



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	Friedrich-Alexander-Universitat-Erlangen-Nurnberg
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 1 2025
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	Bachelor of Applied Science (but began my masters at FAU)
<b>Major(s)</b>	Marine science and environmental management

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Otago equivalent</b>
German A1.1	German and English	10 Otago points
Field course	English	10 Otago points
Cryosphere	English	10 Otago points
Boundary Layer	English	10 Otago points

Total Otago credits gained:  54 points  72 points  108 points  40 points

Any comments about these papers?

They were very good, and done in a different style than what I am used to at Otago, but it was a good switch up. The German language course was compulsory, but I think it was extremely helpful; the class was taught in a very interactive fashion so that everyone was encouraged to speak and practice it. It was helpful to learn the basics so that I could go to a café and order, or go to the supermarket and the train station etc. and not be completely lost.

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

It was my first semester of my masters, so I don't exactly have an Otago equivalent to compare it to, but it felt much more independent and self-directed than at Otago. It also had a lot of emphasis on presentations, but this may be because English was the second language of most people in the class and so naturally that aspect would be more challenging than it is for me. One course (field course)

was completed in 3 days of data collection with only one assignment attached to it. So I did not have a scheduled class during the semester.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in a self-contained university student dormitory. Similar to halls of residence at Otago except you cook for yourself. I liked that I could be independent but still live with students. Great location, cheap rent, and doing it through the university made it a very easy and smooth process.

## Money matters

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

Visa (flights to wellington to get this also), insurance (health and travel insurance), flights, accommodation, food, travel (transport and accommodation), spending money (e.g. social gatherings, activities, drinks), local transport (monthly DB subscription).

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

Cash is good in Germany. I had to open a 'blocked bank account' for my visa application which provided me with a German bank account also, so I would mainly use this, but I would sometimes use my NZ bank account via payWave too.

## Visas & Insurance

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

Yes I had to get a student visa. The fee for the visa itself was covered by my Erasmus scholarship, but I had to go to wellington to get it as they only allow you to get it in person, and it was expensive to fly down. Otherwise, it is relatively straight forward as the Embassy has clear instructions on what to bring/requirements for it on their website.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

Yes (German health insurance).

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Lots of faculty organised events, for example the geography committee would do BBQs and games in parks. I would recommend future exchange students try to put themselves in these situations as often as possible because it is a great way to meet people, especially those who are studying something similar to you. The friendships I made and people I met are definitely one of the best things to come from the exchange.

*What was the university/ city like?*

A (relatively) smaller town, they have done a good job at preserving the traditional German feel (for example no sky scrapers, and buildings are very German style), city is designed for biking and has great public transports (buses and trains), a very student city (I would almost compare it to Dunedin in that sense).

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

Nuremberg is only a 15 minute train ride away which is a larger but equally as beautiful city, there is shopping, museums (e.g. rallies museum), and good food. I loved the pretzels, schnitzel, and curry wurst in Germany. I also visited the other major cities like Munich, Frankfurt, Cologne, and Berlin (all fantastic).

*Any tips for future students?*

Travel as much as possible and go to as many events as possible.

## Overall Experience

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

My exchange experience at FAU in Semester 1 of 2025 was an incredibly rewarding and enriching chapter of my academic journey. As I transitioned from my undergraduate studies at Otago into the first semester of my master's at FAU, I experienced an independent and self-directed learning environment, with courses covering the cryosphere, the boundary layer, and a unique condensed field. These courses covered a range of environmental topics that I am interested in. Living in a university dorm with my own kitchen allowed me to be flexible while still staying closely connected to other students, and the affordability and location made it even better. I appreciated the emphasis on biking and efficient public transport in Erlangen, as well as the city's beautiful, traditional German aesthetic. The social events organized by the geography faculty were great for meeting like-minded students. I made the most of my weekends in Germany exploring cities like Nuremberg, Munich, Berlin (all paid for under the monthly DeutschBahn subscription). I was also fortunate enough to visit countries like Holland, France, Austria, Czech, and Hungary. My entire family lives in Hungary, so doing this exchange was a perfect opportunity to see them again and to practice my Hungarian (the last time I was in Europe was 2013). The combination of academic growth, cultural immersion, and new friendships made it a semester I will always treasure.

I will attach images in the email.