

A First Look at Germany... (A language assistant's initial impressions of a new land)

Within an hour of being in Germany one of the biggest stereotypes of the Germans was already disproved. My train was a half an hour late and my next one was delayed as well-what about everything in Germany being insanely organised and punctual?! This just showed me, though, that many of the preconceived ideas that we Brits have of the Germans just don't follow the reality.



The town Bochum itself was certainly something new for me as well. Compared to my tiny, quiet University town on the East Coast of Scotland, on my arrival (it will surprise many of you) Bochum seemed to almost be a bustling metropolis in comparison. My geeky excitement of there actually being a metro and trams just further proves this point. I cannot lie and say it is the most beautiful place that I have ever been but I

love it all the same-lots to do and so easy to get around, even to other towns-it is one of my favourite parts about this area that there are so many places just so close to one another-it is more like one big city. Being used to having to travel quite a distance to reach any kind of civilisation, this is a fantastic novelty for me!

Most importantly, though, what of the actual school Walter-Gropius Berufskolleg? I must firstly highlight that the term Berufskolleg baffled me before my arrival here, there is no such equivalent in Britain, and I must admit that I am still not quite sure what it is. What I have managed to find out about the school, though, certainly makes me wish that there was such an institution back in the UK. It seems that there is a course to suit everyone, no matter



what you want to do later in life. This does mean though that there are so many students and members of staff; all have been so welcoming to me but I must apologise for not being able to remember everyone's names and I do not see how I ever will!

There has certainly been a lot for me to take in during my first few months here and really one article cannot even touch upon the millions of new experiences that I have had. As I slowly learn the way of life in Germany many more of my preconceptions



have been disproved, yet simultaneously I have discovered that some stereotypes do hold some truth (I attended a mini Oktoberfest in Munster; Lederhosen and Dirndles a plenty!). I can honestly, wholeheartedly say, though, that all these



experiences have been good ones and I am so looking forward to continuing collecting more!

