



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Stockholm School of Economics
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1, 2025
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Finance and Economics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Corporate Finance and Value creation	English	FINC300 level
International Finance	English	FINC300 level
Comparative history of economic thought	English	ECON300 level
Investment Management	English	FINC300 level

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

Any comments about these papers?

International Finance aligns quite well with the similar course offered at Otago. Unfortunately, I couldn't get Investment Management or Corporate Finance approved as direct equivalents for FINC302 or FINC303, so you'll need to complete those in Dunedin during semesters 1 and 2 at some point. I really enjoyed the papers and teaching over there, although I found *Comparative History of Economic Thought* quite challenging compared to other ECON papers I've taken. It's very content-heavy and focuses on historical knowledge and analysis rather than current economic theory or quantitative methods.

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

Much smaller classrooms, so expect much more engagement between lecturer and students as well as more group discussions and projects. The quality of staff is extremely high with many incredibly

reputable and knowledgeable people conducting their own research as well as taking the papers. At SSE, there is a highly competitive environment due to the standard of student, and hence, in some papers expect a high workload. This was the case for Corporate Finance, Investment Management and Comparative History of economic thought for me.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in the Liljeholmen apartments and really enjoyed having my own space to cook, along with a private balcony and bathroom. The location was also very convenient for catching the train — it only took about 25 minutes in total to get to uni. The only downside was that the building was mostly regular residents, with only a handful of other students, which made it a bit harder to meet people and get to events at Lappis or other student accommodations. Overall, though, I loved my time in Liljeholmen.

Money matters

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

Return flights cost me about \$3,500, but this could be cheaper — I chose to layover in Singapore and only booked about five months in advance. Accommodation was around \$1,000 per month, although this increased slightly each month due to the weakening NZ dollar. Insurance was about \$700, which I quickly made back through a couple of hospital claims and a flight claim. I spent roughly \$100 a week on food, but I tend to eat on the heavier side and avoided eating out entirely (which is unbelievably expensive in Stockholm).

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

I recommend a wise card. I had some negligible issues with it when booking some flights overseas or ordering things from European website, but was mostly entirely fine and as required used my NZ ASB card.

Visas & Insurance

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

You do have to apply for a visa and it is somewhat of a length process, but the approval shouldn't take long especially coming from NZ. Mine took less than 2 weeks, but do apply with lots of time in case of issue. Once you are approved, you may enter Sweden on a short stay and then get your fingerprints and photo taken for a residence permit ASAP at a migration office. You will need this card to travel and return back to Sweden during exchange with an NZ passport.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Health insurance was mandatory for exchange students, but this was covered in my travel insurance. I would recommend the university offered ALLIANZ providers as I had no issues with them as mine.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

I would recommend joining SASSE sports as well as attending the organised school events. Breaking into the school culture can be hard as Swedes are quite reserved to the people they hang out with, but attending with other exchange students is always fun.

What was the university/ city like?

I thoroughly enjoyed living in Stockholm. Although at first I struggled to adapt to the culture shock of Sweden as a New Zealander, with time and as the weather improved I came to love the beautiful architecture, natural beauty and stunning scenery of the place.

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

I would recommend going Skiing in the north if you are in the right season for it. I went to Are and it was absolutely massive and stunning. I would also recommend visiting the Hellasgarden for an ice bath and sauna experience. If over 21 and in the summer months, do attend Tradgarden!! Best venue for going out in Stockholm by far!

Any tips for future students?

Swedish people are lovely once you crack them. Don't lose that New Zealander charm while over there, you will find it is received very well. Make sure to get well involved at the beginning with the exchange events, as this is likely how you will meet your best friends while over there.

Overall Experience

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

Overall, my exchange to Stockholm was one of the best experiences of my life. Although there were some challenges such as adjusting to a new culture, managing a higher workload, and being away from friends and family, the rewards far outweighed them. I made amazing friends from all over the world, gained a deeper perspective on economics and finance through world-class teaching, and got to live in one of the most beautiful cities in Europe. From late-night study sessions and fika breaks to ice baths at Hellasgården and dancing at Trädgården, every moment shaped the adventure. I'd recommend it to anyone. Make sure you go in with an open mind, say yes to everything, and don't be afraid to put yourself out there.