



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Edinburgh University
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2, 2022
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Finance and Accounting

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Advanced Financial Accounting	English	Acct315
Behavioural Finance	English	Finc499
Foundation Spanish 3	English	Span231

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

Any comments about these papers?

I enjoyed all of these papers. Behavioural Finance consisted of two 50% assignments so not having to do an exam was great. The content was interesting and teaching staff were very passionate and helpful. Spanish consisted of weekly assignments which also meant there was no exam, it required effort to keep on top of it but was great for learning. Financial accounting was run quite similar to how Otago would, with lectures, tutorials, computer workshops, group project and a 70% exam

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

It wasn't too dissimilar, about 3-4 hours of lectures for each paper then a tutorial and or computer workshop. I didn't find it difficult to adjust to this teaching method at all.

Accommodation

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

I stayed at Kincaid's court. It was an absolutely incredible location, 5 minute walk to most of my lectures and supermarket, right next to the Royal Mile and princess street. I was in a self-catered flat of 12 people, with most of my flat mates being first year Scottish students. They were great and it was a good way to learn about Scotland and their culture. The only thing about this accommodation is that it is right above a few pubs/bars so you have to buy ear plugs or be woken up at least 5 times a night by Scottish people either fighting or having an intellectual conversation – it's often pretty impossible to differentiate between.

Money matters

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

All in all this probably costed between 15-12K. I know people that did it cheaper but I used Edinburgh as a base to travel to other places which made the trip slightly more expensive. I also foolishly waited until the last minute to buy a flight home which costed 2.6k. My accommodation was 4.5k for the semester, flight over was 1.2k and insurance around 750.

I didn't go out very much and didn't eat out either which saved me a lot. Tried to use that money more for travel as it is easy to get a 50nzd return flight to Poland and stay at a hostel for 12nzd a night.

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

I got a wise card which I would highly recommend, it made transferring, dealing with finances...etc very easy. Other people use Monzo too which is similar.

Visas & Insurance

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

I didn't need a visa as studying less than 6 months in the UK

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not that I'm aware of but was insured regardless.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

I played social rugby which was a great way to meet people. Absolutely freezing so my passion wore off as I got further through. At the start of the semester they had a club convention thing over a few days where you could sign up to any club imaginable for any passion. I personally didn't have a lot of obligations and wanted flexibility in my time so didn't do this but if people are wanting then there's plenty of opportunity there. I did sign up for the hiking/mountaineering club that had cheap bus tickets to some great places in the highlands.

What was the university/ city like?

I couldn't speak more highly of Edinburgh, it's a beautiful city and extremely kind and personable people. Everything you need is in walking distance and there's so much history. The Uni was also great and everyone was extremely accommodating to all my needs.

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

I would try get out most weekends and explore wider Scotland, there's so many places to go. It is quite easy to fall into a routine and doing the same thing so go to the highlands, loch ness...etc

Any tips for future students?

Download Rick Steve's Audio Europe app. In all major city's he has a walking tour that is 1-2 hours that is packed full of great information and suggestions. Made my experience going through the colosseum and all other places great.

Overall Experience

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

I've just finished my last exam and very sad to see the exchange wrapping up. If you're thinking about doing a semester overseas, I couldn't recommend Edinburgh highly enough. Going halfway around the world can be daunting but the Scottish have an extremely inviting and similar culture to New Zealand and it's not too difficult to translate from Scottish to English either.

Something about Edinburgh that people may overlook is the fact that the airport is 20 minutes away by bus that goes every 10 mins and it can jet you all over Europe for next to nothing. In the past month I've gone to Morocco for \$150 NZD return and did a trip from Edinburgh, Berlin, Brussels, Amsterdam and back for the price of 6.8 boxes of lime cruisers (\$170 NZD). I'm also currently eyeing up a one-way trip to Latvia for \$24. Overall, it's a great city, where most things are walking distance, the history and architecture is incredible and I'm extremely happy to have called this place home for the past few months.

The education system here is also great, with the uni being ranked in the top 20 internationally but I feel like my degree relevant learning only amounts to a fraction of the value I have gained out of this. I feel very satisfied to go back to New Zealand and start working without feeling like I'm missing out on seeing the world.