



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	Uppsala University
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 2 (Autumn) 2025
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	LLB and BA (Politics)
<b>Major(s)</b>	Law and Politics

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Introduction to American History	English	HIST200
Introduction to American Politics	English	POLS200
Modern Sweden	English	HIST200

Total Otago credits gained:  54 points  72 points  108 points  \_\_\_\_\_

Any comments about these papers?

I really enjoyed the papers. The American History and Politics ones were similar to Otago papers, just with way less work! The Modern Sweden paper was very interesting and was a great way to learn more about Sweden in an engaging and interactive class environment.

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

All of the papers I did had no large-scale lectures and instead were all taught in seminars, which were like Otago tutorials. I only had about 10-15 people in each class, so they were very close-knit and all discussion-based. There were lots of readings for each seminar, and we basically just discussed them in the lectures, without any 'front of class' teaching. All the assessments were written essays or class presentations, with no exams. There was very little contact time, I had about two 2-hour seminars a week. I found the workload very light which meant I had so much free time for fun activities and travel.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in Flogsta, in a big corridor with 12 rooms. We had our own bathroom with a toilet and a shower, and then a shared kitchen and lounge/living area. I personally loved living in Flogsta and my corridor was super sociable and fun. I met my closest friends in my corridor and it was a very comforting and cosy environment. The communal spaces got a bit dirty at times (people weren't very good at cleaning their dishes!) but because we were all close, it was manageable and we had a roster for the bins and cleaning.

It is very variable - some people didn't have as good luck with their corridor and people weren't as sociable, but if you go in with a good mindset and put yourself out there to make friends it should be ok. Flogsta in general has a huge student population (there are multiple buildings with 100s of people) and there are floor parties and things to do with others even if they don't live on your floor.

## Money matters

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

Flights – around \$1.3k each way

Accommodation - \$975NZD per month

Food – groceries are considered very expensive here, however, I found the prices were largely similar to NZ. The nations (which are like the student organisations) have really good meals and drinks that are very cheap; however, eating out at restaurants and cafes is very expensive. My friends and I didn't eat at a restaurant once. For example, it was around \$50NZD for a main meal at dinner.

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

Wise card!!! This is by far the easiest way to manage money – I did a lump transfer from my NZ bank account into Wise and then put it into a savings jar on Wise. When I needed more money, I would transfer it into SEK and use this. Nearly everywhere in Sweden uses Paywave and you don't need to bring a bank card anywhere. They also barely use cash and some places don't accept it.

## Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, you need a resident permit visa to go to Sweden. I applied online, and then when I got to Sweden, I had to go and get my fingerprints taken and my photo. This then meant I could get my physical resident permit card, which you can use as photo ID in Sweden.

It is quite a complicated process, and the Swedish bureaucracy is extreme, so make sure you get onto it early and be VERY cautious and double-check all the documents you submit online. If it gets rejected due to a small mistake, it can push back the visa acceptance quite a lot.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

Yes, Uppsala University has included insurance that covers you as a student. However, this doesn't cover any travel you do before or after exchange, or any travel outside of Sweden when you are on exchange. Therefore, I got the StudentSafe exchange on top of this.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Uppsala is so great at catering to students and has so many fun activities. The International Student Association runs great events, so follow them on Facebook and Instagram. Most of the activities come through the student nations, which run everything from pub crawls to yoga to arts and crafts and club nights. There are endless activities there, and they are all really cheap and catered towards students. I would recommend going along to these with people from your corridor, or even just by yourself, as it is a great way to make new friends.

*What was the university/ city like?*

Uppsala is the cutest place – I absolutely loved the city centre. It's small and cosy but still has lots to do and has cute cafes and shops to explore. It's quite a similar vibe to Dunedin – lots of students everywhere, walkable and feels safe. There's a cool castle and cathedral to explore, and there is also beautiful nature and forests. Just 5 minutes away from Flogsta (my accommodation) were gorgeous trail paths and forests that we went walking in all the time. The university buildings are also stunning and there's a huge variety of libraries that are cosy and warm to choose from.

The campus is spread out around the city, it's not all condensed like Dunedin. However, this doesn't impact anything at all as it still feels fully like a "student city" and they're all very close together.

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

Go to the nations and eat there!! They have great brunch, breakfast and lunches there. My friends and I would go to nation lunch about 3 times a week, it's so reasonable, yum and convenient. They also have great nations pubs which have cheap drinks, dinner and bar snacks, and provide a really fun and cosy place to hang out.

Other favourite places:

- UNO: A really cute café with delicious coffee and matcha – free wifi so it is great to study here
- Storken: This is the cosiest old-fashioned café with the most delicious sweet treats
- Stadsbibliotek (city library): get a library card and get books out!! I managed to read so much when I was on exchange because there was a great selection of English books and it's all totally free
- Go to the stadium and watch a soccer game, or bandy (which is kind of like ice hockey but outdoors)
- Visit the Cathedral – it's gorgeous!
- The botanical gardens are a lovely place to walk and there's a nice café in there too

*Any tips for future students?*

I would absolutely recommend getting a bike, everyone bikes, so there are great bike lanes, and it's safe. It's definitely the cheapest way to get around as buses are sadly really expensive in Sweden.

If you are looking to make friends easily, I would definitely recommend staying in Flogsta. You can hear some horror stories online about it being gross and dirty (and this can be true) but as long as you communicate with your flatmates and make an effort it should be fine. The rooms are actually very big and the location is very convenient, whether you want to walk, bus or bike.

Hop on the train and go to Stockholm for day trips – it's so easy and convenient. Also, if you can try and rent out a cabin somewhere in Sweden. We did one in late summer, and one in winter, and it was probably the highlight of my whole Swedish experience. Uppsala is gorgeous but so is the rest of Sweden, so try to explore if you are able.

## Overall Experience

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

I had the most amazing time in Uppsala, and it exceeded all of my expectations. The city genuinely has everything you could want as a student, and I found it so comforting that the vibe was similar to Dunedin - there are students everywhere, and you are very well looked after.

I was very anxious before going and didn't know what to expect, but I genuinely had the most wonderful time. There's something for everyone in Uppsala, whether you love clubbing or going out, cute cafes, nature, sports... etc. I'm not sure why Uppsala isn't a more commonly recommended/highly sought after exchange location because it was truly everything I could want. Especially because you get guaranteed housing and there is such a large student population, it means everything is so well catered to students and you will have a smooth transition into exchange life.









