

Australia Year Abroad

I completed a year abroad at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia for the 2022/23 academic year. I hope this report will be helpful to others who are considering applying for this fantastic opportunity

Application process

The application process is incredibly straightforward due to the tightknit partnership between Warwick and Monash. The main things to bare in mind are you will be required to achieve a strong 2:1 (65% and above- at least this was my requirement as a mathematics student) and you need to be able to make a case for why this will help you academically. I found Warwick to be quite relaxed with regards to the second point and the people on warwicks end were very understanding of the fact that Australia presents a unique opportunity to travel.

Costs

Australia is very expensive place to live. I lived on campus at Farrer hall, where most exchange students live and I paid 1296 dollars per month. Which came to about 7500£ for the year. I know a lot of people moved off campus for second term however and found cheaper housing for as little as 110£ a week. However a group is required for this, if nothing else there are lots of facebook groupchats that have constant offers of shortterm residency contracts.

Furthermore food is quite a lot more expensive than the uk due to Australia taking great pride in not importing too many items. I spent about 80£ a week on food due to this (and also the desire to explore much of Melbourne's exquisite cousine).

If you are planning on travelling then factor in a big chunk for flights, unlike Europe 10£ flights return to Italy from London Stanstead do not exist. Flights return to Sydney will normally set you back around 150-200£ for reference.

Drinking in Australia is very expensive if you .are going to a bar. A pint will normally be about 13-15 AUD (approx. 7-8£). Furthermore Buying spirits in a supermarket or "bottle-o" will cost anywhere from 20-30£ for the cheapest vodka/rum. However nearly all exchange students nearly exclusively drink wine ("goon") and a 2L bag can be purchased for as little as 10 AUD. It does the job

Work

Finding a job in Australia is very straightforward, especially around September-october a lot of shops will be hiring Christmas casuals. They will be expecting you to have full availability pretty much unless you get lucky with your employer.

The pay however is very good as a casual. Normal hours the pay ranges from 26-30 Aud per hour and past 6pm an extra 25% is added. Saturday and Sunday also have added rates. As a casual you can't generally work more than 30 hours however as an exchange student I see this is an encouragement to enjoy the new country you are in!

Getting a job here was definitely an "adulting" moment. Sorting out tax file numbers, bank account and superannuation funds is all good practice!

Academics

The academics at Monash are very different in comparison to Warwick, at least in the maths department. I chose mainly computer science/stat based fundamental modules as this is something I wanted to pursue more in my third year at Warwick.

A couple notes

1. Participation marks. Each week there is normally a tutorial which you must attend (8/10 for whole term to achieve the full mark). So if you are wanting to travel during term time this is something to keep in mind
2. Assignments make up MUCH more of the grade than Warwick. Consistent work is rewarded, cramming not so much
3. Make a real effort as I found tutors and professors to be incredibly generous with their time and understanding

I personally chose 3 modules each term as I was also working a job and studying some individual stuff on the side. However I would recommend taking advantage of the incredible teaching and to step outside your comfort zone!

Conclusion

Overall I had an incredible year in Australia. It is far away from home and makes you a far more independent individual. A great positive I believe. There will be lots of challenges but every single one will be overcome. The other exchanges you meet will be in the exact same position so don't be afraid of asking for advice. People enjoy helping and understand your position

Feel free to email me at alexander_ahl@outlook.com if you have any questions. I would love to answer any questions that you might have to help you adjust quicker than I did!

