



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	University of Copenhagen
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 1 2025
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	LLB and BA
<b>Major(s)</b>	Politics

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Legal Negotiations in Theory & Practice	English	LAWS unspecified paper
Propaganda and Disinformation on Social Media	English	18 points ARTS, 200 level
Maritime Security	English	18 points ARTS, 300 level

Total Otago credits gained:  54 points  72 points  108 points  51 points (36 ARTS, 15 LAWS)

Any comments about these papers?

I found these classes really interesting, particularly the two politics classes because you really got to hone in on what you found interesting by choosing what you did your final assignment on and what you focused on. The Legal Negotiations class was a master 's-level law course with predominantly Danish master's students, but I was able to keep up with the content pretty easily. You would get to negotiate with different students in each class which I found really interesting and helpful. The final exam was a 20-minute oral exam, where you negotiated with the professor, which I was really nervous about, but overall, it was a great experience!

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

In Denmark, the classes are very discussion based and there is no hierarchy in the classroom so you can openly talk and debate with your professor as if they are your classmate. There was a lot of group work and practical exercises within the classes so the lectures/seminars often felt like tutorials. Another big difference between Otago and Copenhagen is that the classes in Copenhagen go for 2-4 hours which felt like a big change from the Otago 50 minute lecture length. The classes are also not recorded so you have to go in person.

The workload was very light compared to Otago which I also really enjoyed but that was for law and a BA. In contrast, science at Copenhagen requires a lot of work compared to Otago based on what I heard. Overall, I found the academic experience quite different from Otago but I really enjoyed it, especially the discussion element of all the lectures and seminars.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in Mariendalsvej which I cannot recommend enough! It is a great location, one of the cheaper options when it comes to student accommodation in Copenhagen (which can be really expensive), and a great way to meet people because you're put in apartments with four other international students. The apartments themselves are great (especially compared to Dunedin flats) and while the RAs at Mariendalsvej don't organise many events to meet people compared to some accommodations (like Signalhusset or Tietgen which throw parties for people to meet each other in the building), it was still really easy to meet people from other apartments in Mariendalsvej. There is also a gym in Mariendalsvej.

I was a 10-15 minute bike ride away from Central campus and North campus and a 20 minute bike ride away from South Campus. While the location of Mariendalsvej isn't as good as some places like Basecamp, it is still objectively the best accommodation in my opinion! I have heard great things about Signalhusset (very similar to Mariendalsvej but slightly cheaper and quite far away from central Copenhagen) and Tietgen as well (great if you're staying for a whole year).

## Money matters

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

Accommodation for 1 semester was \$7000 + a \$2000 bond.

Flights were \$1800 but I flew through Thailand with a 3 week layover.

Visa was pretty expensive, around \$700 all up + having to pay for flights and buses to Auckland to get your visa.

Groceries were around \$60-\$70 a week. Previous Copenhagen student reports claimed that groceries were cheaper in Copenhagen than in NZ but I didn't find that entirely true – meat and dairy are more expensive in Copenhagen but other groceries are cheaper, meaning I overall spent the same amount at the supermarket weekly as I did in NZ.

Eating out in Copenhagen costs an arm and a leg, with coffee being \$10-\$12 and an average meal out being \$25-\$40.

Insurance cost me \$1200 but that's because I went on an exchange for a whole year. Would be half of that if you're only going for 1 semester!

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

I used Wise which is an international bank account / card and I can't recommend it enough! Super easy to set up and gets rid of most of the fees you would incur if you used your NZ bank account

overseas. Exchange students around me also used Wise but some used Revolut which is also a good international bank account / card alternative to Wise.

## Visas & Insurance

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

You have to get a Residence permit to study in Denmark which lets you both study and work there. This was a very long and complicated process, requiring you to travel to Auckland to get your biometrics done, bring a lot of paperwork and pay quite a bit. However, it was all worth it for the exchange!

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

No.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

All departments and faculties at UCPH had an organised orientation day and more activities throughout the semester. These were great for meeting people when you first moved to UCPH but I didn't get involved with them much after the initial orientation activities. Aside from that, there are clubs you can get involved with at the University but there is far less of a club lifestyle at UCPH than there is at Otago. I never joined any clubs at UCPH because of this and because many of them are in Danish. However, there are lots of other activities you can get involved in! Copenhagen is a big running city and there are so many running clubs throughout the city so I would highly recommend getting involved with that.

UCPH also has a student bar called Studenthuset (or in English, Student House) where students can volunteer and work at. While I never volunteered there, I heard great things about it from other exchange students who met and made friends with other exchange students there.

*What was the university/ city like?*

The University is split up into 4 campuses all over Copenhagen, all of which are beautiful, either in a modern or older more historical way. I loved the University but found it a little difficult having the campuses split up as I had classes on both central and south campus. Admittedly I didn't feel that connected or involved with the University in the same way I did at Otago but that's because I was always travelling or out with friends. I didn't see this as a negative thing though because I found the social and travelling part of my exchange more important than being involved with the University.

Copenhagen itself is gorgeous and the coolest city I've ever visited. Maybe it's because I lived there for 5 months but it really is the coolest city ever! It is such a vibrant city with so much history, gorgeous architecture and cool street art. I also LOVED the biking in Copenhagen – you're always biking everywhere in Copenhagen which really gives you a feel for the city and makes you feel more a part of it. Copenhagen also has some of the best nightlife and vintage shopping I've ever experienced. Copenhagen in the summer is also magical, with everyone always out and about and swimming.

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

Things to see:

- Nyhavn Canal
- Amalienborg palace, especially to see the changing of the guards at noon every day
- Rosenborg Slot and the park around it
- Frederik's church
- Danish Parliament
- Kastellet
- Islands Brygge for cold dips or summer swimming!
- The Little Mermaid
- Freetown Christiania
- Shopping at Vera's market (an outdoor market held every Sunday Morning) or vintage shopping down the street Norrebrogade
- Grundtvig's church
- Frederiksberg park
- Frederiksberg Slot
- Church of our Saviour

#### Going out:

- Hangeran (in an old aeroplane hanger!)
- Den Anden Side
- Meatpacking District – an area with a bunch of clubs and bars, with my favourite being a club called Baggen!
- Culture Box
- Kissas or Jojos: two bars run by the same company that sell delicious and cheap cocktails at around \$13 NZD each!
- Proud Mary's – not the best club but they do American nights on Tuesdays that international students always go to! Like Pint Night

#### Food

- Reffen – an outdoor food market that opens up in the summer. Highly recommend getting a Danish hot dog here!
- Bakeries: Buka, Hart, Juno, Saint Peters Bakery
- There are two NZ pie shops in Copenhagen if you miss NZ pies called Wild Kiwi Pies!
- Shawarma's in Copenhagen are cheap and yummy and everywhere throughout the city!

#### *Any tips for future students?*

Get involved with everything you possibly can and put yourself out there as much as possible! I said yes to absolutely everything, even if I wasn't that keen on it like joining a run club or doing a cold dip in the coldest month of the year but I always had the best time!

Get on the bike, even if you're not the biking type of person or are a little scared of it! It really is the best way to get around and you pick up the road rules and speedy Danish biking super-fast!

I would also recommend getting a job there if you're tight for money like I was. International students with no Danish under their belt can still get a job in Copenhagen in hospitality as it is such an international city. Hospitality is your best bet although I have heard of students getting jobs in retail. I just walked around with some CVs for a few hours around Norrebro and got a job that way. Your visa lets you work and getting a job was great both financially but also experience wise. I made some great friends at the restaurant I worked at and got to learn way more about Danish life and culture by working with the Danes.

## Overall Experience

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

Going on exchange was truly the best decision I've ever made. I remember reading the answers to this 'overall experience' question in previous student reports before I went on exchange and thinking that people must have been exaggerating but this was truly the best experience I've ever had. From the fun you have, to the people you meet, to the new ways of life you learn about, to the travelling, to the lessons you learn, this experience has helped me grow as a person and broadened my perspectives. I got to travel to so many cool places, from Paris to Berlin to Venice, and absolutely loved it. I made some lifelong friends from this exchange and got to try so many new cool things I never would have tried before.

More specifically, I am really glad I chose Copenhagen. Copenhagen is a great city to be in if you want to be in Europe and somewhere culturally different from NZ. There is a reason why Denmark is voted one of the happiest countries in the world and it's because the quality of life is so good here. From the biking, to the food, to the architecture, to the shopping, Copenhagen was a wonderful city to live in. I felt so safe and happy living here and you could so easily hop on a train or plane to anywhere in Europe whenever you wanted to. I think it's important to choose a city to exchange to that is good to live in rather than just visit because you spend a whole 5 months in that place and you want to be in a place that is fun to live in, not just visit. Copenhagen is definitely one of those places.

This is your sign!!! Go on exchange!!! Do it!!!



