



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Warsaw School of Economics
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 2018
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Economics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Health Economics (121091-0402)	English	ECON306	
Sustainable Development (121511-1503)	English	Elective	
Service Quality Management (131161-1503)	English	300 level management paper	
European Economics (132131-0669)	English	200 level economics paper	
Project Risk and Value Management (137311-0637)	English	300 level management paper	
Responsible Management (137939-0004)	English	200 level Management paper	
History of Economic Thought (210101-0583)	English	300 level Economic Paper	
Microeconomics of Competitiveness (237481-0622)	English	300 level Economic Paper	
Energy Security Economics (238791-1338)	English	300 level Economic paper	All added up to 72 pts

Do not stress if you are unable to sort your papers out before you get there as the online process can be very confusing. I ended up having to add and change papers when I arrived and everything was fine.

The academic experience in Poland is very different to Otago. It is not to the same academic standard as Otago but I do think there are so many things that you can take out of it. If you are wanting an academic advancement I would not recommend Warsaw. But if you are wanting a totally different situation to what you are used to this is the place for you. Go in ready for a relaxed, non-structured way of teaching. You never really know what is going on or when things are due. You

usually are not given outlines of what they want from you on an assignment and timelines don't really exist. But I think this was a wonderful learning curve. You had to take things into your own hands and ensure you were getting things done. You also have to work in groups with people from all different countries with different ways of doing things. This made it very challenging at times but was also a very cool experience to work on your ability to communicate to people that don't necessarily do things like New Zealanders.



Accommodation

I stayed in the dormitory which was very cheap and liveable. It's not anything flash. Sharing a room can be a rather interesting experience but you make it work. All of my friends were flatting outside of the dormitory so I spent most of my time at there's. But I am glad I stayed in the accommodation as it was cheap and easy to organise.



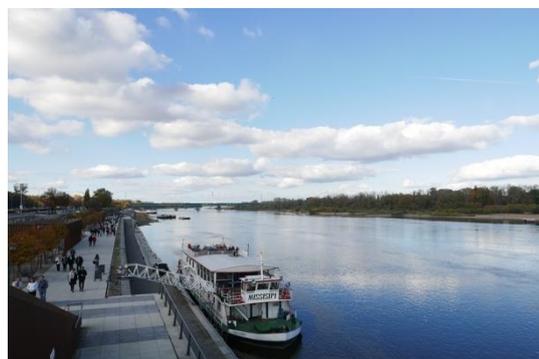
Money matters

The dormitory cost me around NZD 800 for the entire semester. This was fantastic and meant I had more money to travel. My friends that were flatting were paying more than what they do in Scandinavian countries in subpar flats they were living in. So I would say it's well worth living in the dorm. But don't expect great things it is VERY BASIC!!

Everything else in Poland is so dam cheap. Food is wonderful and in Warsaw the variety in cuisines is magnificent compared to other European countries and best of all it's affordable to eat out. Me and my friends cooked together most nights and then ate out twice a week. Lunch I usually bought from a café.



I travelled for a total of 5 ½ months on top of my exchange so it's rather hard for me to calculate my spending on the time I just spent in Poland. I can say that my weekly allowance was more than enough to get me through the week and a weekends worth of traveling.



Poland is a wonderful place to go on exchange if you want somewhere you can afford to live and travel in Europe. If you are wanting to have a totally different experience to New Zealand with many different cultures give Poland a go.

I used my ANZ debit card the whole time I was over in Europe. It worked out to be much cheaper than the cash passport. I did set up a Polish bank account but never really used other than paying my accommodation but I could have just done that at the post office.



Visas & Insurance

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

Yes, I had to apply for a Schengen student visa from the Polish embassy in Wellington. I had no trouble with this and they gave it to me the same day I went up to Wellington for my interview. Just make sure you get onto it early. I think it cost me around NZD 102 Did your host university have a mandatory insurance? Yes

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

There weren't many clubs or groups at the university that weren't business related as it is a small Business school. This was a shame but meant that you had to go and join sports groups outside of the uni. I joined the Warsaw Rowing club which was fun.

The Erasmus group organised lots of trips, parties and events which were really fun and a great way to meet other exchange students.

Any recommendations

Explore the city and find all the wonderful places to eat. There are so many amazing food halls and restaurants around to explore. From first appearances of the city seems to be very bleak, but once you get under its skin you soon discover there are many wonders to the city. The beautiful parks in the autumn and the many museums make for wonderful activities on the weekends.



Any tips for future students?

Go in with an open mind, on my first day I thought 'what the heck have I done'. But once I got into the city and found some friends I had a wonderful time. Don't forget to just go with it, the lectures can be rather frustrating to deal with sometimes but just go with the flow and everything will get sorted. Also take advantage of living in Warsaw and travel as much as you can on your weekend. Warsaw is very cheap to fly out of so take advantage of that and see the rest of Europe when you are there.



Overall Experience

My exchange experience was random, exciting, and different. It was an experience that is hard to explain in one sentence. It's not all fun and games all of the time but I think it was a very important experience that I would never replace. Poland is a wonderful country with so much history to learn and places to discover.

