



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	Cardiff University
Semester & Year of Exchange	Spring 2024
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Arts
Major(s)	Anthropology/Archaeology

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
A Visual History of Early South Asia	English	18
Greece and the Near East: Expanding Worlds	English	18
Archaeology: It Matters!	English	18

Total Otago credits gained: 54 points 72 points 108 points _____

Any comments about these papers?

Archaeology: It Matters! Was not a useful paper for a New Zealand student to take! It discusses the ethics and modern applications of archaeology from a very... British point of view. That is to say, while they might find a lot of the ideas of community and public inclusive archaeologies to be quite novel, it is what we are taught from day one at Otago!

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

It really is a very similar system with similar grading and workloads! I didn't feel much of a transition in terms of the work. I did find that the courses offered were a lot more varied but overall in course structure and teaching methods there is not a huge difference. I would say however, with papers in general, there are less contact hours than you would have at Otago, especially in the humanities.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in University halls, Talybont North, in an apartment with 5 others. It is a really convenient and easy way to do accommodation, everything is taken care of and you're protected which is super important. It is also a great social opportunity!

Money matters

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

Flights were the biggest single cost probably but it is better the earlier you book! I managed to get in quite quickly after getting my place so I was lucky. Food is a lot cheaper in the United Kingdom, from the supermarkets - not out, so it hasn't been too bad for basic living needs. My largest spending has been on trips around Europe, if you get a chance to travel do it but do it wisely! There are lots of ways to save money when exploring and I'd urge research and planning when it comes to separate trips.

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

I used Wise, an internet/card banking system which converts money to different currencies as needed. It is very easy to use and organise and only takes a small percentage when converting.

Visas & Insurance

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

No. I am afraid I am not much help with Visa applications and information. I am a British citizen and didn't need to organise any of it.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

Yes but this was covered by my Otago mandatory insurance through StudentSafe.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

At Cardiff there are so many things going on! Hundreds of clubs and the student union is very active. I'd suggest to look out for the "Give It A Go" events, some of these include planned trips over the United Kingdom, you can go on a day trip to Cambridge or the Stonehenge or through the Cotswolds. These are definitely worth doing, especially if you can organise to go with friends. The students union also has a bar and nightclub which hold events and themed parties through the year. There are also lots of public lectures and opportunities to explore different subjects and topics in the University.

What was the university/ city like?

Cardiff is absolutely lovely and it reminds me of Dunedin in many ways. The weather is very up and down and never predictable, the people are friendly and easy going, and in South Wales you are super close to some beautiful landscapes, nature, and castles. It is a ever-changing city with lots going on. I would also credit it as being very convenient for those who do like to travel and explore, there are so many buses, trains, and flights, out to the rest of the country and the world, Cardiff is an excellent base which will allow you to do many things!

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

If you can go and see a show or an Opera or anything in the Millennium centre, do it! It is a beautiful venue and it's set at Cardiff Bay which is a lovely area to explore. I'd suggest you try avoid Greggs, the British will really try and get you hooked but its honestly nothing to write home about. If you have to eat on Campus the Green Shoots Cafe inside the main building has always been my favourite!

Any tips for future students?

Look into concerts in the United Kingdom ASAP, if your favourite artist is coming anywhere into the country, buy tickets, you can figure out hotels and trains once you get here, but you really don't want to miss out! This place is about the size of New Zealand except with very comprehensive and accessible public transport, make the most of it while you can!

Overall Experience

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

My exchange experience has been amazing and I've learnt so much. I came to the United Kingdom because it was the easiest option for me because of my citizenship and I am not leaving at the end of this semester, I will be completing my postgraduate research in Scotland. I have met some amazing people, seriously try and find the other international students - they know what you're going through and you will bond like anything! It's been amazing getting to know them and going exploring with them, and now I have places to stay if I ever go to America! My trip has been awfully busy and hectic

and I have even had to do some school work so it's all been very full on. This has been a good thing however, going on exchange is an intense and hugely rewarding experience!

