



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Trinity College Dublin
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1, 2025
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Science
Major(s)	Information Science

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
CSU33D06 Software Design Analysis	English	INFO310
CSU34041 Information Management	English	300-level INFO
STU33005 Information Systems	English	INFO302
TEU00282 Toolkit for a Smart and Sustainable World	English	100-level ARTS
IRU22172 Irish for Beginners	English	100-level ARTS

Total Otago credits gained: ☒ 54 points ☐ 72 points ☐ 108 points ☐ _____

I took 25 ECTS (5 modules) = 54 points (3x 18-point papers)

Any comments about these papers?

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

The overall experience was very comparable to Otago. The main difference being less contact hours. One of my classes only had a 1 hour lecture a week! There was also a lot more group work than I had experienced before. 4/5 of my classes were 100% internal assessment. It was very deadline heavy in the last few weeks of the term and I didn't get a lot of my grades for those assignments back before our final transcript was released.

Accommodation

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

I stayed on campus at Printing House Square and I could not recommend it highly enough! I opted for the cheapest room (Ensuite Small Single) and it was perfect. Being right in the heart of Dublin city in walking distance of everything was amazing. The apartments are super modern with individual ensuite rooms and a shared kitchen/living area. I was placed with 6 other exchange students and they became some of my closest friends. The main con is how expensive it is but that's just part of it and for Dublin city centre, you can't do much better! There were also additional costs with needing to supply your own bedding, kitchen equipment and cleaning products. The apartments were not serviced, so it was up to you and your flatmates to keep things clean and tidy.



Money matters

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

Accommodation: €4,567.33 (13th Jan - 9th May) – about \$9000 NZD

Flights: \$5000. I was only able to book about a month before I departed once my place was confirmed by Trinity. I booked one-way flights as I hadn't confirmed my return date at the time and then also ended up changing my return flight as my travel plans changed - so this is high!

Food costs: I am not sure how much I spent week to week, but groceries are cheaper than in NZ! Plus, there is a lot more in-season produce from around Europe!!! I would note that eating out is a lot more pricey (take your usual NZ price and put a euro sign in front of it) - e.g. a typical takeaway lunch is 10-15 euros.

Insurance: StudentSafe Outbound Policy - \$705.75 covered me for a few months' travel as well.

Washing / Drying - €6 (\$11) each time

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

I used Wise and it worked well for me. A simple way to carry and convert lots of different currencies.

Visas & Insurance

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

I am lucky to hold an Irish passport, so I didn't need to get a visa.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes, you needed to be insured, but the University of Otago's recommended policy was sufficient.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Lots of choice at Trinity! You can find lots of information online, and once you arrive.

I joined the Netball club, which was a lovely way to meet Irish students and some other exchange students too! They had a competitive team, but you could also join socially - training with the team. They had some cool social events as well!

The ESN network supports Erasmus and exchange students, they have a card that gets you discounts (including RyanAir!) and organise weekend trips during the semester around Ireland.

What was the university/ city like?

Trinity has such an awesome vibe and a beautiful campus. There are always things going on and lots of people about, including tourists! They have some good coffee and food spots on campus and nearby. The student bar on campus is great and always busy, especially on 'Pav Friday'.

Dublin city is incredibly vibrant and diverse. The city centre is very walkable and well connected to other areas with public transport. There are lots of beautiful buildings, with a mix of modern areas and historic suburbs.

During my time in Dublin, I was involved in Te Waka Aumihī - a waiata group run through the New Zealand Embassy. It was so special to meet other Kiwis living in Ireland and get a wee touch of home while living so far away. They often get involved with events for Waitangi Day, Anzac Day and more. It's a lovely community, and I would encourage you to reach out to the Embassy if you would like to join!

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

So many recommendations! Generally just walking around the city you will stumble across lots of cool spots.

Places / Attractions:

The Book of Kells - as a Trinity College student, you get free entry and can bring up to 2 guests!

Guinness Storehouse

EPIC Museum

Kilmainham Gaol

Grafton Street - admire the buildings, buskers performing and the general atmosphere!

Forty Foot - a popular ocean swim spot, especially on a sunny day. You can get off at Dun Laoghaire and walk along the coastline.

Howth Cliff Walk - if you're looking to explore beyond the CBD you can take the DART train to Howth and walk the trails. Lovely spot on a sunny day.

St Stephen's Green, a lovely park at the top of Grafton St - a nice spot to sit with a takeaway lunch.

Merrion Square Park - another lovely spot close to campus!

The Ruby Sessions at Doyles – 3 live music acts every Tuesday night (book tickets the Sunday before)

GAA – the sport is such a core part of the Irish culture and identity.

Rugby games at Aviva Stadium – Leinster or Irish Rugby!

Food and Drinks:

Bambinos is a popular NY style pizza by the slice and is definitely worth the hype!

A spice bag with curry sauce! Xian Street Food was the best I found.

The Celt - classic Irish pub with live music from 9pm every night.

O'Donoghue's (Merrion Row) - another classic Irish favourite with live music nightly.

Sprout - delish lunch spot and worth the price!

Beyond Dublin, try to explore the various parts of Ireland as there is so much to see. From the Cliffs of Moher, Ring of Kerry, Dingle, Galway, Cork – the list is endless! Northern Ireland is also very cool with such interesting lived history that you can still see today - Derry, Belfast and the Giant's Causeway.

Any tips for future students?

Make the most of it! It's such a great opportunity and you'll meet so many amazing like-minded people. The Irish are such beautiful souls, and the culture is truly special. Experience it all from the pub culture and traditional music to GAA and even try to learn a bit of Gaeilge.

Europe and the UK are also right at your doorstep, so travel as much as you can!

Get a Student Leap card for discounted bus/train fares. It also gets you very cheap tickets to/from the airport on the Dublin Express (buy them through the TFI Go app!)

Overall Experience

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

It's hard to put into words just how incredible my exchange experience was - studying abroad at Trinity College Dublin truly exceeded my expectations. Over a few unforgettable months, I learnt so much about myself and my capabilities, and I came away with so many amazing memories. I met some of the most incredible people from all over the world, forming lifelong friendships. I had the chance to travel extensively throughout Ireland, connecting with my whakapapa, and across Europe.

I truly had the best time and would 100% encourage anyone to take the leap and study abroad. I now proudly call Dublin my second home and cannot wait to return.

Ireland will forever hold a special place in my heart 🍀

