



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

<i>Host University</i>	Fudan University
<i>Semester & Year of Exchange</i>	Semester 1 2018
<i>Otago degree(s)</i>	Commerce & Arts → (only Commerce points competed abroad)
<i>Major(s)</i>	Management/Psychology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Organisational Behaviour	English	General Management	*
Managerial Communication	English	General Management	*
Organisational Communication and its Social Context	English	General Management	* = 36 points 300MANT
Foreign Business Investment	English	General Commerce	18 points 200Commerce
Management Information Systems	English	General Commerce	18 points 100Commerce

Any comments about these papers?

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

Lectures were conducted in a classroom style manner with lots of interaction between the teacher and students. There was only one lecture per week per subject, however these ran for about 2 ½ hours with two ten minutes breaks. Due to my scheduling I only had classes Monday through to Wednesday, which was great! All classes had group assignments and participation requirements. The class size was relatively small compared to Otago, my largest class has about 60 students, with the remainder having about 30.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in the International Dormitory on campus. This was massive, with about 20 floors each having about 30 rooms. I opted for a single room (you could share with one other person at a lower rent cost) which included an en suite. There were two kitchens and laundries at each end of each floor. There was a mixture of permanent international students (completing Masters etc.) and short term students. The benefit of staying here was the close proximity to classes; even staying on campus it took about fifteen minutes to walk to class, and the closeness to the cafeterias, which were very cheap. Organising to stay in the student accommodation was much simpler than finding an apartment to live in the city. There is a lot of bureaucracy involved with renting a place and often the contracts are not very legal. For example, a friend of mine signed a contract with a different address listed to the one she was living at because the apartment did not have the consent to have as many rooms as it did. The disadvantage of staying in the student accommodation was the quality of the rooms, which were a bit worn down and not very clean. This did not bother me too much but in the winter the room was freezing because of the draft coming from the poorly sealed balcony door and windows. The bed was also the thinnest, hardest thing I have ever slept on. I was still not used to it by the time I left. I was always so excited to go to cheap hostels when we went travelling because the beds were always so much more comfortable! I will never complain about a bed again after my experience of that!

Money matters

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

I probably spent a bit over \$10,000 on my trip, including travel within the country. I was not restricting myself in any way though, so definitely can be done far more cheaply. My rent was \$2200 in total and had to be paid upfront. Flights to Shanghai from NZ were about \$800 each way. Food was probably my biggest expense, but this is because I ate out at ridiculous amount of restaurants and cafes, Shanghai has a great Western and Chinese food scene! My visa and insurance were about \$200 each.

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

Initially I just used my ANZ debit card to withdraw money, this used to incur a fee but then ANZ dropped all card fees so I did not get charged anything. Once settled at University I set up a Chinese bank account with ICBC. Most students used this bank and it was relatively easy, however this may have been because the local bank was used to dealing with international students and spoke relatively good English. I'm not sure this would be as easy in other parts of Shanghai. This required your passport, and for the most part you have no idea what's happening, you just sign a lot of documents and hope for the best. So far nothing terrible has happened! Having the Chinese bank account allowed me to connect to pay service apps such as WeChat pay and Alipay, which are the main purchasing methods. I could not transfer funds between my ANZ account and Chinese account so I would have to withdraw money from my NZ account at an ATM and then use a cash recycling machine to put the cash into my Chinese account. This was a pretty easy process. Stores do not use Eftpos like they do in NZ, so using your card for in store purchases is pretty useless. Cash, Alipay or WeChat pay are the best methods.

Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, I had to apply for a visa but this process was surprisingly easy and quick. Fudan University sent me the required documents, so all I needed to do was fill them out and hand them in to the local Chinese Embassy in New Zealand. They processed the documents and I had my Visa the next week.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes my university required me to purchase their insurance, even though I already had my own. This was taken care of at the student dormitory, so was not difficult but a bit annoying that I had to pay for two insurance types. However I would recommend ensuring you still have your own insurance before leaving NZ, as I do not know what the student insurance covered.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There was an International Student Association run by local Chinese students which organised Orientation activities for people to get to know each other. Sometimes the International Dorm held events such as movie nights. There were also clubs and sporting groups available to join, but these were mainly for the Chinese local students so I do not know how easy it would be to participate in these due to language barrier etc.

What was the university/ city like?

The University campus was massive, with a North and South campus far enough apart that a bus operated between them. It is a pretty campus with lots of little gardens. It is also stray cat capital, with probably about a hundred cats (I'm not exaggerating).

Shanghai is an amazing city! There is a Metro station about a 10-minute bike ride away and then about 30 minutes on the metro into the main street of Shanghai. Many of the Western areas, such as the French Concession and Jing'an, with the best cafes and restaurants, are about a 50 minute metro away. The journey into town did get a bit tiresome towards the end as we were going in nearly every day. The bars and nightlife were also amazing, and there are constantly events being held which offer free admission or drinks.

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

I would recommend making use of 'Smart Shanghai', which is a website that advertises events that are happening in the city, the top rated restaurants and cafes, and tourist attractions. There are constantly dining/drinks specials being offered during the week, especially on Mondays-Wednesdays. Basically everything you need for Shanghai is there.

Any tips for future students?

Make sure to apply for the Prime Minister's Scholarship for Asia, it's an easy \$8,500 and means you never have to think about how much you are spending!

I'd also ensure you are at the University for the beginning of the orientation week. My friend and I were still travelling during the majority of this and I think it affected our ability to make friends as the majority of people had already formed their friendship groups. As the minority of students taking a general course i.e. not a language course, we had limited contact with other International Students as we were mainly with Chinese students taking an English subject course, so this was also a factor.

I definitely recommend downloading and getting familiar with WeChat before you go, it is the main social message app in China (similar to facebook) and is your link to everything. There is a group on WeChat called Aussies & Kiwis in Shanghai which is really useful if you need to ask any questions. It is a group of mainly expat Australians and Kiwis. Every couple of months there is a 'Kiwi Drinks' event that is advertised in the group and is for any New Zealanders living in Shanghai. I attended both events while I was there and is a great way to meet people, I made many of my friends through this. It is also an opportunity to network with many of the international companies that are operating out of Shanghai.

I think my biggest piece of advice is to try learn and use as much of the language as you can. Whilst Shanghai is a pretty Westernised city and English is quite widespread, knowing even a little bit of Mandarin is very useful. I used Chinese most often when ordering food (which is very important), so I would recommend focusing on this topic!

Overall Experience

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

My experience at Fudan University and in Shanghai was great. Having only a few days of university per week meant that I had plenty of time to explore the city and many other spectacular parts of China. I travelled for two weeks before my exchange started visiting Hong Kong, Guilin and Yangshuo. During the exchange I also visited Huangshan (the Yellow Mountains), Zhangjiajie (the 'Avatar Mountains) and Hangzhou. The experiences I had during my time travelling will definitely be what I come to remember my exchange with. The exchange was challenging at times but definitely worth it, and I am very glad I participated.