

IT University Travel Report (2024)



Host university: Auckland University of Technology

Study Programme at IT University: Digital Innovation and Management

Exchange agreement or Free mover: Free mover

Courses studied abroad: Data Warehousing and Big Data, Digital Transformation and Change Management, Information Technology Strategy and Policy, Leadership for Sustainable Organisations

Period studying abroad: semester (autumn/spring) _____ **Started July, 2024** _____

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here: _____ **JonasGuldtand7@hotmail.dk** _____ **(+45) 21950724** _____

My stay abroad



Studying at AUT: Academics, Courses, and Community

Overall, it was a very pleasant university experience with many different faculties and facilities. AUT is branded as being top 1% in the world, however, the academic level reflects a somewhat lower level in which the master's students have only just recently been introduced to the critical mindset and theories.

Naturally, it is what you make it out to be and the courses and topics all seemed very intriguing and relevant to me – particularly my elective within Leadership for Sustainable Organisations, lectured by the inspiring Dutch professor Marjo Lips-Wiersma.

The social life and community at AUT are introduced very early on with upwards of a hundred different clubs you can join at uni. I recommend trying to join the outdoor club, OffGrid, that goes on various hikes throughout the semester, though the mini adventures (understandably) quickly sell out - so be fast!

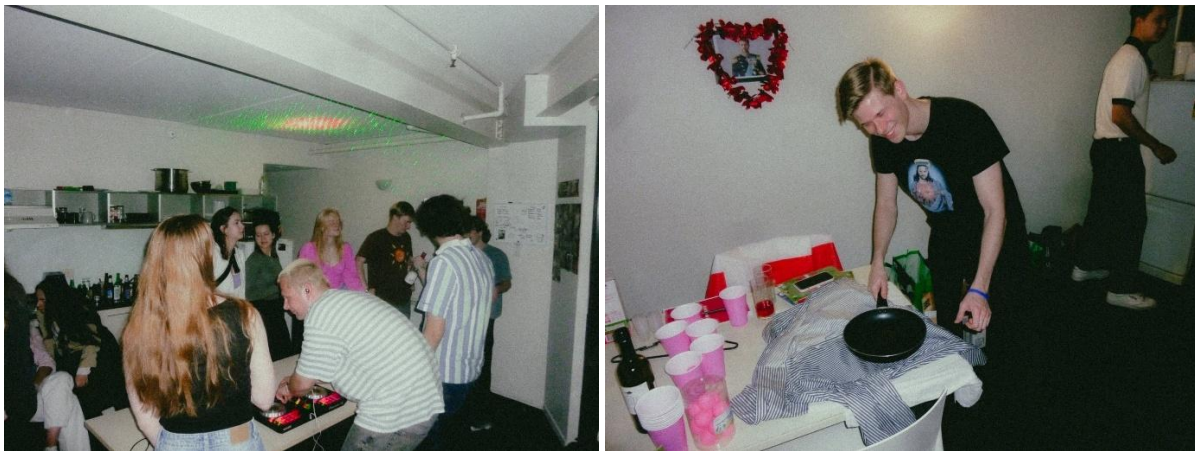
Initial Motivations & Impressions

I've always loved travelling and long dreamt of an extended stay abroad to fully experience life outside Denmark. As a huge *Lord of the Rings* fan and inspired by family and friends who praised New Zealand highly for its welcoming culture and beautiful scenery, it felt like the perfect destination for my academic adventure.

My stay exceeded expectations – especially the vibrant dorm life with sports tournaments, movie nights, and many new international friendships. The city of Auckland itself, seen in isolation, felt less dynamic compared to Copenhagen and have fewer hidden gems to offer. The city centre is not as big as you might expect so that is simply a heads up that you might find your favourite places (within the city) relatively quickly and stick with them throughout the semester.

Travelling all around New Zealand, however, offered incredible landscapes and adventures, ranging from swimming at gorgeous black sand beaches, hiking mountains amidst the clouds, sandboarding giant dunes, and even skiing down snowy volcanoes. It was a joy to experience the many different environments and conditions the country offers!

Arranging your stay & Finances



AUT Accommodation & Helpful People:

The process of finding accommodation was smooth and easy through AUT's own website as they have several dorms connected to their various campuses

(<https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/accommodation/apply-for-student-accommodation>).

Personally, I studied at the City Campus and was allocated a small room two minutes of walking from campus.

Brett Armstrong was the exchange coordinator from AUT that greeted us by e-mail and was an absolute gem of a person in terms of helping with any clarifications or doubts.

Expenses & Scholarships

Auckland and New Zealand in general is a relatively expensive destination, however, worth it! Travelling to the opposite side of the world comes with a price and for the flight ticket to New Zealand I paid 8,000 DKK. I travelled home through Australia, Japan and South Korea which roughly totalled the same price of 8,000 DKK as I wanted to utilize being (relatively) close to these countries too.

I found grocery shopping in New Zealand to be somewhat similar to Copenhagen prices (which is relatively expensive), however, eating out at restaurants could be found as low as half price when compared to Copenhagen standards ~ 50 – 70 DKK. Be prepared that touristy things do cost quite a lot and that many destinations require the rental of a car as the country is enormous. We were fortunate that our German friend, Willy, ended up buying his own car, as he studied there for an entire year.

I highly recommend applying for as many scholarships as possible. Don't be shy when it comes to applying and put genuine effort into your applications as it is super worth it. ITU has two grants themselves including Lemvigh-Müeller (10,000 DKK) and their Travel Pool (2,500 DKK) – I was fortunate enough to get both of these, alongside Knud Højgaard's Fond (15,000 DKK).

Recommendations



- If you are interested in the slightest about sustainability, I highly recommend the course, Leadership for Sustainable Organisations. Professor Marjo is a quirky and highly intelligent soul who is so full of knowledge when it comes to sustainability topics and a critical mindset.

- Do a South Island road trip. This is an absolute must. Whether you do it in your two-week midterm break or after your studies have concluded does not matter, please just go there. Without a doubt, the most beautiful nature I have ever seen in my life.
- See if you can find a show, perhaps high school performance or professional, with haka, singing, and dancing. It's beautiful to see their passion when it comes to Māori traditions.
- Make lots of both small and big trips outside of Auckland: Mount Eden, Rangitoto, North Shore, Piha Beach, Tongariro(!), Hobbiton, Lake Taupo, Lake Pukaki, Lake Tekapo(!), Wanaka, Queenstown, Roy's Peak, the list goes on...
- Watch or even play some rugby! Whether it be going to an All-Blacks game or watching it with your new friends at a pub. It's such a big part of kiwi culture.
- Try Marmite and Vegemite of course (don't put too much on your bread).
- Befriend Kiwis and Samoans and learn some slang! Sweet as & she'll be right!

