



2016-2017 Student Mobility/Exchange Program Returning Undergraduate Student Report

Student Name:

Host University: Glasgow School of Art

Host Country: UK

Faculty/Department at Host Institution: Sculpture/environmental art

Semester: 1

Date of Report: April 3, 2017

1. OVERALL EVALUATION

How would you rate your exchange experience overall?

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 **Excellent**

Why did you choose this host institution? What key factors or issues influenced your decision?

The exchange was an amazing way to meet a group of locals, and it immersed me completely in the culture of Glasgow. I got to experience a different institution, and I saw that there are many ways that people learn all over the world. Some challenges were getting used to using the workshops. I had to do inductions before using most facilities.

2. PREPARATION

I didn't need to get a visa since I was a short-term student. This was great because it saved me a great deal of time. I was ready to travel because I had some savings, and my passport was already renewed.

It would have been nice to bring art supplies with me, because I had to purchase a lot of new materials and they were costly. Overall, everything can be bought on the spot. It's also good not to go overboard with comfort, because you will likely be getting rid of everything in the end. (I didn't keep my bed comforter, or the dishes, cooking utensils I bought.

3. ARRIVAL

Was anyone at the airport, train station, etc. to meet you? Did you experience any difficulties upon arrival?

No one picked me up from the airport; I took a taxi to my house. My roommate was waiting to greet me outside of the house. She gave me keys and took my around the city after I settled.

Classes started quite late in Glasgow. It is good to come early if you can – but you really start enjoying your time more when school starts because you don't know anyone at the start. I feel like it is better to stay later and come earlier.

The first day of class was a meeting, where everyone introduced themselves and talked about where they came from and what they are interested in. I also attended the Freshers week events, where I met some great friends – they had free events such as figure drawing, beer and food, zine making, yoga, and a video mapping experimentation session. I met plenty of exchange students during this week.

Is there a coordinating office for international students, including exchange students, at your host university? Is there a staff person you would recommend students approach with their questions?

There was general student service, where they were able to help with any issues. I was in contact with Claire, Chidgey-Carmichael.

4. ACCOMMODATION

Where did you live during your exchange? Were you happy with your accommodation?

For the first month I lived with a roommate, which I arranged myself, because apparently they did not have space in the residence. I moved after a month because there were problems with bugs and there was too much moisture. After that I moved into residence, which also wasn't much better because it was cold (the heaters turned off every 30mins), and there was construction happening during my entire stay.

Yes I had some trouble finding accommodations, I was lucky because the only reason I found a place was because the girl leasing was Polish (so we got along well). The host institution was not extremely helpful. Also, Fiona Sloan the director of the residences was very cold, and inhospitable.

5. STUDIES AT HOST INSTITUTION

To better understand the similarities and differences between academic studies at OCAD U and at your host university, please comment on the following:

Level of academic difficulty and challenge: It was independent study, so it is difficult to compare the difficulty. I worked equally as hard as at OCAD.

Time spent in class (# of hours per week): I was required to be in my studio 9am-5pm Monday-Friday (40 hours a week).

Time spent working on projects outside of class (# of hours per week): This was dependent on yourself. I spent at least 15-20 hours a week outside of class.

Studio-based work: The majority was studio based work, Monday – Friday 9-5.

Written assignments: I had weekly readings in the Elective course, and a final essay. I also needed to write about my own work for studio coursework.

Interaction between students and professors: Decent; accessible communication.

6. SERVICES

Were there any extracurricular activities/events scheduled for exchange/international students at your host university (cultural visits, trips, workshops, etc.)? Which ones would you recommend?

There was Freshers week, and a special exchange student welcome within this week of events. Students were also strongly encouraged by the professors to attend talks, and gallery openings throughout the exchange.

What were the library and computer facilities like?

The facilities were standard. They had printers, copiers, and a large computer room.

7. COST OF LIVING

How did you prepare yourself financially for your exchange? Did you pay for the experience entirely out of your own savings? Did you receive student or bank loans? Did you apply for / receive any financial awards (scholarships or bursaries)? Did you have help from parents / family / friends?

I had savings from my parents, and I received a bursary from OCAD U. Without the bursary I would have struggled to get by.

In general, was the cost of living in your host country higher, lower, or similar to that in Canada? Please explain.

Generally it was a higher living cost, but also my life style was more costly, as I was travelling, going out, and experiencing the city fully.

8. EXPENSES

Exchange rate with host country: 1 GBP = 1.7 Canadian

Time spent in host country (month/year - month/year): Sept/2016 – Dec/2016, 4 months

Would you estimate that you spent more, less, or the same amount as an average, local student attending your host institution? I spent about the same amount.

Please complete the following budget to give other students an idea of what they can expect to spend in the host country.

Basic Expenses in Canadian Dollars:

1. **Tuition and general fees (paid to OCAD U):** \$ 3000
2. **School supplies:** \$ 400
3. **Rent or university residence:** \$ 900/month = \$3600
4. **Rent-related expenses:** (Included)
 - A) **Electricity/Water:** \$ /month
 - B) **Telephone:** \$ /month
 - C) **Cable:** \$ /month
 - D) **Other (specify)** \$ /month
5. **Groceries or Meal Plan:** \$ 600/month = \$ 2400
6. **Personal expenses (toiletries/cosmetics, etc.):** \$ 30/month = \$ 120
7. **Laundry:** \$30 /month = \$120
8. **Transportation:** \$20 /month = \$80
9. **Leisure (Sports, Entertainment, etc.):** \$500
10. **Travel health insurance:** \$ 0
11. **Medical expenses in host country:** \$ 0
12. **Round trip plane ticket:** \$ 1700
13. **Travel/trips during exchange:** \$600
14. **Student visa:** \$ 0
15. **Other expenses (please specify):** \$ 300 –shipping bags home

Estimated Total Expenses: \$ 12,820

9. ADAPTING TO YOUR HOST COUNTRY

Did you experience any “culture shock” during your exchange? How did you deal with it? Do you have any advice for students on how to adapt to life in your host country?

My roommate was nice enough to take me around the city. I didn't really experience cultural shock because everyone spoke English. I did have trouble the first 3 days understand the Scottish accents.

Was there a lot of interaction between local students and exchange/international students? What is the best way to develop friendships with students from your host institution?

There was a good amount of interaction between locals and exchange students. I found that people generally were quite friendly. Exchange students bonded together the most. The best way to make friends is to be present, ask questions, and be friendly.

Did you have any unforeseen problems? Was there anything that you felt was strikingly different from what you expected?

I didn't expect to have issues with housing... Glasgow is a quite dirty city so there are a lot of troubles with bedbugs.

10. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Generally, the experience was the best things I've ever done! I have no regrets. I learned a lot, and I was amazingly inspired. Coming back to OCAD I feel that I have refreshed and developed personally as well as in my artistic practice.

Please email your report to International Student Services at international@ocadu.ca.