



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Strathclyde
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 2018
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Marketing with a Minor in Communications

Academics/course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
MK209 – Understanding Consumers and Markets	English	MART210 Consumer Behaviour	18
MK329 – Marketing Communications in the Digital Age	English	MART330 Integrated Digital Marketing	18
P3100 – Journalism and Creative Writing 1a	English	MFCO220 Writing for the Media	18

Any comments about these papers?

MK209 – Good lecturer and the content was pretty interesting but I had a lot of cross over with a stats paper I had already taken at Otago. I found the way the assignments were marked in this paper was really inconsistent and harsh. The exam at the end was pretty chill.

MK329 – This paper was my favourite and lots of the stuff that was taught in it was actually really useful. The lecturers were really good. The assignments were some of the most interesting I've done in my whole time at uni so I do recommend this paper! The lecturer also gave the exam questions in the last lecture!

P3100 – This paper was not what I expected and was just purely creative writing, with the journalism aspect being taught their second semester which I wasn't there for. I wouldn't take it again but it was super easy and there wasn't an exam.

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

The biggest difference I found was the grading system and the way assignments were marked. A 40 is a pass in the UK which is great but lecturers are rare to give a lot above a 70 so the marks compared to Otago weren't fantastic.

I thought the workload was more than papers I had taken at Otago. But for 2/3 papers there was an element of having to hand in something every week which was probably why I thought there was more work required. I also found tutorials not helpful at all but they take attendance so make sure you go because if you don't then they penalise your grade.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in Birkbeck Court. This is the cheapest hall but also the smallest. In saying that, I really enjoyed staying in Birkbeck. I choose it based on recommendations from others that went on exchange. It is small and the kitchen is really, really small but the room size is pretty standard and the bathrooms are decent enough (our shower pressure was the best I've ever used). If you do want more size then everyone that I know that was in the other halls was happy with what they had but it can be a pretty big price jump. Birkbeck did have the reputation of being the 'party' hall but I'd say most of the halls were very into their partying and there was probably a party somewhere for every night that I stayed there.

If you do stay in a hall, laundry is expensive. Don't pay for the drier to save money and dry your clothes in your room with the heater blasting.

Money matters

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

Accommodation: £1785.00 so about \$3500.

Flights: \$2360 for flights from Auckland to Glasgow. I took the quickest route with barely an hour of stopover so it was a bit more expensive. I also bought the Multi Flex pass for \$150 which meant it was free to change my flights, which I did end up using for changing my flight home.

Visa: The visa I used was the stamp at the border and it was free. I would recommend this to everyone if you are only there for less than 6 months. It is easy to use and you'll have no problems.

Food: Food in the UK is so much cheaper than NZ. Aldi is a big yes for food, just be cautious because their fruit and vegetables, while being insanely cheap, go off very fast. I spent more than I needed to for food but you could definitely survive on 20-30NZD, if that.

Insurance: I got insurance through STA Travel when I booked my flights for \$367 (this is with the uni's discount they have with STA Travel).

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

I used a Loaded Card, which was really good. I used this instead of the Cash Passport because I was already with Kiwibank. It was so easy to put money on and it transferred instantly. Most places have Paywave (contactless as they call it in the UK) so make sure you use that and most of the time you won't have to sign every time you use the card. The biggest drawback of the Loaded Card was that you

can't transfer people money and they can't transfer you money which is really annoying. If you're there for more than a semester I would definitely open a bank account.

Visas & Insurance

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

No, I just got the Visa Stamp that they give you at the border. This website is helpful to find out if you are eligible and to know what you need at the border. <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes, but it was pretty much the same as what Otago requires you to have so I didn't need any extra insurance.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are so many tours that the university and all the different international student associations organised. I never went on any of them but some of my flat mates did and they raved about them!

I also joined the Strathclyde netball team which was a great way to meet people and do something that was just like being at home. There are so many sports clubs at Strath and I recommend that you join one, whether you've played the sport before or not! All the clubs put on so many social events and nights out so it's well worth going to all of them that you can!!!

What was the university/ city like?

Glasgow and Scotland in general are very similar to New Zealand, which I really loved. It made settling in so much easier and I feel like I didn't suffer from as much culture shock as I was anticipating. I found it really easy to find your way around Glasgow with the trains and underground system. Most of the things I ended up doing in Glasgow were in walking distance because my hall and the uni is so central.

The university is laid out pretty well and is marked really well so I never found myself getting lost. The new uni gym opened when I got there and it is like Unipol X100. If you are in halls it's free to sign up and I recommend taking advantage of it!

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

- Stack and Still. A new pancake house that opened when I was there. Incredible.
- Tantrum Donuts. Hand crafted donuts that are out of this world.
- Utilise Skyscanner and Kayak! They can have ridiculously cheap airfares! I got around mostly by plane, which was cheap, but you can also get some stupidly cheap buses and trains to other parts of the UK/Europe.
- Pick up loyalty cards in any shops that you can. Even though I was there for only a semester, I racked up so many loyalty points/discounts.
- If you're there around Christmas time, go to as many Christmas markets as you can! Edinburgh's are a must if you only end up going to one.

Any tips for future students?

Don't be afraid to travel around by yourself! As long as people know where you are and where you're going, it's really great to just have a weekend away by yourself!

Go out and meet as many people as possible the first few weeks. The uni has so many things on throughout Fresher's Week (O Week) so do try and go to as many as you can.

Overall Experience

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

Exchange is one of the best things you can do. Even if you're reading this and still unsure about doing it, do it! It has been one of the best experiences of my life. I got to visit so many places in Europe and the UK for dirt cheap. Glasgow is such a fun city with so much to do and see. I met some of the best people on exchange, who I talk to everyday. If you're anxious about going, no matter where you go as soon as you start talking to people the first thing they will bring up is the accent. While most will call it Australian, it really is a great way to get talking to people. Anyone will strike up a conversation with you based on your accent so if you're nervous about meeting people and talking to them, people are very open to talking and meeting new people!



At Edinburgh Castle. You can get a super cheap train from Glasgow Queen St Station



Eiffel Tower in Paris



At the Christmas Markets in Glasgow!



At Disneyland Paris!!



The Strath netball team after one of our games