



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	ESADE, Barcelona, Spain
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 (Spring), 2023
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Management and International Business

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Negotiation	English	MANT 300 level
Barcelona: Street Art. Understanding its Art to understand today's society	Spanish	Culture 200
Never Too Many Movies: Spanish and Catalan Society through Cinema	English	Culture 100
Anthropology: Cultures and Religious Traditions	English	Culture / Religion
Global Environmental Challenges and the Business Response	English	MANT337
Project Management	English	MANT 300 level
Supply Chain Management	English	MANT 340

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points 72 points 108 points _____

Any comments about these papers?

I found that these papers were a lot more specific/had a more defined area of learning compared to Otago papers. It meant that we went quite in depth into the subject matter. Some of my classes (Negotiation and Anthropology) were small and very discussion based and I found those classes a lot more enjoyable because the class times are so long.

The ECTS are different for each paper so definitely keep that in mind when applying for different papers.

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

The school is a lot smaller than Otago and the campus is only made up of two buildings, one of which you don't go into because it's for the postgraduates. The classes are 2 and a half hours long and there's only one class for each paper per week. There are no tutorials but most classes had homework such as a forum or preparation for the next class. The classes are definitely smaller, I think the largest class I was in had roughly 40 students.

Accommodation

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

I stayed with two other exchange students in an apartment close to Plaza Catalunya. We had a pretty hard time finding accommodation that was reasonable and in a good area. The pros were that it was super central and only down the road from a main metro hub. It was also close to the Rambla which meant that it was always brightly lit and there were always people around late into the night, which made me feel more comfortable to walk home late. The only con would probably be that the area, because it's a main tourist area, can be very busy with tourists and the restaurant can be more expensive but there are reasonable cafes and restaurants around.

Money matters

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

Accommodation:

- € 1,200 bond
- € 600 agency fee
- € 550 per month rent
- € 84 utilities

Flights:

I flew through New York because I'm doing a second semester exchange in Toronto so there are definitely cheaper flights through places like Turkey or Qatar.

Visa:

- € 300 - Spanish Health Insurance
- Flights to and from Wellington
- \$133.50 NZD – Visa Fee

Food:

- € 30-40 per week for general groceries
- I ate out usually once per week so that could be up to € 15
 - o You Can eat out for a very reasonable price
- Coffee and croissants on campus are super cheap

Insurance:

- My insurance covers an entire year and multiple countries including the US and Canada so I don't feel what I paid would accurately show a semester cost in Spain

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

I used Wise which had Apple Pay and you can transfer money into your wise account very easily. It's also so easy to pay other Wise account members and I used it to pay my rent.

I honestly only used cash for mostly small purchases like coffee and croissants and only if I had coins. Most places take Apple Pay.

I would recommend Wise and I've also heard Revolut is quite good. They both have reasonable exchange fees.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, I applied for a student visa through the embassy in Wellington. It was honestly a horrible process but if you go earlier and have all the information it should be fine. You have to go in-person. I didn't know this and had to pay for a very last-minute flight in mid-December which was very expensive.

I emailed the embassy for the information regarding the documents I needed for the visa so that helped me get everything sorted. I had to pay for Spanish health insurance. You then book an appointment which is when you hand in your visa application in-person. They say the visa application takes about a month but I would do it earlier rather than later to avoid the stress.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

During the orientation week/first week of intensive classes there were some walking tours but other than that the school doesn't do sports or clubs really, or at least it was not made available for exchange students as far as I could tell.

Erasmus Barcelona on Instagram has heaps of trips and events that are great for meeting new people and they work with club promoters if that's your thing.

What was the university/ city like?

The university is super small and the local students that go there are obviously quite wealthy as this is one of the top business schools in Europe. There aren't any green spaces on the campus but it is next to a park. The campus is quite modern, clean and has its own cafeteria for lunch downstairs. There is also another cafeteria in the post-grad building. The campus is NOT in Barcelona. It is in Sant Cugat, a town just outside of Barcelona. It is very easy to get to using the S1 or S2 FGC train.

The public transport is really good and I never had any problems with it. I would recommend the T-Jove card because you pay one flat fee for zone 1 for 3 months of unlimited travel on the public transport.

The city is very touristy and there are a lot of pickpockets so be careful. There were always a lot of people around and was pretty busy. There are festivals all the time in Spain and in Barcelona I was there for Santa Eulalia and Sant Jordi. A lot of places are closed on Sundays, even grocery stores, so don't plan on getting your shopping done on Sundays.

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

In Barcelona:

- Palacio Montjuic
- MNAC
- Montserrat
- Bunkers Walk
- La Chula – It's a Mexican restaurant close to Sagrada Familia and the food is amazing
- La Bona Sort – a restaurant in the Gothic Quarter
- Sagrada Familia

In Spain:

- Mallorca for the beaches but don't go during the main tourist season as it gets very crowded
- Zaragoza for a day trip – there's an Islamic for there and a lot of Moor architectural influence. There's also a Basilica there
- Madrid
- Malaga and Torrox Costa
- The Pyrenees Mountains
- I've also heard great things about Valencia, Alicante, Seville and Sitges

Any tips for future students?

- Be aware of your personal belongings, especially in touristy areas like La Rambla.
- Talk to as many other exchange students as you can because some of them you'll probably travel with.
- If you are trying to practice your Spanish, take a class taught in Spanish, not just the intensive language courses.
- Try and plan your courses so that you have either a Monday or a Friday free for more weekend trips because attendance is recorded
- Have fun and say yes to new things

Overall Experience

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

Overall, I learnt a lot about myself and about Spain while I was on my exchange. The papers were relatively relaxed and most of the teachers are really nice. I feel extremely grateful for all the opportunities I had during the exchange to travel and meet so many new and interesting people. I

definitely pushed myself out of my comfort zone but it was so needed. I'd recommend going on exchange to anyone who is privileged enough to be able to go.

