



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	UC Bocconi
Semester & Year of Exchange	2023 S1
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Science
Major(s)	Mathematics, Economics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Econometrics	English	ECON210
Mind and Society: Intro to Cognitive Sciences	English	ECON unspecified 300-level
Economics of Institutions and Culture	English	ECON unspecified 300-level
Applied Stochastic Processes	English	STAT372

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points 72 points 108 points _____

Any comments about these papers?

Econometrics was extremely difficult (most Bocconi students say it's the hardest undergrad paper) and required more advanced math than any Otago commerce paper I've seen. I would advise against taking it if possible. Mind and Society was an enjoyable and unique mix of Psychology, Neuroscience and Economics with some simple mathematical models. I found Institutions and Culture quite dry as it was entirely based off reading academic papers and studies. It also required some prior knowledge of statistical methods. Applied Stochastic Processes was easily my favourite. The lecturer was so helpful and taught all the concepts very clearly.

How did the academic experience/ workload/ style of teaching differ from Otago?

Overall, the workload at Bocconi is slightly higher than at Otago, although this depends on which papers you take. As a general rule, I would say papers with fewer prerequisites tend to be easier and have lighter workloads. The teaching style is similar with a few lectures a week. Only Econometrics had tutorials, which were held every few weeks. Lectures are typically 90 minutes, but some papers occasionally have 2.5 hour lectures. You can choose whether to be an attending or non-attending student for each paper. I wouldn't recommend choosing non-attending unless you really have to, as the content and exams are often designed to be harder and you usually have to self-teach from a textbook.

Accommodation

What accommodation did you stay in? What were the pros and cons of your accommodation?

I was in a flat of four Otago exchange students in a suburb called Navigli. The location was perfect for Bocconi and the Navigli area is a trendy neighbourhood built around canals, with great cafes, restaurants and bars. Spotahome, Uniplaces and Airbnb are good resources for finding private options, although it can be difficult to organize from outside Italy. We arrived in Milan with 10 days' accommodation booked on Airbnb and then organized our Navigli flat once we were there, which was quite stressful.

There is also a company called Aparto, which has a partnership with Bocconi to offer a hall of residence for international students. This is a fairly recent option which only opened a couple of years ago. Everyone I met who lived there had a great time, although it is more expensive than finding private accommodation like a flat/apartment. Aparto also offers more of a social aspect, and is 100% safe and secure with very little admin required, so overall I would recommend Aparto over private accommodation.

Money matters

Please detail your basic costs, e.g. accommodation, flights, visa, food, insurance

Flights to Milan and back cost \$3400 altogether, although I came back in September after travelling so it can definitely be done cheaper, depending on the time of year you come back. The apartment was 575 euros per month per person, but we shared 2 bedrooms between 4 of us. The visa was only \$82.50, and you also need a Permit of Stay (explained below) which costs about 100 euros altogether. Groceries in Milan were cheaper than Dunedin, but the supermarkets were generally small with a bit less variety than NZ supermarkets. I used TINZ for insurance, which was \$595 for 5 and a half months of cover. Phone plans are much cheaper in Europe than NZ. Mine was 15 euros per month with Vodafone for 50GB data + unlimited calls/texts. A metro ticket in Milan is 2.20 euros valid on all public transport for 90 minutes. For 22 euros per month (plus 10 euros activation), you can get an ATM travel card, so if you use public transport a lot in Milan this is a good option.

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, Cash passport, foreign bank account, etc.)

Get a Wise account and order the card for \$14. Super easy to use and will be the only thing you ever need to use to pay overseas.

Visas & Insurance

Did you have to apply for a visa? What was the process?

Unless you have an EU passport, you need to apply for a student visa by sending your passport + documentation to the Italian Embassy in Wellington. That's the easy part. When you get to Milan you need to get a Permit of Stay which is a VERY bureaucratic process where you need to fill out a big form, get it stamped correctly and post some documents, before an appointment at the immigration police station to receive your permit and have your fingerprints taken.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

What organised activities were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

There is an Erasmus Student Network (ESN) which basically runs all extra-curricular activities, weekend trips and parties for exchange students. I would recommend contacting ESN Milan before you arrive so they can add you to all the WhatsApp groups you might be interested in. I missed out on a few events at the start of the semester as I wasn't added yet.

What was the university/ city like?

The facilities at Bocconi are just okay. Most of the lecture halls are really nice and modern, but the space in the library/study rooms is quite limited. Milan is a beautiful city. There are so many unique neighbourhoods and pretty buildings. Milan also has a good central train station so it's really easy to visit other Italian cities and towns. Most people there speak English to a good enough level that you can visit shops and restaurants without knowing Italian, but it's a good idea to learn just the basics so that you can say hello, thank you etc.

Any recommendations for things to do, places to visit, places to eat etc.?

Places to eat close to uni: Dahlia Lab, KIOSK, Delicious Baobing

Around Navigli: Farini, Le Colonne Gelati, Via Pasteria, Zog

Places to visit: Duomo, Piacoteca di Brera, Sforzesco Castle, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Prada Foundation (and Bar Luce, the café there designed by Wes Anderson)

MUST TRY: Panzerotti Luini, it's the best cheap snack around the city centre

Any tips for future students?

- Sign up as an international student with YesMilano for help with getting your tax code
- @visit_milano and @thenestmilan are good Instagram pages to act as local guides
- Skyscanner is useful for booking flights
- Omio is great for booking trains/buses between cities in Europe
- TripAdvisor is very useful as it has a ranking of 'Best Things to Do' in virtually any city/town you might want to visit
- Rick Steves Audio Europe app has walking tours for heaps of major European cities/landmarks

- Use Google Maps lists to label places you want to visit and your favourite places you've been so you can recommend to others

Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

I honestly can't recommend going on exchange enough. It's such an amazing opportunity to experience new cultures and see incredible things, all while earning points for your degree. You pay the same fees as you would in Dunedin, and Bocconi is a renowned university with Europeans paying thousands per paper so you get a really good deal in that regard. Milan is a well-connected city perfect for visiting Italy and the rest of Europe. I visited over 30 towns/cities across Europe, and it was super easy to do as you can get to almost anywhere via train or a short plane trip. My personal favourites were Amsterdam, Budapest, Antibes and Dubrovnik but there's virtually no end to the awesome places you can visit. I have way too many photos from my trip to choose from, so the ones attached here are just from Italy as these are definitely the places you'll want to see if you choose Bocconi!



Pompeii, Positano, Lake Como (Varenna),

Roman Forum, UCL semi-final at San Siro, Duomo di Milano