

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/BCom
Major(s)	Law & Accounting
Exchange Institution	Univeristy of Copenhagen
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Trimester 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	NZD100
Accommodation	Signalhuset Kollegiet
Return Airfare	NZD1050
Local Transportation	NZD560 (Cost will be lower if you get a bike to bike around. I took the metro instead because it was really cold to cycle during winter).
Meals	NZD800 in total from February to Mid July. I worked part time at a restaurant, so dinner was served all the time and didn't need to get groceries for dinner, therefore, your cost for meals might be higher. Also, I rarely eat out.
Visa	NZD500
Health & Insurance	NZD90 per month.
Personal Spending	NZD2500 inclusive of travels, shopping, etc.
Communications (phone, etc.)	ND50 (Feb-July)
Other fees (specify)	n/a
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Eating out is incredibly expensive – above the average price compared to Wellington.

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

About right as planned.

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

I opened a foreign bank, so I only transferred large sums of money once and therefore only get charged once.

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

- **Budget your weekly expenses – groceries, mobile expense, transport, travels, others.**
- **Find a currency where you're comfortable converting Danish Krona into that currency. NZD is**

easy, but if you're an international student like me and your parents do not earn NZD, then try to find a currency which is easy to calculate.

- Buy currency from the country which uses that particular currency. If you want to get the most value of Danish Krona (DKK), then only exchange for DKK in Denmark as interest charges are highly likely to be lower.

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

Not sure, I don't drink any of the above.

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 apply for one. It was complicated for my case, as I don't hold a NZ passport and my passport was about to expire.
- Because my passport was about to expire, I had to apply for my visa via ST1 Application first, renew my passport after, and send a scanned copy of my new passport to the Danish Consulate.
- The whole process took me 1-2 months.
- NZD500 + as it included cost to renew passport.

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

- Find out what the process is like
- Read through what types of documents you need and prepare them
- Start applying as early as you can as it can take time.

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?

- Health insurance was provided
- Travel, and other kinds of insurance was excluded and it is important to have these in Denmark.

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

- I opened a Danish Bank account and the Bank suggested the YoungLiving insurance scheme for me. Cost me 80-90 per month.

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					
Media Law	English	Elective	15	3	This course was interesting and lecturer

					was good. Lots of group work and presentations, not much reading.
International Energy Law & Sustainability	English	Elective	15	3	Learning in and outside of the classrooms. We got to visit the United Nations City in Denmark, had in-class debates, visited a law firm in Denmark, and had guest lecturers.
Intellectual Property	English	Elective	15	5	Lecturer just read everything from the slide and book. It was also really hard to understand the lecturer. Answers were not provide after the lecture for exercises we in class.
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

- **Host University will email you when you can register for your courses. There is helpful information on their website & contact for you to email if you're still unsure.**

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?

- **Yes, Register early as every Master course only allows 45-50 students per class.**

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

- **Pick a course that explores an International field as you get to learn the law in European &**

International context.

Academic Experience

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

- **There was more group work a presentation**
- **We got to mix around with students all over Europe & even with the danes themselves.**
- **Mode of transport was environmentally friendly, but scary at first when cycling on the main highway/roads.**

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?

- **We had to present or work in groups every week.**
- **Workload as a little bit less as we worked in groups.**
- **Lecturer would then discuss further about the case that we presented**
- **Lots of guest lecturers that work in that area of law will help provide insights to the module an visits to law firms as well as UN City**

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?

- **10-15 hours a week to read, study, and prepare for presentations.**
- **Media Law was really fun and so was Energy Law. We got to learn in a different way in both courses, and content was really interesting.**
- **Denmark is also one of the many countries that is efficient and energy resources and renewable, therefore, this course is an advantage. It covers Danish, European, & International Law in relation to energy & renewables.**

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

- **Pay attention in class! (even if you didn't do your readings).**

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

- **Average.**

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?

Apartment student accommodation

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

- **You got to meet people from different parts of the world and open yourself up to different cultures and behaviours**

- **Close to the metro and right opposite field's shopping mall.**
- **The accommodation left us to bear the cost of changing light bulbs which cost a lot. Furniture and broken furniture were dealt with different entities, and it took really long for them to fix it.**

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Apartment like and one close to the metro.

How early can you move into accommodation?

Only on the dates specified in the contract you sign.

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

I lived in a self-catered hall.

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?

- **Apply early!**
- **Find accommodation close to your campus as it will cost you more to travel by metro if you live further away/ longer to bike to campus.**
- **There are halls which are less social, if you like more peace & quiet after a certain time, then apply for that.**

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

- **It was easy if you opened your mind to it, show interest, & smile.**
- **Danes are very reserved, therefore, you will have to make the first move.**
- **Practice some of your French/German/ Spanish/Mandarin/Japanese (if you speak any) as a way of making friends with other international students in your class/accommodation. One of my flatmates knew German and Mandarin, and knowing the other person's culture & language made it easier to make friends. He got to practice his Mandarin with me and his German with my other flatmate. We all ended up learning some new words.**

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

- **It was interesting to accept how things worked & how people behaved, especially how reserved they were.**

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

- **Punctuality is key! Always keep track of time and plan your journey**
- **Eating out is expensive and the cost of living is expensive (especially metros and trains). Budget if you like or keep track of your spendings. Budget brands in grocery stores are surprisingly good**

quality.

- **Everyone dresses really well and look effortlessly cool. Try to dress your best. 😊**

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

- **I appreciated how punctual people were and how cycling is their means of transport.**
- **The fact that Danes were willing to speak English if you are unable to speak Danish as compared to other European/Scaninavic countries.**
- **Also appreciate how well they look after themselves and how they carry themselves (the way they dress themselves) + their wellbeing.**

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

- **Treated as well as Danes, some even assumed I spoke Danish.**
- **University, Lecturers, and Faculty were really nice, friendly, & helpful.**
- **Other students were friendly as everyone was in a new environment and wanted to get to know each other.**

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 would be hard for students on wheel chairs because the building where my lectures were held only had a few steps to walk up to. There were no lifts.**
- **As for others, there will be no problem.**

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?

- **Student get together and games were organized and held at the student hall, during orientation for the first 2 weeks inclusive of pub hopping, scenic tours, ice breakers, university introduction, etc.**
- **Join ESN Copenhagen as they provide discounts for travels and etc. They also help plan activities and excursions inside and out of Denmark.**

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

- **During winter, it's your chance to find a cozy and warm cafes, try out a typical Danish breakfast/brunch, pastries, hot drink.**
- **When it gets warmer, explore further outside of Denmark, Scandinavia, or plan for some cheap trips to Eastern Europe, such as Latvia, Estonia, Prague, Budapest, etc.**

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

- **I found quite a few part time work available. You just have to *LOOK/SEARCH* for it. If you don't**

find any, you're not TRYING.

- I worked part time at a Japanese Restaurant & they will hire if you are willing to put in the hours (I worked 15 hours a week) & learn their complex and thick menu. This means you might have to sacrifice most of social activities depending when your shifts are.
- They do not only hire those with Japanese background or those who are only able to speak Japanese. I only spoke English and those who worked there came from all over the world – Nepal, Japan, Denmark, China, India, etc.
- Email some of the places or even walk in and hand in your CV.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

- Not too sure about internships.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	Warm clothes! Merinos,thermals, so that you wear fewer layers
2	Adapter for chargers
3	Thick socks
4	Good backpack for travels (better if it is waterproof)
5	Sports/tramping/hiking shoes

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

1	Be resourceful
2	Be Independent
3	But also know who to depend on
4	Be considerate, patient, and open minded
5	Show interest

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Go to Iceland, Sweden, Norway. Scandinavia beauty is a whole new level.
2	Backpack around Eastern Europe because it is dirt cheap and so beautiful!
3	But don't forget to explore Denmark itself – visit the Sand Dunes, North Jutland etc
4	Plan your trips in advance!
5	It's perfectly fine to travel solo to Iceland and Eastern Europe. I felt safer in Budapest and Prague than in Munich! Remember to still apply basic common sense though.

H: Personal Experience

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

I delayed my graduation by a semester and I don't regret it one single bit. I got to meet so many people, travelled 14 countries, learnt the law in a European context, exposed myself to so many types of cultures, and even picked up a new language. I could have graduated & gotten a job, but that's not what education is about (at least I don't think). I wanted to see the world and I did. This experience is one in a lifetime because I was able to travel as a student and study at the same time. I got to travel with friends & got to get student discounts everywhere I went. I got to pick up a different language as I got to expose myself to many diverse cultures around me and started to adopt a different mindset. I grew close to my friends and we had a lot of fun travelling around Europe together. To study abroad for six months was definitely not enough, I would suggest a year as you will get to know the city better and six months will only give you enough time to settle down. Going on an exchange is also a good way to get out of your own country and explore the world – Is the grass greener on the other side?



