



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	University of Exeter
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	Semester 2 2022
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	Law and Commerce
<b>Major(s)</b>	Information Science/Finance

### Academics/ course load

*Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?*

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Otago equivalent</b>
Public Finance	English	FINC305
Financial Modelling	English	Finance 300 level
Nature Inspired Computation	English	INFO304

Total Otago credits gained: 72 points

*Any comments about these papers?*

Nature Inspired Computation requires significant knowledge of the Python coding language and I would not recommend if you don't have much experience with that. Public Finance was very interesting/enjoyable and economics based. Financial Modelling was excel modelling, it was mostly group work and only had lectures in the first 6 weeks of semester. Financial Modelling and Public Finance both were internally assessed so had no exams. The exam for Nature Inspired Computation was meant to be at the end of the following semester (4 months after I left Exeter) however the University is very flexible in organising alternative assessment for exchange students and instead I just had to hand in an assignment before I left.

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

It was mostly the same however a slightly lesser workload and less teaching hours a week. More group work and assignments and less exams.

## Accommodation

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

I stayed in James Owen Court, this was initially the only available University residence for exchange students however they later offered exchange students places in other residences who were still looking for places to live right before we started University. I would definitely recommend James Owen Court as they have designated blocks for exchanges students so it is an easy way to meet people and a fun/social environment to live in. The rooms are standard university accommodation rooms, not as new as the Otago ones but they have ensuites which is a major bonus. They are self-catered and within the residences there are floors with shared kitchen/living areas. It is very close to town and only a 15minute walk to uni. The only con is that it is quite hard to get into. You have to apply right when the applications open so make sure you stay on top of when that happens. Before you can apply for accommodation you have to be accepted into Uni so try and apply to Uni as early as possible so you are accepted in time for when accommodation opens. If you cant get into James Owen don't stress some of my friends also lived in flats with locals which they ended up loving (and was a great way for us to meet the locals they lived with and their friends), you just have to make slightly more effort to put yourself out there and meet other exchange students. Because Exeter is so small and all the exchange students are so nice, you always run into people and all the exchange students kind of end up knowing each other.

## Money matters

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

Accommodation was around \$5000 NZD, return flights around \$3300 NZD, insurance around \$700 NZD.

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

Would highly recommend Wise cards, they are so easy to set up, convert money and transfer other people with Wise cards instantly. Very handy when travelling with friends and you can't split bills. They also allow you to transfer to locals or other international bank accounts which is ideal.

## Visas & Insurance

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

You do not need a visa if you are in the UK for less than 6 months, just use the e gates when you arrive. We were given so many mixed messages about this and some people paid for student visas but the UK boarder control confirmed for us when we arrived that they have just changed the rules so you do not need one for less than 6 months.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

No, I used the insurance recommended by Otago and it worked well.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

One of the biggest differences I noticed from Otago was the massive University spirit and how involved all the students got with the sporting and co-curricular activities/groups. Would definitely recommend joining some of those as it's a great way to meet different people. All of the sporting teams also have social events every Wednesday night which are fun. My friends and I also joined the out of doors society which took busloads of students to do Saturday morning walks in areas around

Exeter. These were always lots of fun and a great way to see areas around Exeter. We also went on the University ski trip to Andorra for a week which I would definitely recommend.

*What was the university/ city like?*

Exeter is a small town based around the University, not too different from Dunedin in the sense of student culture. Exeter however had a strong English vibe, full of pubs and quaint little English buildings and scenery.

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

-Explore around Exeter: Bus to Sidmouth, Topsham, Exmouth, Jurassic Coast. Cornwall/Devon, Bath, London, Salcombe

-The Quay (river in Exeter) for walks, coffee/cafes, drinks by the water.

-Gandy Street

-Exeter Christmas Markets

-I Thai opposite James Owen Court is delicious. Also Efes kebab is a classic student spot for kebabs.

-My friends and I loved studying in cafes we thought the best for study were Sunshine Society, Tiny Tasting Room, Undergrad. Other good coffee places not for study were Sundays at the Quay, 130 Basement and Sacred Grounds.

-The university does 2 pound lunches everyday which are yum and very social.

-Annual Tar Barrel burning in Ottery St Mary in November (University will advertise bus tickets) it's the most random but very memorable local event.

*Any tips for future students?*

Stay on top of applications etc and apply early to take the stress off. You will love wherever you go/stay so don't stress if you don't get your first choice. Save as much money as you can beforehand so you can make the most of everything. Travel is so tiring, don't try and do too much in too short of a timeframe.

## Overall Experience

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

I loved studying in Exeter and would recommend it to anyone who wants to go to exchange somewhere with a really strong Uni culture. The fact it is a student town and that you are living with all other exchange students makes it so easy to meet both exchange students and locals, and means there is always so much for students to do.

While it was not as cheap or convenient to travel to other parts of Europe etc in the weekends compared to other bigger cities such as Dublin or Edinburgh, when I was in Exeter I didn't actually have much desire to do this every weekend (I did go a few weekends and in mid sem). This was because I didn't have exams so I was only in Exeter for 3 months. I was able to do so much travel before and after that I just wanted to enjoy my time being a student while I was there. There was also so much to see and do around Exeter/London that I wanted to do this first.

Overall exchange was one of the best experiences of my life and I would recommend it to everyone. I made so many memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.