



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 quiet 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)



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.
academic quality of education/placement activities
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.
counselling/support at host institution/organisation
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.
transfer of credits
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.
student life
welcome/orientation programme
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.
accommodation
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!
leisure/culture
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!!
suggestions/tips
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!
conclusions



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:

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