



IT University Travel Report

Host University: Queensland University of Technology

Study Programme at IT University: DIM

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Exchange

Courses studied abroad: Programming fundamentals, Foundations of Business Process Management, IT innovation and Disruption

Exchange Period: semester (autumn/spring) Autumn _____ year 2018

If you wish to give advice to other students regarding your travels, please state your contact info here: Students going to Brisbane who have concrete concerns or questions are welcome to reach out to me on Jakobfriisstorborg@gmail.com

Your stay abroad

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

The University facilities are great. Smart screens everywhere, all lectures are recorded, so you can easily structure your studying as you please and the online dimension of the teaching situation was generally used more than I've experienced elsewhere. Worked well.

The academic level varied a bit. As people usually say after going abroad, studying at QUT was also a bit like being back in high school. You were expected to be present and do small assignments during the semester. This also meant that the workload for the exams was minimal, as a lot of your final grade is based on your work during the semester.

The course IT innovation and Disruption was a course I chose to substitute my Reassembling

Innovation course. It was very similar to the course Digital Business Models that I took the semester prior to, so I sailed right through. Didn't learn anything really, but a very easy course for those who want a chill time. It had some assignments and blog posts that we had to do every week in the first half, so then it was a bit more work. Got very chill at the end and no exam. Easy to get high distinction.

The course Foundations of Business Process Management was really interesting, and could easily substitute the ITU Process Innovation course, if you're on that new business models specialization. I liked learning the BPMN process modelling language. It required a looooot of work though. Did well, but wasn't a walk in the park.

The course Programming Fundamentals wasn't easy for me at all. I'm glad I learned to program a bit, but it was a lot of effort for a guy that hasn't really done a lot of math since high school. Teaching wasn't great. Probably an easy high distinction if you've got programming experience.

I only had three courses, as I had extra ECTS points before going.

I didn't engage a lot in the social life at campus. I saw that a lot of other exchange students were a part of student groups and went on trips with them etc. I found my friends outside of the uni setting.

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

I basically felt that the first two semesters of my ITU master was pretty hardcore and I needed a change of setting. Also always wanted to live somewhere else than Denmark for a longer period of time, so this was a great opportunity to do so.

Never had a desire to visit Australia specifically, but then I thought "why not" and I went. I'm really happy I went somewhere English speaking. Easier to navigate society, easier to integrate and make friends who come from the place you're visiting.

Definitely met my expectations. Lovely break from life back home and I formed great friendships with some amazing people in Brisbane.

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?

The trips reminded me that you can go basically anywhere in the world and meet some nice people and have a good time. Definitely triggered a desire to live and work abroad upon graduation. Studying somewhere else also gives you an outside perspective on your studies back home and on the educational system of Denmark.

Arranging your stay

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

People keep saying it's a lot of paperwork. I was fortunate enough to get one of the exchange spots, so it was pretty straight forward. Just check your email once in a while and then do the things required of you as they hit your inbox. Don't let it build up too much, just chill out and it's gonna be cool.

Begin applying for grants as soon as you get the spot at uni. Even if you haven't received all confirmations. You can usually send these at a later point. Before I started applying, some of the grants already had their last application date. Also remember you can still apply for grants while you're abroad.

Know that the Australian semester begins in mid-July and ends beginning or mid-Nov. This means that you'll be frustrated about the lack of summer break in Denmark, but with the early finish of the semester in Australia, you have great chance of doing a lot of traveling before you write your thesis or whatever is waiting back home. I chose to travel Southeast Asia for 2,5 months before returning back home at the end of January.

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

The ITU exchange people are great. Besides that, I pretty much just did things myself.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I specifically wanted to live with Australians, so I didn't want to live in student accommodation buildings full of overseas students. Found my housemates in a Facebook group. It's also chill to just book a few nights at a hostel or Airbnb and then find something when you're there. You pay per week, and prices in Brisbane should be between 150 and 180 AUD per week depending on location and size of room.

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

I chose not to get Danish travel insurance, because you are required to get an Australian health insurance. Pays off to research the market yourself instead of accepting the university's offer. There are a few different companies. I found NIB to be the cheapest. I saved a bit of money there.

Accom and drinking is expensive in Brisbane (and Australia). For smokers it's a nightmare. A pack of cigs are around 150 dkk and a pack of roll is 250 dkk. Stock up or quit. ☺ Nightlife is a bit tame with strict lock out laws. Clubs close early. Melbourne is less regulated so the party scene there was more my thing. Went a few times. Flights are a little expensive too.

Eating out is generally less expensive than in Denmark. So is public transportation in Brisbane. Take advantage of that and make sure to register your student status with your gocard (Queensland's rejsekort). Great discounts. My primary form of transportation in Brisbane was the citybikes. Convenient and super cheap. 3 AUD per month.

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

I applied for some, yeah, but not as many as I wish I had. It seems like a lot of work, but when you get the money, it's sooo worth it.

I got one from one of my ancestors' foundation, the ITU travel pool, Nordea-Fonden and Oticon Fonden. Make sure to apply for Dansk Tennis Fond. I was too late.

Recommendations for other students:

There are many ways of approaching a semester abroad. Reflect on what you want out of it, then work towards that. I'm very happy about getting to know a lot of Australians and getting into certain communities of Brisbane. To do this, I sacrificed getting to know a lot of other exchange students. There's obv no right or wrong. Time passes quickly.

West end and Paddington are nice and slightly alternative areas of the city (like Vesterbro or Nørrebro, just smaller).

Brisbane is surrounded by beautiful nature. Take advantage of that.

Have fun and remember that the courses will be transferred to your Danish degree as passed or failed only.