

University of Glasgow  
Semester 1 2017  
LLB (hons); BA (history)



## Summary

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Glasgow and would recommend both Glasgow and the exchange programme to anyone.

Life as a student in Glasgow was not dissimilar to life as a student in Dunedin. There were plenty of students and student-orientated events around and everything you need is in walking distance (and Uber's for rainy days are cheap as chips). The people I met were all there for the same reason – to experience life overseas, get away from home, to meet new people and to have a good time. It made making friends and finding things to do a breeze.

Scotland is an incredibly beautiful country (it gives New Zealand a run for its money) and is full of life and excitement.

## Accommodation

Name: Kelvinhaugh Street flats.

Setup: Blocks of four-story apartment-like buildings full of single-sex and mixed 5-person flats. Meals not provided.

Location: 15-minute walk to University, 20-minute walk to main drag (shopping, clubs etc), one-minute walk to the local pub.

Cost: Expensive – similar to Hall price in Otago.

The accommodation was nice enough. Small rooms, warm, came with all the flat necessities, had a lounge. However, lots of Americans, which got a bit tiring. Residents were made up of mainly second and third year students.



Unfortunately, Kelvinhaugh Street did very little in the way of making exchange students comfortable or helping us settle in. We had a total of two social events run by the Hall itself. I managed to luck out with a full flat of rather anti-social people. It initially made making friends harder than it should have been. Luckily I consulted the list of Otago students in Glasgow (helpfully given to us by the exchange team at Otago University), and soon connected with them. Most of the good friends I made were these Otago students and people they had met in their classes and accommodations. This consisted of almost exclusively other exchange students which was somewhat saddening as I did not get to meet as many Glaswegians as I would have liked.

I would recommend Kelvinhaugh if you're looking for a good location and warm accommodation. If you're looking for a more social, party atmosphere with far more students living in one area, then look into Murano Student flats. I made plenty of friends there who described it as being very social, with bigger flat groups.

## University grounds and teaching

The University has some beautiful buildings and grounds. However, similar to Otago, these stunning buildings are surrounded by very average looking late 20<sup>th</sup> century style buildings where most of your classes will be held. The library is big and nice, similar to Otago's.

I took three law papers and one history paper. The law lectures were small and very participation orientated, much similar to tutorials at Otago. There would be 45 minutes out of the 2 hour lectures dedicated to discussion in groups and presenting back to the class. The 300/400 level law papers at Glasgow are almost exclusively year-long papers; however, they allow for exchange students to only take one semester worth of the paper. We were assessed on only half the course and the bulk was in the form of external exams at the end of semester. Difficulty was similar to that at Otago, bar one paper where we were given the exam question in advance so were able to pre-write and memorise it for the exam.

The standard of teaching was high. All my lecturers were very confident, intelligent and personable. The history department in Glasgow especially has some well-renowned staff.

## Costs

Cost of living is similar to that in NZ.

- Accommodation was similar to what you'd pay at Halls of Residences, maybe slight cheaper.
- Food was cheap if you cooked in bulk and bought from the supermarket.
- Eating out could be cheap if you go to the right place. There are lots of January deals around for half price food and drinks.
- Alcohol was similarly priced to NZ. If you're on a budget, I can recommend 'Frosty Jacks' – a three litre plastic bottle of cider akin to Scrumpy.

## Weather

I was in Glasgow from January – May. Very bleak to begin, with grey skies and the occasional snow shower. Colder than Dunedin, but the accommodation was a lot warmer.

The sun came out at the end of April and made the whole city a lot more pleasant. You'd see far more people out and the local park would be full of people all day.



## Things to do

Short answer, a lot. Every night there would be something on if you looked hard enough. Glasgow is very proud of their culture and music scene. Plenty of nice and cheap places to eat and drink. Great nightlife.

The number one thing I can recommend is travelling the rest of Scotland. Three of us Kiwis and two Swedes hired a van for a week and did a road trip – one of the best weeks I had overseas for sure.

### Highlights:

- Isle of Skye, Loch Ness, Loch Lomond, the Highlands – absolutely gorgeous scenery in North-West Scotland. Simply a must do.
- Edinburgh – weekend trips to Edinburgh were a good time. Great look out points, main drag and castle.
- Genting casino – I wasn't much of a gambler -- until arriving in Glasgow. The Genting is located on one of the main drags amongst all the night clubs. A visit in on the way home from town was an all-too-common occurrence. Great roulette odds, excellent staff, free soft drinks and tea and coffee.
- Continental Europe – every other weekend was spent travelling around Europe. Make the most of cheap airlines (e.g. RyanAir).
- Kelvingrove museum, Medieval Necropolis, Botanical gardens

Glasgow was truly an unforgettable experience. You would be silly not to go on exchange while at Otago, and Glasgow is the perfect place to do just that.