



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Glasgow
Semester & Year of Exchange	Second Semester 2018
Otago degree(s)	LLB/BSc (Psychology)
Major(s)	Law and Psychology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
HIST1022: Introduction to Scottish Culture	English		18pts
LAW4033: Issues of Family Law	English		15pts
LAW4048: Law in the Roman World	English		15pts
PSYCH4006: Human Development 3H	English	PSYC318	18pts
PSYCH4076: Sleep and Circadian Timing (International only)	English		18pts

Any comments about these papers?

HIST1022: full of international students and a great way to get a general grasp of scottish history. The lectures on the Jacobites are fantastic.

PSYCH4076 was fantastic, there isn't anything quite like it at Otago. However it does involve a group assignment ...

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

The Law papers were all small and based around class discussion and participation rather than a lecture. A lot of preparation was needed in advance of every class, and we would then discuss that preparation like we would in an Otago Tutorial. I found the workload pretty similar.

The Psychology lectures were very similar to those at Otago, big classes and not a lot of class participation during them, however they expected a lot more work than they do at home. You couldn't expect to get any better than a pass unless you did some significant independent research.

Accommodation

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

I stayed at the Murano Student Village in a 12 person flat and absolutely lucked out, my flatmates were incredible. The pros of staying at Murano are the people. It is basically a first year hall, but they place all of the internationals together. Our building was all internationals, with 3 floors of 12. The 11 other internationals I was placed with on my floor became my best friends over there, we did a lot together, including outings, dinners, we even made a Thanksgiving feast. Within 2 days of arriving the majority of us rented a couple of cars and we were heading off on a road trip around the Highlands for a week. You will never be short a travel buddy.

Cons, you are basically living in a first year hall again (which if you have a serious problem with noise or struggle sleeping etc may not be your thing) and you have to pay for your laundry (and it's extortion!) but other than that it was pretty great.

Money matters

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

With the exchange rate to take into account, you need to prepare yourself that everything is expensive. I was told to budget for the whole trip costing roughly \$10,000, and I'd say that was fairly accurate.

Staying at Murano is expensive, similar to a first year hall at Otago, but I thought it was worth it for the convenience of being close to uni, and the fact that those sorts of places make it very easy to meet people.

Flight to get to the UK and back can be ridiculous, get in early. I got good flights into Heathrow and out of Paris to home for ~\$1600(NZD) all up, which wasn't too bad! Getting around Europe is insanely cheap if you know where to look (can't recommend RyanAir and Skyscanner enough!). Just for an example, I got return flights from Glasgow to Dublin for \$40(NZD).

Murano didn't provide meals, and I believe most of the halls are like that. Eating out is expensive. But the supermarkets like Tesco are pretty reasonable. Getting into flat cooking will save you some \$\$ as well.

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

I used a cash passport and my credit card while I was over there. I had some issues with the cash passport not working in some places which meant I had to carry cash with me a lot (a bit of a nuisance). I had some friends who opened bank accounts, which was a bit of a mission to do, but it definitely made things more convenient for them within the UK.

In saying that, as long as carry cash or you have a credit card that can be used in places where your Cash Passport won't work, I really didn't have any issues.

Visas & Insurance

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

New Zealanders get a 6-month study visa upon entry into the UK as long as you have proof that you are going to study there. Was probably the easiest customs I have ever done, I just had the letter from the University of Glasgow with me and showed it to the Customs Officer. He asked me a couple of questions (what was I studying, was I planning on working while I was here etc) and then he stamped my passport and sent me on my way, took a grand total of about 5 minutes. As long as you have the documentation on you, I doubt you'll have any problems with UK customs.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

They expected me to have travel insurance – which you definitely need !!

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Glasgow offers a heap of social outings and activities! I ended up joining the Law Society and went along to a couple of their functions, they were pretty great and really cater for the international students – the majority of law students in the UK go on exchange during their degree so there is always someone willing to chat about their experiences with you!

What was the university/ city like?

The University is in the West End of the city, which is basically the posh part of town. The buildings are gorgeous, and there's lots of arty stuff around to do.

The old university buildings are absolutely gorgeous, like Otago, it also has some not so gorgeous ones (think Burns) but everything is centralised and convenient once you get the hang of it.

There is a gym with a pool on campus, use it! It's great.

The Underground is amazing. So simple that even I (who still to this day have avoided any form of Dunedin public transport) found my way around with no problems.

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

- Oran Mor: get a group together and do the play, pie and pint – they're normally really good (and sell out fast so get in early!)

- If you're there for second semester, 'Glasgow' in the botanical gardens is worth a look – it's very well done. If not for that – go there anyway for the squirrels – so cute!

- There are a heap of cute little cafes and places to eat in the West End, test them out – they're pretty great. (Groupon has some great deals too! Look for High Tea at Café Swiss)

Any tips for future students?

- DOWNLOAD THE CITYMAPPER APP! The best thing I ever did was downloading that App, if I hadn't I would probably still be lost on the London underground right now (it's a bloody maze down there!).

- Get a railcard – it's worth it.

- Don't change price you see into NZD. You won't make the most of your exchange if you do that all the time. And believe me, you don't want to know how much you're spending. Just make the most of your time away.

- Don't say no, you are only there once, make the most of every opportunity.

Overall Experience

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

This exchange was easily the best thing I have done in my life so far. I've seen some incredible places and met some amazing people. People give Glasgow a lot of stick, but I absolutely loved it – Glasgow has a lot of character, and unlike Edinburgh – it isn't full of tourists all the time (though Edinburgh is lovely too!).

The weather is similar to Dunedin really, thought probably a bit more rain (a good raincoat and umbrella are wise investments) and the Scots are some of the friendliest people you will ever meet.

Another perk of Scotland is that it is so easy to get to both other places in the UK and the continent, I ended up seeing places I never expected to, like Morocco and Eastern Europe, because it was so ridiculously cheap to get there. When those cheap flights come up you need to grab them, one of my favourite trips was a super unexpected one a group of 8 of us did to Ireland, where super cheap flights came up 2 weeks before, we booked them and ended up roadtripping around Ireland in a minibus.

I took a month both before and after Uni to travel, and that was a great decision. We saw Europe in summer and in winter, spent Christmas in Amsterdam, New Years in London and generally had the time of our lives. Though you'll probably be more than ready to head home at the end of your exchange, hang in there and see some more of the world if you still have the money and time. You're only young once and it's a looong way to go back.

Don't worry about the money, in the words of my (very wise) Australian flatmate at the time, 'if you don't go home in financial ruin, you haven't done it properly'.



Glenfinnan, Scotland during our Highland Roadtrip.



Sunset at the Cliffs of Moher, Ireland.



Riding Camels in Morocco!



Thanksgiving Dinner Prep in our lovely wee kitchen + the end result (pumpkin pie is surprisingly delicious).

