



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	University of Glasgow
Semester & Year of Exchange	2019 Semesters 1 & 2
Otago degree(s)	BA
Major(s)	History of Art

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Discourses in Cultural Property	English	--	18
Albrecht Dürer: From Germany to Italy and Back Again	English	--	18
Georgian Landscapes	English	--	18
The Human Image in World Art 1650-Present	English	--	18
Beginners Italian (Early Exit)	English	--	18
Music: Listening through Analysis	English	--	18

Any comments about these papers?

All very interesting and well-taught. The only one I didn't enjoy so much was cultural property, which got a bit more into the law side of things than what I found interesting.

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

A big difference was that all of the lecturers were teaching courses based on their field of research, and so were passionate about what they were teaching as well as very knowledgeable. Also, third year papers only had two official contact hours per week, and you were expected to do a lot of reading in your own time and come to class prepared to talk. Due to smallish class sizes most lecturers combined lecture and tutorial into one guided discussion, so I experienced a very conversational teaching style that I personally enjoyed.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in university owned accommodation, which had the benefit of being all arranged before I arrived, so I could just collect the key and move in the day I landed. There was also some cooking

equipment and plates provided, and you could order a bedding pack. It's a little on the expensive side, though not much, and you have no control over what your room is like or who you are in a flat with (if you go for one that is arranged in flats). But if you lock yourself out you just go to the office and they'll let you back in, and all your stuff is insured for while it's in your room.

Money matters

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

University accommodation: roughly the equivalent of \$240 per week.

Food: The equivalent of about \$25 a week, but I was extremely frugal.

Flights: Around \$1300 each way (two one-way tickets rather than a return). I flew Emirates and AirNZ, but there are cheaper fares if you go by airlines like China Southern.

Visa: I have British citizenship so didn't need a visa. I spent 14USD on a transit visa waiver for a stopover in the US.

Insurance: \$800 full cover from STA and fortunately (or unfortunately) had no need to use it.

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

I opened a UK bank account and transferred money in large lumps every couple of months so I could set up direct debits for my accommodation fees etc. and was also paying less over all in transfer fees. I took enough cash to cover the first few weeks in case of any problems.

Visas & Insurance

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

No

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

No

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

I got involved with several clubs (of which there are a huge number) – theatre and Scottish country dancing specifically – that were affiliated with the university, and also joined a choir that had nothing to do with the uni. The clubs had socials as well as classes/events, and university accommodation arranged several trips, movie nights, etc. for those staying there. There was a special international students orientation which had a heap of events including various tours (e.g. to Loch Ness) which ran in conjunction with it which I heard were good, though I didn't go on any of them.

What was the university/ city like?

Living in a big city took a bit of adjusting to but I enjoyed being able to go and do just about anything I wanted without travelling very far at all and the fact that there was so much going on all the time. The university itself looks like Hogwarts, which is awesome, and Edinburgh is only an hour away by

fast train. Glasgow has a bit of a reputation for being dangerous, but the west end where the uni is and the central city are as safe as any other big city.

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

Paesano is a relatively cheap Italian pizza restaurant near the university that makes the best pizza I've ever had.

Any tips for future students?

Brave the cold and get outside in winter. Explore at least some of the city on foot, especially around the University area, and go down cobbled lanes – they often have interesting shops and cute cafes. If you'll be using the subway *at all*, get a subway card. It's free and makes the tickets cheaper. If you are going to be taking the train anywhere frequently look into getting a 16-25 railcard. They cost 30 pounds but it gives you 30% off all train tickets in the UK. Take a decent raincoat! And don't do all of your shopping at Waitrose, it is the most expensive supermarket and you can often get the exact same thing for half the price at literally any other supermarket chain.

Overall Experience

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

I had never moved cities or flown internationally, so moving to the other side of the world on my own for a year was a huge deal and took a lot of adjusting to and the first few months were hard. I couldn't afford to go home in the summer and my parents couldn't afford to come to me, so the prospect was daunting. Going for the calendar year meant that I had a large gap of 3-4 months in the summer in which I could travel, but it did also mean that I was coming in halfway through their academic year when people generally had established friend groups already and not all of the clubs were really advertising themselves. The thing that helped most was joining a choir, which got me out of my flat (which wasn't very nice at that point) doing something I enjoyed and into a group of really nice people who knew the city. By halfway through the year I had found my feet and loved my different lifestyle. I joined a few more groups and clubs, such as the Scottish Country Dance club and by the end had a large and increasing group of friends.

Course-wise I loved it. At third-year level all of my lecturers were teaching their own specialist areas of research about which they were obviously passionate and dedicated to, and there's nothing that makes a subject more interesting than someone teaching it with genuine enthusiasm. Glasgow is also one of the top universities in the UK, and several of my lecturers were very highly respected.



Glasgow University Scottish Country Dance Club at the university societies country dancing ball, with our mascot, Gus the duck.



Glasgow University looking like Hogwarts

I didn't do as much travelling during term time as some other exchange students, though I went to Edinburgh fairly frequently and also made day trips by train to places like Loch Lomond. In the first half of the year I also visited Oxford, where my parents met, and the village where I was born and lived as a baby before my family moved here, which was very special. I travelled a lot in the summer instead with a tour around my extended family living in England, a week-long trip to Germany, and a wild-camping trip on the Isle of Mull. I also went to some of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, which was mind-blowing and I got to hold an owl.



Drying my shoe after falling in on the bonnie bonnie banks of Loch Lomond