



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Manchester
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 (Manchester) 2019-2020
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Arts, LLB (Hons)
Major(s)	BA (Politics), Law

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Politics of Climate Change	English		
Politics of the European Union	English		
The United Nations Security Council in Practice	English		

Any comments about these papers?

Collectively these three papers equated to a full politics course load at Otago (that is four papers).

All were very interesting and covered subject matter that is not offered at Otago, or at least not an entire course focused on the subject matter.

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

Academic experience was very similar, as was the workload. The style of teaching was relatively similar. Overall there was nothing about the courses that were overly shocking or required much adjustment.

Accommodation

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

Stayed in University accommodation at a hall called Dalton Ellis. It was a relatively nice hall, approximately 280 students who were from across Europe and Asia, to the best of my knowledge it was one of the most diverse halls. Very different to Otago halls, less structure, no real equivalent to RA's. Not very social – If you were looking for a more social hall I would recommend Fallowfield and specifically Oak House, I had many mates there and went to join them regularly.

Money matters

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

Accommodation: \$5500; Flights: \$2700; Visa: \$200; Food: \$40 (Weekly, but highly variable); Insurance: \$440.

Note: Additional travel around the UK was relatively cheap for me, trains were very affordable and buses more so. Additionally, student hostels in the main centres are very affordable especially off peak.

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

Used my NZ Debit Card – No problems and minimal transaction fees.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes – Although one could get one at the border provided they had all the correct documentation.

I got mine in NZ, had to arrange a number of documents, head up to Christchurch for Biometrics, got back to me within 2 weeks. The process was relatively straightforward but was frustrating at points.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not to the best of my memory.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are numerous societies, clubs, and events. I personally did not join many as I wanted to avoid regular commitments that could restrict travel.

I would recommend joining the International Society, it has various organised trips at reasonable prices, which are quite fun and they have, frequent social events.

I also joined a local Church, there are many excellent local ones if that's what you are interested in.

What was the university/ city like?

University is excellent, very large, very busy. Top quality teaching and friendly students.

Manchester as a city is very fun, it is aptly described as “cosmopolitan” it is a mixing pot for many different cultures and has plenty of eating options on offer. Manchester also has a great night life, there are constant concerts within the University facilities, additionally I would highly recommend looking into the “Warehouse Project”.

However, Manchester is rather “grey” specifically it lacks greenery and large parks that other large cities have, and it rains a lot. Additionally, in the middle of winter the sun sets around 3:30pm, feels rather strange.

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

Travel around the Midlands, Yorkshire Dales, Northumberland – The immediate region is stunning and worth checking out.

Make sure you plan a trip to Scotland and specifically Edinburgh – They are truly phenomenal.

Eating – “Curry Mile” is on the edge of campus, you should definitely explore it (Al Zain was a fave), there are cool places like Footage, Pieminister. The entire “Northern Quarter” is full of eateries, a must visit.

“Gay Village” is a great time for a night out.

Any tips for future students?

Get amongst, it’s a great time that will fly by. Also make sure you spend some weekends in Manchester, there is a ridiculous amount to do that you may miss if you’re constantly flying to Europe.

Overall Experience

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

Overall my experience was unreal, I absolutely loved Manchester. The University was great and my courses were very interesting and I made a number of friends in my classes. I got to know a bunch of International Students from NZ, Aus, and the US. I had explored into Wales, Northern England, Oxford, London, Scotland, and Ireland – I would highly recommend it all, every trip was fantastic.