

Exchange Report



Mathæus Preis

Third semester exchange

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To know's and to do's before leaving

You are probably at the stage where you have talked with Sofia and have picked some destinations and are now looking into reports for a couple of the former exchange students. If you have decided on Robert Gordon Institute I will try to explain in brief and prepare you on what i did before going and what i did the first week there.

- Start talking with Sofia and share your concerns and wishes since she is there to help you
- When you have decided to go, start looking into private accommodation for your stay (if not wait till you get a mail from RGU where you can apply for Student accommodation)
- When the date is secured you can start look for tickets to get the cheapest one. (Aim to get there the weekend right before semester start since the first week is freshers week and you will get plenty of time getting to know the city and your way around)
- Be sure to check your mail regularly since most of the info you will get with date comes in there

The first week

- At arrival take a cap. It will save you a lot of time finding your way and costs maximum £20.
- Head down to 3 or some other phoneshop to get your sim-card
- Get to know your local area and then head down to school during the first week and get everything sorted and you can get them to print out your schedule for the first weeks.
- Join the Erasmus group on facebook. They make a lot of social get togethers and are also very helpful if you should have any questions.

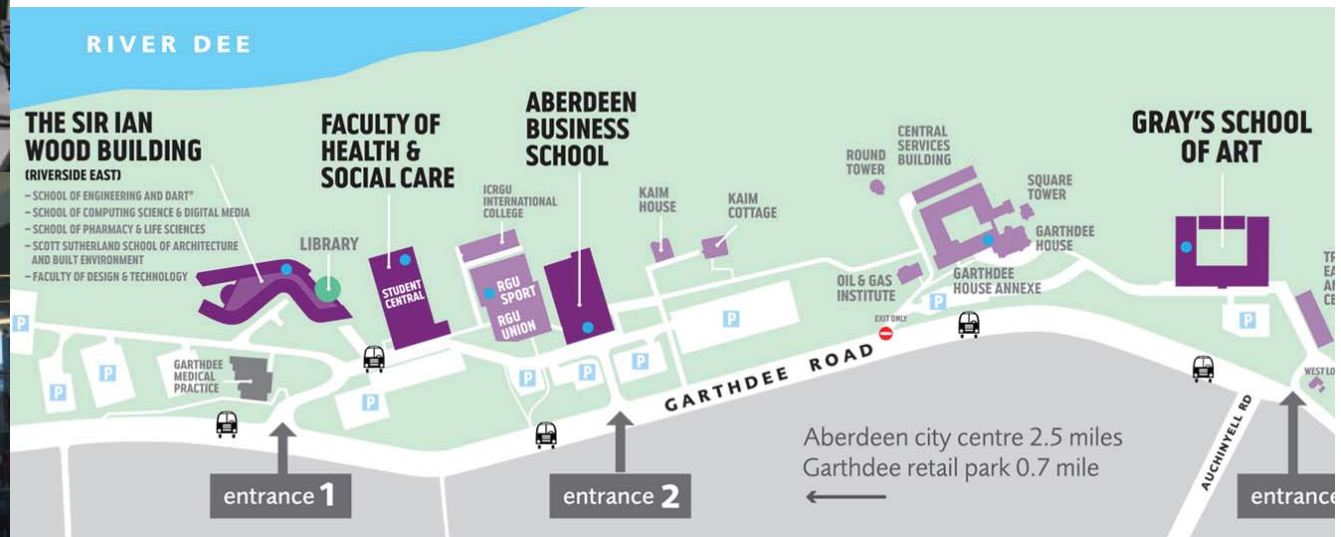
Robert Gordon University - RGU

RGU Campus is really big and has a lot of building spread out near the river Dee. It consists of different buildings but Sir Ian Wood Building is new and is where the Architectural Technology lectures are being held. On your first day at campus you should head down to Scott Sutherland School of Architecture and Built Environment which is located down in the bottom past the canteen. They have their own office and can help you with finding your teachers and printing out your schedule.

There is a fantastic library on campus as well which contains books covering all sorts of subjects. In here there are tables and computers for studying as well and amazing views over the grounds and river Dee.

In the basement of Scott Sutherland School of Architecture and Built Environment a workshop is located with everything needed for building models, printing posters and painting your models. A couple of men are supervising and ready to help with anything. They have some different days in the start of the semester where introductions are held and mandatory if you want to use the workshop. Just go down and ask where you can hop in since they are mainly for the new first years.

Just left of Aberdeen Business School RGU Sport is situated. Here you can join the gym for workout or even go swim before classes or after. A membership for one semester costs around 60£ for off peak hours which is anytime they are open except 4-10 pm Monday to Friday.



Courses

The 3 classes i followed was:

- Management for Built Environment 2
- Design Technology 2
- Professional Practice

Management for the build Environment 2

The class consists of two lectures a week where subjects like benchmarking and how to improve your business and compare how the market is moving and what to look for in it. We had two assignment over the semester. The first one was a presentation where we in groups should talk about TQM, benchmarking and other measuring tools in the business. the second one was individual where we had to compare a british company to one located in abroad with tools like the SWOT- and PEST-analysis. Be ready to put some time into the second assignment since its time consuming.

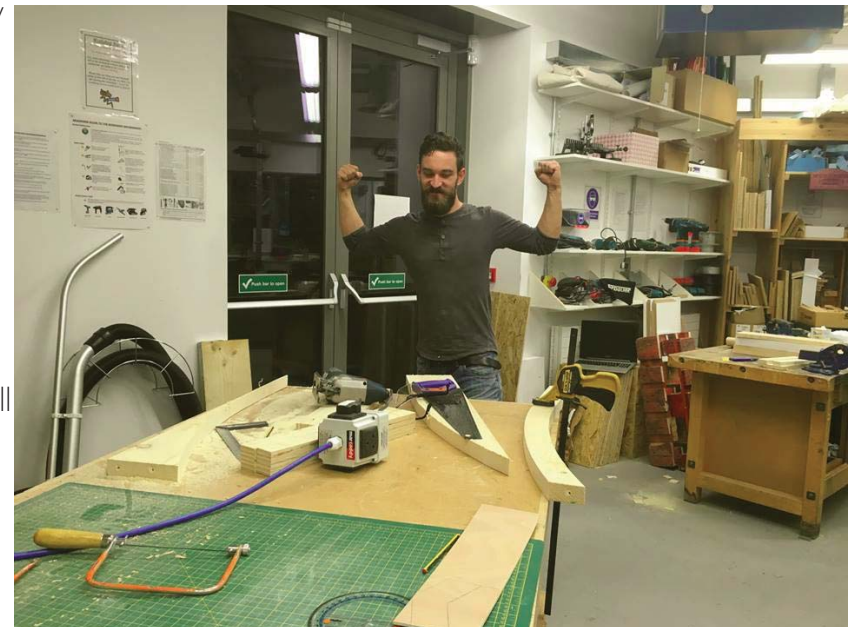
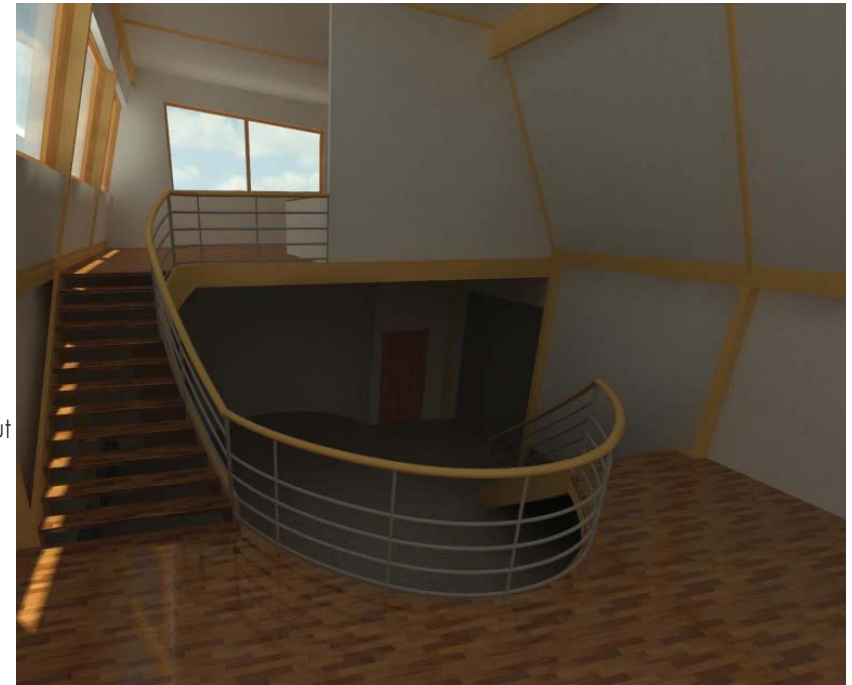
Design Technology 2

This is the main course with a full day of lecturing and studio work and time for questions to the teachers. This project was divided into two with a group part looking on the site and and making the initial design. After that it was individual work refining and developing it to a finished building. Posters and detail drawings was made with revit but dont expect help with the revit since everybody is working in either autocad or sketchup. some of the deliverables is pictures worked on in photo-shop.

for the full project we had to deliver consisted of 2 presentation sheets in A0, a design statement and a technical booklet.

Professional Practice

In this course we had to establish a practice and think about what thoughts in concerns of bank loans and the needs for starting up. We got some lectures on business strategies and comparisons in the industry. The deliveries was a letter to the bank explaining what kind of finance you would need to start and the second report was a letter to the client explaining how the building process will go and explaining to them how the RIBA plan is implemented and where they have something to say. These two reports takes a lot of time and research so would recommend starting early.



Aberdeen city and living there

Aberdeen is a nice city, small enough to walk around in. I would not recommend biking there since the bikelanes are almost non existing and the cars are not that aware of cyclists. I thought of getting a bike as I am experienced biking in Copenhagen, but decided not to after seeing the conditions there. It is possible though to borrow a bike from the RGU union GO-Green.

Accommodation - Ardmuir Trinity Court

The room I lived in was placed at Pittodrie st. which I got through the university. It was around £500 a month for 10m² room in a 3 person apartment. It was only 1 of the other rooms that was rented out to a guy from York close to my age. I guess they try to pair people of similar age. We had a shared bathroom with bathtub, shared kitchen equipped with stove, oven, microwave, dish washer, washing machine and a fridge. The kitchen was fully functioning however really poor quality knives, pots and pans.

The room was furnished with desk, bed wardrobe and bookcase. The wireless in the apartment worked fine after signing up on their website which took 2 minutes. In the hall there was a billboard with different activities throughout my stay was posted.

I lived around 6km from RGU but had two buses, 1 and 2 right outside my door which both drove to RGU. The bus company called First have an app where you can buy 24h tickets for £3. It is also possible to buy for a longer period but with only 3 schooldays it was not worth it for me. I also ended up walking home most of the days since the sun was shining and loved the walk. It took me around 50 min. and usually stopped by Morrisons to buy something for dinner.



Shopping and eating

The city's main street is Union st. where a lot of shops is located like Primark and lots of places to eat. The main mall in Aberdeen is Union Square placed at the rail station and have all the more expensive shops. You can get down there through another center from Union street. At the corner on Union st. and King st. there is a Wetherspoon where you can get some chips, burger and beer for around £6. For daily grocery shopping I would recommend ASDA or Morrisons which is quite similar to Føtex and have everything you need. For the quick shopping there is Tesco and Sainsbury but they are generally a bit more expensive.

On the days off I spend some time in a cafe to come out and do my schoolwork there. It was placed on Belmont st. which also is the main place to go out drinking in the evenings. It's a small street but a lot of good bars is located here and Slains Castle is one of the nicest bars I have seen in a while.

Aberdeen Shire and the surrounding areas

It is quite easy to get out and around from Aberdeen. The trains from the Rail station goes often and are not that expensive if you book in advance. But it is worth it to come out and see other things in Scotland and the trips with the train gives you a beautiful look on the highlands and coasts.

Stonehaven

Its a small fishing village with the famous caste Donnotar castle. It is placed on a big rock on the coast and the views from the courtyard are amazing. Be sure to get there on a day without to much wind since they close it if its to windy. The caste is reached from Stonehaven where a small half hour walk leads you through fields and beatiful scenery.



Glen Garioch (pronounced Glen Giri)

An old distillery located in Oldmeldrum where a you can get a guided tour and have a little tasting at the end of the tour. It is the closest distillery to Aberdeen and is reachable by train and bus. Bigger and more famous distilleries can be visited but are further away but tours are arranged. It is almost mandatory to go and see atleast one when in Scotland.



Ballatar

Small mountain village reachable by bus which takes around 2 hours. Once again the scenery from the bus is outstanding. When Reaching Ballatar there are several mointain hiking routes and bike rental is also possible if you want to go to Loch Muick. We ended up getting quite lost on our way out there and went up another mountain but we ended up havang some amazing views over the landscape.

Edinburgh

This is a city definitely worth a visit. It is an old city with its famous castle in the center of the city. I would recommend visiting for a full weekend since there is so much to see and the streets in the old town are amazing just to stroll down. Worth seeing besides the castle, parliament and old town is Dean Village located in the North-Eastern corner of Edinburgh. I lived in a hostel close by called Belford hostel which is an old church refurbished to accommodate backpackers and such. The shared sleeping halls are located in the old churchroom and is open all the way up.



Conclusion

All in all it has been a semester abroad where I have learned a lot about me and how I work alone. A lot of the work in the second part of the semester is individual. Second I really enjoyed spending time in a different culture talking with others and interacting gave me a broader understanding of cultural differences and also how teaching is a bit different to how we are taught in Denmark. I feel I missed some of the things that were taught but came back to my group and they have filled me in on what I missed while I got time to enhance my abilities in Photoshop and Revit while away. So I can only highly recommend to take a semester abroad.

If you have any question write me and I will do my best to answer.

