



My Exchange Evaluation

Basic Information

Host University	ESADE Business Campus
Semester & Year of Exchange	S2 2024
Otago degree(s)	Bachelor of Laws & Bachelor of Commerce
Major(s)	Accounting

Academics/ course load

Which papers did you take whilst on exchange?

Course title	Language of instruction	Otago equivalent
Re-Imagining Capitalism: Alternatives for the 21 st Century	English	Level 200 unspecified
Arts & Culture in Spain & Catalonia: 2000 years of beauty	English	Level 200 unspecified
Coaching & Personal Effectiveness: How to be an authentic leader	English	Level 200 unspecified
Intensive Spanish: Beginners	English/Spanish	Level 200 unspecified
Spanish: Beginners	English/Spanish	Level 200 unspecified
Never Too Many Movies: Spanish & Catalan Society through Cinema	English	Level 200 unspecified
Negotiation	English	Level 200 unspecified
Innovation in Marketing: creativity, new products and design	English	Level 200 unspecified

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

Any comments about these papers?

I loved all of these papers!

I would definitely recommend to take the intensive Spanish course as most exchange students take this and it is where you make most of your friends.

The papers taught by alex - **Arts & Culture in Spain & Catalonia: 2000 years of beauty** and **Never Too Many Movies: Spanish & Catalan Society through Cinema** are an amazing way to learn about Spanish culture whilst you are living in Spain. Alex is an amazing teacher and so passionate. These classes are all made up of exchange students so they are great for meeting people/having the same

classes as your friends – they are also very easy! Alex runs a traditional catalan farewell lunch for exchange students who take his paper at the end of semester which was one of my highlights from my whole exchange.

Re-imagining capitalism was one of the best papers I have ever taken. It is slightly more challenging (weekly assigned readings and forums) than some other papers but it is well worth it.

Negotiation is also a great paper and was the only class where I had actual ESADE students in my class which was cool for making friends with them.

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

The class size is much smaller and the sessions are much more interactive. All of the teachers are highly qualified and regarded in their field as ESADE is one of the top private universities in Europe. This means they are incredibly passionate about their jobs and what they teach which is really great as a student.

You have less focus on external grading and more grading that is the result of class participation which means you learn more throughout the course which I preferred to Otago.

The classes are all 2.5 hours long and you only have one per week. I chose to jam all of my classes into Monday, Tuesday, Wednesdays so that I would have a 5 day weekend. I would recommend doing this as the commute to uni is long as the campus is outside of the city.

If you are going S 2 I would recommend trying to do your classes on just Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This means you can get cheaper flights back on Mondays from travel rather than Sundays.

Accommodation

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

I stayed in an apartment in the gothic quarter. It was very cheap compared to other accommodation but very touristy. I would recommend looking for accom in Eixample – most students live here and it is still very central but less touristy.

Gracia is really nice too but it is a little further out.

Money matters

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

Flights: \$1.6K to fly to London in July, \$2.4K to fly to NZ from Barcelona on the 15th December.

Accom: €500 per month (this is very cheap. Standard accom I around €650-800)

Visa: I think it was around \$100-\$150

Insurance: to get a student visa for Spain you are required to get comprehensive Spanish medical insurance. This was around \$700. This was annoying since I was travelling before and throughout the exchange outside of Spain so I also had to get general insurance to cover that which was around \$500.

Transport: The trains in Barcelona are amazing and super affordable. The 3 month pass is around €40 and can take you almost 2 hours out of the city. The day pass is around €5 so it's really good value for the 3 month one.

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

Wise card.

Visas & Insurance

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

You require a student visa. The process was annoying as I had to fly down to Wellington to lodge it and you have to get appointments quite in advance. They held onto my passport whilst they did my Visa.

I believe they have changed it back so you can post your visa application now.

I think I booked my appointment in the end of March for an appointment in May as I left NZ early to travel Europe on 1st July. They say the visa can take up to 6-8 weeks so you need to allow time before you leave the country as they have your passport.

Mine ended up only taking 2 weeks but I would recommend to get onto it early anyway to save stress.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance?

I think we had to send them our Spanish health insurance as well.

Extra-curricular/Social Activities

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

There were some clubs you could join right at the start but I didn't.

If you do Alex's paper he offers some walking tours at the start of the semester which I would recommend doing.

You can do Erasmus trips but they are not done through the uni.

What was the university/ city like?

ESADE is out of the city in a beautiful little town Sant Cugat. This means the commute is long and sometimes very early (I had 8am classes so would have to get the train before 7am) however the town itself is lovely and very safe. There are some beautiful walks around the uni. You should also go into Sant Cugat and check out the monastery as well as the cafes and restaurants.

ESADE is private university. Many universities in the EU are free so the students who attend ESADE full time are very wealthy. Many of the actual students are not from Spain/Catalonia but come from countries throughout the EU like Germany, France, Austria etc. This means it doesn't really feel very Spanish/Catalonian as 50% of the papers are taught in English. It's a very small campus and doesn't have many facilities there but it means you always bump into friends.

Barcelona is an amazing city. Living in the city is very different from Otago which is a small uni town so if you want a city life then Barcelona is perfect, but if you want a more uni vibe its probably not going to give you exactly that. All of the students are spread out across the city. Barcelona is not as unsafe or scary as it is portrayed and I lived in the thick of it. There is endless things to do and see. There are beautiful beaches you can explore outside of Barcelona and gorgeous nature. It is expensive as it is a big tourist city however some things – like drinks in bars, are pretty reasonably priced.

The city itself is so beautiful. The architecture is absolutely insane, especially coming from NZ which is so new. You can honestly just wander around the city and marvel at the beauty. There is so much culture and so much art – if you love this then this is absolutely your place!

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

Bars: Curtis (cool record bar), ovella Negra (huge student bar, cheap drinks), 33/45 & 45/33 (cool bars in raval), el born has many cool bars as well as eixample.

Restaurants: gelida (cheap traditional catalan), delacrem (best gelato), bar el velodromo (one of the oldest restaurants in Barcelona), bar tomas (some consider this to be the best bravas in barcelona), botafumiero (very expensive but amazing seafood restaurant), bar bocamoll (nice student restaurant near ESADE), els 4 gats (café where Picasso used to hang out in gothic quarter), can paixano (great tapas, cool bar), Gats (nice tapas), flax & kale (healthy and delicious food), honest greens (nice salads), bloome by sasha (amazing breakfast and sweet treats), chok (amazing sweet treats), conesa entrepans (delicious sandwiches), glutery (great gluten free bakery), Euskal etxea (best pinchos & good bar)

I am gluten free and Barcelona is amazing for GF food.

Things to do: honestly just walk around the city and you will be amazed at what you find. Explore Gracia, explore sarria (beautiful catalan town with a nice walk), go to the beach, go to stiges, do all of the tourist museums and cultural activities, eat your way around the city, go to costa brava for a weekend, fly to one of the Spanish islands for a weekend.

Study spots: la central – both locations, such a nice café and study spot. Also flax and kale

Any tips for future students?

Barcelona is such an amazing city – you will never get bored! Be smart and you will probably not get pickpocketed. Some exchange students went away every weekend – don't do this! You can travel again but you may not get the opportunity to live in a city like Barcelona again. Make the most of your time in Barcelona while you can – travel before and after instead.

Overall Experience

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

My exchange was absolutely amazing – I could not recommend Barcelona more. It is the most vibrant, inspiring city – living here for 4 months is not enough time to even scratch the surface of all it has to offer. Make the most of every moment!

