



Student Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Double Degree Law and BSc (Geography)

Otago degree(s)	
Host University	Semester & Year of Exchange
University of Glasgow	Semester 1, 2018

Academics/ course load

-Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

On exchange I took 4 papers- Coastal Environments and Management, Populations Geographies (Space, sex and death), Geographies of Solidarity and Internationalism and Global Energy Politics.

These papers were all really interesting, but in particular I LOVED Global Energy Politics. I never planned to take this paper but ran into difficulties getting into the original papers I wanted, as classes were already full by the time I got to Glasgow in orientation week. It turned out however to be one of my favourite papers there.

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

-All of my classes were relatively small, about 30 people in each of my papers. Lectures were taught in classrooms as opposed to lecture theatres, and were more like what we would call a tute or seminar at Otago. The lecturer would often encourage/expect participation in class discussion. The semester there is very short, it went from the first week of January until about the 23rd of March, then there was Spring Break, and exams began at the end of April and went until the middle of May. However, none of my papers had exams. Instead, each of my papers had a 3000 word essay due at the end of the semester, and there was very little internal work. The lecturers also went on strike for a month during semester time, so the majority of my classes were cancelled.

-The University itself:

The University buildings themselves are amazing!!!! Most of the buildings are very old, and apparently were one of the inspirations for Hogwarts. It also has a 10 story high library which has amazing views overlooking Glasgow. The University is located in Glasgow's west end, a nice area with large parks, good shops and many bars and restaurants. Ashton Lane is also a 1 minute walk from the University and is definitely worth going to.

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

-I stayed in Murano Student Village (as did two other girls from Otago). Although this is predominantly a first year hall (although everyone cooks for themselves), a lot of international students lived here. I lived on a floor with 10 other internationals from Germany, Spain, France, USA, and Argentina who were all lovely and lots of fun, and we did a lot of socialising with the other floors in our building too. We had a room each with a double bed, desk, sink and wardrobe. The floor had 4 showers/2 toilets/1 kitchen between everyone. However, the facilities themselves are nothing flash, and you have to provide your own bedding, kitchen equipment, towels etc. Murano is also in a slightly dodgy area of town, and about a 25 minute walk to the university. You can find really good private accommodation that is nicer than the uni accommodation, cheaper and in a better location to the city/uni, but it may be harder to make friends and socialise. However, I would still recommend Murano as it's one of the most social places to live.

Money matters

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

The accommodation cost 2025 pounds, and this needed to be paid in one lump sum at the start of semester. I think my flights were about \$2100 nzd return (this is kind of high as I went over at peak time just before Christmas, and there were also cheaper airlines that you could use). I spent about 25 pounds on food per week (I think food in general is cheaper than here at home), and about 15 pounds on going out/activities per week.

They also offered good student tours on the weekends around Scotland, which were usually 30 pounds. Glasgow Airport has lots of great cheap flights going throughout Europe too, which is really handy if you plan to travel. You can also get an overnight bus to London for 10 pounds, which means you don't need to spend as much on accommodation there too. Travelling around was probably my biggest cost of the trip.

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

I mainly used my Cash Passport, as I could load it up with both Pounds and Euros (for when I was travelling), and then you don't have to pay a transaction/currency conversion fee each time and you can get cash out of ATM's without having to fees. I could also use my normal NZ Visa eftpos there though too, and had a credit card as a backup for emergencies. I would definitely advise not keeping these all in the one place, and always have one in your room, and one on you, so you don't lose them all and get stuck with no way to access money.

Visas:

I didn't need a visa as I have a British passport. If you do need to get a British Visa though, you need to remember to take the supporting documents, and documents that prove where you are studying each time you leave the UK and re-enter.

What was the city like?

Glasgow is a really cool city, it has really good restaurants, bars, concerts, many free museums and pretty much any shop you could think of. Kelvingrove is a huge art gallery and museum, set in a really pretty park only a 2 minute walk from the University. It also has a small tube system, which you can use to take you from the University to the city centre in less than 10 minutes. It was very cold most of the time I was there, and it had its worst winter in 70 years. There was 5 days of thick

snow, almost as high as my knees! In saying that though, generally the winter there was pretty similar to Dunedin's.

Any tips for future students?

Try and enrol as fast as you can into papers you want to do there, as they have limits on how many people can take each paper. Once the paper is full, no one else can sign up, and some of the class sizes are very small! You need to be willing to compromise on what papers you take.

Overall Experience

Overall, it was such a great experience that I would highly recommend to anyone. The classes were really interesting and covered topics I had never even thought about at Otago. It is also a really great way to meet people from all over the world. For me, it was kind of like my OE, as I also had a lot of free time to travel around, and because flights are so cheap there and everything is so close, I believe it is a cheap and time efficient way to be able to see a lot of Europe, whilst still getting stuff done at University.



Some of the classrooms in the University Quad.



Weekend trip to the Highlands.



Snow day outside the entrance of the University of Glasgow.



Kiwis in London pub crawl- about 8000 New Zealander's participated!