

# Student Exchange Questionnaire

**Name:** Angela Gray

**Massey Degree:** Bachelor of Arts

**Host University:** Charles University

**Semester and year of exchange:** Semester 2, 2017

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

The Czech Republic is a centrally located country in Europe, Prague is an affordable city and I wanted to go somewhere that didn't use English as a first language.

- **Did it meet your expectations?**

Yes

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

Modern History of Central Europe, Great Czech Writers, Czech Society: Transition from Communism and The People's of Europe. I actually enjoyed all of these topics so I would recommend them. I might not recommend all the teachers but the subjects were good.

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

Yes. Sometimes it was as if the teachers were just reading straight from their piece of paper with little "teaching". At times I thought the level of teaching was at high school level because they did not delve too deeply into ideas and concepts. But this depended on the teacher, of course. There was so much information to take in and the lectures were 3 hours long with only about 1 x 10-15 minute break! Massey University is more academic, from my experience. This may also be because the courses held in Prague were classes designed for exchange students and not one that is mixed in with locals. Sometimes the teachers struggled to say what they wanted and would often go the long way round to explain something not too difficult; a bit of a language barrier sometimes. Some of the teachers can't seem to read the students engagement level. Sometimes they kept on talking when most people had already drifted off as we had few breaks.

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

Accommodation part of the program which was off campus. I chose to stay in a single room and it was really good. I lived so very central and only a 30 second walk to the metro and trams. I lived in a 4 bedroom apartment. A little old but within the style of Prague. Apartment was generally warm during winter.

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

Accommodation was pricier than what I was paying in NZ but I had an affordable room in NZ. Groceries etc. was generally cheaper.

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



Weekend trips and evenings out with some of the organisers. Every weekend they had activities you could sign up to.

- **What's one thing you learnt about your host country or culture?**  
So very difficult to name just one! The very cool Czech language.
- **What were some of the highlights of your exchange experience?**  
Being and living in Prague and being able to speak, even if only a little, in Czech.
- **What did you find challenging?**  
Being surrounded by young Americans. Sorry!
- **What do you feel you have learnt or gained from going on exchange?**  
I feel like I have learnt so very much on this exchange. The Czech history is so much older than NZ and their recent change from Communism to Democracy I found very intriguing. I thoroughly enjoyed learning Czech and meeting Czech people and practising the language. The culture exchange is always great, too!
- **Do you have any tips for future students intending to travel to the same country or university?**  
Understand that it's a little bit more relaxed than Massey. Go with an open mind and an open curiosity, try all the food and go to neighbouring countries but don't forget to stay in Prague too in order to really understand the city and the people. Don't expect to be with Czech students but rather American students.
- **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?**  
Just had a little problem with my student accommodation weekly payments through Massey and StudyLink. The host university was very helpful.