

# 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](mailto: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 Nov 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	3
Students / friends	5
Teachers at BOKU	4
Curricula	4
Host university	5
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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening	<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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Speaking	<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"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<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"/>	<input 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**

I had a hard time to decide to come to New Zealand (nearly quitted my whole masters) as I think it's quite cynical to be an environmentalist by passion and study sustainable solutions and environmental protection and at the same time contributing a lot to climate change, sea level rise and climate refugees by flying here, at least the parts I couldn't take a train. I tried to reduce my impact as much as I could and took trains till Beijing and also avoided any domestic flights. (Read my blog with more thoughts about that:  
[www.einlebeninvollenzuegen.wordpress.com](http://www.einlebeninvollenzuegen.wordpress.com) )  
But New Zealand is stunning, of course! Try to make as much out of your stay as you can! It seems that at least some rivers, ecosystems and landscapes are still very wild and functioning without too much human traces. In those moments at the beaches, underneath the bright night sky or while watching curious native birds you will realize why you care about the environment. Although NZ is not as green and clean as it always seems (water and waste).  
The culture is similar but you will recognize many differences as well. Try to dive into the Maori culture, values and beliefs, as there is a lot to learn from for us Europeans!

**8. Host university**

Lincoln Uni is very small and family like! You know the faces of lecturers and students quite fast. You have access to modern facilities, a good library and cafes, the gym, study rooms and departments. The open door policy of the lecturers is amazing: you can pop in their office anytime and ask for help. As postgrad student you have some 'special status' there which makes life and cooperation easier. It is also possible to engage in interest groups or projects next to your courses and work together on for example making the campus more climate friendly with the passionate staff (e.g. 'SAGE').

Furthermore there are many events, keynotes and workshops (Library Services) you should participate in.

Courses: There is a huge variety on interesting courses you can take there. My suggestion is to get a diverse impression by picking courses from different departments. You can sit in all lectures in the first week and decide after that which ones you take for sure.

Workload: the workload during the week is quite high and mainly you have 2 big (8-15 pages) assignments per course which make most of your grade. Exams are not so common.

The courses are mainly seminars, where you come prepared as you read papers for homework and just discuss them during class.

Times Off: ensure to keep a healthy work life balance and don't stress yourself too much. Times off and breaks are important and you have many parks and green spaces on campus.

**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 type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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?**

Ulrike Piringer, Lisa Maria Schmidberger, Alina Toppler (BOKU)  
Diane De Haan (LU)

**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	3
from students at the host university	3
from others: former Narmee students and tutors	5

**12. Registration process, financial support, other requirements**

The registration process is very long and can get overwhelming sometimes. Just make sure you start early enough to avoid stress. Many documents and data but as soon as you have successfully applied, it's easier.  
Look out for scholarships you can get: NÖ Landesstipendium, BOKU Join Study, Erasmus Plus, Industriellenvereinigung, Leistungsstipendium, ... It is worth trying to get as much scholarships as you can, as NZ is quite expensive!

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

People are super friendly and laid back here. Work and Career doesn't seem to be the priority. As soon as you show interest in the locals you get invited to have a look at their life. There are not too many people in the area, which makes it nice and small. Everything seems to be a bit more easy going.  
NZ English is like Austrian German. Hard to understand and catch up everything with just the Matura level English but as soon as you spent some weeks here, it gets way better! The language is quite cute and charming! You should be confident in your English and open for new phrases. The readings and assignments can be a bit more time consuming and maybe never 100% perfect, because it's just not in your mother's tongue. Learn some Maori words and phrases as well. It is such a beautiful musical language!

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

Yes       No

**If yes, please indicate which ones:**

A couple of get-togethers with drinks and snacks were provided, especially in the beginning and end of the semester to get to know each other and celebrate. I really appreciated how much the teachers and staff care about a good study experience for their students.

**ACCOMMODATION, SERVICES, AND COSTS**

**15. What was your primary residence during your stay?**

- Student dormitory
- Room in a private apartment
- Flat share with other students
- Hotel / guest house
- own private apartment

**16. Who helped you look for accommodation?**

- Host university
- Housing market
- Friends/family
- Other: Facebook Groups

**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



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?

- More assistance in the application process: renew the software for the online application, maybe assistance from former students, buddy system?
  - Informations about different scholarships
  - active Support Carbon friendly travel options and support of slow travelling (Transsiberian train, sail hitchhiking). In such an environmental program there should be more awareness and help regarding the topic about emission when flying. Many people could avoid at least short inner-European or NZ domestic flights. BOKU should support and encourage students taking the train+ferry+bus instead of flying. You can see the beautiful landscapes even before you start studying if you travel down slowly within two days.
  - more inclusion of former Lincoln students to buddy up with NARMEES who are about to travel there (Buddy System).

## 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...

Here in NZ you are going to encounter a different style of teaching and studying. Instead of many small courses you only have three big courses, which brings some self discipline to also work on your assignments and homeworks at home/in the library. It also brings more flexibility to go on little roadtrips as you just have to be at uni 3 times a week. Generally I really enjoyed the high quality of the seminars. I took the following courses (Term 2) as I am passionate about the social factors of sustainable development, how to drive change and how we could live more connected to each other, nature and the bigger whole again:

**ERST 636: Aspects of Sustainability: An international perspective:**

At first I thought we already know all the issues and content from BOKU lectures, but I was wrong. Such a good course that brings in way more sustainability related topics like injustice, wellbeing, alternative economic models, politics, activism,... The lecturer Lin Roberts is passionately pushing sustainability issues also on campus and was an environmentalist throughout all of her life. Inspiring person! Many different sources create the content: Videos, studies, campaigns, socio political headlines, reports, art, music, you never get bored by the content, cause even if you are quite into that topic already there is a lot to learn. It's very interactive: you do discussion, presentations, brainstorming, group works, an own project all as part of your grade. I loved this course, which is compulsory in the second term anyway!

**SOCI 602: Social Science Research Methods (Qualitative):**

This course is very hands on as well. You will really learn how social science and qualitative research work as you do your own research project with interviews and observations. You interpret your gathered data and finalize your findings in a short report. I really learned a skill there! You keep that skill, you won't forget about it as you do it yourself. Overall it is a demanding course as you have to do a lot of work every week (readings, 1 interview/observation, transcribing and interpreting that interview) but it was worth it. Make sure that you don't sacrifice your other courses because of the high workload of this course! The class gets like a family throughout the year as the lecturer really tries to have teambuilding and groupwork exercises.

**PSYC 602: Advanced Social Psychology of Wellbeing:**

I could switch to that course as my other class I actually wanted to take was not offered and I had no prior knowledge in psychology. That topic was new and stunning for me. Learning about social phenomena, societal patterns, wellbeing and its connection to a sustainable future, how we are biased and why we often take decisions that are not good for us. So interesting, I loved it! We had amazing papers to read and could also partly choose which topics we want to focus the discussions on. As the class was quite small and international we had very valuable discussions and could reflect upon our own cultures a lot. Make sure you read the papers for homework. I never found more interesting papers and you can only participate in the discussions if you have read the content, don't miss that chance. The lecturer is such a wise and calm person, who has amazing world views and an incredible ability to explain and give examples. I wrote down quotes of him every now and then as I really enjoyed his philosophical and open approach. Nothing is true, right or wrong! He deeply cares about the wellbeing, fulfillment and happiness of people, which makes him the perfect lecturer for this class.

**Interesting facts:**

- no exams for me, just ongoing homeworks, presentations and assignments,
- you get some time before the study break and the exam period to finish your exams
- Small classes, many interactive teaching methods and discussions
- a lot of readings
- no perceived hierarchy of students and lectures, they are so friendly, open and willing to

have lunch and a drink together on campus. They see us exchange post grad students as colleagues and really talk to you on eye level.

- workload is quite high. Ensure to save times for yourself and all the social activities you can be part of! Because you could work on uni stuff 24/7 and still would have the feeling that you could do more!
- intercultural: you learn a lot about different cultures, as the uni has about 50% international students.
- explore the country: take a car to the mountains or the beach on the weekends and spend some time exploring the area, you only have this chance once!

## The last two questions

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

The easy going, laid back and friendly lifestyle of the country. People dont work as hard and unhealthy and define themselves by their carreer only. Ist more about having a good time together, enjoying life and doing what you love. I want to bring some of that feeling back home!

**Which particular piece of advice would you give interested students?**



Talk to people who have done the exchange to Lincoln before and get their advices. If you think you can do more positive things with your exchange experience than you do negative by traveling here, do it. Try to feel what you really need and what you just think you need! Otherwise it is for sure not a must have, to do an exchange term once in a lifetime. If you are pretty content with what you have and how it works for you back home, just stick to that. We are pretty lucky in Europe as well!  
But if you are here try to leave back your european mindset and oen up to that experience fully!

## **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](mailto:joinstudy@boku.ac.at).