



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Aston University
Semester & Year of Exchange	Semester 2, 2019
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	Marketing, Film and Media

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent	Otago credit value
Digital Marketing	English	MART200 level	18
Fundamentals of Strategy	English	MART 301 substitute	18
Retailing Management	English	MART300 level	18
Services Management	English	MART300 level	18
Innovation	English	MART300 level	18

Any comments about these papers?

They provided lots of real industry experience which I really enjoyed.

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

It had a greater practical experience which was great. There was less emphasis on academic research and referencing. I personally found the study far easier.

Accommodation

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

I stayed at Aston Brook Green, which was self-contained flats. There were a lot of other exchange students which was great, and not just first-year students. I enjoyed being able to cook for myself and have independence. The wardens were very distant and just left you to it, unless you had

something broken that needed fixed. They were very basic and in a slightly rough area – I never felt unsafe, however, it wasn't a nice area. The accommodation was very cheap (works out to be about \$80 a week I think).

Money matters

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

Flights: \$2000 return if you get in early

Visa: free – just take all your documents and get at the border

Food, living costs: quite cheap – could get through on about \$400 per week, may want more for travel, though.

Accommodation: paid upfront before I moved in – around \$2800 from September to January

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

A MONZO card! The most incredible card and so easy to sort your money with. All you need is a physical address to send the card to and it arrives in 2-3 days. You can transfer your money over from your NZ account with TransferWise. I would not recommend a Cash Passport, or a BNZ card if you are with them – they have a lot of transactional fees and average exchange rate.

Visas & Insurance

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

No. Just find out what documents you need, and get your visa at the border.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There was an orientation week which was a great way to meet the other exchange students. There is a slight divide between the exchange students and local students, so get involved with a sport and club – it's the best way to meet locals.

I would recommend doing the day trips organised by the university to see tourist sights – they are great.

What was the university/ city like?

The university was so much fun! Good uni culture, and the exchange students get to do a lot of things together. The city is very average, not a lot to see and do. However it is very central, so you

can easily go see other places in England. If you want to go travelling most weekends anyway, it's a good place to base yourself and is cheap to live.

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

See as much as you can! England has incredible history and culture, and is so close/cheap to travel to other parts like Ireland, Scotland and Europe.

Any tips for future students?

Talk slowly and clearly – we are very hard to understand, particularly to European exchange students who have learnt proper English, not NZ English.

Also go on in with an open mind – you don't realise how sheltered we are in Dunedin until you experience other cultures. Birmingham was fantastic at broadening my horizons as there was a huge Muslim and Hindu population which I wasn't used to but was so great to learn more about.

Overall Experience

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

I had the most incredible time of my life! I could not recommend going more. My favourite part was meeting people from all over the world. It is the most amazing feeling making some friends for life who live on the other side of the world. We organised to do some travel together too during the semester so I recommend not organising all of it, and waiting to see who you meet and can go travelling with.

I also did 2 months of travel before my exchange around Europe which was incredible – if you can, make the most of being over there and see as much as you can.