

**Clare Stephens: Technical University of Berlin (Semester 1, 2010)**

**UQ Program: Bachelor of Engineering**

My exchange to Technische Universität Berlin was an amazing experience. I undertook the challenge during my fifth semester of Environmental Engineering, taking four of my five subjects in German. I really enjoyed the different learning approach in Berlin, everything was a lot more relaxed. For example, rather than enrolling in courses, students just enroll in exams at the end of semester and there's no compulsory number to sit. So if you get to the end of semester and feel like you aren't going too well, you can just decide not to sit half of your exams. The students have to be a lot more self-motivated than Australian students since they have fewer guidelines from the university.

I found the study experience interesting, but the biggest benefit I got out of my exchange was meeting amazing people from all over the world. I was living in a college where my roommates were from a huge variety of countries including Poland, Bulgaria, Egypt, India, China, Chile, Italy and El Salvador. I made so many great friends and we had heaps of fun together. Since we were all foreigners, we spent a lot of time immersing ourselves in the incredible youth culture of Berlin. The parties over there were huge and there was always heaps going on. We went to concerts, exhibitions and festivals that were different to anything I'd seen before. I'd especially recommend Sage nightclub near Jannowitzbruecke on Thursday nights and swimming at Schlachtensee, a beautiful lake that can be easily reached on the train. Anyone who is considering an exchange to Berlin should definitely make it happen, it's like no other city in the world and you'll never forget the experience!



Sage nightclub – might have been a good idea to bring swimmers....



Berlin bear outside the TU maths building.