



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Edinburgh
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2 (Otago)/Semester 1 (Edinburgh); 3rd year
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	Classics

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Empresses and Others: Women of Imperial Rome	English	CLAS300	18
Ancient Superpowers: The Armies and Military Monuments of Rome and Persia	English	CLAS300	18
Early Modern English Witchcraft	English	HIST300	18

Any comments about these papers?

They were very interesting, engaging, and I had a really good experience with all of my lecturers.

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

I did not realise that the three courses I was enrolled in were honours level, which meant that the workload was more than I expected, but I was able to adapt fine. All three of my courses were completely seminar-based, which was very new from any of the classes I've had at Otago.

Accommodation

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

South Clerk Street (University of Edinburgh self-catered accommodation). The apartments were in a great location: super close to the university/shops/entertainment/the rest of the city. The cleaning facilities were not great and there were mice. In addition, the line of communication was not at all clear when there were issues.

Money matters

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

My general costs were accommodation, flights, insurance, food and entertainment. Edinburgh is not a cheap city to live in so these were probably more expensive than other exchange locations.

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

I primarily used cash and my debit card – I would recommend to other people that they get a cash passport if they are going for a short enough time that they cannot get a foreign bank account. I didn't get one before I left and it was super annoying and expensive to constantly pay banking conversion rates on transactions.

Visas & Insurance

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

For NZ citizens studying in the UK for under 6 months, you only need a short-term student visa, which you can get at immigration provided you show documentation that you are studying.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not sure – I got my own insurance regardless.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There were a number of events – honestly, though fairly early on I just started doing things organised with people I met at the early activities on our own, not through the university.

What was the university/ city like?

It's very beautiful, very old, full of character.

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

Travel through as much of Scotland as possible – Glasgow, Aberdeen, the Highlands, etc. Things around Edinburgh proper are fun but also tourist prices so can get expensive.

Any tips for future students?

It's exchange. Have fun. Ditch class and go to Spain for the long weekend.

Overall Experience

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

Exchange to the University of Edinburgh was honestly amazing. I met so many incredible people and had so many unique and extraordinary experiences – I had wanted to go on exchange since I started university, and my experience only affirmed that. The ability to learn and be a part of the culture at an institution that is almost 500 years old is incredibly rare, and the memories of that will fondly be kept. But more so I think exchange helped me develop further as an independent adult, and more capable person and student. It allowed me to push myself out of my comfort zone and experience new cultures and places, both on my own, and with strangers-turned-close-friends.