



## 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:** Auckland University of Technology

**Study Programme at IT University :** BSc in Data Science

**Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad:** Exchange agreement  
Operating Systems

**Courses studied abroad:** Foundations of IT Infrastructure  
Knowledge, Enquiry and Communication  
Information Security Management

**Exchange Period:** semester (autumn/spring) autumn year 2019

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

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## Your stay abroad

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

The courses I took at AUT were a massive let-down, and frankly felt like a waste of time in the context of my programme at ITU. These were the only 'suitable' courses approved by SAP, however I feel they were a much lower level than those offered at ITU.

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

New Zealand seemed like an exciting and interesting place, which is absolutely true; however, I personally can't recommend living in Auckland. It's a fairly big city, but I felt it had little to no culture, especially in comparison to Copenhagen. Traveling through the rest of New Zealand however, the south island in particular, was a fantastic experience.

**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?**

I felt no connection to Auckland or AUT, personally or academically. I experienced many ups and downs, but I'd say that I grew as a person during my time in New Zealand. As a person that appreciates nature, New Zealand is a stunning country in many regards. The places I visited outside of Auckland made the overall experience much more impactful.

Academically, I felt comically unchallenged. I don't know whether this is ITU's fault for assigning me poorly fitting courses or if the academic standards are just lower in New Zealand/AUT. I felt little purpose to many of the things I was learning and really felt no motivation to give much effort.

## Arranging your stay

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

Honestly, quite hectic. I really don't understand how AUT is a 'partner university' with ITU. I was responsible for every step of the process, and found myself constantly waiting for ITU/SAP to approve my various forms. It seems the only thing that makes AUT a partner university is a 10% discount on tuition.

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

AUT Student Hub. Kenneth Holt (kenneth.holt@aut.ac.nz) was particularly helpful.

### **How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?**

I was lucky to know someone in Auckland who I stayed with until I could find a place to move into. I used trademe.co.nz to find a decently priced flat. I considered the AUT student apartments, but they were considerably more expensive and AUT requires you to pay for your entire stay up front!!

## Expenses and Financing

### **Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad**

More expensive than living in Copenhagen. Housing prices probably aren't much different, but I found myself paying significantly more for groceries (especially produce). Luckily I continued working my job in Copenhagen remotely, and wouldn't have been able to survive without that income.

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

SU-Udlandsstipendium is an absolute must. It covers the majority of AUT's tuition fees. I also applied for Lemvig-Muller (10.000 kr) but wasn't accepted. Travel pool is also important. If your exchange is during the fall semester remember to apply in October (during the semester)

### **Recommendations for other students:**

I'm honestly very conflicted as to whether this semester was a complete waste of time or not. On one hand: school felt like a joke most of the time, I had a ton of downtime in a city I didn't particularly like, and I'd have much better financials if I'd stayed in Copenhagen. But on the other hand: I saw some beautiful nature (outside of Auckland!!), had a fantastic 2-week trip to Tonga, and really learned a lot about myself throughout this ordeal.

Of course everyone is going to have a different experience. I met many other international students from different places in the US and Europe. Some loved their experience, some thought it was alright, and some had the same complaints as I do. It really all depends. All I can really give is my own experience, and if there's any recommendation I can give, it's do your research!!! New Zealand is reaaally far away. My decision to go there was mostly impulsive, and that might be partly why I had the experience I had. Make sure this is something for you, and make sure you're taking courses you'd actually enjoy — especially since you're paying a lot of money for them!

If I could go back, I'd probably apply as a freemover to somewhere I felt more passionate about. As I mentioned before, I felt pretty frustrated with the application process and personally don't think AUT should be labelled as an exchange programme or a partner university. I understand that I was among the first to go abroad in the Data Science bachelor, so this may be part of the issue.

My mom says I complain too much, so who really knows ;) I've attached a few pictures on the next few pages.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

## Kayaking in the Doubtful Sound



Te Whara Track in Whangarei Heads



Rafting in Rotorua



Roy's Peak in Wanaka



A beach in Mangawhai



Auckland from the Sky Tower

