



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Tasmania
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 2022
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Science
Major(s)	Marine Science

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
International Marine Management (KSA302)	English	NA
Advanced Oceanography (KSA306)	English	Coastal and Shelf Seas Oceanography (MARI322)
Antarctic Ecology (KSA307)	English	Marine Ecology and Ecosystems (MARI301)

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

Any comments about these papers?

International marine management was a unit that was unlike anything offered at Otago. It used a seminar based teaching approach with discussion of topics taught in lectures that week. Marine policy was a new topic for me as it is not taught in Otago's department of Marine Science. It is a very important topic that gave me insight into a whole new sector of Marine Science, whilst also supporting what I have already learnt at Otago. This was extremely valuable learning for me that will make me a better scientist and critical thinking in the world of marine management.

Antarctic Ecology was an awesome unit to take for someone interested in the Southern Ocean ecosystems. The focus on Antarctica specifically was unique and not offered at Otago. Understanding how the Australian Antarctic Division is run is also valuable for investigating how different scientific government organisations work outside of New Zealand.

Advanced Oceanography was a challenging, but valuable unit. The topics covered, including chemical oceanography, are not offered at Otago. Some prior knowledge was assumed that I did not have. This made the unit harder, but not impossible.

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

All units had one 2 hour lecture each week that was uploaded online. This was not what I expected and took some adjusting to. The in-person labs were 3 hours long and were once a week. The workload was similar to Otago. Past exam papers were provided for only one of my three units. Exams were online and open book.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in a share house (flat) with three Australians.

Pros

- Cheaper than student accommodation.
- Got to meet Australians, rather than just exchange students. Most people who stayed in student accommodation were 1st year or international students.
- More freedom than university accommodation with start and end date.
- Could stay closer to the beach.

Cons

- Not as nice facilities.
- Further out of town (had to use public transport to get to university)

Money matters

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

- Accommodation: paid \$100 AUD a week.
- Flights: \$613 AUD one way (3 flights from Dunedin to Hobart).
- Visa: NA
- Travel Insurance: \$331.50 NZD.
- Food: \$50-100 AUD a week.

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

Revolut (debt card) is good as it is free and can be used internationally. Can transfer anyone who has it in any currency.

I also set up an Australian bank account with ANZ.

Visas & Insurance

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

No.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

UTAS offers many clubs. I joined the bushwalking club, sailing club and the mountaineering club. I would recommend all of these clubs as they are very interactive and have weekly-monthly activities that help you meet people and get outdoors.

Tasmanian University Students Association also provides lots of discover/experience Tasmania activities. Student pay reduced rates to do paid local activities such as ferry tours, climbing, brewery tours, rafting etc.

What was the university/ city like?

UTAS had lots of international/exchange students who were very friendly. Most of the local students were not very interactive and kept more to themselves. The institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies was amazing and had great research facilities that were far better than Otago's Marine Science department.

Hobart was lively and full of things to do if you love the outdoors. It has a similar vibe to wellington, however is a little more outdoorsy. Definitely for people that enjoy tramping, climbing and rafting.

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

Maria Island is a must see and was my favourite place in all of Tasmania.

Bruny island was also awesome and a little closer to Hobart.

The three capes hike (East Coast – Tasman Peninsula) was an amazing place to see marine wildlife (saw both whales and the biggest pod of dolphins I've ever seen).

Overland track is a must do and is one of the most famous hikes in Tasmania. Mount Anne is a challenging but rewarding hike too.

Both Freycinet and Bay of Fires are also extremely famous spots, but worth the visit!

Any tips for future students?

- Join clubs!! It is by far the easiest way to make friends.
- University study is important, but prioritise seeing the place you are staying!
- Use every weekend. Plan in advance weekend trips because time flies.
- Be open to new perspectives because you will likely spend a lot of time with other exchange students from around the world who have very different outlooks.

- Don't forget to give yourself some down time. You value your experiences more when you have some time to take it in and reflect.

Overall Experience

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

My exchange to Tasmania was the best decision I've ever made. I didn't know that going to a small island off Australia would allow me to meet people worldwide. I have come back with lifelong friends and a completely different outlook on what a university experience can be. Through my exchange, I learnt the value of a life outside of studying and partying by spending most of my time outdoors and undertaking new extracurriculars. I accelerated personal growth by consistently putting myself out of my comfort zone for 5 months. Through this experience, I have gained confidence in myself and the ability to adapt to new situations. These are skills I'm proud of and am excited to bring into future endeavours.