



## My Exchange Evaluation

### Basic Information

<b>Host University</b>	Uppsala University
<b>Semester &amp; Year of Exchange</b>	2019 Sem 1
<b>Otago degree(s)</b>	LLB / BA
<b>Major(s)</b>	Law, Economics

### Academics/ course load

*Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?*

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Language of instruction</b>	<b>Otago equivalent</b>	<b>Otago credit value</b>
Comparative Constitutional Law	English	-	36
Economics of Development	English	ECON 303	18
<b>Basic Swedish 1</b>	English/Swedish	-	-

*Any comments about these papers?*

Enjoyed the papers a lot. Basic Swedish was interesting but I did not complete the course as I was busy travelling and could not get credit for the course.

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

Course were talk very differently in a more personal format with more seminars and group work (for both courses). In terms of workload I had a lot more free time than I do at Otago, because of taking only three papers and the way they are structured.

## Accommodation

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

**I stayed in the Flogsta Highrises in Uppsala and thoroughly enjoyed it. I lived on a corridor sharing a kitchen with 12 people and with my own bathroom. Flogsta was a great place to meet people from around the world and there were regular social events being put on by different corridors throughout the semester.**

## Money matters

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

Insurance ~\$600, Flights ~\$1500 (Paris Return), Monthly rent ~\$650, Food was all over the place because I got involved with a sustainability initiative and partook in some 'food rescue'.

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

Would 100% recommend using Transferwise (online/app). Once in Europe you can order a debit card that is linked. Minimal international transfer fees, no overseas service charge, no cash withdraw fee for up to 200 pounds a month. Can preload with foreign currency. Even gives bank details for EU so people can pay to your European account.

## Visas & Insurance

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

Had to apply for a Visa online, process was easy. Once in Sweden I had to go to the migration agency to get my fingerprints taken before they could send me my permit card.

*Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?*

The university had an insurance scheme but I didn't have to use it.

## Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

Uppsala has some of the best student culture in Europe through their system of student 'nations'. Nations are similar to OUSA, except there are 13 and they have their own smaller clubs within them. They also run regular events, balls, club nights and bar nights all hosted within their own 19<sup>th</sup> century nation buildings. It is quite a special experience. Personally I got involved in GH nation, and their sports club GHIF. They provided activities and contacts for everything from volleyball to running to kayaking (I organised a 4 day kayak trip through the club).

*What was the university/ city like?*

The university is the main focus of the city, with most of the buildings dotted around the historic city centre. In winter the city is hidden in snow and is quite a bit different to Otago. Once spring hits everyone comes outside and the place really comes alive. Especially around Valborg!

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

I can highly recommend joining the student nations and living in Flogsta, both were pivotal for the success of my experience. The pub at GH has some nice burgers and beer too! Oh and Lunsentorpet is a good overnight walk!

*Any tips for future students?*

I can not recommend going to Sweden enough! I think the biggest tip would be to put yourself out there. This is essential if you want to meet any Swedes as they can be quite shy and reserved. Alcohol can help with this!

## Overall Experience

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

When I left the summer in NZ for Europe's winter I didn't quite know what to expect. Winter in Sweden is a little bit more chilly than in Dunedin, something I discovered after going out for a run in -20 degrees in a singlet. The harsh environment does something special to the people, although they may be cold on the outside Swedes are some of the warmest people once you get to know them. Uppsala in the first months of the year is a winter wonderland in the winter (walking home from town in a snowstorm anyone?). As the months fly by the world around you is slowly transformed as the snow melts and the plants erupt from their hiding places. Around the first of May there is a massive celebration that consumes the entire city to welcome the spring. Known as Valborg, this is Uppsala at its best and one of the highlights of my exchange!

Living in Flogsta was an experience in itself. The older highrise buildings are 3km away from town and house around 700 students. This creates a real community atmosphere and made for some great parties! Flogsta is mostly dominated by exchange students, with the Swedes keeping mostly to themselves. Because of this you end up meeting more internationals than Swedish people, with plenty of Germans, Dutch and Australians (too many if you ask me!).

I spent 7 and a half months overseas and had the time of my life. The biggest thing that the experience taught me as a whole was to be more confident. Some of the best and craziest memories I have of my time overseas were made when I took a chance and talked to a stranger. Whether that be on a FlixBus (if you haven't heard of those look them up!) or on the street. That's not to say there weren't bad times overseas. Being away from home can be a lonely and isolating experience, that's the honest truth. But those times were far outweighed by the hospitality, friendliness and openness I experienced from people in Europe.

I've been sledding with huskies, skied into Norway, gone on 4 day kayaking expedition, hitchhiked across Sweden, stayed with innumerable European friend's couches and danced until the sun rose at a rave in a forest. I would have done none of that without the opportunity of going on exchange, so my advice is if you're considering exchange, get out of Dunedin and explore the world!