

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

<b>_Cognome</b>	<b>Elzeney</b>
<b>_Nome</b>	<b>Mostafa Mohammed Mostafa</b>
<b>_Matricola</b>	892034
<b>_Anno di corso</b>	2.LM
<b>_Corsi di studi</b>	DESIGN ENGINEERING
<b>_Sezione</b>	
<b>_e-mail</b>	mostafa.elzeney@polimi.it
<b>_Sede di scambio</b>	University of New South Wales
<b>_Stato</b>	Australia
<b>_ID ERASMUS (per sedi in EU)</b>	
<b>_Semestre svolto all'estero</b>	2°

### Testo

In this report, I'll try to reflect on my exchange experience in Sydney and talk about the things that I faced there so hopefully, it'll help future exchange students. I'm a Masters student in the Design & Engineering Program. I choose Australia I spent one trimester at the University of New South Wales in Sydney. Which was one of the best experiences I ever had in my life.

As an international student in Italy, I've already experienced being away from home. But Australia was a different experience, different culture, a different perspective on life and design inside and outside the campus.

### Arrival

Upon my arrival to Sydney, I was surprised by the weather, it was the first time in my life to experience Summer in February which felt a bit weird at first coming from freezing Milano. From the beginning, Sydney felt different. People drive on the left, so I had to adjust to that and know where to look when I cross the street. For the first two weeks I stayed in a room I rented via Airbnb that is located in Surry Hills, 10 mins walking distance from my Campus in Paddington. Surry Hills was a nice place to live in, it's located at the heart of Sydney and has a lot of nice cafes and restaurants. I enjoyed walking around there and to Hyde Park which is close by.

Upon arrival, I suffered from jetlag as the flight took more than 14 hours long. My sleeping patterns were disturbed for almost a week and it didn't take long before I came back to normal.

### Settling down

I arrived one week before the welcome week, so I have enough time to settle down and finish and paperwork. All in all, things went smoothly. I opened a bank account and got myself an Opal card for transportation and started discovering the city. Another thing I did that is important was the Photo ID, It's an ID that the NSW government can give you that can be used as a formal ID card that you can use instead of your passport. Paperwork in Sydney is super smooth and takes no time, customer service is valued here, and you feel welcomed everywhere with a big smile.

I had to relocate to another apartment as the old one felt so small. I used gumtree to find a new place also in Surry Hills that is slightly more expensive but much better. It's important to ask for a contract when you choose to stay in a place as many landlords prefer not to sign contracts to evade paying taxes. Having a contract protects your right in case any problems happen.

### The City

I feel in love with Sydney from the start. It's a diverse city and has people from all over the world which makes it a melting pot of many different cultures. This left me with a great sense of belonging, tolerance, and inclusion. The city has a big beach culture as it is home to the famous Bondi beach that is known to be a Surfers attraction.

The city is expensive though, for reference, a good hamburger will set you back 10 AUD. The rent is also expensive and unlike Milano, they calculate the rent weekly not monthly. The payment is usually done fortnightly (every 2 weeks) using cash or, more commonly, via bank transfer. A shared room in Surry Hills will cost somewhere between 170 – 300 AUD per week, depending on location and amenities. The further you go away from the city center, the less expensive the rent becomes and also the more costly the transportation to campus. So, consider a place not too far from the university. Biking is also a good option if you are into that, you can buy a used one from Gumtree.com or rent an electric bike from companies like Bolt Bikes for 80 AUD/week. Generally speaking, biking is fun in Sydney despite the fact that not all streets have bike lanes. I highly recommend buying/renting an electric bike as Sydney is a hilly city and will require effort to cycle up the city slopes. I used the bike to do some deliveries in my free time using the Uber Eats app.

Speaking of working, as a student I'm only allowed to work for 20 hours per week. There are many opportunities for casual work but it's hard to find part time jobs as employers prefer graduates and PR holders over students.

Weather in Sydney is so unexpected, it can be sunny at moment and become cloudy and rainy all of a sudden. This makes it hard to decide what to wear every day as you don't know what to expect. Forecasts are not so accurate, and the weather can get so random at times.

The city is full of things to do and sights to see. Circular Quay is the highlight of the city as it has the Sydney Opera House and the main ferry harbor. Darling harbor is beautiful at night and hosts fireworks every Saturday. Kings Cross is at the center of Sydney and is famous for its nightlife and pubs. China town is full of authentic Asian restaurants and markets. The blue mountain is outside the city and offers a great view over the canyon and a chance to see wild kangaroos and koalas.

### The Welcome Week

My first experience with UNSW was the during the welcome week, during which the university offered lots of activities, workshops, and lectures to get us started. There were lectures about academic writing, job hunting, CV writing, and many skills that they thought it's important for the students to know before starting their learning experience. The lectures were really useful and made me feel welcomed there. They also introduced us to the Australian culture and food in an interesting and funny way.

UNSW has many clubs and societies, which enhances the students' life during their study time. From sports to hiking and photography. Volunteering is also available in many places in UNSW. I recommend joining ARC society and engage with their many activities as it's a great opportunity to meet new people and make like-minded friends. I joined the Student Exchange club, ARC Society, Art society, and Wander society.

### The Study

Study in UNSW was different than Politecnico di Milano. In UNSW it focuses more on discussion and collaboration between the tutor and students, and among the students. For two of my courses, every week there was both a lecture and a tutorial. The lecture is a 1-hour presentation that talks about the theoretical part, it usually doesn't involve discussion but just a fast Q&A section in the last 5 mins. The tutorial, on the other hand, involves discussions with the tutor about the topic of the lecture. The tutorial also involves some exercises and activities that help students deepen their understanding of the topic. We were required to read papers and articles before each tutorial in order to be able to discuss them in class.

My only problem with the education system was the new trimester system that UNSW adopted this year. Under the new system, the study lasts for 9 weeks instead of 13, which is 1 month less, this resulted in courses being squished to fit the new shorter schedule. That made the weekly study load higher than usual. The trimester system made it difficult for me to travel and discover Australia due to the weekly assignments that were required to deliver. However, I managed to socialize and go to many events and trips during my time in Sydney. Like my trip to the National Park and Palm beach. In UNSW, if you have time, you can't run out of options to have fun.

On another note, the university's infrastructure was really good and provided us with everything we needed. The design labs had all the required tools and machines to create prototypes and test our designs. The staff was super helpful and friendly, they helped everyone to achieve their tasks in spite of the tight schedule.

### The Overall Experience

The overall experience was great, and I'd recommend Sydney and UNSW to anyone who would like to discover a different approach to education. However, I'd recommend you stay longer if you can and if you can afford it, as one trimester is not enough to experience what Sydney and Australia have to offer. Try to immerse yourself in the culture and make new friends while maintaining a balance with your study and submissions. Studying abroad is one of a lifetime experience that will expand your horizons and broaden your perspective of the world. It'll help you grow on a personal and professional level, And Australia is a great place to do it.

---

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

Firma \_\_\_\_\_

