

2012-2013

University Attended: University of Sydney

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

What did this involve, how long did it last, was it useful?

The orientation week was the week before Week 1 in each semester. The first thing that we did was to have a presentation over the academic aspects of our university life here at University of Sydney which consisted of the director of the programme and other head of departments. It ended with an exchange student from the previous semester who talked more about the social life at University of Sydney which based on social events, sport clubs to join and other societies. Also some advice around the city was given as well. During the same afternoon other speeches was held during the afternoon to give advice on more the daily life here in Sydney. For example, a lifeguard came in and talked to us about safety, rules and regulations concerning beach life. The whole day consisted of practical information of how life is in Sydney. At the end we got a package to bring home with further advice about the University and the options to do during free time. Except for this, nothing else was really held except for opportunities for different events to attend. There weren't that many and there were a limited amount of tickets so it didn't give the opportunity for everyone to join in on these events.

Induction week gives the opportunity to meet other exchange and study abroad students from other institutions. In my point of view, this wasn't properly accomplished since people from their own universities stuck together and no activities were in actually helping people to 'bond' with other groups. It was useful in that we found out quite a bit about the city that otherwise might have been difficult to find out. On the other hand, for an entire week, it was pretty basic.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Style of teaching, courses, ease of access to courses, methods of assessment, teaching support

The style of teaching mainly depended on the faculty in which the courses were part of.

For the Economics faculty, there were only lectures which were 3 hours each week. 3 hours to be in the same lecture hall was tiring and pretty difficult to focus which made the time spent during lectures not as productive. The methods of assessment mainly consisted of a mid-term exam and a final exam, usually no other assessments which did put more pressure on them.

For the Marketing faculty, there was a different approach. The lectures consisted of 2-3 hour long lectures but with more interaction and discussions between the lecturer and the students. This made it more interesting and I found it a lot more productive. All marketing courses which I had included one hour tutorials each week. Different case studies which fit in with the course material covered during that week made the theories learned more understandable in terms of real-life situations and applications. The assessments were divided up between tutorial participation, research participation, mid-term, presentations, and final exam. Due to the wide variety of assessed material, I found it that I learnt a lot more and was more engaged in the course.

The third faculty which I had for one of my courses was International Business. The course I took is called Business Negotiations. Basically the same setup as the marketing courses but with more focus on interaction between students themselves on how to learn the subject rather the lecturer 'telling' what to learn. Very interesting approach which made the students more connected and also learned more from each others mistakes rather being individualistic.

In all courses, the lecturer had an hour or two free dedicated for questions but was needed to be booked in advance. Was helpful during the weeks when there was less coursework while the weeks leading up to the exams it wasn't easy to have these appointments.

The University of Sydney has an online a list of all different courses they offer so it was easy to prepare ahead of time the different options I had to take. I was mildly disappointed that the timetables for each separate course were not available unless it was chosen and submitted for a new timetable. It was only after the course had started that this was available which made it more difficult to get the appropriate time schedule which suited me best with the courses that I wanted.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

I thought that all information the MBS International Team gave ahead of time was useful and very well-prepared. As soon as I needed something from University of Manchester I was able to get fast response and every time helped me out that made it a lot easier for me.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

The MBS second year meetings were helpful in order to get prepared for the year abroad. By also having three meetings, it gave me time to reflect on the different choices I had, also to really think through what I wanted to accomplish during my year abroad. They weren't that long and got the point so it was very useful for me.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Level of support, additional information that could be useful for future students

The international office at the University of Sydney was great. Everyone working there are really friendly and understanding in each situation I had when I needed help. It was only on few occasions which I emailed the international office but that was mainly between the two semesters for my second semester course choices and administrative things. When I needed to have more of a conversation I went there in person and always got help immediately and was able to solve the situation very quickly. So advice for future students would be to go to the international office in person if something is needed urgently. I got all support which I needed from University of Sydney's International Office.

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Please include any information relating to the purchase of compulsory health insurance ie costs etc. or whether this was waived by having the University of Manchester Insurance Policy

When going on exchange to Australia, the OSHC is needed to be paid prior of getting a visa. The visa was very simple since it was online and I received my visa within minutes after applying. The cost for the OSHC is 437 AUD for 12 months. Depending on which nationality and how the visa is submitted, there are different costs (<http://www.immi.gov.au/allforms/pdf/990i.pdf>). The simplest way for an EU-national to apply for a temporary student visa would definitely be online.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

This should be information on any extra fees that the University charged but should not include accommodation, books, transport, visa etc.

N/A

ACCOMMODATION

As much information as possible on what accommodation is recommended or not recommended.

I lived off-campus with someone which I knew from before on exchange in Sydney as well but going to another University. I met several people who live on campus but they weren't that impressed since the student accommodation was very expensive for what they received. Since they are living among other students, their common area was often messy and noisy. The common rooms were often abused and therefore most people which I know who live there spent as little time as possible in the accommodation area.

I lived in an apartment in the CBD which was very convenient since it was easy for me to get to anywhere around the city I wanted. Sydney is a wide-spread city with a lot of things to discover in the outskirts and since the city centre is the main point, all transport was nearly direct and accessible.

I really like living off-campus and was able to make friends in school and outside of school so to live on-campus in order to get in touch with more students wasn't needed for me. Areas like Manly, Bondi Junction and Bondi Beach are packed with other students, both Australians and International which also provide cheap accommodation and great access to the beaches. The only problem with those areas is that they are pretty far away so it can take around an hour to reach the University.

If future students want to get their own accommodation, they should remember that it can be difficult for students to get apartments in the city and that it takes quite a lot of time to apply to rent an apartment so they should come here a couple of weeks in advance and stay at hostel/hotel if they want to move in before their courses start.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport, travel, social life, integration with local students, student activity groups

An exchange student gets a concession mark which gives a massive discount on all public transport. It is pretty complicated system since there are different zones with different payment cards which creates quite a lot of confusion. The best way is to either use an app which tells you the optimal way to get to your destination or go online on <http://www.131500.com.au> to get information.

There are a lot of destinations to travel to in Sydney so it is definitely worth to book trips to discover the country! Domestic flights aren't expensive and very easy to book and use. Due to the backpacker culture in Australia, there are many great hostels around the east coast which provides reasonable accommodation for a cheap price among other travellers so you get to meet a lot of people.

The social life in Sydney is a lot more complicated than I expected it to be. It seems that Australians aren't that very interested in meeting people from abroad. Not a lot of Australians which I have met hang around university a lot, they go to the lectures or tutorials and then immediately go home. So most of my friends from Sydney are international students and some are Australians. Since I am Swedish I have met a lot of Scandinavians from other universities.

Since there aren't that many student activity groups at the University it is not that easy to integrate with them. There are a lot of events and groups on Facebook for international students so to meet other international students is easy and fun since they are also in the same situation as yourself.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

An unforgettable adventure combining interesting courses, great weather and basically a lot of fun.