

International Polytechnic Winter and Summer Schools Through the Eyes of International Student

A student from Germany, Daniel DENK, participated in the 2019 [International Polytechnic Summer School](#), and in 2021, he chose the program on [Big Data: theory and application](#) of the International Polytechnic Winter School. We could not miss this opportunity and asked Daniel to compare summer and winter schools at Polytechnic University, full-time and distance learning formats, as well as share his opinion on how different the big data program, in which he also studied in Norway, is from that of SPbPU. About this and more in our interview.



- Daniel, good to see you! Tell us why you decided to participate in the International Polytechnic Winter School?

- The main reason is that I enjoyed my summer here. The content of the lectures, the presentation of the material, the competent instructor - everything was organized at a high level. At the end of the course, I had a clear understanding that I had learned a lot. That is why after a few years I chose Polytechnic University again.

- If you compare online training and face-to-face format, which is closer to you?

- It depends on how you look at it. The full-time format gives a lot of opportunities for intercultural communication. It is easier to communicate with other students, to work in groups. On the other hand, when you study remotely, all classes are recorded. If I doubt whether I learned the material correctly, I can simply review the lecture again. Besides, studying online allows me to arrange my schedule flexibly. For example, I continue to take classes at my university in Germany, but at the same time, I am also studying at Polytechnic University.

- And then, in the summer, where did you find information about our university?

- On one of the educational portals. I needed a course in entrepreneurship for my resume. I was looking for suitable programs, and I saw Polytechnic University. And I thought - and why not?

- And you often take part in summer and winter schools?

- Yes, if I get the opportunity, I try to use it. I have already been to China, Finland, Norway. In Norway, by the way, I also took a course on big data.

- We can't help but ask you for feedback. What are the similarities and differences between the courses in Norway and Russia?

- In Norway, the program lasted longer, about a month. Respectively, we studied more subjects, and the tasks themselves were more extensive. On the other hand, in Russia, we were taught subjects that we did not have at the Norwegian university. Thus, I was able to expand my knowledge in this field considerably.

- Why is it important for today's students to participate in such programs?

- I think that, first of all, it allows you to retake some disciplines at your home university. Secondly, it is a unique opportunity to gain valuable experience in intercultural communication and teamwork. Which, by the way, very few students can get.

- Whether your expectations from studying at the International Polytechnic Winter School were justified?

- Absolutely, yes. I had the task to learn new and useful information, to work in an international team on an interesting project - and I got it all.

- How was the teamwork organized at Polytechnic University?

- As I said, we had an international team with guys from different countries. The work was organized in the format of Agile: an interactive approach to work on the

project. We were constantly in touch, discussing problems, solving problems. I think we did very well.

- In your opinion, is it difficult to work together on a project online?

- Of course, there are more difficulties than in the traditional format of interaction, but they are all solvable. The key problem is the difference in time zones; it is important to take this into account when organizing work. I already had the experience of working remotely in software development for a company in Denmark. I can't say that online and offline formats were very different for me.

- What advice do you have for other students who are planning to take part in summer and winter schools?

- If you get the chance, make sure you take it. You will get an important experience of intercultural communication, get to know a new country, its culture, traditions, people. All in all, nothing but good!

- Daniel, thank you for the interesting interview! May all your tasks and goals come true for sure!

Prepared by the SPbPU International Office

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