



## Student Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Otago degree(s)</b> Bachelor of Arts	<b>Major(s)</b> Anthropology
<b>Host University</b> University of Bristol	<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b> Semester 1, 2018

### Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Mediterranean Past	English	ARCH200	20
Africa	English	ARCH200	20
Castle and Church	English	ARCH300	20

Any comments about these papers?

I particularly enjoyed Castle and Church as I was studying in England - so I learned a lot about English history and their historical sites!

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

The teaching style definitely favours more 'independent learning', as assessments are mostly research based and require a lot of further reading and gathering of information for yourself. Also, I

found that whilst I had fewer internal assessments overall (than I would at home), they were each worth a lot more; ie. only having one essay to do, but it being worth 50% of my grade.

### **Accommodation**

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

I stayed in self-catered University accommodation, mine was called University Hall. A pro was that I was able to save a lot of money going self-catered, as I was more than happy cooking for myself and I found generally groceries were cheaper than in NZ. A con was that I showed up halfway through the UK's academic year (our semester 1 is their semester 2) so it was a bit difficult trying to fit in socially.

### **Money matters**

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

Flights: \$1500 (I purchased two one-way tickets)

Insurance: \$420

Food: Approx \$60/week

Accommodation: Around \$220/week

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

I used a service called CashPassport and I would highly recommend it. It works like a normal debit card except none of the overseas charges, and you can move money between different currencies really easily.

### **Visas & Insurance**

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

I did not have to apply for a visa, but do remember to always bring the necessary documents with you if you plan to travel whilst away - even if you are on a 6 month student visa, you still need to *reapply* for that visa every time you leave the country.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

**Insurance was mandatory for my hall, but it was included in the overall accommodation price.**

### **Extra-curricular/Social Activities**

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

I would recommend going to BISC - the Bristol International Student Centre. They host lunches every week (much like the ones hosted at the OUSA) and organise day trips and other social events specifically for exchange students, so it's a great place to meet new people.

What was the university/ city like?

The campus is a bit more spread out than at Otago, but everything you need is generally within 2-3 blocks. I really enjoyed the city overall, Bristol is sort-of like Dunedin in that it has a large student population, so it is pretty lively and there is always something going on.

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

I would highly recommend taking a day trip to Bath, it's about \$7 return by bus (or there's a bike route) and has a good mix of historic/cultural sites as well as a large shopping plaza (so something for everyone). Within Bristol, definitely visit the Clifton area - there are loads of boutique-style shops and some really lovely cafes (Primrose being my favourite). On a sunny day, I would recommend going across the Suspension Bridge and up to the Ashton Court Estate - it's a great walk and you get a beautiful view of the city.

Any tips for future students?

The best piece of advice I ever received was to keep my head up - literally! It sounds silly, but whenever you are in an airport, train station, bus depot etc. remember to keep calm, keep your head up and eyes peeled looking at the signage to figure out where to go. Don't stress out - you will find the right way!

### **Overall Experience**

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

My exchange was to the University of Bristol in the UK for Semester 1 of 2018.

Overall, I would say the best thing about my exchange was the chance to break out of my shell and experience a whole new country and way of life. Having to rely on your own resourcefulness and motivation - especially when living in/visiting non-English speaking countries - can be daunting at first, but also incredibly rewarding and has helped me gain a lot more self-confidence.

On a personal note, I wouldn't say that my overseas experience helped me to 'find myself' as the cliché goes, but it has certainly helped me to figure out what I want to do post-university, and the time away in a new environment really does give you some clarity and (maybe) a fresh perspective on things. Graduating doesn't seem so daunting once you've been around the world!

Alice Morrison

Photos:

When the 'Beast from the East' hit Bristol.





Dam Square with friends in Amsterdam.