



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Strathclyde
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 2019
Otago degree(s)	LLB/BA
Major(s)	Law and politics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Intellectual Property Law	English	Intellectual Property Law	
Law, Film, and Popular Culture	English	400 Level LAWS	
Contemporary British Governance	English	200 Level POLS	
			Total 72 points

Any comments about these papers?

The film law paper was really easy, not at all like a normal law paper, more like an arts paper. Of the 5 law assignments over both papers, only one was a legal opinion. The marking system is quite different, as to pass you only need 40%. Over 70% is considered a very good mark, and this is quite hard to achieve.

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

Both law papers did not have exams, just final assignments. The film law paper was 60% group work, and tutorials for the politics paper also involved group work. All three classes were made up of one two hour lecture every week, and a tutorial every second week. The last two weeks of the semester the lecturers went on strike, which apparently happens just about annually. Going into exams/final assignments, I had only gotten back two assignments, so it is kind of hard to know where you are at.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in Birkbeck Court, like a lot of exchange students. This was the cheapest accommodation, and it wasn't the flashiest but it was fine. All of my flatmates were on exchange as well, and this was the case for most exchange students I met. I also knew exchange students who got put in Thomas Campbell and Andrew Ure, I would say the most important thing is that you live with other exchange students. Nearly all the halls are on the same block, which is right next to uni, and very close to the centre of town. Most of the halls are made up of flats. In Birkbeck, each building has 4 flats, so you only have access to your own building and your own flat. Many people had issues with the laundry facilities, which are run by an external company, but you can usually get a refund if you call and complain. Birkbeck rooms were quite small, you had to get your own duvet cover and sheets, as well as all your kitchen things. On opening weekend they had a second hand giveaway where I picked up most things I needed such as a pot, pan, and cooking utensils. All halls come with a free membership to the Strathclyde gym.

Money matters

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

Birkbeck was 105 pounds a week, which you can pay upfront or in instalments. I had done another exchange in semester one so I flew from the USA, but my flights home cost around \$2000 NZD. Eating out is more expensive than NZ, and at the supermarket some things are cheaper and some things more expensive.

What means did you use to access your finances? What would you recommend?

I used an Air New Zealand Onesmart card, which I would recommend as you can load multiple currencies for if you are travelling, and you also earn Airpoints as you spend. Unlike the rest of Europe, none of the ATMs charge fees to get cash out. It was kind of annoying not having a bank account for when I needed to internet bank people, which I had to do many times for things in sports clubs.

Visas & Insurance

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

As I was studying for less than six months, I just got the short-term study stamp when I went through immigration. To get this you can't go through the e-gates, you need to see an immigration officer and show them your acceptance letter. Make sure you do this at your first UK airport. You are meant to do this every time you re-enter the UK. The university checks that you have a visa at the start of the semester. I met a couple of people who did not get their stamp when they first entered the UK, and they had to leave and re-enter so that they could get the stamp.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

ESN Strathclyde organises events for exchange students throughout the semester such as a scavenger hunt at the start so you can get to know the city. They also have a buddy program, but I didn't know anyone who actually met up with their buddy, it's a bit of a hit and miss of who you get. Strath has many sports clubs, I played hockey and squash which was a great way to meet Scottish people. The clubs take all abilities, and I found they were quite cheap compared to NZ. The teams play against other universities which can require travel, so there are not meant to be lectures on Wednesday afternoons, but you can get out of class if necessary. All the big sports clubs go out on Wednesdays after their games, all to the same club. They also have various social events throughout the semester on top of this, often these are themed. I would definitely recommend joining a sports club, it made my time at Strath so much better. The gym is quite new, and has a pool as well. The gym classes are included in membership and I really enjoyed the ones that I went to.

What was the university/ city like?

The uni is in a great location in the middle of town, although there are some big hills. All the uni buildings are very close together, some are connected, and some are a bit of a maze in terms of navigation. The library and gym are right next to each other, across the road from most of the halls. The students union has a couple of bars and cafes, and places to study or hang out during the day. The city has a lot of very old buildings which are very pretty, and they put up Christmas lights and decorations at the start of November. On the subway you can get to the West End, where you can visit Glasgow Uni and Ashton Lane. The only supermarkets within walking distance are metro type supermarkets, which I found fine, but obviously didn't have as much as a normal supermarket.

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

Popular places to eat include Paesanos, Wetherspoons, Bar Soba and DiMaggios. Tantrum Donuts is really good, as is Deeserts. During Freshers week all the bars/clubs do heaps of promo deals so you can figure out which ones you like. The Garage is a bar which has a bouncy castle some nights. The Isle of Skye is a really popular place to visit, and Edinburgh and St Andrews are great as well. A lot of people did some of the "Keltic Ginger" tours, previously known as Student Tours Scotland, and really enjoyed them.

Any tips for future students?

Make the most of your time overseas, there is so much going on in Glasgow/Europe. Also since you can't fly straight to the UK, make the most of your layovers. On my way home I flew through Beijing and went to see the Great Wall of China.

Overall Experience

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

A lot of Scottish people would ask me if I was enjoying Glasgow/Strathclyde, and seemed surprised when I said that I loved it. Glasgow was a nice mixture of being similar to New Zealand/Dunedin but at the same time so different. There is so much to do in Glasgow, whether it is social events with sports clubs, trips around Scotland or trips around Europe, it would have been great to have more time there. Being based in the UK makes travel to Europe super easy, and I also did a trip to Morocco. The weather is not great, slightly colder than Dunedin and rainy, I would say the biggest difference was the lack of sun due to clouds, and the sun setting at 4pm. There were around 400 exchange students the semester that I went, most of them were European, so you meet heaps of people.



Left: Old Course at St Andrews



Below: Edinburgh Castle and Victoria St



Left: Squash club sub-crawl