

Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

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

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	BCom
Major(s)	Finance, Economics, Japanese
Exchange Institution	Meiji Gakuin
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	2015 Trimester 1 & 2

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	8000
Return Airfare	2000
Local Transportation	1000
Meals	1000
Visa	100
Health & Insurance	200
Personal Spending	
Communications (phone, etc.)	100
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	N/A

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

I spent more mainly on personal items

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

Foreign bank account

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

Expect a large amount of personal spending

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

One dollar

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. I had to visit the Japanese embassy prior to departure. The visa cost around \$100 and it is best to arrange this at least several weeks prior to departure as it takes some time.

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

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?

The Japanese government has a mandatory health insurance of which amounted to around \$200 after one year

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

Government

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
VUW Trimester 1/YEAR					
Intensive Japanese	Japanese		4		
Practical Japanese	Japanese		2		
Behavioral Economics	English		2		
Independent Study	English		2		
Current Issues	English		2		
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					
Intensive Japanese	Japanese		4		

Practical Japanese	Japanese		2		
Internship B	English		4		
Japanese Society	Japanese		2		

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

Booklet is provided before registration and 2 weeks are allowed to visit courses before registration.

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?

There were no issues in this process.

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

Take time to try different courses before registering

Academic Experience

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

It was a great experience in a vastly different culture. Teaching styles are very different.

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?

Workload varied from course to course, but was not more than the VUW workload

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?

The university will recommend you a certain workload. The Japanese language course is worthwhile.

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

Provided you put some effort into assignments you will be fine

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

Well facilitated with libraries, computers and internet 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?

Language courses were provided. The teachers and program for these courses are very good and definitely worthwhile

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Dorm

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

Well facilitated. Food and washing facilities were provided. Con is that it was far from central Tokyo

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Dorm

How early can you move into accommodation?

The day of orientation

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

Breakfast and Dinner were provided. Rooms included a stove and sink.

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

N/A

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

N/A

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

Speaking the language makes this a lot easier. Just like anywhere if you're willing to put forth the effort you can make great friends.

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

A lot of fun

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

Mannerisms, lifestyle and surroundings are all completely different. It is best not to treat it like your own country and instead enjoy the differences.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

The convenience

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

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?

It is enjoyable regardless of these factors though it may mean different treatment it does not necessarily mean negative treatment. It is an unspoken rule for most Japanese to not talk about the aforementioned sexual orientation despite what they may think.

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

Not necessarily discrimination. It is best to keep in mind that Japan is an isolated country so regardless of your fluency in Japanese speech or mannerisms a foreigner or someone who looks to be a foreigner is a foreigner and is treated as such.

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?

Large varieties of all clubs are provided and advertised at the beginning of trimester 1 so it is easy to find an activity to fit you

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

There are plenty of places around Tokyo to visit on everyday. Otherwise taking overnight stays around Japan is always fun

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

English teaching programs were a possible opportunity. Otherwise a certain level of Japanese would be required to find a reasonable job

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

English teaching internships are available with the university

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	Phone
2	Power adaptors
3	Plenty of Yen
4	Laptop
5	Some kind of GPS(probably your phone)

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

1	Focus on a good experience, visiting plenty of places with plenty of people
2	Have an open mind
3	People from all parts of the world have a lot to offer not only Japanese people but plenty of other exchange students are there to hang out with
4	Try as much different food as you can
5	Different cultures are different

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Eat ramen
2	Taiwan is close by and is definitely the most worthwhile place to visit
3	There is a lot to do everywhere in Tokyo so make sure to see as much as you can
4	Check out special events or holiday events and go out for them
5	Go shopping and buy plenty of souvenirs

H: Personal Experience

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

The exchange experience is something I wouldn't trade for anything else. It's the perfect opportunity to meet friends from all around the globe and form everlasting memories. More important than the study aspect of the experience I think that the chance to take on a foreign lifestyle is eye opening and has changed my own perspective of the wider world. Due to this I would highly recommend the experience to anyone who is unfamiliar with the world outside of New Zealand.