



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Exeter
Semester & Year of Exchange	2019 – Otago Semester two
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce & Bachelor or Applied Science
Major(s)	Marketing (management minor) + sports nutrition

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
BEM1021 – Leadership & teams	English	MANT252	18 pt.
BEM3030 – International business history	English	MANT3XX	18 pt.
BEM3052 – Managing change & crisis in organisations	English	MANT346	18 pt.
BEM2032 – Start up Entrepreneurship	English	MANT2XX	18 pt.

Any comments about these papers?

The Exeter Exam period for semester one (Otago Semester two) is mid-January. I made sure all of my papers were internally assessed, this allowed me to finish the semester mid-December and avoid Exams.

Start-up entrepreneurship only runs for eight weeks so you finish this paper quite early in the semester. International business history did not cover much content, however I was only required to write two essays.

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

The Exeter grading system is different compared to Otago. At Exeter anything marked above a 70% is considered very good and a pass is only 40%. So, even a 60% is considered quite good.

Attendance is also compulsory for all classes at Exeter. They monitor this via your phone as you must sign in for each class. However, if you look at the class schedule you can ensure this doesn't affect travel, study etc. Most days I only had one class and I was finished by 10.30am and Thursday's off.

Accommodation

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

As I was only at Exeter for one semester my only option (aside from finding private accommodation – which is VERY difficult to do) was to stay at James Owen Court (JOC). JOC was great, they put all international students within certain blocks and I made a lot of friends this way. JOC is located about a 15 minute walk away from campus but it is located on the main street which was very handy.

JOC is a hall that is a mixture of first year and international students, but international students are all put into the same blocks so you do not see the first year students at all. The flat I was put into had 7 people all up.

When you arrive at JOC your room is very bare, but there are plenty of thrift stores to purchase items from and you can get bedding/ towels etc pretty cheap from Wilco, Primark etc. Don't buy the packages Exeter offer bedding to be in your room when you arrive etc. as these are a bit overpriced.

MAKE SURE you apply for James Owen Court when applications open! I knew a few people who missed out on accommodation as they applied too late.

JOC also organises some trips within the hall to various different places for not a bad price!

Money matters

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

James Owen Court = \$4770 NZD (this has to be paid in full within the first 2 weeks of arriving)

Flights – NZD → UK = \$800, UK → NZD = \$2300 (I flew home via Canada to visit friends, however, flying early January is expensive! So if you can book in advance or fly outside of the Christmas period)

Insurance = \$600 – I paid additional for skiing insurance, so this would be cheaper without. I went through Cover More.

Food – food in England is cheap! I was spending on average \$24 on food per week

Washing – you have to pay to use the washing machines / dryers at James Owen it was around 2.70 pound to wash and 1.40 pound to dry.

I worked two jobs to save for exchange and student loan payments come through, but try save as much money as you can! + You get \$1000 from the University to go on Exchange – be aware of possible scholarships, I was lucky enough to receive the Westpac travelling scholarship.

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

I used a cash passport whilst in England, be pre-pared and watch the exchange rates! This allowed me to transfer money between 10 different currencies. If this doesn't work for you opening up a Monzo account is very simple.

!!!! If travelling around Europe, a lot of places are cash based or have a minimum spend to use card so try have a little bit of cash on you. If possible also avoid EuroNet ATM's. They have terrible exchange rates and charge you a lot just for using the ATM!

Watch out for cheap flights with RyanAir, EasyJet, Flybe etc. I got a 16 pound flight to Spain from Exeter! Typically it is cheaper to fly out of Bristol then Exeter as Exeter is a small airport but Bristol is only about a two hour bus from Exeter.

Visas & Insurance

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

When you land in the UK you just head to passport control (DO NOT GO THROUGH THE E-GATES – and do not enter the E-gates anytime you arrive in England you need to go through passport control every time with your letter!) and you need to show them your Exeter acceptance letter (print this out), and they give you your six month (or however long your exchange is) stamp.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No, but I believe you could purchase insurance through Exeter however this only covered you for travel within the UK and those who I knew purchased this had to buy additional insurance if we were to go away for the weekend which can be very painful, especially for last minute trips.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Make sure you join a club or society, this is REALLY important! Most students participate in either or both, there is something for everyone sports, travel and food etc. The Travel Exe society is good if you want to travel around the Devon/ Cornwall area.

I joined the Boxing club (no prior experience at all, but most clubs have beginner sessions for everything). Boxing had up to four trainings per week and it was 65 pound for the entire term. It is also quite expensive to join the gym.

In the first week the University organises a variety of activities for international students – I did a Jurassic Coast boat tour for 11 pound, but there were also quizzes, cathedral tours etc.

What was the university/ city like?

University of Exeter/ Exeter is very, very similar to Dunedin in the fact that it is a student town. There are lots of activities run by different clubs on various nights of the week.

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

Exmouth Beach, Exeter Cathedral, Beer Village, Exeter Quay, Gandy Street, if you are in Exeter over Christmas the Exeter Christmas markets are very cool (if you travel around this time they are everywhere I went to the Edinburgh, London and German Christmas markets!), Exeter underground tunnels are around 5 pound and cool to check out.

Ottery St Mary – Tar barrels (if you're around in November)

Food – Old firehouse (really good pizza), Red Panda, there is the best Thai restaurant across the road from JOC and lots of little cafes/ restaurants around the Princess Hay shopping mall.

Timepiece, Lemon Grove, Fever

If you get the chance try to head to the Cornwall area.

Any tips for future students?

If you get the chance try and travel Europe/ UK before you arrive at Exeter as you do not get a mid-semester break (each paper individual decides if they take the week off, only two of my papers did this) so weekends are your only chance to travel (unless you are going Otago Semester one where they get a semester break b/c of Easter!) I travelled for 4 weeks prior to Exeter and at the end of the semester with the friends I had made we did a 3 week trip together over Christmas/ New Years.

Be aware of your visa requirements! And double check your papers if they have exams etc.

You will get an email about a bus that takes you directly from Heathrow to James Owen in Exeter this is around 40 pound. If you look on the app Omio (great for all travel it gives you bus, train and plane options) you can get a bus for 10 – 20 pound from London – just make sure it ends at Sidwell street (Honiton Road is a bit further away and you will have to catch a second city bus) and it will stop pretty much right outside James Owen!

Download City Mapper – it works in all major cities e.g. London, Amsterdam, Paris etc. it gives you all transport options and the price, time etc.

Overall Experience

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

Going on exchange was by far the best experience! I went for the second half of my fifth year. There is so much to do in both the UK and Europe. I met so many people from all around the world and now have friends in multiple different countries! Exeter is a great place as you can easily travel internationally (via Exeter or Bristol airport), and nationally train, bus etc.

Exchange is a once in a lifetime experience! I was very nervous to go having never travelled before and as I am from Dunedin originally I had never left my home town. I have made so many memories and memorable moments (especially from transport errors!) but I wouldn't change anything about the experience. The admin prior to exchange can be a little but overwhelming (if you have also never travelled before, but Exeter send you lots of helpful emails!)



Exeter Boxing Winter Dinner + Boxing social



The Temple Bar – Dublin, Ireland!



London with friends I made on exchange!



Lake Bled – Slovenia



Venice – Italy



Croatia – Sail week (prior to starting at Exeter)