

Erasmus Report – Stay at SKH (Stockholm University of the Arts)
From: HZT Berlin

My Erasmus experience at SKH was enriching on multiple levels. One of the most immediate and impactful differences I noticed was the quality of the facilities. The studios were well-heated during winter—which made early morning dance classes much easier—and well-ventilated in summer. This significantly improved my physical readiness and ability to focus. Unlike HZT, where moving between studios sometimes means going outdoors in cold weather, at SKH everything is housed in the same building, which helped my body stay warm and ready throughout the day.

Having access to a proper locker room was also very helpful, as it allowed me to store essentials and avoid carrying everything daily. Additionally, SKH offered resources like a Pilates room with a coach, a massage chair, and a sauna—which I used regularly, especially during intense physical periods. These facilities supported faster recovery and overall well-being.

The building itself was very clean, which I especially appreciated as someone who's allergic to dust. The smoke-free policy and secure access system (via keycard blips) also contributed to a sense of safety and respect in the space.

The structure of the program was also thoughtfully designed. I was placed in a third-year group preparing for graduation, and much of the semester was dedicated to helping students transition out of school. This included workshops and activities focused on planning and navigating post-graduation life. As I still have a year left at HZT, I found these tools especially valuable—I can now start experimenting with them within an educational setting before applying them in professional contexts.

Socially, integration was smooth. The group was very used to having Erasmus students, which made it easy to feel welcome and included from the start. We also had two group productions during the term, led by invited choreographers. Despite some criticism from the artists regarding budget limitations, the school provided enough funding for costumes and an external venue, which created a sense of stepping outside the “student bubble” and engaging with the broader artistic world.

One unique and inspiring initiative was the opportunity to take classes taught by MA students, who shared their research and practices. This allowed us, as BA students, to connect with and learn from those further along in their journey. At HZT, we're often invited to see performances by Master students, but not usually in the context of a shared classroom. I found this initiative incredibly valuable for bridging the gap between study and professional artistic identity.

The structural organization of the BA Dance program at SKH differs significantly from that of HZT. At SKH, student intake happens every two years, and the group moves through the full three-year program together. While this allowed for strong group cohesion, I personally value the modular and mixed-class structure at HZT, which starts from the second semester. The HZT system simulates professional life more closely by encouraging flexibility, adaptability, and interaction with a wider variety of peers.

The group size also impacted my experience. At SKH, I was part of a group of 17 (including myself), while at HZT my group is 11. I find smaller groups more conducive to deeper observation and interpersonal connection. With fewer students, it's easier to follow each other's development and create space for individual contributions—something I occasionally missed in the larger setting.

In terms of attendance policy, both schools use the 80/20 model. However, at SKH, attendance is self-regulated, and this caused some friction. In particular, irregular attendance during collaborative processes with guest choreographers disrupted the group dynamic and creative flow. In contrast, HZT's more structured system seems to promote greater accountability.

Another notable difference was the examination format. At SKH, each course had a final examination that included written, oral, and practical components. At HZT, assessments are more modular, and not all of them require the three components. While both systems are effective, I appreciated the depth that came from having all three elements tied to a single course—it provided a more comprehensive reflection on the learning process.

In terms of academic content and support, both institutions stood out for their quality. However, something that deeply influences my learning experience at HZT is the peer group. Many of my classmates are close to my age and life stage, which creates more mature and grounded exchanges. I also sense a stronger clarity in their artistic direction, something I associate with their level of experience and personal development. At SKH, I had the impression that many of my peers were still in an earlier stage of exploring their path, which made for a different group dynamic. That said, this also brought a level of openness and curiosity that was refreshing in its own way.

My semester at SKH offered an invaluable contrast to my studies at HZT. The experience deepened my understanding of different educational models in contemporary dance and helped me reflect on what conditions best support my development as an artist. I return to Berlin equipped with new tools, and grateful for this opportunity to grow across contexts.