



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	Corvinus University of Budapest
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 1, 2019
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	Bachelor of Commerce
<b>Major(s)</b>	Accounting, Finance

### Academics/ course load

*Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?*

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Otago equivalent</b>	<b>Otago credit value</b>
Corporate Finance	English		
Corporate Finance II (Financing Policy)	English	FINC3XX	18
Hungarian for Beginners I	English	ARTS1XX	18
Decision Techniques	English	MANT2XX	18

*Any comments about these papers?*

All the papers were pretty cruisy and all the teaching staff spoke really good English.

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

Overall, I found the workload of these papers to be much less than those at Otago as for each of them there was only one lecture and one seminar a week. Classes tended to be smaller, for example my Hungarian language class was capped at 15 students. This means attendance and class participation usually counts for a significant portion of your grades, so be prepared to have lecturers call on you for answers during class. That being said though, courses were pretty straight forward and I found as long as you showed up to classes, you will have no problem passing them.

## Accommodation

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

Apartments are easy to find in Budapest and I ended up living in a fully furnished apartment with four flatmates from four different countries, which was an amazing experience. I would suggest looking for a place near Calvin ter, this way you are only about a 10-15 minute walk away from both the university and the city centre.

I had not arranged any accommodation before coming to Budapest and I would advise others to also wait, even though it can be a little stressful. The university's ESN (exchange student network) group arranged "Hostel week" which is a week before the official orientation week and it consists of a bunch of social events so you can get to know the other exchange students. I would say to try and go to as many of these events as you can as I ended up living with some of my friends that I met during Hostel Week.

## Money matters

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

Flights: NZ\$800 one way from Auckland to Budapest

Accommodation: NZ\$170 a week including power, wifi and apartment "common costs"

Visa: NZ\$95

Food: NZ\$5-10 per meal (eating out)

Insurance: NZ\$1,100 through STA Travel (This was for 12 months though as I went on two exchanges)

Public transport: NZ\$18/month

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

I just took my NZ debit and credit cards as my bank (ANZ) does not charge an international ATM withdrawal fee and found these to be sufficient. There was no need to open a bank account in Hungary. Most places accept card and I paid my rent in cash.

## Visas & Insurance

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

I was told by the Hungarian embassy in NZ to apply for a visa (residence permit) once I got to Hungary. I arrived in Hungary and got stamped through on a tourist visa and a couple weeks after I arrived, I went to the immigration office with all my required documents. I would advise others to look up what is required for the visa as some of these things may be easier to arrange in NZ (e.g. passport type photos, a bank statement etc).

Applying for a visa in Hungary is a lengthy process. Mine took over six weeks to process after I submitted my documents and I had to go back to the immigration office multiple times before I was able to get my residence permit card.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

Yes, but I also needed it to apply for my visa.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

The ESN network was very good at arranging plenty of activities for exchange students. They also arranged lots of social events (dog walking, pub crawls, dinners etc) as well as trips to Eger, Krakow and Transylvania. As I mentioned earlier, I definitely would arrange to be in Budapest during hostel week as this is where you will meet a lot of other exchange students and potentially people to live with.

*What was the university/ city like?*

Budapest is a beautiful city. There are plenty of things to do and it is also cheap, so cheap that I ate out for lunch and dinner every day! It's very easy to get around, the public transport network of trains, buses and trams is very reliable and punctual and runs 24/7. Because Budapest is a capital city, English is spoken relatively well. There are also plenty of convenience stores and pizza and kebab shops that are open 24/7.

Corvinus University is much smaller than Otago, with only three main buildings all situated next to each other so it's not too hard finding your way around.

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

Things to do: Fisherman's Bastion, Gellert Baths, Margaret Island, Janos Hill, Gellert Hill, The Pinball Museum

Places to eat: Ildiko Konyhaja (traditional Hungarian food), Molnar's kurtoskalacs (chimney cake), Hummus Bar, Asian Kitchen, Al Dente

As Budapest is a main international airport, it's very easy to get cheap flights (NZ\$10-100) with budget airlines like Wizzair or Ryanair to so many places across Europe. You also don't have to book these too far in advance, even booking a week before you can usually still get some pretty great deals.

*Any tips for future students?*

Although Budapest is a capital city where you can get by with speaking English only, locals will appreciate if you learn a little bit of their language, just like many other foreign places. Here are some of the basic phrases:

Hello: Szia (see-ah)

Thank you: Köszönöm (Keu-seu-neum)

I don't speak Hungarian: Nem beszélek magyarul (Nem bes-el-ek ma-ja-rule)

One beer please: Kérek egy sort (Care-ek edge shirt)

Also, try not to have an early morning class on Tuesday if you can avoid it as Monday nights are the big student night.

## Overall Experience

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

I knew hardly anything about Budapest/Hungary before I did my exchange, but I have to say I had the time of my life and I was so glad I picked Budapest to do my exchange. I met plenty of other open-minded exchange students from all corners of the globe who were always up to travel and go on adventures. During the semester I managed to explore 10+ countries thanks to only having class Monday-Wednesday. I was incredibly grateful and lucky to have been able to live in Budapest and I don't think I could have picked a better place. I had the time of my life and I'll definitely be back to visit one day!

**To sum it all up, if you love meeting new people, food, nightlife, and want to experience Europe in a city that's exciting, cheap, easy to get around, then Budapest is the place to choose for exchange!**

If you have any further questions, I'm more than happy to help so you're most welcome to email me at [evanchangnz@gmail.com](mailto:evanchangnz@gmail.com).

