



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Exeter
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2, 2018
Otago degree(s)	LLB/BA
Major(s)	Psychology

Academics/ course load

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
MLS2159: Key Modern Poets from Spain and Latin America	English	SPAN300 level paper	18
LAWS3168B: Criminal Justice and Evidence	English	LAWS400 level paper	15
LAW3057: Family Law Adult Relationships	English	LAWS400 level paper	15
PSY2203: Social Psychology	English	PSYC300 level paper	18

Any comments about these papers?

All in all, these papers are easily achievable. The law papers were largely theoretical in nature, however they required a lot more research than Otago. Another difference was the amount of preparation work required for the tutorials, as they were far more hands on then at home. However, the lecturers were awesome, and the tutorials were based on more practical legal skills such as a divorce negotiation for Family Law and proposing changes to the UK Criminal Code in Criminal Justice.

Social Psychology was very similar to what we do in Otago and the required papers here will set you up nicely for this paper as there was a bit a repeat material. Again, it was more dependent on self-research than the papers at Otago, including for the exam itself. Key Modern Poets was a really interesting paper. The lecturer was really passionate about it and it reminded me of doing English analysis back at high school. I really enjoyed this paper.

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

A big difference was that classes were compulsory. You must check in on your phone via bluetooth and if you miss a certain number of classes it can invalidate your visa. However, even with four papers the workload is easily manageable, and you can still travel. I was often away in the weekends and that was no trouble at all. The style of teaching is very similar. I found lectures pretty much identical to Otago. It is the more practical workshops and seminars, where you are responsible for

teaching a particular part of the course based off your own research, which differed to my work at Otago.

Accommodation

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

I didn't actually have any long-term accommodation when I arrived in Exeter and instead, I stayed in a backpackers about 40min walk from the University. While it was stressful trying to find a flat, I was only in the backpackers for three nights before I managed to grab a place. There were heaps of flats going, but it was a lot of admin to do before Uni had even started.

I loved my flat, there were some pretty cool people in it and one of the pros of private accommodation is that you get your own space and more importantly it was a little less pricey than hall fees (£100/w vs around £120-140/w for a Hall). I was lucky to find a furnished flat which was awesome so that the only thing I had to buy was bedding (Go to Primark-super cheap and really warm duvets). However, on the flip side you do miss out on the socialness of a Hall. A lot of the friends I made lived in James Owen Court and really enjoyed having "friends onsite" I suppose. If you do want to live in the Halls though make sure you apply the day it opens as it is based on a first in first served basis and fills up really quickly. I applied a week after it opened and missed out.

One thing to be aware of is if you are going private be really careful of deposits. A mate and I found ideal accommodation before we arrived. However, they asked for £1000 (roughly \$2000 NZ) as a deposit before we had even arrived in the UK. We were already suspicious due to odd emailing times (middle of the night for the UK), typos, and unusual grammar so we choose not to. When we got there the house didn't even exist. Eeek, close call.

Money matters

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

What	Pounds	New Zealand Dollars
Flights		\$1800 return flights via Singapore and Tahiti
Accommodation (Exeter)	£2400	\$5000
Food (Exeter)	£50-60 a week. Half on groceries and half on eating out. (Coffee is awful there though)	\$100/w
Two months of travel (flights, food, attractions and accommodation)	Singapore, Italy, Spain, Greece, Scotland, England, Budapest, Poland, Amsterdam, Hungary, Paris, Tahiti	\$5000
Insurance (STA)		\$488 (6 months, comprehensive, and no excess)
Approximated total =		\$14,000

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

I had two travel cards. Air New Zealand One Smart, my favourite, as well as the Cash Passport. They both had an app which made access during travel really simple and worked in every country we

went to. Highly recommend both but One Smart seemed to have better exchange rates than the Cash Passport. I also opened an HSBC account and got a debit card with them once I was in Exeter. This was a great idea as it gave me a card to use day to day over there. It was really easy to set up, I made an appointment with the branch and had it all done in about an hour.

Visas & Insurance

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

You need a visa if you are going to be studying in England. There are a few options about the type of visa and what they all entail. I used the GOV.UK website to help figure out what each visa allowed and the process to get one. (<https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas>)

I was only there for six months so all I needed was the Short-Term Study Visa. I applied for mine at the border and it was super easy. You just needed your acceptance letter from Exeter, Passport, current bank statement to prove you could pay, your booked return flights and potentially a Drs. certificate with your immunisation status. However, I think this has changed and you have to do it online now before you go. My friend did it this way and it cost about \$200 NZD and took about a month.

Also, if you are going to America or even have transit or a layover in America you will need an ESTA visa. You can apply for these online, they are super easy to get and take no more than a couple of days to process. They cost about \$15 USD.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not that I am aware of. I used STA insurance and didn't have any need to use it in the end. However, I have heard that they can be quite difficult to claim through, so I would recommend shopping around and looking at your options. My friend did this and managed to get hers quite a lot cheaper.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

I would recommend signing up for their Global Chums programme. This was a great way to start making contact with someone in Exeter before you actually get there and ask all those burning questions. They also host a few social events (Pub Quiz, Meet your Buddy Breakfast) which helped me meet people in my first days in Exeter and really helped calm the nerves. Otherwise, make sure you get tickets to Flaming Tar Barrels at Ottery St Marys and watch a bunch of people running up and down streets on fire. Definitely join up to a couple of their Clubs and Societies and then play some social sport. These were really fun and they had some really cool social events as well!

What was the university/ city like?

Amazing! The campus, albeit up a hill, is beautiful. Most of it has just been upgraded in the last couple of years and at Christmas time it was decked out to the nines. It was so cool, very vibey. The Forum, their equivalent of the Link, has a full-on dairy with all of your day to day needs from fresh bread to toilet paper, shampoo, chocolate and spirits. Also, the Forum has a Costa, Pret a Manger (Affectionately known as Pret) with sandwiches, yummy almond croissants and super average coffee, The Ram (onsite pub) and heaps of other places to eat.

Exeter is beautiful. From the cute little quaint town with bricked pave ways, to the one top end shopping street/open mall thing (Princess Hay Shopping Precinct), Roman ruins and a really beautiful old Cathedral with an astronomical clock! It has something for everyone.

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

To go:

- The Exeter Christmas Market! (near the Cathedral)
- Take the train and go to Bath, especially when the Christmas market is on! The market there is massive and everyone goes.
- Flaming Tar Barrels of Ottery St Mary. (November). This is this massive fair in the middle of nowhere. The University provides limited tickets and you should definitely try and get one. They bus you out to Ottery St Mary and you can watch people, who have been training all year to carry massive tar barrels, lit on fire, on their backs, up and down the streets. It is a massive night, there are fireworks, a wee fun fair with rides and heaps of mulled wine. Remember to take cash though.
- Go to Jurassic Coast!
- Go and have a look around Oxbridge if you get the chance.
- Take a day just to walk around Exeter town and the University. And get your pic at the University of Exeter rock!
- Walk around the Quay and check out the food down there.

To Eat/Drink:

- Go and get a drink at the Ram - The on-campus bar with cheap drinks. Try a Dark Fruit Magnus Cider.
- Walk down Gandy Street - It's a small cobbled street that is rumoured to be the inspiration for Diagon Alley.
- The Old Firehouse - go and get a pizza and your choice of flavoured cider. Great pizza and a super cute vibey pub.
- Boston Tea Party - Cute place with pretty decent food! Great for studying.
- Waterstones - A bookstore with a wee café in it, free wifi and upstairs there is space to study.
- Nightlife - Get yourself in a society and go on a few pub crawls. Drinks are super cheap and it is a sure-fire good night. My favs: Timepiece - a three-level club featuring three different types of music, Fever – think 'Boogie' vibes, Unit 21 – think themed nights and old classics. I saw S Club Seven there though for like \$15 NZD so you know. The Monkey Suit – super classy cocktail bar with good drinks. The Vaults rumoured to J.K Rowling's inspiration for Gringotts Bank!

Any tips for future students?

Go to their clubs and society day, spend the money and sign up to a couple of clubs (10-30 pounds depending on what you join).

- Exeter Law Society: I went to a couple of their events but mostly I joined as to play in their netball team. Great way to make friends! It was a co-ed team and we trained once a week. Plus, they threw some hella social events ... They really got into the costumes. Best pub crawl I ever did was with these kids, they knew the best spots and were also just crazy!!

- Erasmus Society: The society for European exchange students who also love Kiwis. They are more than happy to have you! They also hold some cool events, quiz nights at local pubs, a Christmas ball and of course, a pub crawl or two.
- Honestly, there are so many clubs and societies and it is such a big part of their culture that no matter what club you joined you'd end up with friends and a heck ton of events to go to.

If you are going over the winter months, take a warm jacket it gets mighty chilly out there. Look out for squirrels as they are everywhere. Also, the pizzas are super expensive but are also like double the size of the pizzas we get at home and lastly, English people are lovely you just have to say hi first.

Overall Experience

I know 100 people before me will have said this, but they were right, going on exchange was the best thing I've ever done. I had an absolute blast, I've made friends all over the world and I've seen and experienced some of the craziest things ever. This 6-months of my life will be something that I never forget and something I rave about forever more. I loved Exeter, (pronounced Axe-er- tar if you're are rich and posh)! The University itself was beautiful as well the little English town it was situated in. I'd be lying if I said everything went without hiccups, but it was the hiccups and getting over them that made the exchange worthwhile. I already miss the food, well at least the food when I was travelling, English food was not my fav, the freedom and trying something new every day. If you are thinking of going on exchange ... Just do it!



Princesshay Shopping Precinct

The classic "I went to the University of Exeter" pic.

Gardens at Exeter Uni

Amsterdam



London Underground



Open sea kayaking at a sunken city in Greece



Outside Buckingham Palace, London