

ITU Travel Report - Study Abroad

Name:

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Study:

MSc in Computer Science at the IT-University of Copenhagen

Study Abroad Details:

I was a Study Abroad student at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) during the spring semester of 2019.

During my time at AUT I studied the following four courses:

- Internet of Things and Applications
- Cloud Computing
- Text Mining
- Software Requirements Engineering

My Stay

What was it like to study at AUT?

The experience of studying at AUT was very unlike studying at ITU. First of all, the number of students, the size of campus, and number of courses offered within many different sciences is just on a completely different scale. You are much more a single student in a big machine than at ITU. This is not necessarily a negative thing, but something that is clearly felt.

The courses I followed at AUT were much more academic in the way the curriculum was presented and taught than at ITU. By this I mean that ITU has a more a practical approach to teaching where AUT focuses on the theoretical aspects and expects students to seek out the practical aspects elsewhere. As such, if you are considering studying abroad at AUT expect to study in a completely different way than what you know from ITU.

With the size of AUT a richer social environment follows and it is really easy to meet other international students and engage in different social clubs - AUT has a whole range of social offerings. It is no problem meeting new and interesting people when going abroad, especially at AUT.

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

My initial motivation for going abroad was threefold - I wanted to enhance my spoken English, I wanted to meet people from other cultures, and I wanted a new study environment at another university, to enable me to reflect on how it is to study at ITU.

My approach to studying abroad was very open, which means that I actually did not have a lot of expectations prior to going. I expected to be personally and culturally challenged, to open my understanding of the world, and to experience a lot of cool and beautiful places since I was going to New Zealand.

What did you get out of your stay, both personally and academically, and how do you expect it to contribute to your further studies?

Personally I learned that I am capable of making friends anywhere with people from different cultures, and that you just have engage and reach out. Meeting people with different backgrounds and understandings of the world enables you to have a better understanding and empathy for others. Gaining a lot of new friends also enabled me to observe how they study and how they balance their studies with their everyday lives. This has led to me achieving a better understanding of how to balance my studies with everything else I have going on in my life. Working on not dragging the frustrations and stress from my studies with me back home is probably the most important thing I learned from others while studying abroad.

As the courses at AUT are more academic I have learned to search for and filter through scientific papers on a scale I was not used to at ITU. I have learned to more easily digest a scientific paper, reflect on its contents and apply that knowledge within a specific problem domain.

I expect my experiences from studying abroad to have a very positive impact on my further studies. Firstly, I have gained a new appreciation for Denmark and the Danish educational system - I am looking very much forward to studying at ITU once again. Secondly, I believe to have a better understanding of how to balance my study, work and everyday life to not burn out. This is important for me as I am entering my last year of studies and am very much looking forward to enter the labour market.

Arranging My Stay

Give a short description of the process of arranging your stay:

Applying at ITU and AUT was easy, even though the final admission response from AUT came rather late. I applied for AUT housing which I was lucky enough to get, which meant I knew I had a place to stay once I got there. The most tedious process of going abroad was to select my courses and have them accepted through SAP at ITU, as they had to match with one of the

available specializations for Computer Science. However, this was not possible and a lot of time and effort was used on talking with Marco Carbone and SAP to find a solution.

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

The most useful resource I encountered were the mail sent by the International Coordinator at ITU which contained a lot of “nice to know” information for going abroad in general. In addition to this, AUT have several web resources for international students going to Auckland and New Zealand in general.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

I applied through AUT for a place at WSA - housing owned by AUT right next to the city campus.

Expenses and Financing

Comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad:

- Food was way more expensive than I had anticipated. I ended up spending three times the amount of money of food than I had initially budgeted.
- Traveling to New Zealand is cheaper than I had expected.
- Approximately 20% of my expenses ended up being used on traveling around and experiencing the country.
- Mobile data plans are way more expensive than in Denmark.

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

Yes I applied for a wide range of scholarships. I would recommend applying for as many as possible.

Two scholarships I would recommend in particular are:

- Dansk Tennis Fond
- Marie og M.B Richters Fond

Recommendations for Other Students

- Get the process of pre-approval for courses through SAP going as soon as possible, as they are extremely slow and very cumbersome to work with.
- Knowing that I had a place to live once I landed alleviated a lot of the initial stress of going to another country by yourself.
- Apply for a lot of scholarships.