

Host University: Queensland University of Technology

Study Programme at IT University: MSc Computer Science

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Exchange Agreement

Courses studied abroad:

Advanced Network Engineering (Elective)

Data Mining Technology and Applications (Elective)

Applied Cryptography and Network Security (Security 2)

Mobile and Pervasive Systems (Specialization)

Exchange Period: Spring 2019

What was it like to study at Queensland University of Technology (Brisbane, Australia).

Campus is really nice and have everything you need. They run a service called *HQ* where you can get help with any problems you might have. There is also a lot of events for exchange students; *exchange buddies* - so it is easy to connect with other exchange students. The events run all semester, so there is always something to do if you are bored. I personally did not make much use of this offer, but a lot of the other exchange students did.

I am not impressed by their academic level. I think the academic level at QUT suffers mainly due to two reasons:

- People are allowed to mix and match units almost as they seem fit. This means the professors of each unit has to start from scratch, as some students might not have covered in basic material necessary (even in Advanced Network Engineering!)
- University education is Australia's third largest export. It is a product. Getting high distinction (12) is not easy, but the units are designed to let everyone pass.

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

My professional agenda was to improve my social skills. I knew the academic and technical skills would probably not be in focus on an exchange. My personal agenda was to get far away from everything to take a break and have time to think things over.

I achieved both. Being on exchange alone in a foreign country really forces you to make an effort in order to socialize, so I got a lot of training in socializing with people from completely different backgrounds. It is easy to get quite a bit of spare time if you plan your studies probably, so it also served as a nice break.

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?

Academically it boosted my English and confidence in my own technical skills.

I think it is limited how the trip will contribute to my further studies - QUT can learn more from us than we can from them - but I think it will boost my career. It helped me to get to know other cultures (not just Australian culture) and understand how it affects values, opinions and actions. I think those differences are important to understand in a multicultural work environment and when designing products for people around the world.

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

Arranging is not that bad - just take one step at a time. Dealing with QUT was very easy, the worst part was the bureaucracy involved in picking courses that allow me to actually finish my master degree at ITU. The new specialization system created a catch 22 for students going abroad - but that should not be a problem for you.

What resources did you find helpful in planning your stay and which people did you use?

I stayed with friends in Australia in the beginning, so I mainly got help from them when needed.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I stayed with friends until I found something. That situation might not apply to you. I would recommend renting a hostel/hotel/airbnb for a week or two. That should give you enough time to find a place to live in Brisbane. INSPECT the houses, some of them are of very poor quality - and expect to pay way more than you would in Denmark.

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad.

Housing is ridiculously expensive in Brisbane if you live at a student dorm as I ended up doing. Food is about the same as in Denmark, maybe even a tiny bit cheaper - you might eat more out though (depending on your accommodation) so remember to take that into account when creating your budget.

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

Yes, the best I got was Nordea which I can recommend as they don't have as harsh requirements as some of the other big scholarships. Start early when applying for scholarships - they have different deadlines and most of them require you to reply before your departure.

Recommendations for other students?

Do something productive with your time - the months will pass without you noticing. Being abroad is exhausting sometimes, so it is easy to fall into the good ol' Netflix trap. There is no reason to go abroad if you are staying inside your apartment.

I personally sent home one snap every day. Mainly to tell my family that I was still alive, but it also forced myself to go out and experience at least a tiny bit everyday to make that snap more interesting.