

# Student Exchange Questionnaire

**Name:** Lily Warring

**Massey Degree:** Bachelor Design with Honours (Visual Communication Design)

**Host University:** University of Dundee

**Semester and year of exchange:** Semester 2 2015

I chose the University of Dundee firstly because my grandparents and aunt live in Broughty Ferry, Dundee and secondly because of Dundee's up and coming cultural reputation – the school has just received no. 1 university in Scotland. Furthermore, they spoke English.. or so I thought. Dundonian is not the easiest accent to understand but I believe to be fairly fluent now. I have always wanted to experience Scottish culture as my bloodline is Scottish as well as hearing that it resembled New Zealand in the landscape and the attitude which isn't wrong.

Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art as stated above has an up and coming reputation in Scotland. They are very much in with the latest technology and techniques. Scotland definitely lived up to my expectations, if you don't mind the rain, cold and darkness – it really is beautiful, especially if you manage to escape to the outskirts of the cities on weekends.

I studied the Graphic Design studio paper (very similar to Massey) and a weekly mythology module which was endlessly fascinating!

In terms of numbers there was a huge difference! In my third year design class there was only about 25-27 people vs. the 250-300 odd in Wellington! That changes the dynamics drastically. I felt like I got to know each and every one in the class on a fairly personal level. We were more like a family. However the schedule and work load is almost an exact replica of Massey's design course, include. 40 studio credits and 20 theory. And the artistic attitude is the same, everyone is exceptionally passionate about what they do.

I stayed off campus, I was living with my aunt while I was over there in Broughty Ferry which is small but beautiful and unique, the commute was a half hour bus into town but it really wasn't that bad as I got to see the lovely Tay River at all times of the day.

Many said that they thought the living costs in New Zealand were very expensive. I found the UK not too dissimilar but I imagine if I was working it would be cheaper in the UK as the wages are higher.

I joined the photography society in Dundee which was great! We got to go out and about Dundee in the day and night. It was a good society to join early on as I got to explore Dundee whilst learning how to take the best photos of it. I also joined the International Society - where they did pub quizzes, Scottish food and of course a ceilidh, that was the best fun! My class also had fundraising events for their degree show next year which I helped out with.

One thing about Scotland I learned was that the lack of sun is an accurate cliché. Between the months of October-January you get a window of 11am-3:30pm of daylight and you're lucky if it's not overcast! Which means its likely you will return transparent white and almost allergic to the sun.

There was so many highlights! Primarily the people I got to know and travel with. I got to know my extended family really well. Experiencing Christmas and New Year in Winter was definitely a highlight, I loved getting to wear an ugly Christmas sweater for the first time in my life!

Even though they spoke English, I experienced quite a bit of a culture shock when I arrived. It is difficult to uproot your whole life even for six months. I actually found myself in culture shock when I returned home as well, which was something I did not expect. Another challenge is keeping up with the Scottish drinking culture, that takes real skill.

I learnt that I was capable of so much more than I initially thought. I travelled the country top to bottom and even threw Paris, Dublin and Belgium in the mix. Mostly on my own for that matter. I did so much while I was over there I feel like I aged 3 years in 6 months! And the contacts! I will forever treasure the people I have met who helped me along my way. Not only are they good friends but now I have contacts around Europe for my next adventure!

I would recommend students to make use of the frequent trains/buses/planes! There are trains just about every 10mins to every part of the country, it is something I am really going to miss is how easily accessible Europe is. I got to experience Glasgow and Edinburgh just about every three weeks. I would also recommend just putting yourself out there, you'll never know who you'll meet or what will come of chatting to locals.

It really was an experience I'll never forget, I don't doubt that I'll be back there soon enough!

