

Student Evaluation Form

A. Student Information

Degree(s) enrolled in at VUW	Bachelor of Science
Major(s)	Biotechnology, Cell and Molecular Bioscience
Exchange Institution	University of Western Ontario
VUW Trimester(s) and Year of Exchange	Trimester 1 2012

B. Finances

Please provide an estimate on how much you spent on your exchange (in your host country's currency).

Food & personal spending	CA \$1280
Accommodation	CA \$3335
Return Airfare	NZ \$2750
Local Travel	CA \$1000
Books, misc. levies (e.g. student association)	CA \$585
Visa	-
Insurance	NZ \$404
Other (please specify)	
	Total = CA \$6200 + NZ \$3154

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

It was fairly similar to what I expected to spend. I spent less on food because I decided to cook my own instead of have residence catering but weekend trips away ended up costing more than I expected.

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

I used my credit card which I kept topped up with my student allowance each week, my parents gave me a fortnightly allowance and I had some money saved up before leaving NZ.

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

If you live somewhere with the facilities to cook your own food I recommend that over the residence catering. Don't bother to buy the textbooks unless you think you'll really need them, they have several libraries and plenty of held copies you can check out.

Were there any extra or unexpected costs which future students should be aware of?

Not really

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

CA \$1.20 for a coffee (drip)

Please submit your completed Evaluation form, photos and Consent form to the Exchange Office via email (exchangestudents@vuw.ac.nz).

C. Visas & Insurance

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

You don't need a student visa when you are going for only one semester in Canada (less than 6 months)

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

House of Travel travel insurance, I would recommend it as you can customize it to what you need from your insurance.

C. Academics

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 (if applicable)	VUW points/credits value	Rating (1-5)	Comments
BIOLOGY 3593B Genetic Engineering	English		15	2	Similar to BTEC101/201 but focuses only on plant techniques
BIOLOGY 3660B Advanced Plant Physiology	English		15	4	A lot to learn but I found it extremely interesting
CHEMISTRY 3393B Medicinal Chemistry	English		15	3	
PHILOSOPHY 2700G Intro to ethics and value theory	English	PHILOSOPHY 106 Contemporary ethical issues	15	3	

How did you find the teachers at your exchange university?

All of the professors are nice, helpful and have a good sense of humour.

How did your academic experience differ from your time spend at Victoria?

Very similar, the campus was a lot bigger and Canadians have a very strong study ethic.

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How did your academic experiences differ from what you expected?

Didn't really differ from what I was expecting

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

Make sure you know how the course structure works as some papers are taught over the whole year not just one semester.

D. Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

On campus residence apartments, called Lambton Hall.

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

The apartment building I was in was good for socializing with all the other international/exchange students, it was nice being close to everybody but it didn't give me the opportunity to meet many Canadians compared to people that lived off campus. I really enjoyed my accommodation, especially being so close to campus.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

Depends what sort of thing you're after, I really liked where I stayed.

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

My accommodation was done through the exchange office as I applied for on campus residence. If you do the same make sure you ask about move in dates as it's different to the first year halls and that's the only information they give you about residences but its not all relevant to exchange students.

F. Culture

What were some of the hardest cultural differences you faced while abroad?

None really, it's a very similar culture, it's a bit weird with the cars driving on the otherside of the road but you get used to that quickly.

How would you recommend students to prepare for these differences?

You'll figure it out once your there, there's not much to prepare for.

Did you face any issues regarding discrimination in your host country? Besides the occasional usual banter about New Zealand everyone is lovely.

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G. Personal Response

I was nervous going on exchange as I've never travelled just by myself before but soon after arriving I met a big group of people, exchange students and Canadians and was having the time of my life. I loved the campus, it's so big and pretty and it was interesting being in the snowy environment. I found the classes easy to follow and all the lecturers were willing to help if needed. I did a lot of bus travel to see the main cities around London, ON. I went to New York, Chicago, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Niagara Falls, all with other exchange students during term time. Then to Vancouver once the semester was over. I didn't deny any experiences and found a good balance between doing all the activities I wanted to do and keeping up with school work, I definitely think it's important to experience as much as you can while you're there. I really wish I'd been there for the whole Canadian academic year, the time just went too quickly. I made so many good friends and it's sad to think I'll probably never get the chance to see them again but I will definitely always remember this experience, it's been truly amazing, thanks Vic OE!

DO AN EXCHANGE! You won't regret it 😊



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