



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Esade
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 2025
Otago degree(s)	LLB and BA
Major(s)	Law and Politics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Intensive Spanish for Beginners	English	
Foreign Policy Strategies: Case Studies	English	
Managing Successful Projects for Development	English	
Global Political Economy in a Global Context	English	
The Influence of International Economic Organisations in the New Order	English	
China: Roots and Present of a Superpower	English	
Behavioural Economics and Experiments in Social Sciences	English	

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

Any comments about these papers?

The intensive Spanish courses go for only one week before the normal classes start, and this is a good way to meet other exchange students before your other classes start. It is only worth 2ECTS, however if you want to get the equivalent of 72 points at Otago I definitely recommend doing the Spanish course because otherwise you might find it quite hard to meet the ECTS requirement for 72 points.

Foreign Policy Strategies was a really interesting paper and the lecturer who takes it is really nice, so I would definitely recommend this one. Managing Successful Projects for Development is a paper completely based on the EU PM² project management guide, and is not really related to development

other than the fact that throughout the paper you will plan a project for an NGO. That paper is almost entirely group work, but was not very difficult and had no exam.

Global Political Economy in a Global Context was interesting and the lecturer was really nice, this is different to the Global Political Economy paper which they also offer, but the Global Context one was more politics related and not very difficult, but I think the other one was more difficult and more for Esade students rather than exchange students, so make sure you are aware of which one you are picking if they are both offered.

China: Roots and Present of a Superpower is very easy and required very little work. I don't feel like I learnt very much in Behavioural Economics and Experiments in Social Sciences and I would not recommend taking this paper if there is an exam. This semester there was no exam and it was marked entirely on a presentation and experiment, however I know that the lecturer is thinking about adding an exam so more people come to lectures. If there is no exam then this paper is all good to do if you need the points, it just wasn't one of the best ones.

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

The main difference was that all lectures went for 2-2.5 hours, so depending on how many points the paper is worth you will only have each paper 1 or 2 times a week.

It was also quite different to Otago because the classes are smaller and much more discussion based, the lecturers expect you to participate in classes and most classes grade your participation. The classes are also largely internally assessed and have a lot more presentations. In each class I had at least one presentation and in many I had to do two. In saying that I wouldn't let that put you off going to Esade if you don't like doing presentations because it's less scary when everyone has to do them, the class sizes are smaller and you just get used to doing them. They're also not very difficult to prepare for.

Exams were not as common, out of all the papers I took only 3 of them had exams (Foreign Policy Strategies, The Influence of International Economic Organisations in the New Order, and Global Political Economy in a Global Context). All of the exams pretty much happen all in the same week (end of November if you are coming in Semester 2), and I didn't find them very difficult. The papers you take are the optional papers that Esade students can take, so you will not have many Esade students in your classes and they will mostly just be exchange students. This means that the papers are quite a bit easier than papers at Otago and have a much smaller workload, and I also found that they mark quite nicely.

One annoying thing was that they change the papers offered quite often before classes start, so expect to have to update your learning agreement quite a bit before classes start. Overall Esade was quite unorganised when it came to paper selection and the way the timetable is set out makes it difficult to organise classes so you have no clashes if you need to get 72 points, but it is still possible. You also have to attend 80% of classes for each paper if you want to pass, so you can't have any clashes in your timetable, and classes are not recorded. Classes can start at 8am and the latest ones finish at about 7:45pm so also be aware of this when you are deciding your classes since the main campus (in Sant Cugat) takes about an hour to get to from Barcelona (approx. half hour train ride plus 20 minute walk). The Law campus (Esade Pedralbes) is in Barcelona so doesn't take as long to get to. You will have all of your classes on either the Sant Cugat campus (for the Global Governance programme) or the Pedralbes campus (for the Law programme).

Accommodation

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

I stayed in a room in an apartment that I found on HousingAnywhere. It was quite difficult to find a room in Barcelona, especially if you want one that has a window that opens up to outside, so definitely start looking months in advance. I really liked my apartment, all of my roommates were international/exchange students at other universities in Barcelona and my apartment was in Eixample which is a really nice place to live. I definitely recommend living in Barcelona and not Sant Cugat (where the Global Governance Campus is) because Barcelona is much more exciting and almost all exchange students live in Barcelona (and most of them also live in Eixample).

In my opinion Eixample is the best neighbourhood to stay in and then Gracia would be the second best and then maybe Sarrià. Wherever you live I would recommend making sure it is just a short walk to a station that has the S1 or S2 lines, as these are the lines that go out to Sant Cugat if you're on that campus. Out of all the stations that have these lines I recommend staying near the Provença station if you can as this station is in Eixample and a really good area (close to the main streets and walking distance to Plaça de Catalunya).

HousingAnywhere is a good place to find your room, but you can also look on Spotahome and some other sites. Esade offers a student residence that you can stay in, but almost all exchange students stay in apartments. When you receive your rental contract you can get the International Student Advisor at Esade to look over it and make sure it all looks good.

If you are staying for a year you might need to register with the city, so make sure your accommodation lets you register that address. If you are only staying for a semester this is not a problem.

Money matters

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

Accommodation

Rent: August (€560), September – December (€675) (bills included)

Deposit: €1013

HousingAnywhere protection fee: €196

Insurance

StudentSafe: \$579 NZD

(I think if you need a Visa you have to get Spanish insurance on top of this)

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

I used a Wise card which was good and easy to use.

Visas & Insurance

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

No

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes and this was covered by the StudentSafe policy.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Even though I went in Esade's semester 1 there were not really any organised activities. Esade does not have an O-Week and doesn't organise many/any social activities for students. If you want to participate in organised activities you can join Erasmus events with exchange students at universities all over Barcelona.

What was the university/ city like?

Barcelona was a really cool city to live in. It was really exciting and there is always so much going on around the city. The weather is really nice and it hasn't gotten too cold even in December. It is also easy to take trips to other cities as it's not difficult to get to the airport and there are lots of flights in and out of Barcelona. The only difficult thing is if you have classes everyday it will be harder to take weekend trips since you have to attend most of your classes.

Sant Cugat is quite quiet but it's a nice area. You will see lots of students walking between uni and the train station.

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

Montserrat is a really cool day trip from Barcelona. It's a mountain range with a town at the top that you can walk to in a couple hours from the train station. I also recommend going to a Barça game if you can because that's quite fun. Otherwise just exploring different neighbourhoods in the city and going to the festivals that are on quite often.

Any tips for future students?

Get a T-Jove metro card when you get there. It's only about €50 and gets you unlimited trips on public transport for 3 months. If you need to talk to the Esade exchange advisor book an online meeting with her instead of emailing, she might not reply to your email.

Overall Experience

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

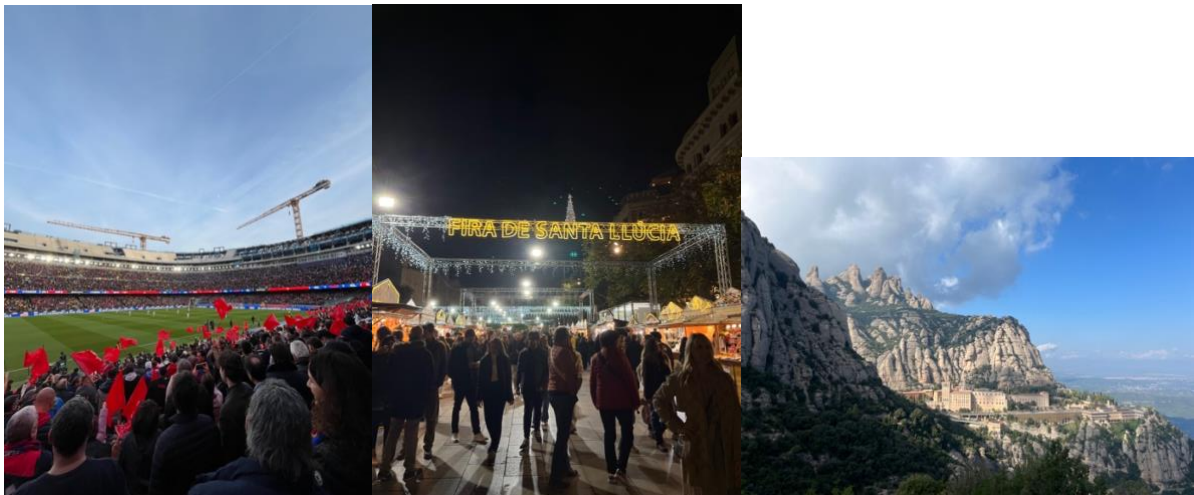
I had a really amazing time living in Barcelona and am really glad that I chose Barcelona for my exchange city. While the exchange programme at Esade wasn't super well organised and the lectures were not always very informative it was definitely worth it since you get to live in Barcelona. There are lots of international students in Barcelona, the city is really nice with lots going on and I never felt unsafe.



Sagrada Família

Casa Batlló

Castellers at La Mercè Festival



Barça game

Fira de Santa Llúcia Christmas Market

Montserrat



Morocco Trip