



UU Study Abroad Report Form

Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Rechtsgeleerdheid
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Rechtsgeleerdheid

Destination city & country	Gold Coast, Australia
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	Griffith University
Purpose of exchange	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	14/02/2018
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28/07/2018

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

I wanted to go on a study abroad during semester 2 in 2017-2018. Trimester 1 at Griffith university started mid February 2018 (that's just after their summer break), but my application process in The Netherlands started on 01-12-2016 by submitting my motivation letter, financial + study plan. This is super early, but everything takes a crazy amount of time to process. I waited till February to hear which Uni from my top 3 the UU had nominated me for. But you're still not in at this point. As soon as the UU nominates you for an exchange programme, you will have to apply at the university itself, in my case Griffith Uni. This is a very time consuming process. First, I had to pick one of the 5 campuses. I chose for the Gold Coast campus, because this one is close to the beach and surfers paradise (also: I think around 90% of the exchange students went to Gold Coast, there were very few people who went to the Brisbane campuses which was a bit sad for them cause they couldn't really meet the other internationals since Brisbane is 80km away) Then, they want you to choose a bunch of courses you want to take at Griffith. (Note: not all courses are available at all campuses and during all trimesters. For example, I really wanted to study at the Gold Coast, but this campus didn't offer certain courses I wanted to take or they only offered a specific course in trimester 2 or 3) The courses you choose during the application process are not final, you can drop and add courses when you get there, but they just want to know if you're planning on taking courses that require extra qualifications. However, there is a huge amount of courses that are open to all students. For



example: I'm a Dutch law student who has only taken law courses in The Netherlands but at Griffith I took a marketing and a business course.

I think I got the official acceptance confirmation somewhere in September 2017. So fill out all the forms, give them all the information they want (and it's a lot) and be patient, they will get back to you eventually.

Counselling/support at home university:

Maybe it was just me, but I felt really lost during the whole application process. Many questions I asked got me an answer like "I am not sure" or "let me ask someone else". This was mainly because I wanted to take courses outside of my law degree since my exchange was during the free space/vrije keuzeruimte in my bachelor. Basically no one knew if this was possible and this was really confusing. The international office responded very quickly, but at the end of the day it was me who figured everything out. Don't underestimate the process, it's a lot and you have to arrange literally everything yourself.

Academic preparation:

I didn't prepare anything to be honest. The Australian culture is incredibly laid back, even at university the tutors and professors are super relaxed. In the first few weeks I thought they just didn't give a damn, but it turned out they just have lower standards when it comes to quality of essays etc. They often said "we're here to help and if you just attend the tutorials there is a very small chance you will fail the course". I would say it is easier to get good marks in Australia, but it was much more work than I was used to. At UU I usually have 1 essay and 1 written exam per course and 2 courses per period, in Australia every course had 3 or 4 assignments and 4 courses per period.

Language preparation:

This was another very confusing part for me, because I didn't know if Griffith required an IELTS or TOEFL certificate. They want you to upload some sort of proof of language proficiency, but the only thing I could offer was my VWO diploma. I had a 7 for English on VWO, which was good enough. However, just a copy of your VWO diploma is not enough, since they don't understand the Dutch grading system so our diploma doesn't make sense to them. Just ask the international office for an official UU letter which states that all UU students meet the language proficiency requirements to strengthen your application. This worked for me.

Finances:

Unfortunately it is true what they say about Australia: it is horribly expensive. I pay \$225 rent per week(!) and I don't live on campus. "The Village", as the student accommodation on campus is called costs \$295 a week and that comes with 5 flatmates. Groceries for 5/6 days cost me about \$60-70, one night out between \$30-70. I have a maximum student loan and I'm renting out my room in Utrecht and I spend every cent of it every month. I've spent around 7000 euro so far and that includes rent, food, drinks, and fun stuff (February-end of June). I am fortunate enough to have parents who paid for my visa and flights (+-1600 euro). So make sure you save a lot of money and make the most out of Ome Duo.

Study/placement abroad period

Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues):



I took 4 courses I thought were interesting: digital & social media marketing, branding & promoting new business ventures, media law and digital photography. I was actually planning on taking a course called creative thinking, but Griffith cancelled this course last minute so I had to pick something else.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

As said before, the academic standards in Australia are lower, but of course it can be quite challenging to study amongst native English speakers.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

Griffith is very well organised and structured. The Global Mobility office is there for all your questions, but I must say I didn't need their help, because everything was very clear from the start.

Transfer of credits:

Griffith marks in percentages or in points out of 50 or 100 (depends on how much that specific assignment weighs in your total mark). For example I scored 83% on an essay and for another course I scored 33 out of 50 points. I reckon the grades will be converted to Dutch marks in percentages, so 83% is an 8,3 and 33 out of 50 is 66%=6,6.

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

In Utrecht we have the UIT-week, Griffith has O-week (orientation week). This is a good way to meet new friends, to sign up for one of the social clubs, get a bunch of free stuff and get to know the campus (cause it's big). It's basically a week full of sick parties and cool events, highly recommend making the most out of it, because this is where you meet all the other international students etc.

Accommodation:

Many people came to Australia and stayed in a hostel for the first few days while they were looking for a place to stay. I didn't feel comfortable with this so I searched all the interwebs for accommodation. I really wanted to live on campus, in the village, because I thought this would be a good way to meet many people. Everyone there knows each other and they have free food a few times a week. Unfortunately, everyone thinks this so all the rooms were sold out when I applied for a room. Tip: apply immediately for a room when you start your application process (February). I waited until I got accepted by Griffith (September), so I was way too late.

I stayed at a student accommodation called "Nexus Place". Pros: lot of students live there, private shower + toilet, 20 min bike ride to uni

Cons: it's way too hot to ride a bike so you will waste a lot of money on a bike you're never gonna use, the bus connection is horrible (only 1 bus an hour to and from uni and not after 6pm), the bed is absolutely horrible and it is very noisy.

Leisure/culture:

The Gold Coast is known for its pretty beaches and laid back vibe. I wanted to surf a lot and the Gold Coast has some of the best waves in Australia. Huge pro for me was that I could be at the beach in a few minutes. Surfers paradise, which is the main area in Gold Coast, is a bit touristy though. There's a lot of Asian restaurants and sometimes it reminded me of Lloret de



mar/Salou/Albufeira, you name it. The nightlife is incredible, there's tons of students so you won't have to miss Utrecht's nightlife. Go visit clubs like Sin City, Bedroom and Retros. It's a lot of fun. Brisbane city is only a 1 hour train ride and hippie Walhalla/surf town Byron Bay is only 1,5 hours away. Purling brook falls, an amazing rainforest and waterfall, is also close by, just like Mt. Tamborine.

Suggestions/tips:

Save money, go out, do fun stuff, living in Australia is a dream so do make the most out of it. And keep in mind: you'll never be as close to epic destinations like Bali, New Zealand, Hong Kong etc again and the flight tickets are much cheaper from Australia to these places, so think about that. I just got back from Bali and I'll be travelling for one more month through Australia before I go back to The Netherlands.

Conclusions

Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? Please explain:

Yes! Griffith is nice, well organised and Gold Coast is lit.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:



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Family name:	xxx
First name:	xxx
Student number:	xxx
Faculty/college:	Humanities
Level:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
Name degree programme:	Liberal Arts and Sciences

Destination city & country	Gold Coast, Australia
Name host institution and/or company/organisation	Griffith University (Gold Coast campus)
Purpose of exchange	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
Departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	17-06-2017
Return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	21-01-2018

Preparation

Exchange/placement application process:

I went to one of the information sessions about studying abroad and I immediately knew that studying abroad was something I wanted to do as part of my bachelors degree. I wanted to go to Australia and so I applied for the AEN network and one other university. Back then, was hoping that I could be placed at one of the universities that are part of the AEN network, namely the University of Wollongong and so I wrote a motivation letter which stated why I wanted to go to the University of Wollongong. After the first selection round, I found out that I was selected to go to one of the universities that are part of the AEN network. Afterwards, I had to fill in a new application form and fill in my top 3 universities within the AEN network. Now, I changed my mind and I decided I wanted to go to Griffith University so I put Griffith University as my first choice. Afterwards, I found out that I was accepted for Griffith University and I had to fill in forms for Griffith University and send them some documents. To me, the application process was fun (the part where you figure out where you want to go and why) but also a bit stressful at times.

Counselling/support at home university:

The support was excellent. Like I said, I changed my mind about which university I wanted to go to most (both within the AEN) and the international office helped me to change my top 3 list. They were always very helpful and answered my questions within a few days.



Academic preparation:

I went on exchange in the third year of my bachelors degree, so I already had a lot of credit points and I didn't prepare for the courses that I was going to take at Griffith University.

Language preparation:

I didn't have to do one of the English language tests, since I had a 7/10 for English at vwo level. However, before I went to Australia I was pretty bad at speaking English but I got used to it immediately and I learned a lot within the first few weeks.

Finances:

Studying abroad is expensive, but totally worth it. I paid quite a lot for my accommodation (Griffith University Village), but we got free food on Mondays and Tuesdays and sometimes even on Thursdays. On other days, I often made dinner with friends or we went out to have dinner somewhere. Fun fact: going out for dinner is often cheaper than it is in the Netherlands, but making dinner yourself is almost always more expensive in Australia. Also, we didn't spend a lot of money on alcohol because we got free drinks on Tuesdays and Thursdays (Ladies night, guys get cheap drinks) at some local clubs, because we got a VIP card because we were in uni.

Study/placement abroad period

Study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues):

I had to have a study plan with the courses I was planning to take at Griffith University. My study adviser signed this and therefore I could go to Griffith University. Later on I changed 2 courses, which was no problem at all.

Academic quality of education/placement activities:

The academic level of the courses I did was lower than in the Netherlands. It was pretty easy to get good grades, even though I didn't go to a lot of my classes. Some of my friends told me that they had one or two courses that were difficult and of good academic quality, so it may depend on the courses that you intend to take.

Counselling/support at host institution/organisation:

Griffith University was helpful when I needed help, but I didn't have a lot of questions for them so I can't really answer this question.

Transfer of credits:

Very easy, they send you a link of your transcript which you can send to Utrecht University. 7.5 credits at UU = 10 credits at Griffith, so for one semester you should take 4 courses to obtain the same amount of credits as you would get in Utrecht.

Student life

Welcome/orientation programme:

Amazing! I got to know so many people in the first week(s), which helped me to get to know even more people and make a lot of new friends. This is mostly because I went to Griffith University Village, where I attended almost every activity and got to know all the active students and internationals (mostly internationals) that also live(d) at GUV.

Accommodation:

Griffith University Village, for me this was the best choice I could have made. Some of my friends were living in Surfers Paradise, which is a very nice location and I was happy to go there a lot, but



at GUV you get to know a lot more people and you get to party more. So it really depends what you're looking for. Before I went to Australia I wasn't sure if I wanted to live at GUV or in Surfers Paradise, because I wanted to live close to the beach and go surfing a lot, but in the end I chose for GUV because I thought it would be more social (and I experienced that it is). If you prefer living in Surfers Paradise but are not sure if it's easy to find a room; it is. But if you want to have a private room it's more difficult and more expensive, although it's still possible.

Leisure/culture:

We often went to Surfers Paradise to go shopping, go to the beach, have dinner, go out or just to hang out in on of our friends hottubs. However, there's also other places to visit: Brisbane is only a 2 hour traindrive away, Broadbeach is an hour away and has some great beaches and a nice shopping center as well, one of my favourite places was Burleigh Heads, where the surf's good a lot of the time and on Sundays many people go to Burleigh and just chill and hang out all together (kind of like a hippy vibe). Byron Bay is also one of my favourite places to visit (and definitely to surf), it's more expensive to get there but definitely worth it. At the village (GUV), we hung out at the pool a lot as well and just have a good time with everyone who's up for chilling or partying.

Suggestions/tips:

Attend as much activities during O-week as possible, get to know a lot of people in the first weeks and enjoy every single moment of your stay abroad. Don't worry about the fact that it's not that easy for people from back home to come visit you, because you make so many new friends that you won't get lonely and the time passes so much more quickly than you'd expect.

Conclusions

Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? Please explain:

I sure would. During my stay in Australia I reminded myself so often how lucky I was that I got into Griffith University and met all the amazing people at GUV. The university itself might not be the best there is, but this leaves you with a lot of free time so you get to enjoy your time abroad even more. Some of my friends had to study a bit more than I did though. If I could go back I definitely would and I have often thought that I was the luckiest person in the world for having the opportunity to study abroad at Griffith University. So yes, I would recommend it a 100%.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?:

Not really, just that you should go and study abroad even if you have some doubts about it



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Faculty of Humanities
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
name degree programme	Communication- and Information Sciences
destination city & country	Brisbane, Australia
name host institution and/or company/organization	Griffith University
purpose of exchange	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	06 / 02 / 12
return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28 / 08 / 12

preparation

exchange/placement application process

Don't underrate the application process, and start early would be my advice. I started the procedure 1,5 year before I actually left with first applying for the exchange programme by searching for courses, writing a motivation letter and all the other requirements. I knew I wanted to study abroad in an English speaking country and I thought London would be the best option for me, until I discovered that the London University couldn't offer me the courses I was interested in. Next options were for me Australia and US. I've chosen Australia because I had heard nice stories about Australia and Brisbane was more a strategic choice since Sydney and Melbourne were so popular. After I'd heard I was accepted, I had to apply for the university, apply for a visa, contact DUO, and a lot of other stuff. Begin early!

counselling/support at home university

Nyncke was my contact person from Utrecht University and I e-mailed her a lot with certain questions about my application. Her answers were very helpful and also the website on www.uu.nl is useful. Just after I heard I was accepted for the programme, there was a meeting with a lot of information. But don't expect that the University exactly tell you what to do and when, they warn you for deadlines but it is your own responsibility to arrange your stuff in time.

academic preparation

I didn't really had academic preparation. I was already in the fourth year of my Bachelor's Degree and I expected that I could handle the level of education in Australia.

language preparation

I didn't have to do a language test, like an IELTS or TOEFL. As long as I had a 6 or higher for my English on VWO level, it was OK. I was a little bit insecure about my English since I never had to write a paper in English for my study, but Griffith University gives a lot of support for non-native English Speakers and I made a lot of use of their 'English Help Services', very good!

finances

Yes, it is true. Australia is expensive! Also the student visa, I paid 400 euro's, and of course the ticket. So save money. I took half a year off from studying to work and I'm glad I did that. I saved 7000 Euros, as I was planning to stay for 7 months. With the Stufi and the OV vergoeding, this is enough.

study/placement abroad period

study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)



<p>I followed 3 courses on the Bachelor's Level. I did courses in the Business area. My courses were 'Employment Relations', 'Management Concepts', and 'Intercultural Communication for Global Workplaces'. I had to apply for these courses in The Netherlands, but Griffith University is very organised and it wasn't hard to figure out how to do this.</p>
<p>academic quality of education/placement activities</p>
<p>I discovered later on that these courses were first-year courses, and because of the reason I already did 3 Bachelor years, the level wasn't too high for me. The only 2 opportunities were that first, the courses were in a different subject area as my other bachelor courses and second, everything is in English! But this was doable.</p>
<p>counselling/support at host institution/organisation</p>
<p>Griffith University is a very rich university (ask what other people pay for fee to Griffith to study!), so the services were very good. For every tutorial you have a tutor, and you can see those persons also as personal coaches. Furthermore there was help for how to write your essay, how to improve your English and help on personal level.</p>
<p>transfer of credits</p>
<p>There is a different grading system in Australia than in The Netherlands. They give you a letter. For example a 'HD' is a High Distinction, what you get if you have a rate of 85% or more for the course. I had to e-mail my tutors for my exact percentage, so that the UU could translate this percentage in a mark. 77% is a 7,7.</p>
<p>student life</p>
<p>welcome/orientation programme</p>
<p>A couple of weeks before I came to Australia, I got an e-mail if I wanted to join the 'Buddy-programm'. I got the contact details of a student of Griffith University, who was my buddy for the next semester. Very helpful! Especially in the first couple of days, when you are a bit lost, it is very nice to meet up with a person who can help you. The first day we had an Orientation Day, with a BBQ to get to know each other. A couple of events were organised for the Exchange students and you can decide for yourself in what level you wanted to involved. Soon we got our own group and organised BBQs and parties on our own.</p>
<p>accommodation</p>
<p>I decided not to stay on campus. It was just a feeling. My university was 30 minutes out of the city and I preferred to live close to the city. The first week I stayed in a hostel, searching for accommodation. I found a room in a house with an Australian man, but after a couple of days I felt that this wasn't my place. It was a house with only working people, far from the city so I decided to search for something else. Finally I rented a room in an apartment complex, in the heart of the city. A friend of mine was already living there and mainly students lived there. Although it was a bit expensive, it was the best decision ever for me. However, I heard also a lot of nice stories of people who actually lived on campus. The only cons are that it is far out of the city and you have to pay expensive taxis if you want to go out since there are no night busses. Also the rooms are little and you live with 8 people, but it could be great fun with a lot of students together!</p>
<p>leisure/culture</p>
<p>Brisbane is a cultural city and there is always something happening. The big pro from Brisbane is that the location is so central that you can easily make weekend trips to beautiful islands, beaches and forests. Also party life is great fun and the citybeach is awesome. However, if you want to live in a big big city, Sydney or Melbourne would be better. But I loved Brisbane, and also for the weather: over 300 sunny days a year!!</p>
<p>suggestions/tips</p>
<p>This is the change of your life. Not only for studying abroad, also living by yourself, meeting people from all over the world and getting to know yourself better. Tip: stay a couple of months longer in Australia after studying for travelling. Australia has so much to offer!</p>
<p>conclusions</p>



would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain

Yes. Griffith University is well organized and has good education. Brisbane is a very nice city where you feel like home after a couple of days.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

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Contact details:

Student Services / International Office

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- I: www.uu.nl/students/exchange



UU Study Abroad Report Form

faculty/college	Faculty of Humanities
level	<input type="checkbox"/> bachelor
name degree programme	Theatre- Film and Television sciences

destination city & country	Brisbane, Australia
name host institution and/or company/organization	Griffith University, Film School
purpose of exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> study/courses
departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	14 / 07 / 2010
return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	24 / 02 / 2011

preparation

exchange/placement application process

There's quite a lot of preparation to go through before you can go to your host university. At times it's pretty demotivating, but in the end it's all worth it. As they always say, it takes quite a while for responses from Australia to get through, they take it easy. But all worked out fine in the end. Griffith University has an excellent website for you to look through the different courses you can take. They give a lot of information on courses, which makes the decision easier. I also looked on websites of other universities throughout Australia, and I found it much harder on these websites. I was really lucky to go to the university of my first choice, since there were at least 3 other people who had Griffith as their first choice. So I think it's really important to write a good motivation letter about why you want to attend which university. But even if you don't end up going to the university of your first choice, I'm convinced you'll have just as much fun and a great experience.

counselling/support at home university

I had a good support from my home university whenever I had questions. We had some meetings beforehand, also with people who had studied in Australia before. No matter how much you prepare, you will always stick with questions though. The best advice I can give is: just go. Everything will work out fine as you go.

academic preparation

I didn't prepare myself on an academic level. I hoped my 3 years of studying that I already had was enough for me. As it turned out it was, since the level on my host university was slightly lower than the level on my home university. There was more work involved though, and for me as a film student I learned that in Australia there are more rules and restrictions with filming than at home.

language preparation

I didn't do anything to prepare myself for studying in another language either. Obviously it was in English, and my level of English was sufficient. It was quite easy to adapt to speaking English, since it was the only language I spoke from the moment I stepped out of the plane.

finances

Before I went to Australia, I had two jobs in Utrecht and Hilversum, to save some money for my trip. I would also have to need it for travelling afterwards, since I was planning on travelling in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand for a total of 3,5 months. I also planned to work in Brisbane, but as it turned out I was quite busy with my studies



there, in film you always have to be really flexible. It wasn't really easy to find a job either, since there are a lot of backpackers looking for jobs as well, who are able to work much more hours than a student.
study/placement abroad period
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
The program at Griffith University was clear and good. There is a good website which students can access, with all the information you need.
academic quality of education/placement activities
As I said before, the academic level of the courses was slightly lower than at home. There was a bit more work involved though.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
They were really helpful at my host university. When I was still at home I had already had email contact with them, and they would always email me back quite soon and always tried to help me the best they could.
transfer of credits
I can't say anything about the transfer of credits yet, since I need to hand this in before I will get my credits.
student life
welcome/orientation programme
It was really easy to meet other international students. In the first week there was an orientation day, after which you could go for a free drink and some food at a bar. There was also an introduction trip to Byron Bay of 3 days. A lot of international students from different campuses joined in there, so you get to meet a lot of people.
accommodation
It is possible to stay on campus, in my case it didn't make sense, since I was studying on the South Bank campus in Brisbane, which is in the city. This campus doesn't have on-campus accommodation, which means you have to travel all the way from Nathan campus if you would have on-campus accommodation. Some of my friends stayed on campus and said it was the worst decision they'd made. It is quite expensive, the accommodation wasn't really nice, and the travel time is pretty long. It's also hard to get back to the campus in the evening. I made the decision to look for a room in a house with other people. The first week in Brisbane I stayed in a hostel, from which I went looking for a place to stay. It was extremely easy to find a room, on gumtree.com.au you can find advertisements. I ended up living with 7 other people from all over the world, which was a great experience, and I lived in a real typical Queenslander house.
leisure/culture
Brisbane is not the first city people would go to when they visit Australia, but it's a nice city to live anyway. There are a lot of cinemas, places to go out and some museums. A big spectacle is Brisbane River Fire, which is the start of Brisbane Festival, which goes on for a while. A lot of theatre and music in the city. There's also a lot of other festivals and always things going on in the city centre. The climate is nice, and there are nice beaches and islands if you travel a bit. It's also a good starting point for a trip along the East Coast.
suggestions/tips
I would recommend to buy a bike as soon as you live in Brisbane. The buses aren't always reliable, and it's a much better way to get around. It's the only thing I regret not doing. Also go visit Stradbroke Island if you live in Brisbane, especially when it's whale season.
conclusions
would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain
I would recommend this host university. I had a really good experience. One thing that I didn't mention about Griffith yet, is that since it's not number one for most international students, it's not completely packed with international students. (At least not at South Bank Campus, where I was studying). Which means there's a big



chance you get to know some real Aussies as well, if you'd like.

do you have any additional advice or comments?

I don't have any new comments or advice. Just go live in the city itself, not on campus. And buy a bike.


UU Report form ~ TRAJECTUM 2009/2010

faculty/college	Letteren
level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> master <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> other
name degree programme	Communicatie en informatie wetenschap
destination city & country	Gold Coast, Australia
name host institution and/or company/organization	Griffith University
purpose Trajectum grant	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> study/courses <input type="checkbox"/> work placement <input type="checkbox"/> field work <input type="checkbox"/> other
departure date (dd/mm/yyyy)	21 / 07 / 2009
return date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28 / 01 / 2010

preparation
exchange/placement application process

The idea of studying abroad as part of my current study (communication and information science) has always lingered in my head. When, during one of our study advisor's information sessions, I came to learn more about the possibilities I made the decision to apply for the exchange program to study for a semester in Australia.

The application process for this exchange programme started with choosing between the different universities with which University Utrecht had a relationship in different cities within the country. I had to fill in some standard procedure forms and write a motivation letter to support my choice of university and explain why this exchange would be good as part for my studies.

Because the university of my preference, Griffith university, was part of an AEN program, I had to make a top 3 lists on which I put Griffith on top. After a few weeks I got the information that I was indeed going to Griffith.

The next step was choosing courses which were suitable for me. This was a long process as Griffith University has many courses to choose from and also many different college grounds. I ended up choosing four courses offered at the Gold coast campus. (Contemporary World Writing, Editing theory and practise, screenwriting and writing for the web).

In order for these courses to be approved a form had to be filled in and send to the Board of Examination. This process seemed to be something that can be done quickly, and the actual delivering of the form for approving the courses as sufficient as part of my studies was indeed easily and quickly done. However, I didn't receive an apply until I was actually already in the Gold Coast, studying these courses. Fortunately for me, these courses did get approved as part of my bachelor's degree.

Of course the university of Griffith also had to approve the courses and after I got the approval from them it was time for me to book my flight and arrange for a visa which was easily done online. Now it was only a matter of waiting until I got go.

counselling/support at home university

My home university sent me a lot of information over the email and whenever I had questions about the exchange all I had to do was write an email to our exchange coordinator and I would receive a reply very soon. The coordinator also arranged for a meeting before we actually went to Australia in which she informed all the



exchange students who were going to Australia through the AEN programme. This was very informative as she also arranged for a formal exchange student to come to tell about her own experiences and to give us the opportunity to ask questions. Also during the stay in Australia it was always possible to ask questions over the email.
academic preparation
It was required to already have about 120 credits by the time we were actually leaving to Australia. I already had this amount of credits and so it was no problem for me. The courses I choose to follow at Griffith didn't really require any other courses to be taken before so there was no problem following them.
language preparation
In order to be able to understand everything during the courses at the university of Griffith a certain level of English was required. This must be proven during the application and required either to take a TOEFLE test or, as I did, show that I already had enough practise in the English language by a previous exchange to America and a previous studies in English at the university of Tilburg.
finances
In order to make the exchange possible it must be proven that the applicant has enough money before leaving. This could be proven by sending a financial plan explaining how the applicant will pay for it all. As I already had been saving for an exchange for about four years, I did have a sufficient amount of money on my bank account to pay for the exchange programme.
study/placement abroad period
study programme/work plan (concerning content and organisational issues)
During the exchange programme I had to take part in the four courses I got approved before going to the university of Griffith. During my exchange I just went to all the lectures and workshops and did the work that had to be done for the course. At the end this resulted in passing all courses and receiving the credits of the courses. The content of the courses were all linked to my bachelor's degree which was my own choice. It was really necessary for the courses to be related to communication or information, but as I wanted to learn more about the subject and as I thought the courses at the university of Griffith would be slightly more practical and more related to the actual work field in which one might end up, I thought it would be a good opportunity to do have the content of the courses related to my main subject in my bachelor's degree. And as I am more interested in the media part of the bachelor and chose subjects that involved media.
academic quality of education/placement activities
The academic quality of the education at Griffith was lower than the level of quality at the university of Utrecht. First of all I thought that the teachers definitely expected less of their students than the teachers do in Utrecht. Besides, deadlines weren't taken as seriously as they are taken here in Utrecht either. I wasn't a big deal if a student was a little later with handing in an assignment. The theoretical side of the courses was very much less important than at the university of Utrecht. I didn't need books for most of my courses and sometimes a felt that it was more about testing your common sense than about really learning about new theories. However, the biggest advantage the courses at Griffith have over Utrecht is that they are very much orientated toward what you can expect when one would actually work in one of the courses field after graduation. This helped me a lot since I still didn't really have a clue about what I was able to do with my bachelor after graduation. They gave a lot of advice and taught their courses so that one can actually use the content of the courses in a real job. For me this was a perfect addition to all the theory I already gathered during my courses at the university of Utrecht.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation



<p>The counselling at the university of Griffith was very well organized. Overall I thought that this university was much for faster with replying to students about problems than I would expect from the university of Utrecht. The later one regularly can piss me of about opening times or very late replays to things that are important to me and my the process of getting my bachelor's degree. Griffith was very fast with everything and whenever one had a problem you could always go to someone to ask for help.</p> <p>Besides the personal help they also organized a introduction day for all exchange students in which multiple people from different departments told us something about what to expect the coming period and to whom to go to when one has a question or problem. They also offered a library service which would help non-native speaking students with correcting their English for assignments and giving other kinds of workshops.</p> <p>There was also a special exchange facebook site for which all exchange students got invited. This was a good way for some people to find new friends and to ask questions or have a discussion about things not only concerning the studies but also concerning general issues relation an exchange period such as finding accommodation.</p> <p>Griffith also arranged for a bus driver which would take students around town to look at different accommodations and they had a board on which people could advertise about places.</p>
transfer of credits
<p>The transfer of credits went well and was easily calculated. 10 credits would equal the 7.5 credits a student gets here at Utrecht for a course.</p>
student life
welcome/orientation programme
<p>As I Explained before this was very useful and informative as many different people spoke during the orientation programme. This gave us exchange students a good idea about where to go to with what question or problem.</p>
accommodation
<p>There were multiple options for looking for an accommodation. One of them was the university campus which offered rooms for students. There were two different accommodations which looked like the university campus and offered a similar room to students but were slightly further away from the university itself. Besides these options, there were a lot of local people that rented their own house to students and this was mostly the cheapest and best option. The university had a board on which people could advertise for them and which made it easy for students to look for a place to live. The first two weeks before the courses started they arranged for a bus driver who would take students around town to look at those places. This is how I found my accommodation. I lived in a house of a local Australian guy together with 4 other exchange students and I've had the best time there. Everything was well arranged and it was not too expensive.</p>
leisure/culture
<p>The people in Australia were very friendly. They were very interested in the many people and cultures that came to Australia and what it is that they are doing there. The warm weather made it possible to practise some real Australian sports as surfing which I did very often. The OZ Barbie was also very popular and as they have free Barbies all around the country it's a perfect way to relax and meet new people on a Sunday. The ocean and the Barbie are both a very important part of the Australian culture and I enjoyed it very much. It was also possible to do a bit of travelling around the country during our own free time and Australia is definitely the right country to travel around in as it is very big and the accommodation is everywhere and very cheap.</p>
suggestions/tips
<p>Enjoy your stay in Australia or what country one would go to! Time really passes quickly and before you know it, you're back home. Try to travel and see and learn more about a country</p>
conclusions



Would you recommend this host organisation/destination to others? please explain

Yes, because although my courses might have been a bit easy compared to what I was used to, from what I have heard the other courses of other faculties are a lot more challenging. And although the courses were slightly easier, they were still a lot of fun and I definitely learned a lot from them. The people here were very friendly in general and since there are a lot of exchange students it is easy to make friends. The university itself is well organized and it's easy to get help. Because they receive so many exchange students they are very experienced with them and have a lot of support and activities planned for them.

Do you have any additional advice or comments?

Travel and learn and see more about the country! It's a good opportunity while you're there anyway.

Faculty: University College Utrecht
Specialisation: Biomedical Sciences

Destination: Brisbane, Australia
Name host institution and/or company/organisation: Griffith University (Nathan Campus)
Purpose Trajectum scholarship: study

Departure date: 11 July 2007
Return date: 24 December 2008

Preparation

Right from the moment I decided that I wanted to go on exchange, I knew that I wanted to go to a country with English as its first language. Apart from this being a great chance to improve my English, I knew that this would be easiest in terms of "infiltrating" into another culture, as you can not be "excluded" by some language barrier. Since the UK is not far enough from home, the USA, well, not entirely my kind of thing, and Singapore didn't offer the courses I needed, I decided to sign up for Australia, Brisbane being my first choice. This preference was largely based on the climate, travel opportunities, the size of the city, and the course offerings.

After being officially accepted by UU, the AEN Network, and Griffith University itself, a lot of things needed to be arranged. As the offer of education came in quite late, tickets were pretty expensive (mine cost €1400,-), so I'd advise to book yours as soon as possible. It was very easy to get the visa; I got the confirmation email the day after I applied online. I chose the Young Global Travellers Insurance which is offered by OOM verzekeringen, which has wide coverage and a good price. Furthermore, I looked for additional scholarship programs, but the deadline had often already passed or I did not fit their study profile.

The communication with Griffith Uni went quite smoothly, although you may need to be patient at times. I could just email them the courses I was interested in, and they would have them checked by the convenors. When you're denied access to a certain course, just try again and give them more information about the courses you've done before (give them a short course description) and you'll make a fair chance to get in.

I've doubted a bit whether I should live on campus or find a place in town. In the end, I decided to live on campus because I knew lots of activities would be organised and there would always be people to hang out with.

Study abroad

Griffith University a big University, very internationally oriented, has good facilities, and has several locations in and around Brisbane and The Gold Coast. I chose to have all my courses at the Nathan campus, which is 15 to 20 minutes from the city centre by bus (10 minutes to the mall).

My study in Holland (University College) required me to follow 4 courses of 10 Australian credit points (Griffith also offers 5 credit point courses). I chose 2 3000-level courses, which is the highest undergraduate level. These (Drug discovery and pharmacology) were both required for my major at home. Next to that, I took a 2000 level course about the modern history of the perception of the human body and disease, which was very interesting. Last, I took an introductory course in management. I would never have done anything like this at home, so it was good to do something like this for a change.

It is hard to really indicate the difference between studying in Australia and The Netherlands. The level of the 3000 courses was comparable to the level of the "advanced" bachelor level courses at home. At UCU however, active thinking and applying the knowledge is more encouraged than in Australia. Griffith uses a much more practical approach, similar to how I imagine the Dutch HBO education, but then on a bit higher level. The 2000 level course (called Healthy Bodies/Healthy Minds) involved a lot of interesting reading and had a high level. The introductory management course was just very, very easy.

Student life

I arrived at Brisbane International Airport on Friday July 13th, where I was picked up by a representative of Griffith Uni. (I strongly advise you not to transfer at London Heathrow, since it's very likely that they'll lose your suitcase... They lost mine on the way to Brisbane and on the way back home...) After we picked up my keys from the accommodation office I was brought to my new flat. The student accommodation at Nathan campus was a bit of a disappointment; it's outdated, the rooms were small, and one shower is shared by the 8 people that you live with. Without anything of my own (it would take a week for my suitcase to finally be delivered) I felt a bit lost the first day..

Fortunately, things got a lot better very soon! My flatmates were the coolest people; 5 of them were ozzies, 1 was a full degree American student, and then there were two exchange students, of which I was one. These people really made me feel at home. and took me out shopping for the first necessary things. Later on, we just hung out a lot, had flat dinners, or we baked birthday cakes. I do realise that I was very lucky to live with these people, as not all flats were so "gezellig".

We had a welcome to all new international students meeting on Monday the 16th, in which we got a lot of useful information. I also met a number of people I'd already been in contact with through the "griffith uni" facebook group (facebook.com is similar to hyves, but more international, you'll need it to stay in touch with all newly made friends! ☺). After this meeting, we had drinks and dinner in the Nathan campus club, which appeared a very nice place to hang out (especially on Tuesday nights ☺).

That Wednesday, I believe, we left for orientation camp in Byron Bay. I had a wonderful time there (surfing, sea kayaking, whales, dolphins, bbqing, partying, you name it...) and met many of really cool people, and started great friendships!

During the course of the semester a lot of activities are organised by the KGBC residential committee, such as a pub crawl, a visit to Australia Zoo (Steve Irwin's), ice skating, movie nights, (almost) weekly bbqs, sports events etc etc, which of course are ideal opportunities to meet even more nice people. The Nathan campus also has a good gym, snack bars, a (rather expensive) mini market, a post office, a hairdresser, the wine bar etc. etc.

I found it is really easy to meet new people; the ozzies themselves are really welcoming, friendly and interested in your stories, and always up for a party. Although I have made friends with some Australians, I mostly hung out with other international students. I guess we all had a similar mindset; really wanting to absorb everything that's happening around. Since we did not live in catered student accommodation, we took turns in cooking for each other, which was always a great deal of fun. Besides we went on a mid semester trip together (Whitsunday Islands, then Cairns/Great Barrier Reef and Cape Tribulation). I also have the idea that we've really gotten to know Brisbane; the various festivals, River Fire (huge firework over the Brisbane River), EKKA (especially the horse races), The Valley (go to the Tibetan restaurant at Brunswick street), West End (the 3 monkeys!!!!), the parks, BBQs at kangaroo point, the city cat, the film festivals, the free exhibitions and museums, ah, good times!!!!!!!!!!!!!! All in all, I think Brisbane might not be the most exciting place to visit as a tourist, but it's a fantastic place to live!

Conclusions

Really, I could go on for hours. Brisbane is an amazing city with plenty of opportunities! I've learned a lot about myself, met many great people, truly discovered Australia (also in the travelling after the semester had ended); it's been a priceless experience!