



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Uppsala
Semester & Year of Exchange	2019 semester 1
Otago degree(s)	Bsci
Major(s)	Pharmacology and Microbiology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Neurobiology (IBG207)	English	PHAL306	15 credits
Toxicology and Risk assessment (IBG509)	English	PHAL 303	15 credits

Any comments about these papers?

Very interesting and very detailed. A lot of fun with neurobiology being nearly all exchange students. Teaching staff were also very good. I only received them equivalent to two of my Otago papers but think the course load was far more extensive than I've ever done before.

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

So different to here in Dunedin. Class sizes were tiny and there was so much support at all times. The courses both had a lot more points were feedback was given during written/oral assignments. Lots of drafts were marked and commented on via teaching staff. Feel like it was my preferred way of learning.

Accommodation

I stayed in a very social building. The building was rather old and outdated and had bed bug issues. There was this cool thing called the flogsta scream every night at 10 where students screamed out of the window to relieve stress.

Money matters

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

Food was like \$40 a week but I ate very poorly due to food being expensive. I paid \$2000 for my flight there because I booked last minute and went via dubai (increased cost). And \$600 for my one home (52 hours, which sucked). Insurance was \$300.

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

Credit card only. Sweden is cashless. Have multiple credit cards because I lost my only one.

Visas & Insurance

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

A residence permit. Was very annoying due to NZ not having an embassy. Australians aren't always the most helpful when you ring from NZ.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Sure did. Was for a large amount and covered heaps

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There was an orientation week, which was kinda good but being peak winter (snowing heaps and dark all the time) it was rather intimidating for me to go to these events (a lot were 5-10Km away) as it was too cold for my phone to work and getting lost was a daunting thought.

However, throughout year there were always trips offered within Sweden and abroad to other countries. These were always stacked with both exchange and Swedish kids. Awesome way to meet things and see stuff.

Id recommend the Lapland trip which I actually missed due to having an exam. All my friends raved about it.

What was the university/ city like?

Beautiful. Similar to Otago in a way. Small and friendly. The locals were all lovely. Tons of nature reserves and beautiful lakes surrounding, all of which gave a peaceful vibe.

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

I find this really hard to limit to a few things. We did lots of stuff off the beaten track. Sometimes doing cheap things like going to the middle of "no where" and just hiring an air bnb with friends is more valuable of an experience than seeing major attractions. Ice skating on the lakes has to be a highlight, going north to see the midnight sun (in the summer) and valborg was probably all time best (massive three day celebration). The 'student nations' are great student meetup areas and are always both homely and cheap. You can usually get a small meal and beer next to a fireplace for less than \$15. You can also work at these nations and make some money or just get free food, great way to make friends.

Any tips for future students?

If you are scared, embrace it. Everyone of the friends I made were so different to the people here. Social interactions were all different and this is scary for everybody. Always try hard to get out and do stuff, even when you're busy with university work. If you get homesick just remember that some of the people and experiences will be the best of your life. Also be prepared for things to go wrong, because im sure at some point in your travels they will, take it with a positive attitude and know you'll get over it.

Overall Experience

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

My exchange was by far the best experience to date. I have always been quite the anxious and at times awkward person. The people I met in my first day alone were so immersive and friendly that all my doubts were instantly erased. My home university was dark (20+ hours when I arrived) and freezing (-20 at times). I hated this at first, but grew to love the snow more than I love the beaches here.

The whole Swedish/exchange culture was so sociable. Going for Fika (coffee date essentially) was an almost everyday occurrence and meant I was constantly doing constructive things. Travelling both within Sweden and to other countries was awesome. I did extensive travelling by myself but also meet copious amounts of friends abroad, some now very close friends.

Exchange has downs too. Missing loved ones and FOMO is a constant thing. Anyone who says otherwise is probably lying. Things also go wrong from time to time, from missing flights to loosing passports etc. These slight problems were a great way to grow character and have made me feel a lot more confident in my future.

Sweden is great and I will 1000% be returning, with cliché dreams of owning a small red Swedish house on a lakeside.