

STUDY ABROAD REPORT

You should upload this report **within 2 months** after the end of your stay abroad to Mobility Online. You should also upload the confirmation of your stay abroad from your host university as well as the equivalence list signed by the dean after your mobility to Mobility Online. If you should not fulfil these requirements it is possible that your whole study grant will be revoked (see letter of acceptance). Queries: jointstudy@boku.ac.at

BASIC INFORMATION

1. Name of student: **Anonym**
- Study programme: **H 227 Natural Resources Management and Ecological Engineering**
2. Host university: **Lincoln University**
 Host country: **New Zealand**
3. Your period
 of stay: from **15 July 2019** to **08 November 2019**
 Study year: **2019**

FEEDBACK FOR FUTURE STUDENTS

4. Information about the host university. How helpful were the following sources of information?

(Please enter a number between 1 and 5, where 1 = not helpful and 5 = very helpful):

Homepage of the host university	4
Students / friends	5
Teachers at BOKU	3
Curricula	3
Host university	4
Centre for International Relations	4
Other:	

5. How would you evaluate your ability in the language of the host university?

(1 = weak to 5 = excellent)

	Before your stay abroad					After your stay abroad				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6. Languages of care/support at the host university and their use in percentage:

Language of care was German: Yes No

1.) English	100 %	3.)	%
2.)	%	4.)	%

What recommendations would you give to future students about the host country and university? (Questions 7 -14) Please give tips, sources of information, contacts, and links

7. Host country

If you stay long enough (after the 4 month studying at Lincoln), I recommend to buy a car in the beginning to get around independently in NZ. The people are mostly very friendly and supportive. Besides, to register and buy a car is quite easy and cheap. Insurance is the same. However, check out the car upfront with a garage or someone who knows something about cars. If you have never experienced a true campus life, then you should give it a go with Farm Road. Try to make Kiwi friends to get to know the culture and habits better. Summer as well as Winter are very nice month to go to NZ, in the end, it doesnt matter which term you chose.

Dependant on your term, try to see lots of the country during the studybreak, it is not as expensive as you might think. Of course you need your own funds. However, even if you dont have your own car, Facebook Backpacker groups as well as friends from university might be good travel companions. The bus system is quite suffisticated and works well respectively. To get in touch with Kiwis (people) a good idea might be Wwoofing to get in touch with them and have some true NZ farm experience - you save money while doing so and live in amazing places. Contact your co-supervisor in the beginning, you dont necessarily have to know much about your thesis and research yet, connect. The courses are small and some are self-directed learning, in order to get to know Kiwi students, or other students, check for lectures on a weekly basis. If you find a course with field trip that suits you, go for it. Join one of the clubs at Lincoln University LUSA, the student association.

8. Host university

Don't freak out about the IPC and your initial choice of courses at the host university in the beginning. It is still possible to change courses after the first week. Therefore, I would recommend you to always have a plan B or a backup course already before you head to NZ. Then visit all the plan B course options during the first week of university.

Try to arrive at least a week or even two weeks before university starts. For my stay (term 2), I wanted to study at least one of the two weeks during study break, but in the end, it wasn't necessary and try to travel and check out the country during your break. For once, during the semester there should be enough time for recreation. The second half of the semester was less stressful with assignments. Additionally, lots of your friends from University will go home sooner than later after finishing the finals, by then you probably ran already out of time to hang out or travel around with them.

The Profs. are very helpful and supportive. If you have questions, ask them. The student coordinator or programme coordinator can help you if need be. It is a small university and rural shaped, enjoy the countryside.

9. To what extent did you feel socially integrated?

(1 = not at all to 5 = very well)	1	2	3	4	5
in the local culture/community in general	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
with students at the host university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
with international students at the host university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

10. Which contact person (at BOKU/the host university) helped you organise your stay abroad?

X and X at Boku.
 X at Lincoln.
 However, X, a former NARMEE Tutor, helped a lot with the preparation for studying abroad and helped to answer lots of questions for the stay.
 Therefore I would recommend to try and find someone who studied the semester or two semesters before at Lincoln to ask questions and to find help for your stay and the beginning as well as planning for it.

11. How would evaluate the general advice and help given in administrative matters?

(Please give a number between 1 and 5, where 1 = not helpful and 5 = very helpful)

at the Center for International Relations	3
from teachers at BOKU	2
from the host university	4
from students at the host university	3
from others:	

12. Registration process, financial support, other requirements

The financial support from Boku in terms of the 1750,- Euros helped a lot with the travel expenses and the Visa to cover. However, the Erasmus+ funds are only for Term 1. At least the next batch of NARMEES incoming to Lincoln in the WS were provided with the ERASMUS+. If you heavily rely on these fundings, you should probably try to get in for the WS. Insurance is covered in the Erasmus+ too, I heard.

Of course you need to have your own funds in the end to enjoy your stay and have a good time. Living is more expensive if you stay on campus of Lincoln University. If you plan to stay in Christchurch or Lincoln town and share a flat, it is most likely a similar price as in Vienna for a month of rent. Groceries are around the same price as home.

The registration process seems to be overwhelming in the beginning, however, after finishing the planning, registration and application process, you realise that it is a straight forward process. In the end, it is overwhelming because there are a lot of steps to take, but after my own application I can say that it is not as tedious as it might seem in the beginning.

In terms of the registration at Lincoln, briefly before starting the term abroad, I would recommend you to find someone who has studied there before, to help you work around it.

13. Can you give advice and suggestions regarding the social aspect of your host country/university (cultural differences, importance of language ability etc.)?

Even if you are not as confident in your language skills, you don't have to be native. If you work your way around the BOKU NARMEE program and the related courses you are well suited for the level of language at Lincoln.

Some Kiwi students may be a little shy in the beginning, since you might study with undergraduates. However, it is worth to approach the ones that seem to be interested in international friendships.

The drinking culture is quite different to back home as you might experience on campus. If you are member of a LUSA club, there is a lot of social life going on and events, be part of it.

14. Were there events organised especially for exchange students during your stay?

Yes No

If yes, please indicate which ones:

Accommodation Services organise a few trips for the students living on campus. However, one or two trips were organised by the exchange coordinator from Lincoln for all the exchange students. There were also some small events for 1 to 2 hours to meet all the other exchange students and some coordinators etc. at the campus bar (e.g. postgraduate cafe, etc.).

Accommodation Services organised two skiing trips and a paintball event, as well as a few pizza nights during my stay.

ACCOMMODATION, SERVICES, AND COSTS

15. What was your primary residence during your stay?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student dormitory | <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel / guest house |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Room in a private apartment | <input type="checkbox"/> own private apartment |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flat share with other students | |

16. Who helped you look for accommodation?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host university | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Friends/family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing market | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

17. How helpful was the host university in looking for a room?

(1 = not helpful to 5 = very helpful)

1 2 3 4 5

18. How would you evaluate the quality of the accommodation? (1 = poor to 5 = excellent)

1 2 3 4 5

19. How would you evaluate the availability and/or accessibility of assistance given during your studies (regarding for example the library, computer rooms, labs, equipment etc.)?

(1 = poor to 5 = excellent)

1 2 3 4 5

20. How would you evaluate the accessibility and/or quality of computers and email services at the host university?

(1 = poor to 5 = excellent)

1 2 3 4 5

21. Expenses during your stay abroad (in Euros):

Travel costs (for a single return journey): 1600 €

Overall expenses per month (inc. Accommodation) 1100 €

Breakdown:

Accommodation	600	€ / Month
Food	250	€ / Month
Travel costs at place of study	50	€ / Month
Costs for books, photocopying, etc.	2	€ / Month
Study fees	0	€ / Month
Other:	Phone, Drinks, Dining	250 € / Month

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

22. How would you evaluate your stay abroad from an academic point of view?

(1 = poor to 5 = excellent):

1 2 3 4 5

23. How would you evaluate your stay abroad from a personal point of view?

(1 = unsatisfactory to 5 = highly satisfactory):

1 2 3 4 5

24. Which aspects of your stay abroad did you like the most?

From an academic point of view:

It was the first time studying abroad. The small sized courses and the individual supervision by the course professors was amazing to experience. Overall the way how the academic daily routine is set up in a foreign, english speaking country was quite interesting to see and experience on your own.

Big assignments with on hand projects as well as field trips with on hand projects were fascinating to be part of and to work on. Additionally, due to big assignments, the academic paper writing style of yours got shaped in a different aspect (due to evaluation differences and different writing styles of the various professors).

From a social/cultural point of view:

I got to find some very good new friends from all over the world, worth to keep in touch. Due to few Kiwi friends I experienced the true New Zealand with sheep shearing and the local cuisine, etc.

If you live amongst the locals you experience a country in different ways than only travelling through.

The Maori-culture is still well present and a proud part of NZ, hence, it was good to see how included an ethnicity can be.

25. Did you have any problems during your stay abroad?

Nothing worth mentioning.

26. Will your academic progress at BOKU be hindered as a result of your stay abroad?

Yes

No

I don't know

If yes, please explain why:

27. How could the Joint Study and student exchange programme be improved in your opinion?

A welcome or get-together event with the NARMEE program coordinator (with some nibbles/snacks) after the nomination of the outgoings to NZ would be nice.

Additionally, before the actual application process finishes (1 month before that), an event for information, on what to do and what to take care for your "road to Lincoln" could be highly beneficial for the students, as well as take away the pressure or the initial respect from the application process.

General Report

Short feedback on your stay: attended lectures, seminars, excursions, etc.

Other things you found interesting, you think future students should know, problems, general tips and recommendations...

The most interesting here are the courses, that's why I emphasize on them in my report, enjoy.

Courses:

Advanced GIS B (607) - was one of my three courses. It was in the beginning unclear if I am suited with the right skill level for it, but if you have Arc GIS background, you are good to go. Especially since Crile is a super nice lecturer and very supportive. The course I learned the most, due to his high on hand projects (to be honest, it was frustrating from time to time, but that is related to the GIS program itself).

No field trip, but 2 nice and very interesting group projects. He takes care of the students and even asks for the stress level of the individual course participants. If need be, due dates might be pushed back a week for example.

Now I can honestly say that I know my way around ArcGIS, that I couldn't do with all my heart with the previous BOKU courses I took. BUT, if you choose the 2 three ECTS courses in the NARMEE course plan, or the 6 ECTS course you are good to go to take that course. (Had UBRM GIS and remote sensing in my bachelors, but not essential as the master courses are sufficient). No exam for the postgrads, but a final project presentation (10mins) of your individual project. Two group assignments and a blog-entry as well as a project proposal were criteria for your end mark.

Aspects of Sustainability (636) - was the compulsory course and more interesting as it seemed in the beginning. One individual first assignment, one assignment about a paper and one group assignment, additionally there was a reflective journal to write every week for yourself to present to the lecturer before finishing the first and second part of the semester. Brief presentations from time to time as well as small in course group works were part of it.

Overall it was about sustainability, but more in-depth than I was used to during my bachelors (UBRM). It seemed like you know everything already, but that was untrue. That's why I changed my mind about the course during the semester. Very friendly professor and helpful as well. There was a one day field trip (3 hours to the BHU, the organic operated farm at Lincoln). You have to take it, but it is a cool course after all. I shaped and changed my point of view about the system (our current political and economical system) we are in after attending the course, to a better point of view, obviously.

Soil Resources (627) - Was a very interesting but intense course. There are four lecturers, all of them very nice and helpful, although one of them was very demanding and hard to satisfy with your work. However, I learned loads and loads in this course about microbial biomass and related aspects. Additionally, another part of the lecture was the nitrogen cycle (Denitrification and Nitrification etc.) as well as the carbon cycle on a NZ dairy pasture. The third part of the lecture focussed on clay minerals and mineralogy. We had one one-day field trip close to Craggyburn Forest. Very nice weather and nice to get out of Lincoln as well as experience some geology, geomorphology and pedogenic processes and hear more about NZ and their soils.

During the studybreak there was a 4 day field trip to Clarence, (past Kaikoura, earthquake zone and interesting to hear lots and lots about it firsthand from the lecturer).

There was one assignment about the one-day field trip and the formation of secondary minerals etc. (slope, aspect and all the related conditions) - Brown Soil to Podzol etc.

The second assignment was a group assignment about the four day field trip. In between that, there was a 15min presentation on a topic for the postgraduates.

After the lectures, there is a 2 week study period, without lectures, only for preparation for exams. I needed around 1 1/2 for preparing for the 3 hour exam, you are supposed to write as much as you know about the topic (drawings and graphs are good if you include them).

These were Essay-questions, I have written 2 pages per question, 5 questions in total to be answered. It is different to our exams, but not as bad as it sounds. Don't be afraid of my review, I am only thorough that you know what to expect.

Enough of it now, take your time to explore the country, as I do now (for 2 month) after my studies. Both Islands are wonderful places, take your time and dont rush through. Travel during your study break to save travel time for after you finished. Try to meet as many people and friends as possible, they might live on the other side of the world and are difficult to meet again. Talk to the locals, campground owners, fellow students or travellers, they always have some nice travel hints and good insider information. Dont always listen to your lonely planet, some places are less magical and less interesting as it tells you. Take winter clothes with you, even if you think there is summer, the houses are badly insulated and at some point you want to go to the south or hike up a mountain or summit a peak.

Enjoy it.

The last two questions

What did you gain the most out of your stay abroad?

Mostly I gained structure on how to cope with problems and solve them by myself. However, I also developed a high tolerance threshold for tedious and frustrating group projects and processes related to assignments. Above that, there is also a lot of knowledge relating ArcGIS and Soil Resources, the courses I attended.

Which particular piece of advice would you give interested students?

Dont freak out by the initial application process, it is easier than it looks. Besides, try to find a master thesis that suits you, if you are super unhappy with it, there might be a solution to change after all.

Many thanks for your support!

Publication of this report

I agree that this report, including the above data (field of study, host university, year of study, length of stay), will be published on the website of the Center for International Relations for the purpose of exchanging information on the study visit, so that future interested outgoings can be informed about your experience at the host institution.

Yes No

The consent is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time in the future without giving reasons. Any revocation can be declared at any time by e-mail to joinstudy@boku.ac.at.