

# Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

## A: Student Information

|                            |                                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| VUW degree(s)              | Bachelor of Design Innovation (BDI) |
| Major(s)                   | Culture and Context                 |
| Exchange Institution       | University of East Anglia           |
| 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  | \$0    |
| Accommodation  | \$4000 |
| Return Airfare   | \$2735 |
| Local Transportation   | \$200  |
| Meals  | \$2500 |
| Visa   | \$210  |
| Health & Insurance   | \$452  |
| Personal Spending  | \$2500 |
| Communications (phone, etc.)   | \$80   |
| Other fees (specify)   | -      |
| What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected? |        |

How did your financial expenses compare to what you originally expected to spend? **More than expected.**

By what means did you maintain your finances? What would you recommend? (Credit card, foreign bank account, travelers checks, etc)? **I used a debit card which worked well. I also used a credit card as a back up.**

What financial advice would you give students attending the same university as you? **Some ATMs will charge your credit card a lot – try use a partnered bank ATM e.g. Barclays for Westpac.**

What was the average cost of a can of coke or coffee in your host country? **\$6.50 NZD**

**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? **Yes. It was not too difficult. I applied for a UK student visa. The process involves completing an online registration, followed by an appointment with Immigration New Zealand. My passport was then sent to Manila to be processed for a visa, before being sent back to my address in Wellington. The cost was \$210. (My passport was given the wrong stamp so it had to be sent away when I got over to the UK, but my host university kindly took care of the whole process).**

Do you have any advice for future students when applying for visas to your host country? **Get onto it early!**

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? **Unsure**

What insurance company did you use and would you recommend it to future students? **I used STA travel insurance (Allianz). Yes I would recommend it.**

**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</b> |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
| AMAA5025B                   | English                 | ARTH216                           | 20                       | 4            |          |
| AMAA5040B                   | English                 | ARTH212                           | 20                       | 4            |          |
| AMAA5090B                   | English                 | ARTH219                           | 20                       | 4            |          |
|                             |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
|                             |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
|                             |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
| <b>VUW Trimester 2/YEAR</b> |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
|                             |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |
|                             |                         |                                   |                          |              |          |

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**Course Registration/Enrolment**

Please describe the registration process at your host university. What kind of help was available? **Straightforward. Website is very accessible for information and instruction.**

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? **The papers I was enrolled in were my top three choices. Register early and spend some time looking through all the papers available.**

Do you have any advice for future students when choosing and applying for courses? **No**

**Academic Experience**

How did your academic experience differ from your time spend at Victoria? Did the academic experience meet your expectations? **Exceeded expectations. I was more focused because all three of the papers had overlapping themes.**

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 seminars were very inclusive – most seminars consisted of a group discussion where everyone is expected to contribute openly. The workload was of the same level as 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? **Three papers per semester. I can only recommend all of the Art History papers I studied as I really enjoyed them.**

What advice would you give VUW students about succeeding academically at your host university? **Keep up with the set readings each week.**

What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, and internet access at your host university? **Library was excellent, huge collection and database.**

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? **N/A**

## **E: Accommodation**

What form of accommodation did you stay in? **Flat.**

What were the pros and cons of this form of accommodation? **Pros: Good location, close proximity to uni, shops and town. I became good friends with my flatmates. Cons: Shabby bathroom.**

What accommodation would you recommend to future students? **A flat in the golden triangle (surrounding Unthank Road) of Norwich.**

How early can you move into accommodation? **I moved in a week before the semester started.**

What options were available for meal plans or cooking facilities? How satisfied were you with the food? **The flat had full cooking facilities. There were supermarkets 5 minutes walk down the road.**

If you lived in off-campus housing, how easy was it to find? What should future VUW exchange students know about living off-campus? **I found my flat through Home Run.**

Do you have any tips of advice for future students when applying for accommodation? **Have a few options to choose from.**

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

What was it like making friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) students? **I got along easily with my flatmates and became good friends with them all. It took a little longer at university but after I settled in I made a concerted effort to hang about after class and that was how I met everyone in my course.**

What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange country/university? **I adjusted easily to life in Norwich. I spent a lot of time in town walking around or sitting in cafes. It took a little longer at university but as I grew my confidence in participating during seminars I felt more at home.**

What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging? How would you recommend students to prepare for these differences? **Sometimes you have to put on an English accent when saying your name; they couldn't spell mine with my kiwi accent.**

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate? **I enjoyed the neighbourhood pubs, talking to the barber, football, the culture within the art history department at UEA and the diversity of people in Norwich.**

How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students? **They were all very**

welcoming. Locals are friendly and always have time for a conversation. The lecturers and tutors are professional and they all have a very good sense of humour. Cool students. UEA is diverse and everyone is easy to get along with.

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? **All of the aforementioned would fit in at UEA. The uni is very diverse and has a huge offering for all students.**

Did you face any issues regarding discrimination in your host country? What were they, and what advice would you give to future students? **No**

### **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? **There are tons of extra-curricular clubs and events at UEA. I recommend going to the pub quizzes and using the Sportspark.**

What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays? **Visit the churches, Norwich Castle and Cathedral, second-hand stores (Magdalen Street), Cinema City, Pubs, nightclubs (Prince of Wales Road) the market, walk around UEA lake, take a train to other cities or out to the coast.**

What opportunities were there for students to work on-campus? Off-campus? **There are job opportunities on campus such as working in the shop, SU bar, LCR or tutoring etc. Plenty of hospitality jobs off-campus.**

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students? **Not sure.**

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

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | Warm clothing                             |
| <b>2</b> | Tolerant attitude (towards weather)       |
| <b>3</b> | A tablet/ipad.                            |
| <b>4</b> | A gift from native country                |
| <b>5</b> | Willingness to experience British culture |

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

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Willingness to accept invitations to events.                             |
| 2 | Get a bicycle. Norwich is flat.  |
| 3 | Live off-campus to enjoy Norwich City                                    |
| 4 | Hang out on campus to meet people  |
| 5 | Take full advantage of the library at UEA; wonderful range of resources. |

## Top 5 Things to do

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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Visit every church in Norwich to appreciate the history |
| 2 | Go to an exhibition at Sainsbury Centre of Visual Art.  |
| 3 | Go to an 'itchy feet' event at the Crypt.               |
| 4 | Listen to a choir rehearsal in Norwich Cathedral        |
| 5 | Do the UEA 'Pimp my Barrow' event.                      |

## H: Personal Experience

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

**I spent 6 months living in Norwich and studying at the University of East Anglia. Norwich was a major city in England during the medieval period and much of the architecture still remains standing today. My first week in Norwich I recall going for a run in the relentless English rain. Soaked through and jet-lagged, I felt a little displaced while laughing at the wonderfully miserable weather.**

**My Art History seminars and lectures were held in the Sainsbury Centre of Visual Arts. I walked to university every day; through the pavilion and gardens of Eaton Park, and along the southern end of the UEA grounds, passing the lake and Ziggurat buildings.**

**When I had time off from university I caught the bus to London, staying in Hammersmith and Whitechapel. I also visited some of the coastal towns near Norwich, such as Great Yarmouth and Cromer. Occasionally I took the train to Cambridge enjoying the English countryside. At the end of my exchange I had the opportunity to experience Paris and Edinburgh for a few days each.**

