

Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

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

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	LLB, BA
Major(s)	International Relations
Exchange Institution	Copenhagen University
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Tri 1, 2015

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	100
Accommodation	Just over 800 per month. Also a large bond (860) and booking fee (115).
Return Airfare	2050
Local Transportation	70 for a monthly pass (but we mostly biked)
Meals	10
Visa	388
Health & Insurance	410
Personal Spending	6000
Communications (phone, etc.)	20 per month
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Living in Copenhagen can be affordable if you avoid drinking and eating out too often (as the supermarkets have good prices). Travelling in general is pretty expensive, so bring as much spending money as you can.

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

Pretty similar, although I spent more on travel to other countries than I had anticipated.

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

I used a New Zealand debit card, and a "cash passport" when I went to places that used pounds and euros. You can set up a Danish bank account once you have a CPR number, but it isn't essential.

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

Be prepared for how expensive Denmark is! Eating out is considerably more expensive than it is in New Zealand. Be careful with your budgeting because you will probably want to do lots of travel at the end of your stay.

What was the average cost of a can of coke or coffee in your host country? A coffee will cost you five or six NZ dollars.

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?

I applied for a residency visa, but waited to do this until I got to Denmark (as NZ citizens can enter into the country for three months for free). Handing in the application in Denmark saved me around \$400 and a trip to Auckland, so was pretty worthwhile. The only drawback is that I had to wait for it to be processed, so I didn't get a CPR number until a few weeks after my friends who already had visas. You need a CPR to go to the doctor and set up a bank account etc.

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

If you are going to apply once you get to Denmark, print and fill out the forms while in NZ and bring everything with you so that you just have to hand it in when you get there.

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?

No

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

I got my insurance through STA. It cost \$410, I haven't to use it but it seemed very efficient/easy.

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					
State of Emergency, Emergency Powers and Liberal	English	NA	10 ECTS	1	The lecturer for this course was not very good, and it was very straightforward in terms of assessment. Quite

Democracy					boring and I wouldn't recommend (even though the topic sounds really interesting).
Great Trials of Western Legal History	English	Legal History	10 ECTS	3	Interesting topics. Lectures involve group presentations, and the exam is an oral exam. A good interest paper if you like this kind of thing, be prepared to do a group presentation.
Introduction to Danish Law		NA	10 ECTS	3	Great course! Really good lecturers, and you learn a lot about Denmark in general. Exchange students only so a good chance to make friends.
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

The online help was useful and efficient.

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?

I got all of the classes that I wanted. Make sure you register on time and think carefully about the courses that you want, because they do fill up.

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

Academic Experience

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

Uni in Denmark was much easier, and the expectations were lower. There are fewer readings. A bit different to Vic, but pretty good when you are on exchange!

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?

No Socratic method, but otherwise the teaching was similar. Lower 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?

Three courses (I think that is the maximum you can take without special permission). I would definitely recommend the intro to Danish course – it was really fun but also interesting and useful.

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

Be aware of the administrative requirements (when you have to hand things in etc), because lecturers might not help you as much with this as they do at home.

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

Really great facilities all around the city.

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?

I didn't do the Danish language course, but I think that if you are staying for longer than 6 months then you definitely should. Everyone speaks excellent English, and I had no issues with that at Uni.

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Signalhuset (apartments)

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

The apartments are great (and warm), and you get to live with three other flatmates who are either Danes or other exchange students. You get your own room.

Some people think that Signalhuset is too far away, but it is only a 25 minute (at most) bike ride from the city and is located right next to a mall and supermarket.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Signalhuset

How early can you move into accommodation?

Late Jan/early Feb. You may be able to make different arrangements if you are coming early to do a language course.

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

I shared a kitchen with my flatmates and we all did our own cooking.

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

know about living off-campus?

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

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

Very easy to make friends with other exchange students, the law faculty puts on a number of social events at the start of the semester. It is a bit harder to make friends with the Danes, as they tend to be quite reserved. When you apply for courses, you are asked whether you would like a “Danish mentor/buddy” – say yes because this is a really good way to make friends with at least one Dane!

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

Quite easy – it is quite similar to home, and you quickly pick up on any differences.

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

Danes are often very reserved – but this doesn’t mean that they aren’t nice/welcoming, it just means that they are very concerned about respecting your privacy. So, you might have to approach people more than you would at home, as they are less likely to approach you.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

The cycling culture is amazing – bikes get priority everywhere!

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

Very well by everyone.

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?

Easy for all of the above. Denmark is very liberal, and also very respectful of those with disabilities.

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

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?

A similar range to those at home. The law society puts on lots of good social events, so find them on Facebook 😊

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

You will want to travel to other countries when in Europe, but make sure that you see the rest of Denmark! It is very different to Copenhagen and definitely worth seeing.

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

Some people got jobs off campus (although this can be hard if you speak no Danish), but I am not sure if anybody worked on campus.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Lots of volunteer opportunities. You can volunteer at the festivals (Distortion and Roskilde) which is great because you get free entry and lots of other benefits.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	A really warm jacket/coat
2	Maybe an extra bag so that you can bring things back
3	Clothes for winter and spring (a rain jacket!)
4	Medication you might need – going to the doctor is free but medicine isn't subsidized for temporary residents
5	Some passport photos (you need them for some of the Danish forms of ID)

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

1	Start checking your university emails early!
2	Ask your Danish mentor to show you around the campus as things can be hard to find
3	Study at the royal library – it is amazing
4	Look at when the exams are when you pick your courses
5	Approach some of the Danish students in your classes

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Get a bike straight away!
2	Eat cinnamon scrolls at St Peter's bakery (only on Wednesday)
3	Go to the Street Food Market at Paper Island
4	Drink beer by the canals (at Nyhavn)
5	Go to Skagen (at the top of Denmark) and stop at some Danish villages on the way

H: Personal Experience

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

I was extremely excited about exchange, but it exceeded all of my expectations. Copenhagen has been a wonderful city to live in, and everything has gone very smoothly. Being able to travel easily to the rest of Europe was great, and we visited a number of places in weekends and holidays. Signalhuset was a great place to live and to meet other exchange students. I can't think of anything bad to say about my exchange, and will definitely be coming back to Copenhagen!

