



Student Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

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|------------------------|------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Otago degree(s) | Bachelor of Science | Major(s) | Geology |
| Host University | University College of Dublin | Semester & Year of Exchange | Semester 2, 2017 |

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

| Course title | Language of instruction | Otago equivalent | Otago credit value |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Structural geology | English | GEOL275 Rock Deformation | 5 |
| Geological mapping | English | | 5 |
| Global environmental change | English | | 5 |
| Igneous petrology | English | GEOL 364 Igneous petrology | 5 |
| Low temperature geochemistry | English | GEOL 262 Geochemistry | 5 |
| Sedimentary environments | English | Geol 273 Sedimentary processes and materials | 5 |

Any comments about these papers?

The papers were really good. The geological mapping gave an amazing opportunity to see more of Ireland while getting to know your classmates. All of the papers were relevant to my degree and I learned a lot. Global environmental change is a very easy online paper that could be interesting for people who want an easy paper to fill their schedule. It also discussed topics that are relevant today so could suit most people even with little geology background.

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

The academic experience was great. I was told that six modules in Ireland would be the same as the workload of four papers in Otago. However, the workload in Dublin was heavier, and I had to spend

more time studying on exchange than I would have back in Dunedin. It is always harder to stay on top of six papers, and the grading in Dublin was stricter than Otago so had to work harder to get good grades. The style of teaching was very similar to Otago. We had four labs a week and lectures every day.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in an off-campus accommodation. The pros of this is that you can choose yourself where you want to live and who you want to live with. The cons is that it is very expensive in Dublin. If you want to find your own flat you have to start really early looking for one, as living situations over there are desperate. We spent a long time looking for one, and the landlords can do whatever they want, so in the end we had to settle for a really expensive flat. The best would be to apply for on-campus accommodation as these are pretty nice, and it will make everything easier for you once you get down.

Money matters

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

Accommodation was €2800 a month and we were three people splitting that. This was also without electricity, which could be another \$200. I flew in from Norway, which was not expensive at all. Flights around in Europe is cheap, so it is a great way to see more of Europe while you are there. Did not have to pay for visa. Food is around the same price as New Zealand, not very cheap. The insurance depends on which one you use. I used one from Norway, which is fairly expensive. Over all I spent most of my money on accommodation, food and nightlife. The alcohol in Dublin is cheap. Public transportation in Dublin is necessary, so smart to buy a Leap Card. This would cost you around €20 a week, so I spent a lot of my money on public transportation.

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

I used both a Norwegian and NZ credit card without any issues, so I would say that it would be okay to just use the one you normally use. Always nice to have a backup credit card in case something goes wrong with one of the cards.

Visas & Insurance

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

Did not have to apply for visa

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Not that I know of, did not have to worry about that as I knew that Otago required insurance for me to go on exchange, and I already had a good one.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

They had many society clubs, so would recommend to take part in those. During the first week of uni you will receive a lot of information on how to join these. Also join Erasmus Facebook groups, as they host many events and gatherings that is a good way to meet people.

What was the university/ city like?

The university is not too big, meaning it doesn't take you long time to get familiar with the entire campus. The library is big with heaps of study space. Dublin is such a great city, and you have plenty of pubs, shops and cafes to enjoy. Had such a great time, with lots of stuff to do.

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

Check out the nightlife (such a great time), Dublin Zoo, Dundrum Mall, Trinity College and all of the old churches and museums. Daily guided tours will take you to Giant's Causeway, Cliffs of Moher and Ring of Kerry, which I highly recommend. Be sure to take a weekend or day trip to Belfast. I regret not spending more time in this beautiful city.

Any tips for future students?

My main tip is to deal with accommodation as early as possible. I cannot stress enough how difficult and annoying this was. I applied too late for on-campus accommodation, so there was no chance for me to live here as it fills up so quickly. If you do not want to live on campus you need to find a place early on, if not you could end up living in an expensive place. Use sites as Daft.ie, and join many Facebook groups to find available flats and potential flatmates.

Overall Experience

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

My exchange experience was great. It was fun to try something new, as Dublin is a bigger city than Dunedin. Taking that field class made it easy to get to know the people in class, and I made great friends for life. Since Ireland is such a small country you can easily travel around, and it is also right on the doorstep to rest of Europe. Really cheap tickets with RyanAir can take you anywhere. UCD felt bigger and busier than Otago, which for me was quite overwhelming in the beginning. It took me some time to get used to the big city life, and one of the main things that I missed was the easy access to nature that you have in Dunedin. Take the bus to Phoenix Park or do day trips to Glendalough if you want to do longer walks. No need to get a car in Dublin as public transport is good and it is an awful city to drive in, but this makes it slightly harder to get around to the outskirts of the city if you need some nature. I did spend more time on school during this semester as it was harder to achieve good grades. This does not have to be the case for everyone as it is pass/fail, but I still wanted good grades. I still had plenty of time to enjoy the pubs and explore Ireland, so no worries. Overall such a great semester, and I wish I could go back and have even more time in Ireland.



Photos from Giants Causeway. Every day there is a guided tour covering Northern Ireland, highly recommend this.

