

Student Exchange Questionnaire

Name: Hannah Easton

Host University: University of Limerick

Semester and year of exchange: Semester 2, 2013

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

I chose the university because I knew previous students on my course had gone there, so I knew that I could find papers to cross credit to my degree. I was interested in Ireland because I wanted to experience the culture and see the beautiful landscapes I had heard about and seen in pictures. I also wanted to be in Europe so I could make the most of travelling around while I was there.

- **Did it meet your expectations?**

I didn't really know what to expect! I had been told the coursework was easier than at home so don't work too hard, and I found this was mostly true.

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

Food Processing, Food Quality, Health and Food, Process Technology 3, and Irish Folklore. I found the food papers to be more basic than at home. Irish Folklore is a good option for international students wanting to learn more about Irish culture and history.

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

For all papers, there were fewer internal assessments and fewer contact hours than I was used to so I found I had a lot more free time. Most papers only have 2 hours lectures per week, plus labs and tutorials for some papers. Most of my lecturers provided some course notes, but attendance in class was required to fill in the blanks to encourage students to go to class. I found that I got similar grades to at home with less effort (but I didn't completely slack off either).

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

I stayed on-campus at Kilmurry Village. It was very convenient to be so close to classes and there was a supermarket within walking distance, and regular buses into town. The house was shared with five other students, and fully furnished. My room was very spacious and had a double bed, although other rooms in the house were smaller with a single bed. Although the house wasn't as modern as in some of the other villages, it was fine for a student and good value for money.

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

It's hard to judge because of the different currencies, but I'd say living costs were similar. I think food was cheaper, but that depends on where you choose to shop. Ireland has some very cheap supermarket chains (Lidl and Aldi) compared to NZ.

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

International Society, Threads society (knitting and crochet), Comedy Society, Tea Appreciation society, free gym membership

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

Ireland has many counties, each with their own accents and cultural differences.

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

Mostly travel – visiting the Belfast and the Giant's Causeway up in Northern Ireland, going on a short Topdeck tour of Europe before starting my exchange, flying over to the south of France for a short visit before exams. The University of Limerick has lots of active clubs and societies, and I especially enjoyed going to amateur comedy gigs at Scholars (café/bar on campus).

- **What did you find challenging?**

This was my first time living away from home by myself so I missed my family and friends a lot. Most Irish students go home in the weekends so it can be very quiet and a bit lonely on weekends. I also had a few issues with some of my housemates, mostly to do with cleanliness.

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

I have learned to be more independent, and I am more capable in unfamiliar situations.

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

Travel as much as you can, make the most of cheap Ryanair flights. Ireland is small country with a good bus system so you can do a lot in the weekends. Get involved in clubs and societies because it's an easy way to meet lots of different people and try something new.

- **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?**

The support provided before my exchange was very good. I didn't ask for any support from Massey University during my exchange as I found the international department at the University of Limerick to be very helpful.