

UTS TRAVEL REPORT

by Tobias Emil Hinke

HOST UNIVERSITY

University of Technology Sydney.

STUDY PROGRAMME AT ITU

Digital Design and Interactive Technologies.

COURSES TAKEN ABROAD

- 1) Advanced Interaction Design
- 2) Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship
- 3) Media as Experience
- 4) Project Management

EXCHANGE PERIOD

I went abroad in my third semester in the fall of 2019.

MY STAY ABROAD

I have had the best time studying abroad in Sydney and would strongly suggest that you stop reading and start packing your bags instead. Even though it can be quite stressful to arrange a stay abroad while writing exams, I can, without hesitation, sign that the experience is all worth it.

Sydney is breathtaking and offers a bit of everything. A city filled with skyscrapers and nice green spots to hang out during the day, beautiful nature and stunning beaches; and most importantly, a fantastic food scene with delights from all over the world. I am happy to share my recommendations that will take you to some of Sydney's best spots if you send me an email.

The university offers great courses and most of the professors are really engaged and talented. However, it has been difficult to get used to the teaching method at UTS as it differs from the way I have previously studied, why I spent a lot of time on schoolwork and exams. Still, I only went to school 2-3 times a week, so there is definitely plenty of time to lay on the beach and meet up with new friends.

INITIAL MOTIVATION FOR GOING ABROAD

I saw it as a good opportunity to try living in another country, which is an experience that many people would benefit from. In addition, the advantage of this university is that one is more or less secured a spot as a free mover, which allowed me to go abroad with two of my good friends.

MY MAIN TAKEAWAYS

By living in another country, I got to know myself even better as it forced me to be completely independent and figure things out for myself. I have had some of the best experiences in my life while studying in Sydney and have also met some really cool people that I will most likely never forget. On an academic level, the way of teaching has taught me to become more structured and has given me new perspectives, which I am sure will help me when writing my thesis.

ARRANGING MY STAY

Applying to become an exchange student can be a daunting process, but once it is done, it is all worth it. I started researching me opportunities well in advance and began the process of applying through ITU. My experience getting help from the staff at ITU was characterised by unclear answers, long response times and much uncertainty, which is why I chose to apply through EDU instead. I would strongly advise everyone wanting to go on exchange to apply through EDU as their employees are experienced and help take care of you all the way through the process. In addition to their talented staff, EDU also offers events where you can hear more about what it means to be on the exchange, which can be a big help in deciding whether or not to go.

OTHER PRACTICALITIES

When applying for exchange through EDU, you will be given access to a guide that can help you find out how to find accommodation in Sydney as well as important things to take care of before take-off, which was a big help for me and my friends.

In regard to finding accommodation, we started out trying to find a nice flat through popular groups on Facebook and websites such as Gumtree. However, since the three of us would like to live together, we found it to be easier to contact real

estate agents directly. While staying in an Airbnb for the first ten days after arriving in Sydney, we inspected approximately ten furnished apartments all over Sydney before deciding on a really nice flat in Coogee that was rented out through Biller Property. Please note that it may take a long time to complete the paperwork needed to be allowed to rent an apartment, so make sure you have found a place that you can see yourself living for a little while.

EXPENSES AND FINANCING

Let me be honest. It is expensive to go on exchange and Australia is not known for being a cheap country to live in. Nevertheless, the experience is worth all the money and the amount needed really depends on how you want to live while you are away.

While food and drinks are around the same prices as in Denmark, some may experience that the prices for accommodation are a bit higher than back home. As me and my friends wanted to experience as much of Sydney as possible, we often ate out at good restaurants, visited fancy bars and spent money on other nice experiences, which made the trip more expensive. I believe it happens to most people who are on exchange, why it might be a good idea to make room for it in the budget.

SCHOLARSHIPS

I applied for around twenty different scholarships and would recommend everyone to do so. Start well in advance, create a template and customise each application based on it when applying for scholarships. While it may seem like a lot of work, it is definitely worth it in the long run and can help make your exchange stay something special. I received support from the following funds: *Knud Højgaards Fond*, *Lemvig Müller Fonden*, *Marie & M. B. Richters Fond*, *Nordea Fonden*, *William Demant Fonden* and *ITU Travel Pool*. Besides from them, I would also recommend seeking support from *Dansk Tennis Fond* and *Augustinus Fonden*.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Order an extra credit card before leaving for exchange, try things you would otherwise never do and enjoy every minute of it. Oh, and do it. Definitely do it.