

Alexander Wise: Imperial College London (Semester 2/2008 & 1/2009)

Program at UQ: Bachelor of Engineering (Chemical)/Bachelor of Biotechnology (Process Biotechnology)

I leapt at the opportunity to go on exchange to Imperial College London because of the chance to experience life in the United Kingdom and Imperial's reputation for Chemical Engineering. Academically, Imperial is quite different to UQ in that its students study almost exclusively chemical engineering subjects right from the beginning of their degrees, without many electives at all, and so are very specialised in the discipline. A dual degree like mine would not have been possible there. Fortunately, I was able to choose from the wide range of subjects available. Dynamic Behaviour of Processes was a particularly interesting course dealing with modeling chemical processes that was taught by an expert in the field. Downstream Separation in Biotechnology was much more theoretical, and gave insight into possible industries that might let me use both my degrees.

During the exchange, I befriended students from my hall, classes, clubs and societies, and huge numbers of ERASMUS and Australian exchange students. Because of their similar priorities, it was the Australian students who I travelled with most. In the UK, we went from Penzance to Edinburgh, in Europe from Porto to Verona, and hiked in Dartmoor, the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District. It was great to explore the incredible history and culture of the city of London. The UK is culturally very similar to Australia, however it still took time to adjust to British attitudes and ways of life. I now have a strange passion for tea. One of the most valuable parts of the exchange was how the experience changed me as a person.



Alexander and other Australian exchange students in Dartmoor.