



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Melbourne
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2, 2021
Otago degree(s)	Law and Arts
Major(s)	Geography major and Politics minor

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Health Geography - GEOG20013	English	200 level Geography paper
Africa: Environment, Development, People - GEOG30024	English	300 level Geography paper
American Politics - POLS30030	English	300 level Politics paper

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points

Any comments about these papers?

They were all really interesting and great papers to do.

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

Everything was done online because of COVID but the academic experience, workload and style of teaching was very similar to Otago.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in a fully furnished flat (in Melbourne they call it a sharehouse) in Brunswick with one other girl who was working and also happened to be a New Zealander. I found the accommodation on flatmates.com.au – it is not associated with the University but I found that University accommodation was expensive. Also since I am a 5th year student I am used to the flatting lifestyle.

I am really glad that I chose this option, and I think Brunswick is a good place to live while on exchange. I lived about 2 minutes walk from the tram on Sydney Road and 5 minutes walk from the Brunswick train station and the supermarket so it was a great location. There are also lots of nice bars, restaurants, shops and parks in the area (the parks were great during COVID). Brunswick is

definitely a student/young professionals area that has a more comfortable suburban feel to it compared to the CBD so in my opinion it was a great place to be.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good location• More space with a proper kitchen, lounge, and outdoor space• Not as strict as University accommodation; it feels more independent• Cheaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bit more risky because it isn't university accommodation• Took more effort to organise – I luckily had a furnished room and I did not have to sign a lease but it may not always be that way• Harder to meet people since you are not in student accommodation with lots of other people

Money matters

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

My flat was AUD\$235 per week, power and wifi was similar to NZ, flights were about \$650, did not need a visa, food was similar to what I would pay in NZ and insurance was \$250.

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

I had an ANZ Australia bank account. I was able to transfer money from my ANZ New Zealand account to that account easily so would recommend getting an Australian bank account.

Visas & Insurance

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

No visa needed for Australia.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No but Otago recommended an insurance policy for me.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

COVID impacted this a lot but Unimelb had a University club called MUSEX that organised activities for us which was great so I would definitely recommend signing up to that – they organised events such as pub nights, dinners, a boat trip on the Yarra River and bowling. I was also able to go to the Unimelb Love Letters Ball through people on the MUSEX committee. There are a lot of clubs at Unimelb which offer numerous activities and events throughout the semester.

I also joined a netball team that played at the University but because of COVID I was only able to play one game.

I had a few friends in Melbourne so I was able to do activities with them for example go out to bars and restaurants, go on roadtrips, go sailing, have picnics, etc.

What was the university/ city like?

The city is amazing, I really loved it in Melbourne. There is so much going on and so much to do, and even during lockdown it was nice to explore somewhere different. I was never actually able to go to a lecture at the University because of COVID however I did go into the sports centre and the library which were nice areas and the University buildings from the outside were beautiful.

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

Try as many restaurants and bars as you can! Some cool bars I went to were Rooftop Bar, Goldilocks, Cornish Arms, Garden State Hotel, Wolf, Espy, Welcome to Brunswick, the Retreat Hotel. Nice restaurants I went to included Cookie, Makan, Fonda, Brunswick Mess Hall, Hawker Hall and I also got a lot of takeaways because of lockdown from places like Chin Chin, Rin Sura, Tokyo Tina, Supernormal, Entrecote and Bahama Gold (Providoor was a great website in lockdown as they send you meal kits where you make the meals from some of these restaurants – it is quite expensive but they are from the top restaurants in the city!)

Other places to visit include the Botanical Gardens, the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), the State Library, St Kilda beach, Brighton beach (and the beach boxes), the museum, all the different parks/gardens around the city, and the shopping centres like Emporium and Chadstone. There will always be different exhibitions or shows around the city so keep an eye out – one that I went to was called Van Gogh at the Lume which was a digital art gallery.

I was also able to fit in a couple of road trips – I went to Mornington Peninsula and did the Great Ocean Road:

- I went to Mornington Peninsula with a friend who had a car and it was a really nice day trip but there is actually a lot to do there so would be nice to go for a few days. We went to Portsea Hotel for lunch and Arthurs Seat lookout which were both great spots.
- Great Ocean Road is a must-do in Melbourne! Another exchange student and I rented a car and stayed at Apollo Bay the first night and Port Campbell the second night. The first day was lots of little beach towns, the second day we went into the Otway National Park and saw some waterfalls and the third day was amazing scenery such as the 12 Apostles and the Bay of Islands. There are lots of places to stop on the way so definitely have a look at the itineraries that are on Google.

Any tips for future students?

Different accommodation options suit different people so definitely choose the option that you think would be best for you, and obviously try to do as much as you can while you are there!

Overall Experience

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

Not quite the usual exchange experience but I still loved it and am so grateful for the opportunity to go to Melbourne. Melbourne wasn't initially my first choice but I ended up really enjoying being there because it is similar to New Zealand but the city is an exciting place to be and there is so much going on all the time. I also had a few friends/mutual friends that I was able to see and do things with so that was a bonus. It was great being somewhere different and the last month when we were out of lockdown was full of fun times. I would definitely recommend to everybody to do an exchange and I cannot wait to do more travel in the future.

