

Student Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Otago degree(s) | Bachelor of Commerce | Major(s) | Tourism and Marketing Management |
| Host University | University of Economics Prague | Semester & Year of Exchange | Semester 2 2017 |

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

| Course title | Language of instruction | Otago equivalent | Otago credit value |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 3BE324 Business Ethics | English | Mart331 | 4 |
| 3BE314 Entrepreneurship | English | Mart3XX | 6 |
| 2CR305 Rural Tourism | English | Tour3XX | 3 |
| 4EK603 Project management | English | Mart306 | 3 |
| 2CR313 Intercultural communication in tourism and hospitality industry | English | Tour301 | 3 |
| 2OP326 Strategic management and business model innovation | English | Mart301 | 3 |

Any comments about these papers?

2OP326 was an intensive course and was definitely worth it as it took the workload off at the end of the semester and was a good way of meeting people.

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

There were no large lecture rooms like Otago has, my biggest lecture was of about 40 people and it was the same group for tutorials. Some classes didn't have tutorials. I also found they focused more on students previous knowledge, experiences and learning from each other rather than simply learning new content and being assessed on that.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in the halls of residence called Jarov III.F. The biggest pro here was being able to instantly and continuously meet people. There were 500 people in the dorm and everyone was very friendly. Cons was sharing a room for 4 months was difficult but this is a choice, you can pay more to have an individual room, also the building was pretty run down, but

again cheap so you get what you pay for!

Money matters

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

Visa was free, travel insurance was \$500, health insurance for the host University was \$130, accommodation was \$1000, flights return were about \$2000, food was cheap in Prague- about \$35 a week at the supermarket + meals out averaging around \$10.

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

I had a credit card, my visa debit card, and a cash passport. I recommend bringing 3 ways of accessing money. I found credit card was easiest to use in stores as it was free and my bank did the exchange for me, the cash passport was the best for getting cash out as it was free and only \$1 to transfer money onto this card, however I only used this for euros. Lastly I also had a visa debit for back up, this was expensive to use in stores, more expensive than the cash passport/less than the credit card to get cash out so this was mainly a backup card and getting generous amounts of cash out in Prague.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, I had to apply for all the documentation required, there is a list easily found online, then all needed to be translated into Czech, again found a number for a lady who did this in NZ. Once I had all these together I had to send all my original documents to Sydney + passport (allow plenty of time here, 3 months), they then sent back the visa.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes, noted above under costs.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Parties each Tuesday night, sports, hikes, day trips, weekend trips, buddy system. I recommend the student parties, the hikes and weekend trips.

What was the university/ city like?

The city was beautiful. Cobble stone streets where you truly lived the European lifestyle! My favourite thing about Prague was how well they do Christmas. The Christmas market was amazing. The university was about 20 minutes away from the hall of residence but this wasn't a problem and was good seeing your friends too and from uni. The university was relatively small so you were always bumping into people and meeting for lunch etc. The city has so many interesting sculptors all around which was very cool to find.

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

Definitely at least one hike at a nearby town, they are all about a day trip and definitely worth it. Don't be intimidated, they're not that difficult and a great day out with a group! Letna beer gardens, Charles Bridge, Juvy, Prague Castle- all must dos!

Any tips for future students?

Don't waste anytime! There is so much going on and things to see and people to meet, get out there, there is always people keen to do something, whether you know them or not flick them

a message and it starts from there! Get on the Facebook page, this is a great way to find people and see what others are doing, everyone will be feeling the same way as you and are mainly there for the same reason so you're bound to get along! Don't worry about whether you speak Czech or not, you will manage just fine without it. Brush up on your geography and NZ culture knowledge, everyone loves talking about this. Don't be shocked when everyone starts booking trips in the first few weeks for months or so down the track. Don't be shy to go on trips with different people each weekend, mixing around is a good thing. The public transport is great and Google Maps will become your best friend!

Overall Experience

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

Without a doubt my exchange experience to Prague was an amazing and once in a lifetime experience. As I had never been further than Australia I didn't know what to expect, how I would settle in, who I would meet, and how I would manage university in another country! Now returning home I have to say it was above and beyond what I had imagined. One of my favourite things about being on this exchange was the people you meet. It is not only awesome when you are there hearing about their different countries and cultures, it is cool to now say I have friends all over the world!

When people ask me what the best thing about going on exchange would have to be the fact alone that you are completing your degree as well as exploring the world! The question I then ask is why they haven't or aren't planning on going on an exchange themselves! Going through the university exchange was also a reassuring way that you would be accounted for when you arrive and an easy way to meet new friends.