



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Vienna University of Business and Economics
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2, 2018
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Economics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Monetary Policy in the US and the EU	English	ECO3XX	
Global Employer Branding	English	MART3XX	
Fondation of Health Economics and Health	English	ECO3XX	
German Business Communication Ia	German	GERM2xx	
			Overall these 4 papers = 3 Otago papers

Any comments about these papers?

I would really recommend the German language paper. Firstly it is full of exchange students so you will make lots of friends! It is also so much easier to learn a language whilst you are immersed in the language so really rewarding and a super fun class.

The Monetary Policy class is held over two weeks and very intensive – they flew a Professor over from the USA to teach the course – the Lectures are very good at WU! As one of the only non EU and US class members it was a bit overwhelming at first as everyone had a much better basic knowledge than me. But in the end it was such an enjoyable class as it is real-life based learning rather than theory based which I really enjoyed.

The other 2 were a little bit dry but easy enough so happy I took them as it didn't require a huge amount of work.

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

The academic lifestyle was very different to Otago. Firstly I had no classes bigger than 30 people and therefore becomes much more of a school learning environment than an Otago. Many classes will give you points purely on participation. This means that most classes you can only miss 1 or 2 classes otherwise you fail!

Classes are also often block classes, which means they only run over a week or two, but intensely rather than over the whole semester. This can be super helpful for traveling and most weeks I had no more than 3 days of uni and could travel the rest of the time. Be smart about how you choose your papers. I also was able to finish the semester before Christmas (even though the semester finished at the end of January) due to the classes I choose, which meant I could go away for Christmas and New Years and not worry about Uni.

When you are looking for papers – really have a good look for papers that you would not have the opportunity to do a Otago – there are so many interesting sounding papers that I am annoyed I did not look more thoroughly before I started.

Overall I found the workload really light and the content pretty easy, but in some ways the content was much more interesting than Otago as it was much more real life based than theory based.

Accommodation

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

I stayed at one of the OEAD houses called MOLKERIERSTRASSE. This is a big apartment block filled with mostly exchange students, about a 5 minute walk from the campus.

I had my own bedroom that was super spacious and then shared a bathroom and kitchen with two other girls. The accommodation is really nice for a student dorm (the nicest accommodation I visited from all my friends on exchange around Europe).

MOLK is the place that all the exchange students want to be, all the pre drinking is done at this residence before a night out. Though it is not as easy to meet people as Otago dorms as you all eat separately and not as many common areas to hang out. So you really have to get out and make an effort to make friends right from the start.

It cost 480 euros a month – which works out just over \$200 NZD a week – so a bit more than Dunedin flats but not too bad.

Money matters

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

Accommodation – as mentioned before accommodation was 480 euros a month with everything included

Flights: I booked flights over early on and paid \$900 dollars – I flew into London as was traveling before I went to Vienna. My flight back was a bit more expensive as I didn't book as early and paid \$1300 – I choose to fly home from Munich, Germany as Vienna can be very expensive to fly in and out of if you do not book early enough.

Food: Food I believe is pretty relative to NZ if you shop at the supermarket – I probably ended up spending more than I would in NZ because I ate out more due to socialising and trying Viennese food. The uni has a little supermarket on campus that does salads and sandwich ect that were only a couple of euros so they were a good deal.

Visa: \$300

Insurance: \$500

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

When you first get to Vienna the Uni will point you in the right direction to start up a Austrian bank account (Erste Bank) for free. I would seriously recommend doing this as it means that you can put a decent lot of money into that account from the start and not pay the conversion fees everytime you pay your accomodation and withdraw money from the bank as well as it making it easy to use your card in shops. Be aware that Austria is very cash orientated so always hold cash when out and about as often they will not take card.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes I had to apply for a Visa and it was a fairly intensive process.

You have to go through a agency called VFS Global as there is not an Austrian embassy in NZ that can issue a Visa. You will have to be physically present in Auckland and go to an appointment as they have to take finger prints. You will need proof that you have enough money to support yourself over your time in Vienna, your flight details (preferably there and back) though I only had there and managed to get my Visa, have evidence of where you will live in Vienna, acceptance letter to the Uni, travel insurance and show you have somewhere to come back and live when you return to NZ. Go onto VFS Global website and you will find a checklist.

Make sure you start this process early and give yourself lots of time as your passport will have to be sent to Australia – I ran into problems that I was leaving for Europe nearly 3 months before I would move to Vienna and they would not process my Visa 3 months before I was suppose to start living there so I have about 1 week between my visa being approved and leaving for Europe but luckily my passport was posted back in time – but keep that in mine!!

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No – but you must have insurance.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

EBN organises lots of events – so make sure you buy an EBN card at the start of semester.

At the start of Semester there are a few events to attend – a welcome dinner and a traditional austrian dinner at a very cute little restaurant - this is a great place to meet people as everyone is out to make new friends – I meet some of my closest friends at these events.

There are other events like wine tasting, wine hiking (you will find Vienna loves its wine!), a sports group which are all fun through out the semester, the more you get out and do the more people you meet

Best of all there are trips of Budapest, Salzburg, Krakow, Oktoberfest and Skiing ect. They are a bit pricey but so much fun. I did the one to Budapest and it was awesome to have so many friends to explore the city with and go out at night. I meet so many people and had a great time. I wasn't able to do the skiing trip as my family came to visit me but apparently this is the best trip of all and if you can go!!

What was the university/ city like?

The University is super modern – your main library looks like a spaceship. Be aware that everyone dresses very nicely for class – it is a step up from Otago! There is always lots going on around the uni so make sure you follow their facebook or instagram account so you are aware of what is going on. The University prides itself on being very international so you will meet Professors and students from all over the world – the uni also runs really interesting talks about global issues that are interesting to attend.

During Christmas they have Mulled Wine in the evenings which is fun after late night classes (be aware it is common to have class that goes to 9pm!)

The University has a massive ball in January – if you are there then – GO! 4000 people go and it is in the old Austrian royal families palace – the Hofburg Palace – it was the most incredible thing I have ever seen. It is like you are going to a ball from the 1800s – something you will never get to do anywhere else in the world

The city is beautiful, clean and feels very safe. The more you look, the more you find cool things to do. The centre of town is very old and traditional looking with big white buildings and then the suburbs around it are much more hip and trendy. Make sure you go out and explore as there is so much more than the city centre.

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

Go do anything and everything that you wouldn't usually do in NZ.

I went to a Opera for 4euros that was super cool. The Spanish riding school is an amazing experience too. When the weather is still warm bus out to the vineyards and drink wine and have lunch out there. It is about 2.5 euros for a class and you sit within the vines – one of my favourite days. Go and explore Neubagasse area – it has all the funky cafes, bars and vintage clothes shops. If you are there for Christmas go to all the Christmas markets you can, they are magical. The one by the Rathaus is the biggest but there are many smaller more traditional ones around.

There is a rooftop bar that over looks the city – it is called Das Loft – get there in the afternoon so you can see the city in light and then as the sun goes down and the city lights up it is even more impressive.

There is a huge old Green House now cafe called Palmhaus that is pricey but so beautiful!

The best part about Vienna is being so central – I was able to travel most weekends and went to places such as Budapest, Krakow, Slovenia, Rome, Innsbruck and many more all within my 3 months at uni there.

Any tips for future students?

Say yes to everything and get out there and make a lots of friends! Its so clique but you will only regret the things you don't do!! You might find that your friends class schedule is rather different to yours so go out and explore on your own when your friends are busy. You'll get to see everything at your own pace.

Sign up for a Buddy before you go, they will offer to pick you up from the airport and help you get your key for accommodation, you will appreciate it a lot when you are arriving to a new city!

As soon as you get there get there start to sort out your transport pass – it saves you a heap of money (Uni will explain how to do this)

EBN (Eramus Buddy Network) will give you a free Sim card when you get there but I would suggest getting a Sim card from Drei – their network is awesome for when you need to roam in other countries – more expensive than what EBN gives you but much more reliable

Use Facebook to look up events that are happening in the city – it is the easiest way to know what is going on outside the Uni bubble – my friends and I found things like the Vienna international film festival and mini Oktober Fest through facebook that were fun events to go to.

Overall Experience

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

My exchange experience was amazing. Living in a new city and meeting so many people from all around the world was an awesome experience. You will understand how differently people see the world which is hugely interesting – always be open to what people have to say. I think you will also realise what an awesome place NZ is!

My exchange experience was so much more than 3 months in Vienna – it allowed me to travel Europe for 7 months – so make the absolute most of this opportunity you are getting! There will be times when you are out of your comfort zones but they will be your best experiences! I learnt a lot about myself and grew so much. GO ON EXCHANGE



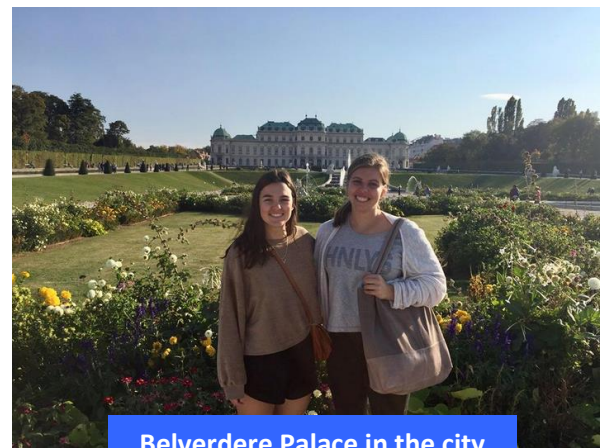
Lunch in the Vineyards in Vienna



WU Ball at Hofburg Palace



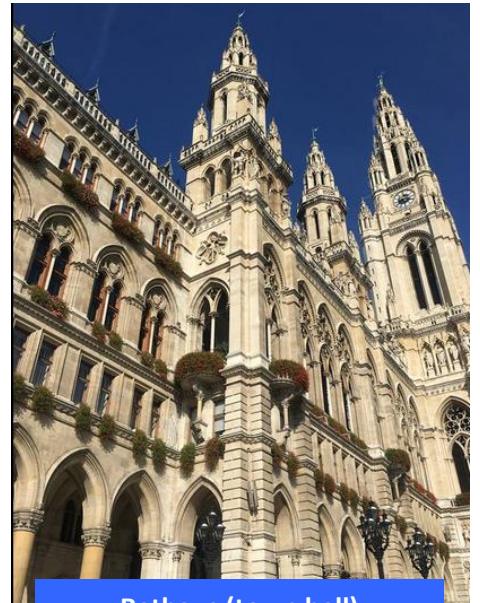
Rathaus Christmas Market



Belvedere Palace in the city



Snow day in Vienna



Rathaus (town hall)