IT University Travel Report

Host University: Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

Study Programme at IT University: DMD

Exchange Agreement or Study Abroad: Study Abroad

Courses studied abroad: Image and Sound, Design Thinking Processes, Design Collaboration, Computing Technology in Society

Exchange Period: Spring 2016

Your stay abroad

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

Studying abroad at AUT is one of the best choices I have ever made. AUT’s International Office does a lot to make exchange students feel like home. They arrange a lot of social gatherings where all of the international students can get to know each other. The university also arranged a special Noh Marae weekend for the international student, where we got to know about the culture in New Zealand. We became one big family with all the people involved in this weekend.

I think my choices of courses matched my study program on ITU. They both included different aspects of design, communication and technology. However, the academic level was not as high compared to ITU.
What was your initial motivation for going abroad and did your stay meet your expectations?

I’ve heard a lot of great things about AUT and how they approach international students, which were my main motivation for going abroad. Even though I had very high expectations before I arrived, they were still capable of amaze me. I had the best time, and if you were ever in doubt of anything, the International Office was ready to help you right away.

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?

Even though the academic level wasn’t that high, I still got a lot out of it. I got to try other ways on how to study. I think it is important to try different ways study in, as you cannot expect everything to be the same including both future studies and work places. None of the exams I had on AUT counted 100%. The work was spread over the semester, which did that we didn’t have a month of intense studying. You also had time to improve yourself, if this was needed. Further, I got to improve my English. I was forced to speak English in every situation, since no one would understand me if I spoke Danish.

Going abroad was also a huge step for me to take personally. I have never been all alone and that far away from everyone and everything I knew. I have learned a lot about myself and I dare to take changes now. I believe that this will help me both in my future studies and career.

Arranging your stay

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

I found out I was going to AUT only a few months before the semester start. Everything had to go very fast, but I got a lot of help from both Rikke from ITU and Kenneth from AUT in arranging my stay. One of the most important things to have before entering New Zealand is a study visa. It is important to apply for that as soon as possible, since there is no New Zealand embassy in Denmark. Everything has to go through the embassy in London and it takes a while for them to process your request. Before applying for the visa, it is a good thing to have following documents ready: the return flight ticket, the Offer of Place letter,
the receipt for the tuition fees, and a proof that you have at least $1200 a month to live for.

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

Rikke Ulstrup from ITU, was very helpful in planning my time abroad in Auckland. Kenneth Holt from the International Office at AUT, was also very helpful in planning my stay. He answered all the questions I asked him, and he was very helpful in getting all the practical stuff ready, such as visa, courses etc.

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

I didn’t have any accommodation arranged when I arrived in Auckland. I was too late in applying for the student apartments at AUT (WSA), but I was placed on the waiting list. I found a place to stay within the first days and I could stay there the whole semester. After three weeks in Auckland, I got an offer for a room at WSA. I stayed there for the rest of my time in Auckland. Staying at WSA was a great experience. The social life was very much in focus, and I loved the feeling that you always had friends around.

**Expenses and Financing**

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

New Zealand is a quite expensive country to live in. It is cheaper to eat out compared to Denmark, but groceries are much more expensive.

I used approximately 12.000 DKK a month, but I travelled a lot so it would be possible to do it cheaper.

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

I only applied for ITU’s Travel Pool of 2500 DKK, which I got.
Recommendations for other students:

I would definitely recommend everyone who is considering going abroad, to go to AUT. The culture and people you meet down there, is such an experience and I will never regret going. And make sure while you are there, to go explore the beautiful nature.