

Report On My Personal Experiences on Exchange at the University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

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Application TUMSOMEX

I have already applied for my exchange semester in December 2020 as the application period for outgoing via TUMSOMEX usually ends in the mid of January. So, you should plan a bit of time for your application. For studying at UQ, an official English Test (IELTS or TOEFL, check out score requirements at the fact sheet of the different partner universities) was required. I participated in a bonus program as well since the exchange places in Australia are rare and very popular. So, make the most out of your application. I did a TOEFL test already in the semester break before, so I had plenty of time to prepare for it, as a score equivalent to a level of C1 was required at UQ.

UQ was set as my first choice, and I received my admission to the exchange place at the beginning of February. Originally, I had applied for Semester 1 in 2022 (Feb – June), but because of the Covid-19 crisis, my exchange Semester was postponed about one term to Semester 2 (Jul – Nov) in 2022. While choosing your semester time abroad consider the different semester times at UQ vs. TUM as well as the different seasons in Australia. In retrospective, I would even recommend Semester 2 as you start your studies in winter and finish in summer which is super convenient if you plan on adding some travels in Australia later on.

Application UQ & Visa

After accepting my exchange place at TUMSOMEX, I waited a couple of months (hereby it depends on which semester time, you have applied for, I would highly recommend checking the different application periods at UQ to not miss any important deadlines!!!). Usually, you also receive good guidance and information about your exchange and important deadlines from TUMSOMEX via E-Mail. After I was nominated as an Incoming Exchange Student at UQ by TUMSOMEX, I could start my application at UQ. Usually, this is nothing more than a formality, therefore, I received my admission letter shortly after.

To apply for a student visa, you need your Certificate of Enrollment (COE) and proof of oversea health care insurance (OSHC), both are provided by the University of Queensland. I would recommend arranging your health insurance via the university as it is pretty convenient. You get all important documents (e.g. COE, OSHC) via your UQ E-Mail, so sign in as soon as

possible and check your messages regularly. While applying for your student visa (subclass 500) you have to hand in a Genuine Temporary Entrant Statement, a guidance on what to write here can be found at the website of UQ.

Finding Accommodation

I lived in a student accommodation (StudentOne Wharf Street) in the CBD of Brisbane. I have already arranged it before coming to Australia. If you come a couple of weeks before the semester starts you can also look for a place to stay there, but I would plan some time for this as it is not easy at all to find a flat or room. Student accommodations are still expensive, for instance, I paid \$299 a week (which is equivalent to around 800€ /month) and that was already a lower rate offer as I signed up for a whole semester contract. If you bring a lot of time and patience you can surely find cheaper accommodation, especially in the districts around UQ which are around 20 to 30 minutes outside the city center. You also get some accommodation offers, On- and Off-Campus, sent by UQ, that's how I found my place.

Orientation Week at UQ

One week before the course-start Orientation Week takes place at UQ. This is a perfect opportunity to get to know the campus and meet people. Take a campus & library tour and participate in workshops and activities on campus, especially the market day (here all societies have stands and promote their activities from UQ surfers to a Bar & Rum society to even a German society – I think everyone will find a personal fit there. I signed up for the Quest Society – for international students a must, would highly recommend it, as they organize a lot of trips and parties ;) – and the UQ Surfers club.

Course Selection

You can take three up to five courses a semester at UQ. For your student visa, it is mandatory to take at least three courses as well as a recommendation from TUM (15 – 20 ECTS). At UQ a course has usually 2 units which is equivalent to 7.5 credits / ECTS at TUM. You can still change your schedule and courses until the third week at UQ. I changed two of my courses after the first week. In retrospect, I would take five courses from the start and later decide which courses I would like to take or drop since I missed out on some classes the first weeks and had to catch up with the material later. While selecting your courses you should have a look at the

Assessment folder on blackboard. Here you can find which assignments you have to do for each course. Other than at TUM, at UQ you usually have a lot of assignments already during the semester like essays, reports or smaller quizzes, or mid-term exams. So, I haven't had to write one single exam at the end of the semester. I selected three courses as I had to work on my project studies in addition, but I would not recommend taking more than four courses anyway because five is an extremely high workload. My courses were Advertising Management (ADVT3509), Money & Mind (ECON1200) and Experiments & Decision Making (ECON2102) for those interested. You can find a detailed course description at the website of UQ and even more details on blackboard after signing up for the course. For the Advertising and Experimental Economics course I had to provide proof of some basic courses (Marketing, Micro- and Macroeconomics) I had already taken at TUM which were stated as prerequisite to participate in the course. This was super easy you just need to write an E-Mail to the responsible faculty to get an admission.

City & Uni Life

I loved Brisbane and the UQ. At first, it was all a bit overwhelming as the university and city are both very big, but everyone there is so welcoming and friendly, and you always receive good guidance from the supervisors for the international students. So, do not hesitate to contact them if you have any problems or struggles! I must point out to Mrs. Karen Fisher, who was my supervisor at UQ, she was literally amazing. You could always text her with any problem and she was super helpful and friendly, much appreciated!

Nevertheless, if you plan on going on exchange in Australia, you should plan in a lot of money, Australia is one of the most expensive countries I have been to so far. I do not have exact figures but I spent roughly 1,000 - 1,200 € / month (including rent, food, activities, weekend trips etc.). Therefore, you should try to apply for a scholarship. I think TUMSOMEX offers some information on their website, just have a look, and try it even if you do not have the best grades. I was a scholarship holder of the TUM Deutschlandstipendium at that time but there are a lot of other opportunities and even specific scholarships for Australia.

Brisbane as a city is beautiful with heaps of different things to do. One of my favorite places there was the State Library, ideal to study in the city if you are too lazy to take the 20 min bus to UQ and you have a gorgeous view over the skyline and the Brisbane River. Take a trip to the Sunshine or Gold Coast on weekends and have a swim or surf in the ocean. Have a drink

at Felons with your study mates and participate in a Trivia. I am sure you will love Brisbane and the UQ as much as I did!

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