

Hi there,

I am Anne. I went on exchange at Deakin University (Melbourne) in my 3<sup>rd</sup> semester and I would always do it again!

I am going to tell you about my expectations, experience, application process, accommodation, units, favourite places in Melbourne and lots more... I hope I can help you make a decision.

I am studying architectural technology and construction management at KEA in the international line. I decided to go on exchange in my 3<sup>rd</sup> semester since I figured (after talking to people from higher semesters) I would miss out the least there. I was also ready for a change and was looking for a more creative environment. When you go through the application process, you can choose between many units, on purpose I chose the ones with the more architectural approach since that was what I wanted to know more about. I recommend you to read through the unit descriptions carefully, they are quite detailed and give you a feeling of what to expect. Also never hesitate to contact Deakin if you have any issues with the unit selection they were always happy to help me via email. Even after the first two weeks of uni I was still able to make changes which many of us did. I chose Modelling Studio because it gives you the chance to learn a new software and build a physical model in the end. All KEA students had no problem with this unit... The other one was Matterscapes, but after the first lecture, my tutor Michael (very nice guy) convinced me to enrol in Public Scapes which is a higher unit but covered a more practical project. We had to develop a bath house from scratch, starting with a site analysis. This project gave me the opportunity to learn more about all the adobe programs Photoshop, InDesign and Illustrator. You always have to graphically document your process and create posters and portfolios. The Modelling Studio classes were quite similar to BIM classes back home where as Public Scapes was all new for me. The focus is way more on the concept of spaces and creating special moments through architecture. I also learned a lot about making drawings, speak for themselves, communicating your ideas so that even your grandma would understand them without having to talk too much about your model or poster. At Deakin, I learned that that's the key and how to achieve that.

The expectations at Deakin are high, but you can take so much out of the education here. You get to work with inspiring tutors and listen to great lectures every week. There is always so much provided.

I always had Modelling Studio lectures on a Tuesday and studio after with my tutor. Public Scapes was on the day after, same structure: first 3 hours lectures and studio work after. In those units, Michael was my tutor. He was really pushing me in a good way. Thinking ideas through with me. I never felt lost, which I think is due to the good program organisation and the clear expectations and the support. In both units, you have to build a model in the end which can be quite costly since you have to pay for materials and production by yourself. I think counting it all together, I spent 350\$ for posters, portfolios and models. That was something, I found quite shocking, but on the same hand, I love the physically results. If you take a studio class, I can advise you to follow the time guide they provide you with and only fulfil the requirements of taking three credit point units in total. Try to keep up with the work load each week and you will be fine. Besides the program you are enrolled in, there is a lot of student life going on at Deakin, right at the beginning they took all the exchange students to

a beach welcome trip to Lorne, which is a beautiful holiday village, right at the beginning of the Great Ocean Road. We were not that lucky with the weather, but still that was where we all got to know each other – also the exchange students from other campuses. Me and my friend from Copenhagen were sharing a room in a shared house ;-). We decided to live off campus since it is much cheaper. Like this, we were able to live with two local girls and had an own garden. I paid 160\$/week. We also saved a lot of money by biking to school and everywhere else. We lived in Newtown which was a 10 min bike ride from uni. When you are looking for a room try flatmate.com. Friends of us stayed at the student residence where we had our “family dinners” (which we nearly had every night...) it was like a second home. Definitely read their reports as well to see where you would rather want to live. The Lions Club in Geelong provided us with free bikes, which was the first Aussie experience right there. I would also advise you to join as many clubs as you can to meet new people. I joined the Geelong Volleyball Team, which was great to meet people outside of uni. Make sure you sign up for the DUSA Club, they organize a lot and you get to use the Dusa Lounge at uni.

Geelong itself is a small town close to surf beaches and cute cafes like “the little Green Corner”. Directly across the uni campus is a bar called “the Deck”, where we ended up going most of the time, with a stunning view on the water. But from time to time it was nice, taking the train into Melbourne. It is the best city in Australia (I think). And make sure to have a salmon bagel in ‘Jungle Juice’ if you happen to go there. I ended up spending the same amount of money here, then I would in Copenhagen, but it always comes down to your lifestyle. Prices are similar, make your own lunch, get a free bike and get the discount student travel card ‘miki card’, which will make you pay half price. The flight and healthcare come on top.

I highly recommend you to go on an exchange, even if Deakin is not the one for you – just go! I can't wait to go back already!

Cheers, Anne



*The Waterfront Campus and Me ☺*



*Bell's Beach close surf beach*