



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University College of Dublin
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 2019
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Management and Marketing

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
International Management	English	MANT217	12
Service Learning	English	MANT252	12
Business & Global Development	English	MANT348	12
Global Marketing	English	MART326	12
Marketing Communications	English	MART201	12

Any comments about these papers?

Work load was the same as papers at Otago. Two of my papers were internally assessed which meant that large percentage of grade was reflective of an essay/report. Lecturers had great knowledge and experience within the industries they were teaching which made class very interesting. Business and global development paper touched on a range of topics in developing countries and looked at more social entrepreneurship and business from those angles which I thoroughly enjoyed.

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

Lectures were two hours long, which meant some days sitting in the same lecture room for 4 hours straight. Many classes required a lot more class participation and engagement than my lectures from Otago which led to the lecturers getting to know your names which was nice. My papers in the business school also had a lot more group projects which ended up being a nice way of meeting more people and finding study buddies to ask questions about the paper for. But, like Otago there is a good support system of staff there to help you if you need it!

Accommodation

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

I stayed at on campus accommodation in Belgrove. UCD isn't located in the town centre and instead is south which is the more expensive part of Dublin. Therefore, finding flatting around UCD is difficult and can be costly. The friends I knew that lived off campus would still have to bus in daily to reach campus as would live in north Dublin. The accommodation on campus was very convenient and easy access to lectures. A lot of students stayed on campus for their entire degree, unlike Otago where it was only first year students commonly in halls. Also the on campus accommodation provided a great way to meet people and fellow exchange students.

Belgrove accommodation and majority of the other UCD on campus accommodation were set out like shared apartment styled flats. I shared an apartment with three others (who were also all exchange students). We had two bathrooms/showers and a shared kitchenette/common area. The apartment worked well, there was no oven and you did have to purchase all kitchen equipment at the start of semester. However, IKEA buses ran daily and easy to get stuff from their or scavenge through the donated stuff from previous semester residence at the campus offices. They provided a duvet and a pillow however, need to get sheets etc for yourself. Maintenance was also very good with fixing any repairs.

Money matters

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

Ireland can be rather expensive in comparison to other parts of Europe. Flights I booked in advance so price wasn't too bad to get to Ireland. Insurance was sorted through STA and didn't require getting one in Ireland. Once in Ireland flights to other parts of Europe could be rather cheap. Ireland has an airline called Aer Lingus which has cheap flights from Dublin to everywhere which was a great way to see Europe etc in the weekends of the semester. Food wise, you could survive of 20 euro a week which is around 40\$NZD. On campus on Thursdays, there was a great food stall market, which had nice options for lunch. There was also a mini supermarket/convenience store, which was easy to stock up on essentials during the week. On campus there was also Starbucks, subway and other cafes etc as food options. Going out could end up expensive as normally would require a taxi back to campus as buses stopped working after a while. A Taxi back was around 20 euro. Entry fees and drinks- Download an app called VISPY which allowed you to get free entry into clubs/bars and would show you where the discounts on drinks were, such as 1.50€ drinks/shots on Mondays at Dicey's (Student nights are Monday, Tuesday as most Irish students leave for weekend, however, nightlife was still good every night of the week)

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

I just ended up using my BNZ debit card majority of the time. I did have a cash passport card and would occasionally use it but debit card was fine. If you let your bank know where you are going beforehand you can normally remove additional charges when withdrawing money from ATM also. I did find when travelling to places such as Spain and Portugal that cash was more commonly used as most cards had a minimum purchase value so cashed was used more so. Potentially if you were staying and doing two semesters opening a bank account could be handy for transferring to people, but definitely wasn't necessary.

Visas & Insurance

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

Visa process is a bit of mission, however, everyone is in the same position. Didn't require a visa arriving into Ireland but when you land you are given 60 days (I think) to organise an appointment and get a student permit. This student permit costed 300€ which was a slightly unexpected cost. The appointments are hard to book but the exchange people at the University help you out and get set ones just for the exchange students and answer any questions. Its normally fine. Just make sure to take copies of things with you when heading over.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Nope.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There is a range of clubs you can sign up to. They have a big sign up day where all the sports and societies are handing out freebies and answering questions which is a great way to get amongst the university culture and meet Irish students. I signed up for the international student society and they placed a range of events on and provided information from exchange students which was useful and a good way of meeting people. I would recommend joining another activity or club as it is a good way to meet local students and mingle outside the exchange students. Even if you have never played the sport before you are most likely welcome to join and half the time most join for the social aspect and weekend trips! But would definitely recommend going along to this. The on campus accommodation also placed activities on every week from yoga to movie nights so was those options present as well.

What was the university/ city like?

The campus is beautiful. It is slightly out of the city centre and requires a bus to get in, however, it is a massive campus with everything you need on site, including two-three ponds, subway, Starbucks a mini supermarket, great sports facilities and even a movie theatre! There is a post shop on campus as well as ATMS, which had good rates for converting \$. I would recommend trying to do bigger grocery shops off campus as can be cheaper and buying liquor was best done at large supermarkets as they sell spirits also there.

Dublin city was neat and easy to get around, with lots of street musicians playing around the shopping area and a nice park through the middle of Dublin. Dun Laoghaire on the coast had cute township and nice markets and it is an easy bus ride too.

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

Places to visit – definitely recommend getting out to cliffs of Moher and stay in Galway . Very cute Irish township which great pizza place! Try Murphy's Ice Cream shop in Dublin and Galway, a fun place to go and try all the Irish ice cream flavours. Did a couple tours from Dublin to Belfast and Kilkenny/ Glendalough through Paddy Waggon bus tours, which we all found was good value and ticked off all the tourist places. Getting out to the Aran Islands is also a fun option and renting bikes for the day. There is a lovely park in Dublin called Phoenix park, which has thousands of deer just roaming in it!

We also did lots of weekend trips away as so easy to travel from Dublin. So did Amsterdam for Easter, Portugal for study leave (Super cheap flights and Airbnb on the coast!), visited friends in London, Madrid and Prague. Definitely worth booking trips away. It makes the semester go super-fast when you explore different places most weekends! Eating out we used first table a lot to get cheap food prices and decent places. However the Sunday market at Dun Laoghaire had hands down the best hot chocolate from a place called truffle fairy and there was a bar that did wood fire pizzas reasonably cheap called Eat Yard/Bernard Shaw and good Mexican food at Boojum.

Any tips for future students?

If you're considering an exchange I would absolutely recommend it!! And if you are after a place that is similar to Dunedin/ New Zealand then Ireland is perfect! It was great being able to spend weekends in Spain and experience a different culture/language, then come back to Dublin feeling like it was home with like-minded funny friendly Irish people. Dublin was an amazing base to travel around from, whether within Ireland or all over the UK and Europe. Flights are cheap, make the most of it!! The Irish students are also very excited to meet Kiwis and some friendly rugby chat always goes down well!

Would definitely recommend engaging on the exchange Facebook pages before you arrive, even if it seems out of your comfort zone, but commenting on some posts can often result in a message of someone in the same boat. I ended up having one of my best friends I made on exchange send me a message on Fb before I arrived asking when I was arriving etc, so just remember everyone is in the same boat! You also have to stick out that first month, no time for exploring the better Netflix options just put yourself out there and meet people. There were so many exchange students all eager to meet people you're never lonely and just going up to someone and asking something normally results in a long conversation. You'll end up coming back home and be in the habit of going out and asking so where are you from. Also don't be shocked by the amount of rock everywhere in Ireland... seems bizarre that they spent so much time building rock walls.

Overall Experience

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



UCD campus is amazing! Accommodation was of a high standard with constant building developments going on. Living on campus was a great way to meet people and get involved with activities on campus. I helped setting a world record for the most hand rolled ice creams in 24 hrs!

Dublin itself was a lively place, lots of street performs and people out at night- like every night of the week. Temple bar as the tourist attraction it is always has live music and a fun atmosphere but drink prices do sneak up on you. The clubs and pubs were also very popular amongst students and were a lot of fun. There is a bunch of distillery's and breweries to visit in Dublin such as Guinness which is well done and a neat place to visit. Baby Guinness are also a thing – recommend trying them on a night out!

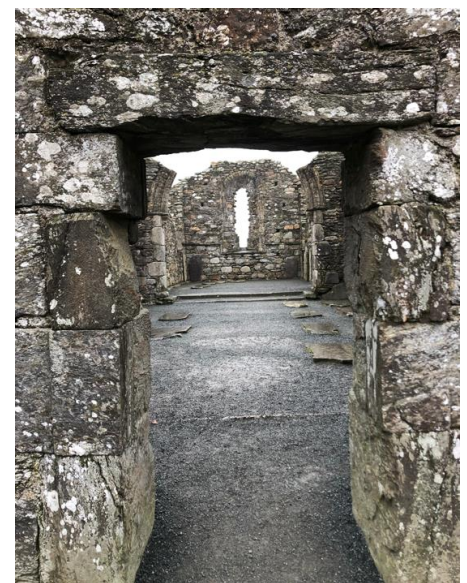
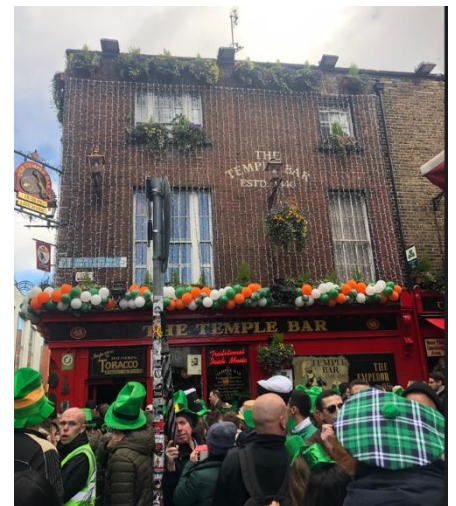
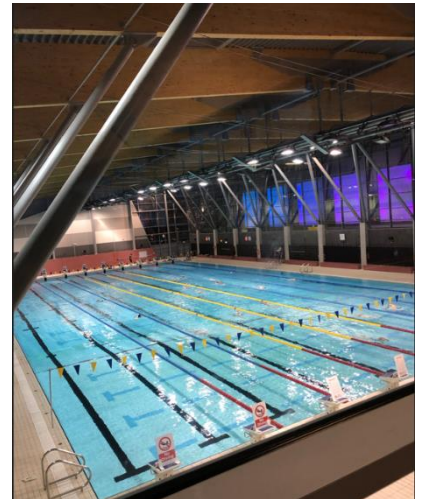
The lecturers at UCD all were very interesting and most of my papers they actually learnt your names which was nice, plus class participation was expected more so. Workload was definitely doable.

I did a bunch of day trips around Ireland with other exchange students to places like cliffs of Moher, Glendalough, Cork etc, which were beautiful and a great way of seeing Ireland.

Ireland has a rich history, I would recommend the immigration museums - amazing learning about all those who left Ireland and the famine.

I loved that I was able to spend weekends away. Prague was a beautiful city to visit and cheap, Madrid had great tapas, churros and sangria, Amsterdam was fun for Easter and hiring boats to drive in canals, riding bikes and visiting the tulips was amazing. Portugal for study week was defiantly a highlight for 5 nights' accommodation in Algarve at an amazing Airbnb and flights return it came to 100 euro each for the five of us that went! Beauty spot.

More photos are on my Instagram so feel free to browse those – clodagh_Saxton



Overall, I already cannot wait to go back to Ireland and visit my friends there! You make friendships for a lifetime and I loved every minute of it! If you have any questions or are considering Ireland or don't know what to expect feel free to contact me and I'll happily answer any question –

