in the department have been exceptional. They really go above and beyond what you expect of them and are always willing to help and very easy to communicate with. There are lots of facilities on campus, especially the libraries have been so useful during the revision period and there's so many resources here, so many computer labs that it's invaluable.

There's a real kind of working relationship between the staff and the students. It's not them and us, it's all the language people together, which is nice.

Would you recommend this programme?

Yes, I've had a fantastic time studying languages at Birmingham and I really feel that not only are my languages better but I'm just a better person for it!

I would recommend this programme, definitely, especially the fourth year has been really enjoyable and pulling on all the experiences from my third year, I feel really ready to speak French fluently.

© University of Birmingham 2014