



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Kyoto
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1/2019
Otago degree(s)	54 points (3 papers)
Major(s)	Education

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Pedagogy 1 – E2			
Advanced Lecture for Pedagogy 1—E2		One 300-level education paper	18
Introduction to Educational Psychology 1—E2			
Human Geography 1 – E2			
Japanese Popular Culture – E2		Two 200-level papers	36
Culture and Traditions in Japan			

Any comments about these papers?

Pedagogy, Advanced Lecture for Pedagogy, and Introduction to Educational Psychology these three papers, are equivalent to Otago's one 300-level Education paper. Other three paper (Human Geography, Japanese Popular Culture, and Culture and Traditions in Japan) are equivalent to two 200-level papers as I talked to the Arts dean before I went to exchange.

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

They have 90 minutes lecture, and no tutorials. Students usually take more than 10 papers each semester because each paper only takes them 90 minutes per week.

Accommodation

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

The dormitory I stayed in was a little far from the main campus, about 30 minutes away (train and transfer to bus usually). The dormitory is quite cheap compared to Otago, and the room size was bigger (you can choose what size you live). The plus is that I could enjoy the beautiful views of Kyoto city.

Money matters

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

- Accommodation: about 270 NZ dollars per month (it depends on what dorm you choose, and what kind of room you choose)
- Flight: I had two connections from Osaka to Dunedin (you have to take the HARUKA train from Kyoto to Osaka though). The flight is about 1700 NZ dollars one way.
- Visa: I forgot the price, but I don't think it is expensive.
- Food: it depends on what kind of food you eat, but compared to Otago, it is cheaper and more delicious, and also you have a lot of choices.

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

You can use credit card. I used ANZ often, but I think it takes the extra fee for foreign cards. I would recommend you have carry some Japanese YEN, because some stores only accept cash.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes. I applied it online.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes, they have. They charged for the insurance at the beginning of the semester.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There are too many organised activities for students, held by the university, clubs, dorms...

I think it depends on which semester you go, but for the spring semester (the first semester), Gion Matsuri is the most well-known activity.

What was the university/ city like?

The university is quite big, the campus has three sections: north, central, and south campus. There are lots of clubs and activities on campus. Also, they have the student canteens and convenience stores on campus. Students usually go to canteens for lunch and dinner.

Kyoto is a beautiful city, a mix of historical and modern buildings and good transport systems, with buses, subways and trains. There are many temples everywhere!

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

清水寺 is a good place to go, you can enjoy the historical culture and rent kimono.

嵐山 is beautiful and it is well-known for tofu.

金阁寺, the temple with gorgeous golden architecture.

Any tips for future students?

Go to Osaka and Nagoya!

Overall Experience

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

I am grateful to the University of Otago for giving me the opportunity to go to Kyoto University on exchange. I had an amazing semester there! The professors at Kyoto University were excellent, and also friendly and helpful. Kyoto is a gorgeous city, full of history and friendly people. This exchange allowed me to experience the Japanese culture and meet friends from a range of countries. I am sure you will not regret if you choose Japan as your exchange destination!





