

Student Exchange Questionnaire

Name: Richard Bland

Massey Degree: Bachelor of Arts (Media Studies)

Host university: Nagoya University of Foreign Studies

Semester and year of exchange: Semester 1 & 2 2017

- **Why did you choose this particular university and/or country for exchange?**

I was very interested in going to Japan and this option offered the greatest financial support as well as great language exchange opportunities.

- **Did it meet your expectations?**

Yes. There were many great features about this University that made my time very enjoyable.

- **What courses did you study while on exchange? Would you recommend them?**

Media Studies, Business, Culture, Tourism, History, Pop Culture, Japanese Grammar, Kanji, Calligraphy. I would recommend the Japanese language papers.

- **Were there differences in the teaching methods and academic environment at your host university, compared to Massey University? If so, what kind of differences?**

The difference was that instead of doing 4 in-depth papers per semester we did anywhere between 7 – 13 smaller papers. The testing usually consisted of weekly homework and quarterly tests.

- **Did you stay on-campus or off-campus? What was the accommodation like?**

My accommodation 'Proxy' was a 10-minute walk from campus. It was nice in terms of facilities e.g. shower, toilet. The only complaint would be that it was in front of an intersection which meant it was loud a lot of the time, also the kitchen was quite small (as expected though).

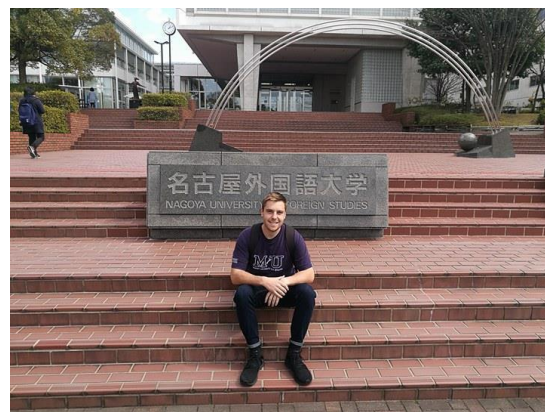
- **How did living expenses compare to in New Zealand?**

I believe that accommodation, food, public transport and food were much cheaper than in New Zealand.

- **What extra-curricular activities did you participate in at the host university?**

There were many excursions offered through the university of which I attended many. The language lounge programme that offered us the opportunity to sit one on one with Japanese students and help them with their English. I also participated in the Japanese version of this (to improve my Japanese).

- **What's one thing you learnt about your host country or culture?**



I learned that Japan has a very group focused society. For example, in the West we are often encouraged to be unique and to be individualists who put their own interests first. In Japan however, people's focus is often towards the better of society or family, often leaving one's own ambitions to the side if it means bettering everyone around you.

- **What were some of the highlights of your exchange experience?**

I was able to meet hundreds of students from all over the world with which many I made amazing friendships with. I loved the food, the architecture, the fashion, the culture and the history and the atmosphere. A highlight would be traveling with a friend to Kamikochi and experiencing the most scenically beautiful places I have ever visited.

- **What did you find challenging?**

I think the most challenging part was completing admin like work to do with StudyLink, Massey, IRD etc. Apart from that the trip was for the most part hassle free. Language was at times a challenge.

- **What do you feel you have learnt or gained from going on exchange?**

I have definitely gained a broader mindset. Experiencing another culture in a country where English is not the first language was eye opening. I was able to meet people from around the world so I heard many different stories and experiences. I also believe I have gained the skills required to live independently.

- **Do you have any tips for future students intending to travel to the same country or university?**

There are always more hidden costs than you realize. Budget in everything from tooth paste to pillow cases to cooking oil. Clearly write goals of what exactly you want to achieve on the trip, plan holidays or excursions precisely and get involved with the community. Meet as many new people as possible and say yes to as many opportunities as possible.

- **Do you have any comments on the support provided to you by Massey University and/or by the host university before/during/after your exchange?**

Very helpful and quick to respond when needed. Thank you very much.

