



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Aarhus University, Denmark
Semester & Year of Exchange	Autumn semester, 2023
Otago degree(s)	BSc
Major(s)	Ecology and Marine science

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Geographic information system (GIS)	English	SURV309
Ecotoxicology	English	Interest paper
Sedimentology and sedimentology	English	GEOG395
Conservation genetics and molecular ecology	English	ZOOL319

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

Any comments about these papers?

The papers all focus on more specific areas of the a given subject, very different from Otago which seem to have a broader focus. But all the papers were very interesting.

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

The workload appeared easier as there was no internal assignments and less homework to be done. But I think the content is a touch harder. The style of teaching is very different with 2 hour lectures (with a break) and more hands on/interactive lab work with more class discussion.

Accommodation

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

I was very fortunate to be put in the Park Kollegium hall. This is the only accommodation on campus and made walks to every lecture no more than 5 minutes and was a very handy location to the campus bars, town and supermarkets etc. This also meant I was the only exchange student on my floor, which I feel was a huge privilege as it meant I was living only with other Danish students and thus learnt a lot more about the language, culture and try Danish foods my floormates made. Although this did make it harder to meet other exchange students.

Money matters

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

Accommodation was 172NZD per week, which included utilities. The washing service was about 4\$ for a load and the dryer was free to use. Supermarkets were similar in price to New Zealand, if not a touch cheaper. I was spending about 100-120NZD per week on groceries. Visa cost quite a bit all up, about 800 for everything and insurance was about 700 for the year, I used the company recommended by the Uni.

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

I created a Wise account which was easy to convert NZD to DKK so I could use my Wise card everywhere. I also recommend opening a bank account through Lunar, which was a relatively simple process, so you can open a Mobilepay account which is helpful for transferring back other students or at some campus bars which don't accept card.

Visas & Insurance

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

The visa process must be done through VFS Global in Auckland, there is no Danish embassy or other that can do this process in NZ. This can take a while so make sure this is done several weeks before you leave.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not sure

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Your department puts on a bunch of activities such as pub crawls, bowling or ice skating. It's a great way to get to know people in your course better and would recommend these. Every Tuesday at the 'studenterhus', one of the many student bars, there was an event for all the international students such as pub quizzes or beer pong tournaments, these are also a great way to meet other international students.

What was the university/ city like?

The city is amazing, big enough to have plenty of events, concerts, good bars, sports and other activities always on. While being small enough that having a bike is enough to get pretty much everywhere and to everything you need. The campus and campus park is also so beautiful in summer and winter once the snow falls as well. Fun to chill with a beer on the hill in summer or play in the snow in winter.

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

The ARoS museum is a must. Full of cool exhibits.

The water sports park in Aarhus Ø is fun for a wakeboard but you need a bit of experience and is only good in summer.

AGF is the local football team that competes in the Danish premier division. The games aren't too expensive and the atmosphere is half decent so I'd recommend checking at least 1 game out, even if you aren't a football fan.

In terms of bars, I recommend Willis, 2 for 1 deals from 8-10 and the campus bars on Fridays are always a good time.

Any tips for future students?

Get involved in everything and don't be afraid to even do things on your own, rather than miss out on any experiences. Keep a look out on Ryanair and other budget airlines to score cheap flights, I got return flights from Poland for 40NZD! so I just went on a solo trip to Poznan for a weekend cause why not. Make the most of every chance you get to travel and explore/experience new things.

Also refurbish bike located in Aarhus Ø is the best place to rent a bike at about 30NZD per month.

Overall Experience

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

If I had my time again I don't think I'd change a thing. Denmark is an awesome country with friendly people and a great culture to get involved in. I chose Aarhus as it had a tag of being a student city, which coming from Otago had a big appeal for me. This reputation of Aarhus did not disappoint, the student culture was great and there was so many chances to get involved in different groups and activities. It's cliché but you do learn a lot from an exchange. It can be tough leaving friends and family behind for 6/7 months but it's an experience that is so worth doing. And Denmark for me was no exception. I have now made many friends from Denmark and will definitely be visiting again in the future.

