

Vic OE Evaluation Form

PLEASE TYPE THIS EVALUATION FORM & EMAIL IT TO VIC OE AS A WORD DOCUMENT

A: Student Information

VUW degree(s)	BA
Major(s)	Film and English Literature
Exchange Institution	Universite Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Tri 2 2013 - Tri 1 2014

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	155
Accommodation	4625
Return Airfare	1493
Local Transportation	570
Meals	3080
Visa	-
Health & Insurance	73
Personal Spending	1540
Communications (phone, etc.)	47
Other fees (specify)	428 dollars enrolment fee
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	There is some very cheap phone credit. I ended up only paying around 2 euros a month for unlimited texting and two hours calling. I didn't expect to have to pay so much for the enrolment process. Always carry a check book with you!

How did your financial expenses compare to what you originally expected to spend?
They went slightly over what I expected mainly because of the price of food in Paris and the fact that they make you pay for pretty much everything you do / want to visit.

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

If going for a year I would definitely recommend opening a bank account. The Credit Mutuel didn't charge me anything to open and uphold a bank account with them. And it's very easy to transfer funds if you run out.

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

If you're going to travel around France you MUST book in advance because the SNCF will rip you off any chance they get. Prices can double or even triple in the space of a few days. Otherwise do your grocery shopping at places like Lidl or Auchan because food prices will bite you in the bum.

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

A black coffee can range from 1.50 euro at the counter in "popular" quarters to 5 euros in the centre of town. A lot are around 2.50.

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?

No.

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

No.

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?

Yes. We had a choice between two "mutuelles etudiantes". I went for the LMDE (the name of the other one escapes me but they will tell you). The whole thing was very confusing but in the end I ended up paying 47 euros for the year and that allowed me to get a carte vitale, the card with your social security number.

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

LMDE. It was pretty useless to be honest. I needed to get new glasses because I lost a pair and I didn't end up getting refunded because I didn't have time to come up with all the paperwork they wanted me to send them.

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					
Histoire de l'art	French	ARTH200	8	4	
Philosophie de l'art	//	FILM200	8	4	
Le cinema parlant	//	FILM200	10	3	
Atelier pratique, Pratique du montage numerique	//	FILM222	12	3	
Theatre and spanish (compulsory options)	//		12	2	
Etude de films parlants	//	FILM200	10	2	
VUW Trimester 2/YEAR					
Histoire de l'art	French	ARTH200	8	4	
Cinema et psychoanalyse	//	FILM300	8	3	
Le cinema moderne	//	FILM300	10	3	
Esthetique et theories du cinema	//	FILM300	10	4	
Photography and spanish	//		12	2	
Atelier pratique video et Post-prod numerique	//	FILM332	12	5	we had to make an animation film which was really hard if you hadn't done anything like that before.

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

Because the campus I was at was very small I only had to deal with one lady who took care of my registration so it was pretty easy. The only trouble was that all the other students registered online and I had to go in and show each professor a piece of paper describing my

situation and ask them to add me to their list. Because of the number of students, many refused to do this so I had to ask and ask and ask.

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?

In the end I got into all the courses. They are fixed courses anyway. If you do the film course, you do all and only the film courses. I would just say stay calm and keep going back and asking until you get what you want. The French love a haggle and a good bit of drama but they will generally give in in the end.

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?

I found it rather frustrating that most students just sat and chatted at the back at every lecture. It genuinely made it hard to concentrate. Other than that everyone was very friendly and because the campus was tiny there was a stronger sense of community than at Vic where everyone seems quite separate.

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 workload got more intense as the semester went on. There are a lot less internal assessments and they tend to be quite late in the semester. I would be inclined to say that there is more work to do at Victoria though.

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?

As I already stated, if you choose to do say Film, then you have to do all the film courses that are on offer in your year and they constitute full-time uni, 120 credits.

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

Unfortunately there is a lot of learning off by heart to be done. Whatever you do, make sure you say that you're an exchange student on the tests so that they don't mark you as severely.

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

There is WIFI of course but the computer facilities otherwise are very limited. You really need a laptop. It wasn't possible to print anything off for the first half of the year, then they got it fixed. The library at the Centre St Charles (the campus I was at) was very small and closed early but it had almost all the books recommended by the lecturers.

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 am lucky enough to know French so I was fine but most exchange students did a week-long FLE workshop upon arrival to get them up to speed.

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

At first I stayed with some distant relatives, then I found a small studio just outside of Paris, in "sous-location".

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

I couldn't get any grants from the government because it wasn't declared - this happens a lot in France. Everything was included in the price though so I didn't have to worry about any bills or anything. It was nice to have some private space to come back to because Paris is such a hectic city it can be quite stifling.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

If you can find a good flatting situation then that's probably the most fun.

How early can you move into accommodation?

Whenever you want.

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

I just had a little stove, a microwave and a fridge. Food in France is delicious of course.

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

Most students in Paris have little flats so it's quite normal for folks to all go home their separate ways at the end of the night.

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

Websites don't always help. If you can talk to people they are more likely to have a solution for you. I scouted the net for nearly a month and didn't find anything.

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

There were not many exchange students at my campus so I had to make friends with "locals". But then it turned out that not many parisians are actually from Paris so I made friends with people from different parts of France. It was rather strenuous at first but then i started speaking to a few people and it happened rather naturally.

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

Very easy it's such a cool culture.

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

I found that parisians don't really like talking to strangers and you really have to gain their trust before going further. They are also very stressed-out. You had better know where you're going in the metro or you'll get stampeded. People pay a lot of attention to their appearance. It's not a lie when they say wear your best clothes to Paris. No pressure.

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

I love their eating habits, taking the time to eat with friends and have a decent break.

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

It was a real mix of helpful people and people determined to be unhelpful and waste your time. The students and uni staff were generally very cool.

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?

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?

There was a whole sporting association which had plenty for everyone. I would recommend continuing the sport you were doing in NZ if you had one or picking something new and rolling with it. That was you get to meet a lot of local students. Not that great on the club front though.

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

Catch the train out to places around Paris that are a mere hour away. You can do that in small groups and make it really fun. PLaces like Reims, Orleans, le Mans have lots of interesting history and beautiful cathedrals. And during the holidays just visit another place in Europe. i caught the plane to Berlin and Barcelona and the bus to Amsterdam.

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

There were very little job opportunities around campus but it's possible to find bar/cafe jobs or baby sitting and english teaching jobs around town.

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Internships normally take place during the summer so not much. I didn't pay too much attention to volunteering unfortunately.

5 things to take to your host country or region

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | Classy clothes |
| 2 | Sensible shoes for exploring the city |

3	Sleeping Bag
4	Your appetite
5	Your sense of inner calm: you'll need it to face french bureaucracy

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

1	Sort out your accommodation before you start study. It's very stressful having to attend a new uni and not having a proper flat to go home to.
2	Jump straight in and invite people to go out and do fun things in the evening. The french love showing people round so it'll be easy to find things to do.
3	Write down everything the lecturer says about assessments in the first class. They don't have course outlines so it is very easy to forget to hand something in.
4	Having said that they are quite lenient with hand-ins so don't panic about it.
5	

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Enjoy a beer or glass of wine on the banks of the seine.
2	Visit and re-visit the Shakespeare and Co bookstore. It has great reading seats.
3	Oberkampf (and places around the 11th arrondissement) is the place to be for a night out.
4	Grab a velib and bike through the city. Everything looks better and it's really cheap!
5	Cue up outside the Comedie Francaise at 7pm for 5 euro theatre tickets.

H: Personal Experience

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

After several weeks of finding the snobbish attitude of many parisiens a pleasant source of entertainment, the novelty began to wear off and I "settled" into the daily whirlwind that was catching the metro and stumbling into my first lecture, croissant and coffee in hand. I attended a division of the UFR 04, itself a division of Paris 1, itself a division of Pantheon-Sorbonne, which in itself is a significant segment of the original Sorbonne university. All in all, I was in the thick of things, studying Film in a beautiful city where each cobble-stone echoes loudly with the sound of centuries of high heels. From a spontaneous dance where we followed a brass band from one end of the city to another, to a pretty hard-out Mary Poppins-style rooftop expedition, it was worth the sore feet to feel part of the city and grasp at its wonder. The people I met on my exchange I have no doubt will remain life-long friends, and I would not have it any other way. Go fry some french frogs while you have the chance (they're remarkably easy to catch!).

