1. Please introduce yourself.

My name is Aron Hammond. I was born and raised in Amsterdam. Born from a Ghanian father and a Dutch mother. I'm a third year student in Economics and Business at the University of Amsterdam. I choose this track because of my interests in the world of business. After the first year (in which all students did business, finance and economic courses) I found out that the quantitative side was more appealing to me academically. That's why I didn't to the business track, but rather economics and finance. However, I do not wish for an academic career. Therefore I choose to be active in my faculty's study association: Sefa. There I gain practical experience that will help me in my career. And besides my life at the university I like to hang out with friends. I have a close group of friends I know from high-school.

2. What do you expect to be the influence (academically) of a study abroad experience on you as a university student?

Next year I have to write my thesis and one of the fields I'm interested in writing about is income inequality and growth. It has always fascinated me how the Sweden always seems to outdo the rest of Europe when it comes to the standards of living. Living there for a semester would give me the chance to observe first hand how the, albeit broken up, welfare state has influenced the citizens and let this feed my curiosity on the subject.

3. Please explain the relationship between the (content of the) chosen exchange programme and your current study programme at the UvA?

This semester I started a minor in programming. The courses offered by Lund University's department of informatics would build upon my newly developed skills really well. There I will be studying the usage of computers in organisations. This then forms the bridge between my minor and major by combining the study of business and computers.

4. What will be the value for you personally if you compare studying abroad with staying at home?

Due to multiple reasons I have yet to move out of my parents' house. So staying abroad for an extended period of time would force me out. I feel I'm ready for this, and I really want the experience of settling in and creating a (social) life from scratch in a completely new country. I have lived in Amsterdam my entire life so I have never been in the situation that I had no social network. I've browsed the university's website and found that the campus is very accommodating to exchange students. Also the 'nations' provide a good social environment.

5. How will you prepare yourself for cultural differences?

There are friends and colleagues of mine who've been to Sweden and with whom I've already talked about their experiences with the Swedish (student) culture. Besides that, I'm in contact with many different sub-, and foreign cultures here as well and I adapt fast in new environments, so I expect to also get along in whichever culture I may find myself once settled into the city and the university.

6. Which benefits do you expect from this study abroad experience in relation to your future study and/or future career?

I am looking into the possibilities of doing a master programme Business Information Systems at the UvA when I complete my bachelor's. 30 EC worth of courses in the field will smoothen the transition from an economics and finance bachelor. Besides this, international experience is a prerequisite that many recruiters here in the Netherlands have for job applicants.

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