

University of Glasgow

Semester 1 2017

LLB/BA: Politics

Summary:

I was lucky enough to attend the great institution that is the University of Glasgow, Glasgow was an amazing city as well as being in Scotland which in my humble opinion is alongside New Zealand one of the most beautiful countries in the world! I would strongly advocate for the University of Glasgow, its reputation as a world leading

university, it's spectacular campus and the student vibe make it the perfect university to go on exchange to. In saying that I think we are all biased towards the cities that we lived in and I have heard rave reviews from friends who lived across Europe on exchange, so bottom line is to take the opportunity and go on exchange -it will be the most unbelievable experience of your life. Or, at least it was for me!

Glasgow was also in a lot of senses quite like Dunedin, it's a university town with numerous universities and colleges (including the University of Strathclyde, which I will mention later). Students are a well-loved demographic in Glasgow and most places you go will do discounts... particularly when it comes to nightlife which Glasgow is renowned for (if big nights out are for you, look no further than Sauchiehall street).

The final point I'd like to make before attempting to get to the nitty-gritty is the access Glasgow and most major European centres have for travel. On my exchange, I covered roughly 15 countries and this was mainly enabled by fantastic low-cost airlines like Easy-Jet and Ryan Air. If you hear someone complain about Ryan Air you can tell them to shut up with confidence, when you are paying less than 20 NZD to fly to somewhere like Spain, don't expect to be waited on as you would at a fancy restaurant (you will meet many entitled people, many from America, be warned). I digress, whether it be a weekend trip to the awe-inspiring Edinburgh or a week sailing around the Adriatic Sea while island hopping on the Croatian coastline, you will get to see some amazing places, not just Glasgow!

Accommodation:

I have mixed feelings about writing a report on the state of accommodation in Glasgow, mainly because I feel like they could do a lot better but I would hate to put anyone off! I lived at Murano Street Student Village in a 12-person flat, the village itself is massive with over 1000 residents. This size should have made it the perfect place to meet locals and exchange students alike, unfortunately the University and the people running the village did little to promote this. Our living situation was far from perfect with the facilities not really being able to cater for all of us (cultural differences making this that little bit more challenging). In saying that I had a fantastic time at Murano and have made friends from all over the world because of choosing to stay there, so in hindsight I wouldn't change my experience but I



think in the future they could do more. Even instituting a Kiwi-host like initiative over there would be great, one of the few down-sides to my exchange was the lack of Glaswegian friends I made, if it wasn't for having family friends and a couple of cool people I met through the International Law society I would not have made good friends with many Scottish students at all. I think this should be addressed at the accommodation level, but as I said it really didn't detract that much and managed to make amazing friends. Anyway, enough with the negatives, Murano was fun, there was a good vibe and there are enough people that with a bit of initiative you will find a crew to suit you. There are other accommodation options, although most are quite similar including Kelvinhaugh Street Flats in which other Otago students stayed, these seemed to be quieter and maybe more comfortable.

Cost:

Cost is obviously a major factor and exchange is not cheap, although in saying that when you factor in the help that the University gives you and the experiences you get from exchange I would say it is possibly one of the biggest bargains of your life. Our accommodation was around \$220 per week, which is neither eye-wateringly expensive or very cheap. Glasgow as a city is cheap for a city in the UK. All the main supermarkets are cheap and nights out and such are also a bargain when comparing them to NZ. Your big expenses are travel, so have enough money for that extra and you should be able to live roughly similar to New Zealand, maybe on the more expensive side of flating.

Weather:

Short and sweet. Do not come to Glasgow for the sun, although towards the winter months it can be surprisingly pleasant. Overall not too dissimilar to Dunedin, probably slightly cooler. Weekend trips to beach destinations help big time though!

Things to do:

Realistically there are far too many things to do in Glasgow, greater Scotland and Europe for me to be much help. My main advice is take every opportunity, I came back in financial ruin but it was all worth it for the things I got to do.

Also Glasgow is pretty good for cheap/free things to do, all of the museums and art galleries are free, Kelvingrove Museum being an ultimate highlight (I went multiple times and still found interesting things). Sport and predominately football is also a big draw card, although be warned don't get tribal about supporting either Celtic or Rangers unless you are willing to back it up, my advice would be to support Partick Thistle, a really cool small club whose home ground Firhill Aka the Fortress is only a 5-minute walk from Murano.



Glasgow's West End is somewhere students frequent, it has a bohemian feel to it and the most eclectic bunch of bars from student's unions, to refurbished libraries, the dazzling Ashton Lane and the crowning jewel Oran Mor an astonishingly converted church.

In summary, 1. Go on exchange 2. Glasgow is the best city to do it in 3. The University of Glasgow is the best, but University of Strathclyde in the centre of Glasgow has some positives as well so be sure to check it out!

Best of luck for anyone keen to go on exchange and remember to do Otago proud!!

