



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Edinburgh
Semester & Year of Exchange	2019 Semester one
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Chemistry and Accounting

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Techniques of Management	English	Science 200 unspecified	
Physical Geography	English	GEOG101	
Sustainability and Social Responsibility (online)	English	Science 100 unspecified	

Any comments about these papers?

I had never taken a paper that was taught online before, but the sustainability paper turned out to be one of my favourite papers I have taken throughout my study. I found it very interesting and a relevant paper for any degree. Although it was more difficult to meet class friends in an online paper, the format meant you could work at your own pace and from anywhere. I would really recommend this paper to anyone studying any degree!

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

I found the teaching style to be very similar to Otago; lectures, tutorials and labs. However there seemed to be less frequent assessments throughout the semester in Edinburgh than Otago. The two on campus papers I took each had one assignment/essay during the semester and a final exam. The online paper had three assignments due throughout the semester and no final exam.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in Fraser Court student accommodation. This was a relatively small accommodation (flats of four) and seemed to be primarily first year students. The location was perfect for me as I had classes at both campuses and this was in the middle of them, a 20 minute walk to each. It was about a 15 min walk to the supermarkets, student pubs and handy (5 minutes) to the bus stop where you can catch the airport bus. Because the accommodation is self catered and arranged in flat type blocks I found it quite hard to meet many other people from Fraser Court outside of my flat, but became best friends with my flatmates.

Money matters

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

My approximate basic costs were:

Accommodation (Fraser court)	\$4,500
Flights (return)	\$2,500
Food (weekly)	\$50
Insurance (comprehensive \$0 excess)	\$640

Generally, in Edinburgh I found the supermarkets on par or cheaper than NZ. Eating out could be a bit more pricey, depending on where you went. The normal/standard price for a pint at a student bar is £3 (\$6), if you are paying more than this I think you are in the wrong place!

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

I organised myself a multicurrency cash passport before I left NZ and used it the whole time I was away. It was very useful and easy for traveling around Europe because you can load both pounds and euros onto it. It made managing my money easier because once it was loaded with pounds I could think in pounds and not NZD, so had a better idea of how much I was spending and didn't have to worry about converting things to NZD in my head.

Visas & Insurance

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

I came into the UK on a 'short term student' visa, this is a 6 month visa stamp in your passport. To get this Visa I just had to show the boarder control my letter of acceptance from the University of Edinburgh to prove that I was a student. It is important to keep a copy of your letter of acceptance handy in you carry on luggage when you travel because each time you leave and re-enter the UK you need to show this letter to get the 'short term student' visa stamp.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Like Otago, there are endless amounts of clubs and societies to join. There is also an International and Exchange Student Society which organises a lot of trips around Scotland. These are great ways of meeting people.

What was the university/ city like?

I found Edinburgh to be a very student friendly city, similar to Dunedin. The University had two main campuses, I had classes at both so did a fair bit of walking between the two (although there is a university bus that shuttles students between the two).

There was always something going on around the city – I never found myself bored. The buildings are all beautiful and have the Harry Potter vibe.

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

One of my favourite nights was going to a ceilidh, there were kilts and accents flying. I don't think you can leave Scotland without going to at least one of these. Make sure you try haggis at least once and a whiskey tasting is fun!

Arthurs seat is a good walk with a view – try to pick a day not too windy!

It is a great city to wander around with cute cafes and pubs everywhere.

Any tips for future students?

The semester fly's by so quickly! If you are thinking about doing something, joining something, or going somewhere, just do it. You don't want to get to the end of the semester and realise you ran out of time.

If you think you will be using the trains a lot around the UK, I really recommend getting a railcard to save you some money.

Most of the accommodation doesn't come with bedding etc. but don't worry about it. There is heaps of really good second hand stuff floating around – you can easily avoid buying it new.

Invest in a good pair of walking shoes and a raincoat. In addition, a good carryon bag/backpack is essential for quick trips away (dragging a wheelie bag over cobblestones is a nightmare).

Skyscanner is an awesome website for finding cheap flights around Europe. If you are able to be flexible with your dates and destinations, you can find yourself on some very cheap holidays.

Overall Experience

Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience.

I was feeling very nervous pre exchange but I am so happy that I did it. It was strange feeling like a first year again during the last semester of my degree and going through those same feelings of literally knowing no one, but so worth it.

I made some really great friends from all over the world who I will for sure be staying in contact with.

I was really lucky to be able to do a lot of travel around the UK and Europe before, during, and after my semester. I was also lucky to have friends also on exchange in other places who I could visit and stay with, returning the favour.

Scotland is a beautiful country with very friendly and helpful people. I felt very welcome and safe in Edinburgh and know I will be back in the future.