

REPORT AL RIENTRO DELL'ESPERIENZA DI SCAMBIO - A.A.
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Testo

This report will describe my experience abroad as exchange student at University of New South Wales, College of fine arts, in Sydney, Australia.

To begin I would like to say that this exchange programme was my first experience abroad of long duration that I made by myself. I decided to go on Exchange programme in order to make an experience abroad, to improve my English and to compare myself with another culture, another reality, observing different lifestyles and the way people operate gaining, hopefully, surplus value to my cultural view that could also open my mind toward new ideas and perspectives. The idea of being in Australia, an amazing country, and the idea of getting in touch with a totally different culture led me to the furthest country possible: more than 24 hours flight.

To tell the truth The University of New South Wales was not my first choice but in retrospect I am glad to have attended this university because I found some of the most capable and worthy professors that I ever had and a campus, COFA, very active in students' life and arts/design activities.

UNSW is a huge university consisting in many faculties from engineering one to humanistic to arts and to scientific one. The main campus, Kensington, is like a city where you can find everything you need during your stay. Colleges are located in this campus and it is in it where the main student life takes place. It is not located in the city centre but it is just 20 min by bus from the CBD, 15 min by bus from COFA campus (design, media and arts UNSW campus) and more or less it is near to main beaches such as Coogee, Maroubra and Bronte. On the other hand, COFA campus is located in a very beautiful and fashionable suburb called Paddington in between the CBD and seaside. It is a small campus in a kind of green area provided with all the facilities students need to express their creativity and to work well during lecture time.

Sydney is a very beautiful city. It is a mix of nationalities, lifestyles and architectures. It gives you the chance to live in a metropolis where you can enjoy the tranquillity of natural landscapes as well thanks to its wonderful beaches and parks. Afterwards it is a very vivid city, very active in organizing cultural activities to entertain its citizen, and above all tourists coming from all over the

world. During my stay I enriched my knowledge thanks to festivals, exhibitions, museums and cultural events organized every month by Sydney district.

When I arrived in Sydney I stayed for one week in a hostel in order to give me the time to find a place where to live. I chose not to live on campus in the college due to personal motivation. Finding a nice place in Sydney is not so easy. One of the main problems, if it can be called problem, is that it is a very expensive city for living especially if you don't find a well paid job or if you are an international student. Actually international students are not entitled to have concession on public transportation that is very expensive. That is one of the main reasons why I tried to find a place in between the university and the CBD. For my personal experience, I can say that it is better to look for an accommodation in proximity of the departure because the demand of renting a place is very high and once arrived in the city it is better to buy a Australian sim card and call to make inspections. Finding a room was a very stressful experience for me because nobody helped me. There are many tools to use in order to find an accommodation: websites, fb groups, university post wall. I found mine on Flatmates.com.au, a very helpful website where a room for any range of price can be found. The average renting price for a nice spare room (not many people in the house and nice environment to live) is about 200-240 AUD per week. For a single room price can be higher. After one week I had my twin room that I shared with one of classmate from PSSD on exchange at UTS. A flat in Bondi Junction, perfect location to go by foot to university and cushy to go everywhere in the city. Never rent a room without having inspected it, there are many awful rooms, and always have a written agreement with the landlord to avoid bad news.

The second most stressful experience was getting enrolled. Unfortunately the courses pre selection I made in Italy was not completely successful and I had to choose other courses during O-week. This is a week where new students are welcomed in the university mood showing them how the procedures work and how the campus works. The main problem with enrolment is that the university offers a very wide range of courses (even not always fully related to design field) but often you cannot access to most of them because students must have attended some specific courses previously or are simply not accessible to exchange students. Selection online, waiting for the approval then going to international office to finalise the enrolment or to change courses is the enrolment process. To be a regular student 4 courses should be attended or 3 courses plus internship found thanks to university. I attended: Introduction to contemporary ceramics, Communication skills for creative disciplines, organisational psychology and design management. There are applied and theoretical courses. For PSSD course, UNSW is not the best choice in the world because there are not service design courses or something related to innovation; actually in Sydney service design is not well developed but it can be considered even a positive side because, for my case, I had the stimuli to think out of the box and choose classes that I could not find at Politecnico such as ceramic or OP. Moreover I came in Australia with the idea of attending an internship but unfortunately I didn't find it. It is always better asking for help to professors or to the international office (during O-week) in order to find it.

University of New south Wales has a high percentage of international students so it is very dynamic in organising events and day trip to make feel students at ease while they are away from home. During my stay had been organized: bbq, Taronga zoo trip, cooking lessons, wine tasting, surf lessons and etc. At Cofa campus, design and art exhibition are displayed, twice a month there is free lunch and free breakfast, bbq and galleries crawl between students are organized.

I met lots of people coming from different part of the world and they have enriched my stay with their amazing personality: international students, exchange students and local student sharing same interests and values. It was an experience that I suggest to everyone because it makes you grow and it modifies you and you realize it only when you come back home. Clearly there were positive and not so positive experiences too but I do not regret to have undertaken this exchange programme because it gave me the chance to achieve a personal and professional growth.

Autorizzo al trattamento dei miei dati personali ai sensi del Decreto Legislativo n. 196/03 da parte del Politecnico di Milano.

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