



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

<i>Host University</i>	ESADE, Barcelona
<i>Semester & Year of Exchange</i>	Semester 1, 2018
<i>Otago degree(s)</i>	BCom
<i>Major(s)</i>	Marketing & Accounting

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Corporate Impact Strategies	ENG	ACCT302	
CMP: Implementing Strategy: Processes and Indicators	ENG	ACCT302	Together with above credited as one paper
Marketing from Strategy to Action	ENG	MART301	
EEO: Sustainability, Business and Values	ENG	MART301	Together with above credited as one paper
Español Intensivo: Principiante	ENG	SPAN200	Span200
Spain and Catalunya Today: Recent History, Current Affairs	ENG	-	None, just done out of interest
Anthropology: In Search of Principles for a Career Philosophy: Lessons from Art and Literature	ENG	-	None, just done out of interest

Any comments about these papers?

My exchange meant extending my degree by a semester because I couldn't get credit for papers I needed at Otago but I don't regret a thing. Getting to take a couple of interest papers was such a cool experience, learning about the history and current events of Spain while actually living there was amazing and I absolutely loved taking an anthropology paper, so awesome getting perspectives from people from all around the world. I would definitely recommend getting a couple of courses out of the way during the first intensive period, the first intensive period is a two week period before the actual semester starts and if you take courses during this you'll have them every day or every second day during those two weeks then they'll be out of the way. This means your course load will be way more chill during the actual semester leaving more time for travel and other fun stuff.

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

I absolutely loved the way classes were taught at ESADE in comparison to Otago. Classes were much smaller, no more than 30 people in a class, and the professor will generally know your name by the end of the course. A lot of your grade is based on class participation which I loved and it was so cool being in an environment where everyone was encouraged to participate in class discussion and share their perspectives. The professors at ESADE are also incredible, I had one that had done multiple TED talks, one that had to take a week off to go talk at a UN conference and one that has established multiple marketing models that are now used all over the world. So incredible being taught by such passionate, motivated, successful people. I also found the grading super chill compared to Otago, even though it's only pass/fail I still got some of the best marks I've ever gotten, between B+s and A+s, still while travelling most weekends. Super interesting courses, such an amazing learning environment and teaching style (in my opinion).

Accommodation

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

Another Otago student, Liv, and I decided to sort our own accommodation in Barcelona as we'd heard from previous exchange students that living on campus wasn't the way to go, couldn't agree more. Campus is a 45 minute train ride from the city and you'd much rather do that on the few days you have uni than have to try do it after a big night out or anytime you want to come into the city.

So we booked an air bnb for the first two weeks and decided we'd try find other people to live with once we got overseas, we quickly met two Americans and a German girl that were also looking for accommodation so over the semester as a group of 5 we ended up living in two air bnbs, the first for a month and the second for almost three months. While finding a place was definitely stressful at times it definitely couldn't have worked out better, we got to live in the gothic quarter for the first month which was an awesome experience but we were ready to move to a different area by the end of the month. Our second place was in Eixample, which is an area I recommend the most. Eixample is an absolutely gorgeous area with such a lovely local presence and great restaurants and cafes. The only area I'd suggest avoiding when looking for accommodation is El Raval, there are some amazing restaurants in this area however it's known for being slightly less safe so always good to have someone with you if you're going into the area at night and not the best place to live (found the best samosa shop in Barcelona in this area though!). Great areas to live are Eixample, the Gothic Quarter and Gracia.

Money matters

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

Rent - \$250/week

Flights - \$2000 return

Visa - \$100

Insurance - \$350 for 6 months (10/10 recommend getting insurance online through southern cross, doing it online saves you loads)

Food - \$100/week, could easily budget better than this but I never turned down an opportunity to go for brunch, coffee, dinner or drinks, you're only living in Barcelona once!

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

I got a 'loaded for travel' card through Kiwibank which I can't recommend enough for while you're living in Barcelona. There is an ATM fee but no fee on normal transactions and because Barcelona is moving away from the cash culture, most places accept eftpos so this was perfect. It's also super easy to access the app and they give you a back-up card at the start to take with you in case anything happens to the first one.

Another thing I'd like to say about financing is save as much as you can, in the time leading up to your exchange draw up a budget and start saving harder than you've ever saved before. On top of this, make sure you chose a university appropriate to your savings, you want to be able to make the most of every opportunity, say yes anytime a new group of people invites you to dinner, travel to another country for a weekend with some of the people you've met, etc. you don't want money to hold you back.

Visas & Insurance

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

Applying for a visa seemed a lot harder at the time than in hindsight. It's quite daunting because chances are you've never had to do something like it before, I'd recommend printing off the requirements and ticking them off as you're able to. Get onto it super early and get as much sorted as you can so that as you can add another document to the application you can get it done quickly then eventually you should have everything, in an envelope, ready to send off and you'll just be waiting for your official acceptance letter. The moment you get that, seal the envelope and send it off.

Note: This might have just been a blonde moment but something that almost screwed me over was the assumption that sending your passport as part of the application mean just sending a copy. This is not the case, you need to send your actual passport so that they can put the visa in it.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

I can't remember but I think so, the visa definitely did and having insurance is a good move anyway. As I said earlier, it only cost me \$350 for the full 6 months so definitely worth it and the insurance you get for Spain will also cover you for the rest of Europe along with a tonne of other countries like Morocco.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Get involved in the Erasmus programmes on offer, they have salsa classes, trips, and other activities. Great way to meet other people. I also paid for a gym membership out at the uni, it was very pricey but for me personally it was worth it so I could still workout a couple of times during the week.

Also, join all the club promoter groups on facebook, Aashi, Kike, etc. these will just help you get into clubs easier and for free so definitely worth it. Clubbing in Barcelona is completely insane in the best way possible, Sutton is great on Wednesdays, Shoko and Opium are known as the touristy clubs but are always a great tie, Espit Chupitos is a shots bar which is always a great time and 10/10 recommend George Payne on Mondays, the blackout tray is an absolute classic.

What was the university/ city like?

Barcelona is one of my favourite cities in the entire world, an amazing place to visit and an even more incredible place to live. Amazing nightlife, history, food and culture are just some of things that made my time in Barcelona incredible. Also the view from Bunkers Del Carmel has to be one of the best in the world.

The university was also incredible. Motivated, passionate professors made courses interesting and small classes made it a completely different learning environment to Otago. I got some of the best grades I've gotten at uni, even though it was only pass/fail so there was less stress around uni and more time to socialise, travel and explore Barcelona.

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

Eat:

- Brunch and cake
- Kino
- Almalibre acai bar
- Bacoa
- Flax and kale

To do:

- Bunkers Del Carmel at sunset with a bottle of 2euro don simon sangria
- George Payne on a Monday night
- Bike down the waterfront
- The Barcelona bus tour when you first get there is a great way to explore the city and get a better idea of the history of your new home

Any tips for future students?

Say yes to every opportunity, don't be afraid to say hi to someone, sit next to someone new in class, or spark up a conversation with another exchange student on the train. Make the most of every situation, and start saving now. You don't want money to hold you back so start saving early, I can guarantee sticking to a budget now will be completely worth it when you're over there.

Overall Experience

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

Overall, my exchange was the best experience of my entire life. The university was amazing, I met friends for life, and I got to travel Europe afterwards for 2 months. I can't recommend going on exchange enough and personally, I adored living in Spain, even with my very limited knowledge of the Spanish language, something I can't say improved much during my time there. Choose a university suited to your budget and be completely open minded, sure things will probably go wrong at some point but that's half the fun, no great stories ever came from everything going to plan.

