

University of Strathclyde
Semester One 2016
BCom, Marketing Management & Tourism Majors

Having arrived on a cold winters night, snow blanketing much of the campus and a party already alive and pumping in the lounge, I soon questioned what it was that motivated me to choose Glasgow for my 'exchange of a lifetime'. In my final semester of study, an exchange to Scotland had been a goal from my very first encounter with the exchange team in tent city as a fresher. Family spread across the country and the music scene were big drivers of my desire to travel to Scotland and it was without a doubt the best decision of my University career to take part in Otago's exchange program.

Course:

Having struggled through paper selection while planning my exchange to Strathclyde in semester two of 2015, I would definitely recommend attending Strathclyde as early into your degree as possible. Business degrees are structured much like Polytech courses in NZ with full year papers restricting what is available to select. Having already completed many 3rd year Marketing and Tourism Papers at Otago, it was difficult to find Strathclyde equivalents that offered different content to what I had already learn't. It wasn't until I arrived and began lectures that a timetable clash occurred and the difficulties changing papers began to jeopardise my hopes of graduating at the conclusion of my exchange. After many emails and phone calls back to Otago, a solution was found and I enrolled in an honours level Sports Marketing paper, a 3rd year Management paper (Tourism equivalent), and a 2nd year Retail and Services Marketing paper.

Papers follow a similar structure to that of Otago with 1-2 lectures a week and fortnightly tutorials. It is important to know that assignments are heavily weighted with most averaging around 30-50% of the course mark for a single essay or group assignment project. 70% is also considered to be an A at Strathclyde so the marking style is a lot lower than what you will be used to at Otago. I felt three papers was a decent amount to focus on during my exchange, however four would be manageable as long as study is kept up with when travelling.

Accommodation:

I was lucky enough to be placed in the newly refurbished Birkbeck Court hall of residence. Along with five other flatmates, we were the first to experience the modernised flat and it couldn't have been any better! A fairly small kitchen and lounge certainly didn't stop us from having a good time and the bedrooms had plenty of storage space for clothing/suitcases along with a desk. As apposed to the

old Birkbeck flats that only had one separate toilet and shower, the new flats had two bathrooms each with a high-pressure shower and toilet.

Most of the students within Birkbeck Court are international, with the hall having its own social committee organising events throughout the semester. Cooking utensils will have to be purchased yourself but Poundland and Aldi will see you right with cheap kitchen equipment. I lived with two Americans, a Canadian, a fellow Kiwi from Auckland and a local lad from Scotland. The Strathclyde international team do a great job of grouping people with similar interests and I have definitely made lifelong friends that I hope to reunite with again in the future.

Culture/Night Life:

Having visited the city many times as a kid, I found it very easy to adjust to the Scottish way of life. Everyone is very friendly and always keen to help no matter the problem. Much like Dunedin, the weather is not always the best and it's always the main topic of conversation with the locals. The halls are very warm and everything you need such as supermarkets and the main street shops are within a 10-minute walk. If Scottish/Celtic music is something you are interested in, I would highly recommend attending any of the Celtic Connections events which run in the city throughout January. Some of the best folk musicians from across the world perform with many events free and there is a great after party each night at the Art School just off Sauchiehall Street.

If you enjoy the odd pint and clubbing then Glasgow is the city for you. Alcohol is relatively cheap with Glaswegians certainly giving Scarfies a run for their money in terms of drinking cultures. Each of the bigger clubs in the city offer themed weeknight events where it is literally possible to go out every night and town will be pumping! Kushion on a Tuesday night for the Juicy Tuesday event and the O2 ABC for JellyBaby Thursdays are an experience not to be missed with the O2 ABC often reaching capacity of over 1000 people – yes it's a club. Going out can become very expensive with most places charging for entry and some reaching £8 if not pre-bought (roughly NZ\$17). I would recommend taking advantage of any free passes that PR staff bring around campus halls to save a bit of money. Glasgow also attracts some of the world's biggest acts and I was lucky enough to see Kygo and Lost Frequencies during my time on exchange, with Coldplay, G-Eazy, Bruce Springsteen, Rihanna and Adele also on tour in the city at various times.

Travelling:

I only managed a trip to Dublin and Belfast while on exchange having already travelled around the UK in the past. If found at the right time, flights can be very cheap with return trips to much of Europe costing as little as £20 return. Accommodation can get quite expensive if not staying in hostels along with food so it is best to save as much money as possible for adventuring around the place. Hiring

a car is not really an option unless you are 25 as they pile on extra costs to cover insurance, however the public transport system is great with trains and buses reaching every corner of the country. Student Tours Scotland offer great day trips which are very informative and are a cheaper way of seeing many major attractions in a short space of time.

I wouldn't hesitate for a minute recommending Strathclyde to prospective exchange students! It has been a life changing experience and no doubt you will form close friendships that will make it tough to leave. I am already hoping to move back to Glasgow more permanently in the future.



