



Student Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Otago degree(s)	LLB/BCOM	Major(s)	Accounting
Host University	Aarhus University	Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 1 2018

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
EU Law	English	NA	15 points
EU Migration & Asylum Law	English	NA	15 points
International Trade Marks Law	English	NA	15 points

Any comments about these papers?

All papers were really interesting with a strong focus on the European Union legal system. The focus was on this rather than Danish law, making all papers very relevant to any European country and their legal system, not just Denmark's. These papers gave me great insight into other legal systems beyond the common law system which we study at Otago.

Whilst all these papers were technically Masters level (rather than Bachelors) they were a similar level of difficulty to 400 level (law) papers at Otago. The class sizes were generally smaller than I'm used to – around 20 – 25 people in each class with a mix of Danish Masters students and other exchange students (both Bachelors and Masters level).

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

Overall, the workload was relatively similar to that at Otago; we had one three-hour lecture per week, per paper (in total I had nine hours of a class a week) and were expected to do a fair amount of reading on top of this. For two of the papers, the lecturers expected quite a lot of participation in

class (including debates or presenting cases every few weeks throughout the semester). Whilst they expected this, participation was not actually part of your final grade and lecture attendance was not compulsory. There were no tutorials or workshops held (at least for law subjects).

The exams were the most different aspect of the academic experience at Aarhus; I had two closed-book oral exams each lasting 15 minutes where they give you your grade on the spot (you are examined by your lecturer and an external examiner) and one 7000-9000 word assignment with a 15 day period to complete it in.,

Accommodation

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

There are several types of accommodation available through Aarhus University, but the type I stayed in was called a “dorm”. It was similar to a hall of residence, but with a few key differences: all dorms are self-catered so you share a kitchen and living space with around 13 others on your floor, the other residents range in age from around 19 years – 28 years old, and many of them live there for their entire university degree (normally around five years) so it is very much their home. I was the only international student on the floor (all 13 others were Danish) so it was a great opportunity to meet other Danes, be immersed in the Danish way of doing things and experience Danish “hygge”. I would highly recommend this option as it is by far the easiest way to meet and make friends with Danes, as your classes (and all other aspects of your exchange) are spent predominantly with other exchange students.

My particular dorm was called Universitetsparken; it is the only dorm (or accommodation option) that is on campus and as well as this has beautiful views of the university park. It also meant my walk to class or the library was no longer than five minutes, and only a 20 minute walk or 8 minute bike ride from Aarhus city centre. Whilst the Universitetsparken is generally in high demand, these rooms do not have a private bathroom, which means they are shared with the 13 others on your floor. This was not a problem for me though; the location of the dorm was well worth it. (It is worth knowing that university accommodation is spread all over Aarhus, and dorms (and other options) can be up to a 20-30 minute bike ride away, depending on where you are). If you want to stay at the Universitetsparken it is important to select “shared bathroom” and also helpful to note “as near to campus as possible” on your application form.

However, another great option available at AU is living in a shared facility house (essentially a 7 – 14 person flat with shared kitchen, living space and bathrooms) – these are made up entirely of other exchange students from all over the world, and seemed to be a lot of fun – there was always a lot of activities, trips and parties going on in these when I visited friends’ shared facility houses, but I think a more expensive option.

Money matters

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

Accommodation: around NZ\$490 per month, and an upfront NZ\$980 deposit

Flights: around \$2000 return

Visa: N/A

Food: groceries are similar in price to NZ

Insurance: \$400 for six month period on exchange (through Southern Cross)

Generally eating out in Denmark (and particularly coffee) is very expensive, but on the whole groceries from the supermarket are much the same as New Zealand. Denmark's social welfare system is incredible therefore any medical costs (such as visiting a GP if need be) is free.

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

I used my usual Westpac debit card while on exchange. I did not think a cash passport or travel card would be particularly useful in Denmark as you cannot load the Danish currency (DKK) onto them. It is possible to set up a Danish bank account while you are there.

Accommodation costs were paid online but required a credit card (rather than a debit card). There were no other ways to pay for AU housing.

Visas & Insurance

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

As I have a British passport I did not have to apply for a residence permit like most other New Zealanders at Aarhus University; instead I had to apply for a residence certificate (which was free) on arrival in Denmark. The application for a residence certificate (as an EU citizen) does require you to have a European Health Card however. Not needing a residence permit saved me around NZ\$800 and a lot of admin, but a residence permit is required unless you have an EU or Nordic passport.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not that I know of.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Aarhus University is very receptive towards exchange students and organises a lot of events throughout the semester which makes meeting and making friends with other exchange students incredibly easy. On arriving in Aarhus, there is a week full of induction activities – both for the exchange group as a whole and for your individual faculty. Here, they also introduce you to extra-curricular activities you can get involved in Aarhus, namely Laerdansk (the free Danish language school) and Run for Friendship – a running group with coaches where you can meet other Danes as well as internationals. AU also has a Student House which organises trips to various places of interest around Denmark throughout the semester for exchange students (such as Copenhagen, the Northern Most tip of Denmark, medieval castles etc.). The Student House also hold international nights (a party with a different theme) every Tuesday. As the faculty is part of the school for Business and Social Sciences (BSS), there is also a trip and afterparty to Legoland which was great fun.

What was the university/ city like?

Aarhus University is the largest university in Denmark, and has very stylish and beautiful facilities. It is located about a 20 minute walk or 8 minute bike ride from the city centre and has a beautiful park at the centre of its campus. In the summer time, the park is used as everyone's backyard and people sunbathe, hold barbeques and parties in it throughout May and June. It has a great student culture, and a very laid-back feel to it. A novelty was the "Friday Bars"; every faculty has a bar on campus which they open every Friday to all students usually around 4pm, each with its own vibe (the Medicine faculty for example, will have a party every Friday and stay open to till late).

Aarhus is the second biggest city in Denmark and was named the European Capital of Culture in 2017. It has a lot going on with cafes, museums, shopping, events and festivals. It takes great pride in the student population and is very laid back with beaches, forests and parks all over the city. I absolutely loved living in Aarhus as it seemed to have everything, all within 10 minutes reach. Everyone in Denmark rides a bike as it is by far the easiest way to get around, particularly as their infrastructure is designed for it. You can purchase second hand bikes easily when you arrive; expect to pay NZ\$100 - \$250 which you can then resell when you leave for a similar price.

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

Things to do and Places to Visit:

- *Outdoor Ice Skating in the Winter*
- *Moesgaard Museum*
- *Åros Museum and the rainbow panorama*
- *Bellevue Beach*

Elsewhere in Denmark:

- *Copenhagen*
- *Odense – a fairy-tale town and the home of Hans Christian Andersen*
- *Skagen – the Northern most tip of Denmark*

Places to Eat:

- *Aarhus Street Food*
- *Grød for insanely good porridge!*
- *Salling Roof Top Bar is a must do in summer*

Any tips for future students?

I think Aarhus would be fantastic any time of the year but I particularly enjoyed being there January to June (Otago's first semester). Whilst you arrive in the depths of winter, everything is snowy and exciting and it means that each day gets longer and warmer (rather than the other way round) and you can really make the most of the city in the last few months "when the sun comes out". There is also the event of year, "Kapsejlsden" held every May, where 30,000 students party in the University Park from around 3am – 6pm, while the faculties compete in a boat race.

Being based in Denmark was such a great location as it is the gateway to seeing Scandinavia. I would highly recommend travelling in this area as Norway and Lapland, Sweden were the standout places of all my exchange travels. Scanbalt Experience organises great value bus trip for Swedish and Danish exchange students to go to Swedish Lapland (as well as many other places) where you get the opportunity to see the Northern Lights, go dog sledding, drive snow mobiles and feed reindeer! Through the Erasmus Student Network I also had the opportunity to go on a visa-free boat trip to Russia, where we spent three days in Saint Petersburg and two days in Helsinki. It was a great way to visit Russia and I met heaps of other exchange students from around Denmark too.

Overall Experience

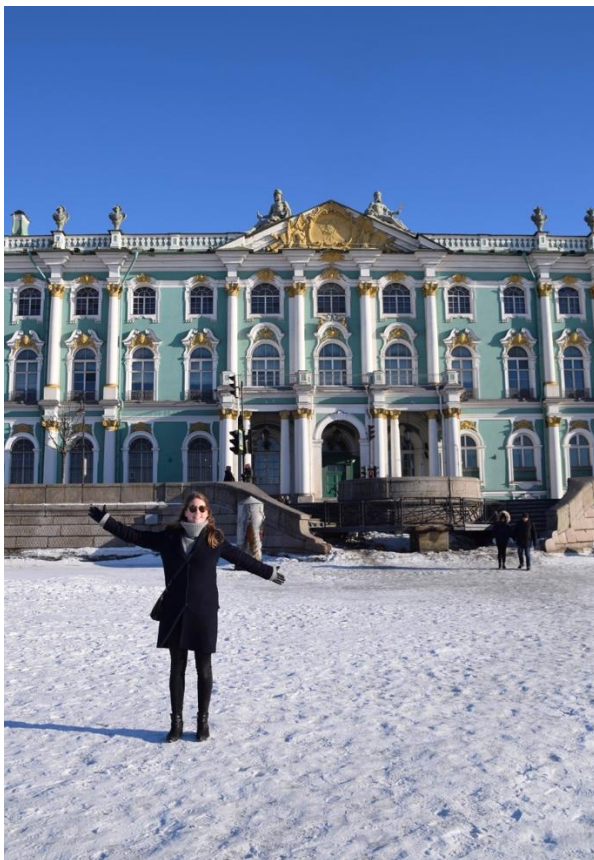
Please write one paragraph (or more) about your exchange experience. Please include some photos!

Exchange at Aarhus was a once in a lifetime opportunity, where I made an incredible bunch of friends from all over the world, experienced student life at another university, and visited twelve countries in Europe. Denmark, in particular, was so special; experiencing 'hygge' (best described as 'cosiness')

first hand, and living with Danes; whilst first off they may appear a bit reserved, they are most efficient, helpful, kind and fun people you will meet. Words don't do exchange justice. If you are in doubt about going exchange, do it – it will be the best decision you ever make!



Dog Sledding in Lapland, Sweden



Standing on the frozen Neva River, St. Petersburg



Aarhus, Denmark