IT University Travel Report

Host University: Auckland University of Technology

Study Programme at IT University: Global Business Informatics (BSc)

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Fee paying

Courses studied abroad: Business Information Systems; Business Process Management; Management and Organisation; Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Exchange Period: Autumn semester 2015

Your stay abroad

What was it like to study at [the university] (including choice of courses, academic level, social life at campus)? AUT has a great variety of courses to choose from. As it is large university the same course has lectures several times a week and it makes it easier to plan your studies as you do not have to worry about the courses you are interested in overlapping each other or if you cannot attend lecture, you can participate it another day the same week.

Lectures have different backgrounds and therefore their teaching style greatly differs, therefore I cannot generalize on teaching style in this university. I would not recommend to take course “Business Information Systems” as I found it very general and exam was focused more on memorizing technical details about IT area, instead of demonstrating deeper understanding of the field. Course at “Introduction to Entrepreneurship and Innovation” was very interesting as teacher (Smitha) brought real life examples and guest lectures from different New Zealand Entrepreneurship fields to the class. We also had to apply gained knowledge in to our project work.

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

I wanted to improve my English language skills by studying in a country where the native language is English. I had plenty of opportunities to do so, however none of my teachers, professors or TAs were native English speakers. I also wanted to experience different perspective and approach to my study field. I am glad I had a chance to have these experiences.
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?

Improvement in academic English level, experience to collaborate in international environment, perspective on business processes in Pacific Ocean area (as courses are not focusing only on New Zealand), connections with students and academic staff at AUT, met new friends, experienced life in different culture. In a couple of courses lecturers were very good at inviting field professionals. I find it exciting to hear real life examples from another part of the globe in fields of entrepreneurship and management. This has allowed me to understand the importance of consideration of cultural differences when dealing with people with various backgrounds. As AUT offers academic staff who has worked in a different parts of the world, lecturers are able to put business management and organizational management practices in a perspective and provide an interesting comparison. I find this experience useful one studying Global Business Informatics.

Arranging your stay

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

I arranged stay in a hostel for the first 5 days and found accommodation on the spot via “trademe” website (similar to Danish “dba”) in 2 days.

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

There was not much help from the host university as long as one is not interested to stay in their student dorms. I used “trademe” website.

How did you arrange practicalities such as accommodation?

Expenses and Financing

Please comment on expenses connected to your stay abroad

Accommodation costs the same as in Copenhagen, but it is easier to find one. It is cheaper to live outside Auckland CBD than in the central area. If one plan to travel a bit around and see the country, it is easier and cheaper to access places by a car. Public transport is not particularly handy. Dining out is cheaper than in Denmark, food in stores is more expensive, like vegetables and milk products. I don’t think there are any major differences regards expenses comparing to Copenhagen.

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

I applied for around 10 scholarships/ funds and got either negative or no answer.
Recommendations for other students:

I would recommend one to try to find a house share outside CBD, as it might be cheaper and cozier than flats in the city. Consider to buy a car, as they are much cheaper than in Denmark and purchasing process is easy, so you will have access to the nature for weekend trips or in your study break. Parking in the city is not handy though. Always check accommodation in person before signing a contract as housing standards in New Zealand seem lower than Denmark. Many houses have mold inside and not so much attention paid to tidiness by owners. Students staying in dorms were very positive about it, good base for a social life and good chance to meet students from all over the world. If you are planning to go for an Autumn semester, be ready that it will be quite cold in July and there is no central heating on properties. Just keep in mind to pack some warm clothing. Start processing your visa in good time as it can take up to 25 work days (if you have filled everything correctly and supplied all necessary documents). International coordinator at AUT Kenneth Holt was really good at responding to all questions very fast, I would encourage to keep in touch with him about anything that is not clear to you. The only difference between arranging study period through ITU and EDU Denmark is 10% discount on tuition fee applying via ITU. Application process takes equally long time either way. If you do not get nominated for your favorite university from ITU and you really want to go there, you might as well have a look at the list of EDU Denmark partner universities.

Relevant only for non-Danish students:

If there is any non-Danish student, considering to go for an exchange semester, I would suggest to first check what are conditions for your SU during your stay abroad. If you are planning to use your SU as an income statement when processing your visa in a country of your partner university, it might help to request an official statement from the main SU office to confirm that you are entitled to receive SU. New Zealand immigration office might not accept any statements reflecting on SU from ITU university of Copenhagen for non-Danish students. These things are new to the staff at ITU, so they might not have answers to your questions and you should be ready to do your own research.