

Victoria Abroad Evaluation Form

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

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	Bachelor of Humanities and Social Sciences
Major(s)	Media Studies, International Relations
Exchange Institution	Jean Moulin Lyon 3
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	-
Accommodation	2500NZD
Return Airfare	2300NZD
Local Transportation	50NZD/month
Meals	3000NZD
Visa	Around 150NZD
Health & Insurance	700NZD altogether (travel, housing, social)
Personal Spending	7000NZD
Communications (phone, etc.)	30NZD/month
Other fees (specify)	Insurance and bonds eg at residence
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	Always costs a lot settling in and definitely be careful of extra obligatory insurance/bonds you need to pay. I had around 600NZD extra I paid unexpectedly. Also just have the basic mindset that things will go wrong/missing/stolen when travelling as it is part of the experience too – so always have backup money for that.

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

I think I predicted the right amount in terms of just the lifestyle in Lyon. However, I did a lot more travelling than I had expected! However with the meals, transport, extra fees, personal spending, etc, I spent as I had prepared.

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

I went to my bank here and got a Cash Passport which I would highly recommend. I think it's offered by every NZ bank. It is very convenient as you can simply transfer NZD to EU into the Cash Passport account with a \$1 fee each time. It takes 2-3 days to transfer. I also opened up another account in France with BNP because I found it would have been more convenient with solving local issues, eg reimburse of bond, getting money back for things, identity proof for rent, etc. However it does take much longer (1-2 weeks) to

transfer and usually have to pay huge fees from both NZ and FR bank to complete the transfer.

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

When you first arrive you'll be asked to pay for/get proof of payment for housing insurance, and social insurance (which only the non-EU students must pay). I paid around 50EU for housing insurance with BNP and 200EU for social insurance with the University. Also, bear in mind that if you are sorting out your accommodation/residence with L'association Lyon 3, not only will you have to pay the association a bond, but also the residence itself. For that I paid around another extra 200EU.

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

Coffee (espresso, which everyone drinks! Beware no flat whites...) was around 1EU, can of coke 1.50EU

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 and it wasn't so difficult. Just make sure you have all the documents required as listed on the website of the French embassy. The only annoying thing was that it was located in Wellington so had to make a trip back down from home in the holidays. Sometimes the visa can take a long time so get it sorted as soon as you have all the papers

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

As said above, get onto it as soon as you can.

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?

Housing insurance 50eu, social security 200eu

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

For the housing I used BNP Pariba bank, and social security through university.

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					
Course d'initiation à la culture Française	All courses were in French	French culture	15	5	Very crammed but productive lectures with a range of coverage of the French culture from history, music, art, urbanization, etc.

Français langue étrangère		French language, level depends on how well you do on the first test	15	5	Favourite class where it helped exchange students improve their French language
Connaissance des sources d'information			15 (100-level)	2	100-level course where it was so easy it made the class boring. Basically the lecturer was old and was trying to teach us how to use the internet
Le fait urbain, les relations ville-campagne		Urbanisation	20 (100-level)	3-4	It was an interesting class getting to learn about how cities were made and the agglomeration processes. A lot of terms had to be memorised
Mondialisation et développement		Globalisation and development	20 (100-level)	3	Interesting subject in general but was hard to understand the lecturer and he used a lot of statistical data
Mediations documentaires et processus éditoriaux			15 (200-level)	3	Title very misleading and content very boring
Société et culture numérique		Digital culture and society	20 (300-level)	4	Although the course was very unorganized, the content was very good and interesting

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

Compared to the NZ administration system, the French system is much slower and sometimes takes a lot of time waiting in queues, getting questions answered, following up with teachers, etc. At Lyon 3 there was the International Office but help was quite minimal.

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 took were completely different to what I had expected with little relevance to my majors, despite the subject titles. There is not much information available about what type of course it will be, and course catalogues do not exist.

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

Just try out subjects that interest you and later change if they don't suit – I think we had the first 2 weeks to add/drop courses.

Academic Experience

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

It was difficult at first because there are no substantive course outlines/exam/assignment deadlines. It was basically required of us to chase down lecturers to give us an idea of it all. Half my courses didn't have readings either, and it's also common that the teachers don't use powerpoint or Moodle (Lyon 3's Blackboard)

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?

Although for 1 semester I took 7 papers, workload did not seem that much in compared to VUW. Tutorials were just like a reading comprehension class whereas lectures were just taking notes – not much conversation like the classes here.

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?

I think 7-8 papers are doable (around 30pts). Even if you're not confident with your French I would recommend taking higher level classes as the 100-level are too easy and the content can be boring.

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

Go to the lectures and tutorials and make friends with other students in your class!

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

Definitely different from Victoria where there is a friendly social atmosphere. Overall Victoria is much better in providing better quality rooms, computers, and library facilities. However, Lyon 3 had some great options for food/cafeterias.

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?

Even if you are taking courses in English or French, there will be a brief test at the start of the semester to put you into French language classes accordingly by level.

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

Residence – CROUS Andre Allix

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

Pro's is that (depending on which building you are staying) it is clean and new. It is also very cheap in compared to other options. Con's is that it is on a hill

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

I would suggest going into a flat to gain a more authentic experience

How early can you move into accommodation?

I believe you can get your key as soon as you get there

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

The residence was huge and had its own cafeteria. There were also nice bakeries/dairies around. Other than that I had a shared kitchen on my floor – everyone treated it well and so it was clean. We also had a large table so had time to socialize with other people during meals

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

Mine was quite far away, around 30 minutes to get to university. It would be convenient to find accommodation in the city centre or near university

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

Google maps the location and see if it's on a hill, near the city, near university, etc.

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 very easy making international friends but not so much with the local people. However there are options to have a "French buddy" from University.

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

There were a few frustrations and adjustments at first, but took no longer than a month to adjust.

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

The most frustration was the administration system and getting things sorted out. A lot of banks, offices, etc are closed for 2 hours during their lunch breaks too, so need to dodge those hours to resolve errands.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

The relaxed attitude where people did not really seem to stress out. French people always look nice too and it was cool getting to see them have a good time with a glass of wine and a cigarette at the end of their day.

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

Unlike the stereotype French people were not so rude. Of course there are always the exceptions, but most were generally quite helpful. Sometimes they were quite lazy in doing so, however.

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?

No problems with minorities – people are quite liberal and believe in the freedom of speech, rights, etc (which is probably why they have so many protests)

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

My parents are from Korea, so there were a couple of times where I felt discrimination against Asian people, for example the women at the office at the residence.

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 activities provided eg sports,gym or joining the orchestra. Every now and again there would be cheap trip deals ie skiing, visiting Geneva, etc, where it is of a benefit to participate. It is usually much cheaper than organizing a trip by yourself, and you get to meet other French students

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

There are a lot to do in Lyon, like visiting museums and the Notre Dame, Vieux Lyon, etc. On weekends there is a good night life as well with lots of bars and clubs. Of course, if there was enough time off, take a trip to other cities or countries!

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

Question not so applicable to my exchange experience.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Again, could not answer this question, but in general there seemed like a lot more opportunities for internships than offered here in NZ.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	Cash currency passport
2	Good camera
3	NZ souvenirs to give to new friends
4	Old clothes because if you're a girl you will definitely go shopping and won't have to worry about having too much stuff when leaving
5	Warm clothes (if going during winter)

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

1	Be prepared to wait long hours sorting administration stuff
2	Do some pre-reading about Lyon or other cities you would like to visit – good places to visit, the history
3	In terms of travel, within France Ouigo is a very cheap train service, and blablacar is another good way of travelling around Europe. Although it is by car and may take time, it is a good experience and cheaper.
4	Don't stress out if things don't work out, they eventually will
5	If you're living far away from University or the city get the 28eu transport card. With a French number Freemobile is the cheapest

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Fouvier
2	Vieux Lyon
3	Drink by the riverside
4	1eu beers at Cosmopolitan on Mondays
5	Local museums

H: Personal Experience

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

The overseas exchange was the best decision I had ever made. Going to France has always been on the top of my bucket list, and it was a great honour to have pursued my goal through VicOE. Going on an exchange means not only being overseas, but having the ability and time to mingle with the locals, learn a new culture, and indulge oneself to a whole new city never imagined before. The best part for me was getting to create strong bonds with people all over the world; people that have taught me and inspired me the most from the exchange programme. I was truly spoiled by such varied companions. Spending six months in France also meant that I wasn't on an isolated island like New Zealand anymore! I took great advantage of this and was blessed enough to have travelled a lot of countries too! I have no regrets at all in having chosen Lyon as my destination, as it has opened my eyes to a whole new level of perspectives, and as I was able to improve the beautiful French language.



