



IT University Travel Report

Dear Student, this is a template – the aim is to inspire other students who may wish to follow in your footsteps. You are free to give your report the shape you want and to go beyond the questions, as long as you cover the information asked for below. You are also very welcome to include pictures and contact information – but you need not. Remember that the report will be made available on the intranet.

Host University:

University of Technology Sydney (UTS)

Study Programme at IT University: BCs

in Data Science

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad:

Tuition-Fee Paying Student

Courses studied abroad:

People and Organisations

Fundamentals of Business Finance

Cybersecurity

Communication for IT professionals

Exchange Period: semester (autumn/spring) Autumn year 2022

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here:

 frao@itu.dk

Your stay abroad

What was it like to study at [the university] (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)?

Studying at UTS was fun. It is a very large campus with thousands of exchange students from all over the world which all led to loads of social activities and interactions. The University had at least 20 different independent shops on campus listing coffee shops, a barber, a supermarket, a bar, and even a doctor, all for the students to use in their lives at the university.

The social activities arranged by the university itself were unfulfilling and felt half-hearted due to their recent COVID transition and the size of the student population. However, there were plenty of offers such as joining various societies as Football, E-sport, Mahjong, Cybersecurity, and whatever you can think of, which were great environments to get out of your comfort zone. They also hosted some great introduction days for exchange students only, which was a great opportunity to meet fellow travelers in the exact same situation as yourself. This is where I personally met few of my best friends from that semester.

The academic level of UTS needed adaptation due to the change in the structure of their teaching staff which was different from ITU. They had multiple teachers and teaching assistants in the lectures to help students on the spot immediately with questions and exercises, which felt more like a High School environment compared to the lectures at ITU. Secondly, the overall objectives of the courses were not as high a standard as at ITU, but for me personally, I also attended 3 first-semester courses, where the majority of the students had their first semester at a university. All the courses required weekly quizzes that counted as marks but were only composed to check if the students read the course material. This could be done easily, but in fact so easily that you might forget about them because you drown in them. It certainly took some time to adapt to that whole new style of approaching academics. But all in all, if you go to UTS you should not be worried about following the courses when you come from academics at ITU.

All my courses were mandatory to follow for my bachelor, but they had a myriad of electives available to design your major and minor (as they call it). This was however not applicable to exchange students that only studied for that single semester.

What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

My motivation for going abroad was to live and experience a different culture from here in Copenhagen. This is certainly what meets you in Sydney, even though it is a western country, they have a different mentality due to their geographical position, nature, and infrastructure. It is just amazingly different. Anyone would love it – I'm sure.

Please describe what you got out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?

Personally, I got out of my comfort zone and got to know a lot of incredible people, who all contributed to me having the best 6 months I have ever had.

If you feel like you need a mental break from studying, exchange is for you. It is not the case that you don't study hard on exchange, but due to all the other factors and you're in an amazing place surrounded by amazing people makes you feel like you are on vacation. But what you develop most of all is your English, or German if you end up with 5 German roommates – haha. I am very happy to have developed my English the way I did in Sydney, and you realize the change the day you start dreaming in English.

Arranging your stay

Please give a short description of the process of arranging your stay:

I applied through ITU as an exchange student but only got nominated as a tuition fee-paying student. This was luckily not the biggest issue as you get a lot of support from your SU, to cover some of the tuition fees.

Once I got nominated, I started following the different procedures outlined by both ITU and UTS. This included Australian health insurance which you can buy through UTS, getting your student visa, but first and foremost getting your courses approved by ITU and UTS. Once the courses are in place you can simply buy/apply for the rest and all you need is a flight ticket.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use (if any)?

I personally didn't use any external services to prepare for my stay, since all the guidelines provided by both UTS and ITU were sufficient. Sometimes I was left anxious about some of my applications that weren't in the right format or other minor issues, but then I sent an email to SAP or the coordinator at ITU, which took the anxiety away with their calm and helpful responses. Thank you.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I was told to find temporary accommodation instead of applying for student accommodation, which really elevated my exchange semester. This was the best decision I have made on that trip. This enabled me to move in with a friend I met in Sydney and have the best-located house in the middle of Sydney for less than what you are paying on student accommodations. I see ways this could be a stress factor, but if you trust in the process, you will easily find a nice house or apartment to live in, in a place that suits (whether you want to live by the beach or close to UTS). This housing situation made me feel like a local instead of a visitor.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Food, restaurants, and shopping are approximately the same as in Copenhagen whereas the housing for me personally was a bit more expensive in Sydney than here. The average room in Sydney was around 6000-8000 kr a month.

Did you apply for scholarships and would you recommend any ones in particular?

I did apply for scholarships but unfortunately did not get any of the 27 I applied for. I comfort myself with that demand for scholarships was super high due to the exceptionally high number of exchange students going away for the first time after covid.

I would recommend applying for as many scholarships as you can, but also to have a backup plan if you don't get accepted for any.

Instead, I had a job in a local restaurant which I really loved because it made me interact with a lot of local Australians that could show me hidden gems and bring me even closer to the Sydney lifestyle.

Recommendations for other students:

Go on exchange, don't think twice!