



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Cardiff University
Semester & Year of Exchange	Fall Semester, Second Year
Otago degree(s)	Undergraduate Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	Archaeology, Classics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Explanation and Interpretation in Archaeology	English	ANTH200
Life in Ancient Rome	English	CLAS200
The Late Ancient World	English	CLAS343

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points 72 points 108 points 120

Any comments about these papers?

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

The Arts is a very independent degree and so the workload was mostly made up of independent readings. Classes were two hours, however they were not standard lectures like at Otago. Each class had a pre lecture which would provide the lecture content and then the in-person two hour lecture was instead used to have class discussions.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in a university accommodation called University Hall. The pros were that the cost of the accommodation covered all the utility bills, much like Otago's university halls. The cons were that the accommodation bus schedule stopped before my last class of the day ended and so later classes were expected to make the 40 minute walk back in the dark to the accommodation, or to leave classes early to make the bus.

Money matters

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

Flights: 1900NZD return

Visa: Not required

Food: 25GBP a week

Insurance: 400NZD

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

Wise travel card would be my biggest recommendation. Putting your funds in the local currency is so much better for you financially. The fee for uploading onto the wise card into any currency will always be cheaper than using your New Zealand card. The currency exchange is rough and so adding on a foreign card fee is not worth the ease of using your debit card.

Visas & Insurance

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

No I did not as I was in the UK for less than 6 months as well because New Zealand is under the Crown

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No they did not, but they highly recommended it. Otago did make it mandatory for exchange students to have insurance to leave as an outgoing Otago student.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

GiveltAGO was a university run society that did day and overnight trips around the United Kingdom. They ranged in price for 30 – 150GBP for activities and these trips varied in activities. Trips included

excursions to Bath, Oxford, Glasgow etc. I would recommend going on these events as they are very well organised and with the varying prices they can be quite affordable.

What was the university/ city like?

Cardiff city was much like Dunedin, very student run and well accommodated to the student lifestyle. The University was a mix of old English buildings and modern structures. It was quite well organised and most schools were set at the main campus.

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

- Go to a rugby game at Millenium Stadium
- Visit Cardiff Castle
- Go to Winterwonderland
- Eat/ Drink at a Wetherspoons

Any tips for future students?

- Actively invest in saving before the trip
- Make sure you read and understand your insurance before leaving
- Always have back up options for flights, accommodations etc. This does not mean pay for back ups, but have an organised back up plan for these situations. I got stranded in Australia for 3 weeks due to a typhoon in China, so I would look into your airlines and what they do and do not provide should flights be delayed or cancelled.

Overall Experience

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

My semester at Cardiff University was definitely one I will be remembering for a long time. I can't say it was the easiest time getting there. After being stranded in Sydney for 3 weeks because of a Typhoon in China, I was able to make the 50 hr journey to Wales at a later date. If you are someone who really appreciates the cold weather and the idea of a Winter Christmas, I would recommend the United Kingdom. They definitely do not play when it comes to Christmas! If you are a rugby fan, Wales loves their rugby and I would highly recommend watching a game at Millenium Stadium. Especially if its against a team from the South, like Fiji who made history in 2024 with their first win on Cardiff grounds. A fat slay for sure (it is likely I am bias). The university overall is very student orientated with events and stalls on almost every day. If you are a coffee drinker and/or a bakery lover, you would also like this University as there is a Costa coffee and Greggs bakery in every school. Cardiff University is very similar to Otago, so if you're wanting to try something new but still want some familiarity, Cardiff is a solid choice.

P.s if you take the fall semester, you might see some beautiful rugby players.

