

# Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

PLEASE TYPE THIS EVALUATION FORM & EMAIL IT TO VICTORIA ABROAD AS A WORD DOCUMENT

## A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	Master of Architecture
Major(s)	Architecture
Exchange Institution	Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts - KADK
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Trimester 1 2016

## B: Finances

Please detail your basic costs in New Zealand dollars. This will help future students plan their own budgets. (Enter your number rounded to the nearest dollar.)

Books	-
Accommodation	\$200 - \$250 per week – Rent monthly
Return Airfare	2300
Local Transportation	Bike - \$300<
Meals	\$8-12
Visa	\$400
Health & Insurance	\$400
Personal Spending	\$100 per week.
Communications (phone, etc.)	\$20 – 15gig data, 10hr talking and unlimited text messaging
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Printing and laser cutting were significantly more expensive than NZ.

How did your financial expenses compare to what you originally expected to spend?

Overall the stand and cost of living is quite similar to NZ, certain Supermarkets were cheaper and overall the cost were comparable. Though rent was considerably more expensive.

By what means did you maintain your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, foreign bank account, travelers checks, etc.)?

Unless you get a Danish Bank account – a NZ Visa debit card was used almost everywhere, cash or mobile pay were also used.

What financial advice would you give students attending the same university as you?

Denmark is expensive for rent, and finding a rental close to campus is quite hard. Fortunately Copenhagen is known for its cycle lanes, commuting around the city is rather quick from one side to the other.

What was the average cost of a can of coke or coffee in your host country?

\$1 Coffee at the university, \$7 Coffee within the city.

**C: Visas & Insurance** *\*Please note this information is recommended by VUW students & current at the time of their exchange. For all up-to-date visa information you must check with the embassy/consulate of your host university.*

Did you have to apply for a visa? If so, was it difficult? What was the process, how long did it take and how much did it cost?

Host University will send you the information and visa process through email.

Do you have any advice for future students when applying for visas to your host country?

Do it as soon as possibly either before you travel to Denmark to allow time for Visa processing – though they will take under a month, compared to the 2 months that is listed.

Did your host university have a mandatory insurance? Or a particular insurance they recommended? If Yes, what was it and how much did it cost?

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What insurance company did you use and would you recommend it to future students?

STA Travel Insurance – never used it during the period of travel.

**D: Academics at Host University**

Which courses did you take while on exchange? Please rate the difficulty of each course (1-5, 1 = Very Easy & 5 = Extremely Difficult) and leave any comments you may have.

Course Title	Language of Instruction	VUW course equivalent or elective	VUW points/credits value	Rating (1-5)	Comments
<b>VUW Trimester 1/YEAR 2016</b>					
Political Architecture : Critical Sustainability	English	Trimester one	60	4	The course was slightly difficult to complete in a Semester due to previous year semester having a lot of work and research prior.
<b>VUW Trimester 2/YEAR</b>					


**Course Registration/Enrolment**

Please describe the registration process at your host university. What kind of help was available?

Online process of how to apply and the portfolio and cover letter entrance requirements

How successful were you in registering/enrolling for classes you wanted? What advice would you offer to next year's exchange students about registration at your host university?

Successful in placement in the department that I selected. Compile an array of different architecture work, renders, models and diagrams for your portfolio.

Do you have any advice for future students when choosing and applying for courses?

To experience more time outside of university – Spatial or Urban departments may give more spare time and holiday periods.

**Academic Experience**

How did your academic experience differ from your time spend at Victoria? Did the academic experience meet your expectations?

Yes and more, the teaching and campus environment was different and challenging then what I have experience before.

How did the style of teaching at your host university compare with that at VUW? How did the workload compare to what you would expect at VUW?

The work was less, but the expectation of work quality and thinking was far highly level then what is needed through VUW

What would you recommend as an appropriate course load for other VUW students visiting your partner university? What specific courses would you recommend to visiting VUW students? Why?

Spatial and Urban Departments have an appropriate work load.

What advice would you give VUW students about succeeding academically at your host university?

Get to know your tutors and class cohort, listen a lot more then stepping straight into doing. And find research or topics that you find relevant to yourself.

What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, and internet access at your host university?

There are computer labs, but the studio computer facilities were lacking. The library is a stunning piece of Architecture in itself. And wifi internet is available around campus.

If you went to a country where English is not the native language, how did you prepare for this? Were there any intensive language courses provided by the host university?

Danish and Scandinavians speak their own languages – but the English is on the same level as native speakers, older speakers though might come across as quite forward.

## **E: Accommodation**

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Courtyard Apartment

What were the pros and cons of this form of accommodation?

Meet a lot of new people outside of the university/though was quite expensive

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Either Apartment or Student Apartments – both have their ups and downs

How early can you move into accommodation?

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What options were available for meal plans or cooking facilities? How satisfied were you with the food?

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If you lived in off-campus housing, how easy was it to find? What should future VUW exchange students know about living off-campus?

Try and arrange accommodation as soon as possible as you could be waiting a month for an opportunity.

Do you have any tips of advice for future students when applying for accommodation?

Through friends, Danish flat search websites or the Facebook Copenhagen student flat websites.

## **F: Personal & Cultural Connections**

What was it like making friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) students?

The studio class basically will be your friends around campus and the city well your stay is there. Slightly difficult, just have to take your time with the Danish as they can be quite stand offish with new-people.

What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange country/university?

There is definitely a visual difference with Denmark the Architecture of the city is something out of a fairy tale, and the cycle lanes are something we miss here in NZ. Though take all that away and the Food, Culture is quite similar.

What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging? How would you recommend students to prepare for these differences?

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

Appreciation of Architecture is high amongst a wide amount of the public.

How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?

Friendly and well looked after as all the other students. Though there is a small level of xenophobia to people from anyone outside of Denmark or Scandinavia.

As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your partner university? For students who are visible minorities in your host country? For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?

Non at all except for the above answer.

Did you face any issues regarding discrimination in your host country? What were they, and what advice would you give to future students?

No, very similar to New Zealand.

### **G: Extra-curricular/Social Activities**

What organized activities (clubs, sports, etc.) were available to students? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future exchange students?

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What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays?

Cycling around the city seeing the sights, and visiting different food outlets in different suburbs. Get out and do stuff every weekend – go to all the summer festivals well its super-danish warm.

What opportunities were there for students to work on-campus? Off-campus?

The visa allowed for a working visa also – though never used this during my time. Unsure

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

There were internships of Architecture students though many for students on leave.

### **5 things to take to your host country or region**

1	Laptop - Own personally computer is mandatory in most studios.
2	Warm clothing - Rain/Jacket, Thermals. Danish winters are cold and can drag on into Summer.
3	Iphone or alternative – used for a camera, due to cycling around the city quick snaps are essential
4	Sneakers or walking shoes.
5	Energy!!

### **5 pieces of useful advice would tell a VUW student going to your host university**

1	Winters are very long – but wait for Summer the city completely changes.
2	Meet and socialize with the exchange group but especially the Scandinavians, they are the best!
3	English speaking in Denmark is some of the best in the world – though try and learn some Danish
4	Obviously buy a bicycle in Copenhagen
5	Attend all the guest lectures – some are very famous.

## Top 5 Things to do

What are your 'Top 5 Things To Do' future VUW students at your host university or city/country?

1	Summer in general – the parks, festivals, events
2	Historical city areas of Copenhagen – Christianhavn, Vesterbro, Nørrebro and City centre
3	Distortion Week Festival
4	Different food districts of the city – Meat packing area
5	Christiana

## H: Personal Experience

Please write one paragraph about your exchange experience. Plus, don't forget to submit some photos to the exchange office!!

An exchange in Copenhagen is one of historic and modern architecture exploration, known as one of the most renowned 21<sup>st</sup> century city of cycle lanes and public spaces – Copenhagen is a choice I wouldn't change looking back. As good or better as the images show the city, the feel and vibe is even better. Being able to cycle around the city without any obstacles is not found in many cities in New Zealand or around the world. The school and people are welcoming, but prepare for a rather long and harsh winter that could go till end of May. The month to enjoy the most is June, warm and long light nights are great experiences. Make the most of both the school and city life.



