

Lund University (LU) Exchange
Double degree BSc Zoology and BA Linguistics
Spring semester 2015

Lund

Lund is a bustling student city, similar to Dunedin. It has a similar small population but is extremely close to the major city in southern Sweden, Malmö, as well as being located just across the bridge from Copenhagen, Denmark. This means it is a really easy trip when you fly into Copenhagen airport as you can take a direct train from there to Lund central station (and the ticket machines are in English!).

Nations are an important part of the student life. They are most easily described as a mixed fraternity/sorority. There are many to choose from, each with different selling points, but it doesn't matter too much which nation you choose as you can go hang out/party at any of them once you're signed up. The nation building is typically a large apartment block with students living in the floors above and the actual nation is located in the basement or on the ground floor. This space can change to cater to different events in the week

including night clubs, movie nights, pubs and afternoon tea. I definitely recommend volunteering to work at the nations as it's a great way to meet people and you also get fed and usually have a workers-only after party!

Accommodation

Applying for accommodation in Lund can be tricky. I applied through LU's own accommodation agency first. It says they accept students on a first-in first-served basis but I'm not quite sure that that's correct as I applied before another Otago student for the same location and she got accepted and unfortunately I didn't. In saying that, still try and apply as soon as you can! It's all done online and the form will ask you to list five student accommodation options and the room type you want (private bathroom vs. shared etc.) so it's a good idea to do your research beforehand and decide which appeals to you most.

I got an offer from LU for a single studio room where you have your own kitchen and bathroom. I actually ended up declining this offer, which was very risky as you're told if you get offered any accommodation in

Lund to take it! My decision to decline the offer was based on the fact that I felt it was important to live in a shared accommodation as it's much easier to meet people, especially the local Swedes! Obviously your living preference is personal so just go with what you feel comfortable with.

Another Otago student (he also declined his first offer of a studio room) and I both applied next through AF Bostader, another popular accommodation agency. However, the earliest you can submit your application is the middle of December which definitely feels very last minute. The application process for AFB can be quite daunting but just make sure you read all the instructions and be on time for all the important application dates. We were both successful through AFB and actually ended up living in rooms beside each other in our dorm! (Referred to as corridors in Sweden)

Other options for finding accommodation are using blocket.se which is similar to TradeMe, and also looking at accommodation in Malmo and Helsingborg, although will need to factor in the cost of commuting daily by train.

Accommodation in most of the student corridors start in February which means you have to find temporary accommodation for part of January. Sometimes you can get in contact with the person currently living in your assigned room, as often they will leave early and you can thus take over their rent and move in early. I decided to stay in the hostel (there' s only one in Lund) and on arrival I found it was fully booked by other students in the same situation so definitely book early. It is a little bit expensive but there aren' t many other options unfortunately.

Flights

Flights for early January are more expensive than other dates during the year and are also likely to book out faster due to it being around the Christmas/New Year holiday period. Therefore it' s essential to book early, which means you will most likely have to book before you have received your acceptance letter. Don' t worry too much as it is apparently very rare to not be accepted!

Lund University will provide you with a recommended arrival date where university representatives will meet

you at the central train station and help you get to your accommodation. Note this did change last minute after I had already booked my flights so be aware of that possibility – fortunately I was able to stay with my uncle in Copenhagen for a few days so I could still arrive in Lund on the official arrival date.

The most popular way to get around Lund is by bike. Again use blocket.se, Facebook buy/sell pages, or buy from a local secondhand store. Walking is also a good option as the town is quite small.

Scandinavia has a reputation for being expensive so make sure you save up enough – you'll find the recommended living cost on the UO exchange website. You can only buy alcohol from two stores in the city as only low percentage beer is allowed to be bought from supermarkets. Note you have to be 20 years old to buy alcohol but the drinking age in bars is 18. Drinks and food at nations are much cheaper than the other bars in town so save your money and hang out there.

ESN is a group for Erasmus students but all international students are welcome to join. They

organise fun events every week and it's another great way to meet people and also get some travel in!

University

The semester is divided into two halves and you generally only take two papers at a time, sometimes only one depending on the credits offered for the course. Classes are quite different to Otago. They are usually longer than our 50 minute lectures and are more interactive as classes are usually smaller – all my classes had less than 30 people. Examinations are also quite different as there are resits if you fail the first time or are sick.

I could go on and on about the Lund University but I don't want to spoil all the surprises! Keep an open mind and most of all have fun! It's extremely hard not to!