

## **Bella (BA Graphic and Communication Design (Ind))**

I always knew that I wanted to take an Erasmus+ year in Barcelona, before my application to Leeds had even been accepted. This was because of a previous visit to the place, its reputation for design, and, admittedly, skateboarding. Thus it was easier in that regard when looking for jobs, and thankfully I found a great internship at Barcelona Metropolitan Magazine. It was initially a 3-month internship, but was extended twice and hence became 7 months in total.

In my spare time, I have had a lot of time to really become integrated in the city and see as much of it as I initially wanted. As the design assistant for the magazine, I have been sent out on countless photography shoots since I was the one taking the pictures to accompany the monthly articles. This meant I quickly met lots of interesting people and saw a lot of interesting places. The Metropolitan office is small, with less than 6 paid employees and a handful of interns, therefore, as interns, we get a good amount of responsibility placed on us and there is definitely a sense that we're valued, which is great! As well as taking the majority of the photos for the magazine, I also get to lay out 2/3/4 page spreads in new and interesting ways, I am involved with the decision of what to put on the cover every month, and have recently been a part of a complete re-design on the magazine, which was an awesome opportunity!



I feel like it's been a great experience because the magazine depends so much on a team effort, and it's actually quite nice to feel like your hard work and stress to meet deadlines pays off, especially when you can actually hold the final thing that you've been working on in your hands. My only negative comment would be that the placement has not been the most stimulating work I've ever done. As far as concept

design goes, there is virtually no scope to think 'outside the box' and as I near the end of my time here, it gets more and more repetitive. It has been so useful in this regard by helping me discover what I want to get out of a job after I leave university.

In terms of social life, it was not hard to meet new people in this city. Most people I've met have been incredibly welcoming and friendly, and there are loads of people from loads of different countries, which is nice and refreshing! Luckily my hours mean I get to spend most of my afternoons skating or cycling round the city. They also mean I was able to get a job in the evenings, and so I babysit three times a week.



I would 100% recommend doing an Erasmus year, the Erasmus+ grant is pretty generous and there's always a chance to get another job if you need more money! And second of all I would recommend Barcelona, it's an amazing city, easy to navigate, you will quickly settle in to life here.