

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 Commerce
Major(s)	Management and Marketing
Exchange Institution	WHU Otto Beisheim School of Management
VUW Tri & Year of Exchange	Tri 1 2016

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	\$0 as all the readings are on Moodle
Accommodation	\$2200
Return Airfare	\$2400
Local Transportation	€60
Meals	Around €10 per meal in a restaurant, around €40 per week on groceries
Visa	€100 for a residence permit
Health & Insurance	\$400
Personal Spending	
Communications (phone, etc.)	€15 per month
Other fees (specify)	
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were more or less than expected?	I lost my phone so I had to pay the excess on my insurance. Travelling increases the cost of your trip by a lot, but everyone goes away at the weekend.

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

I exceeded my original budget due to travelling on last minute trips or poor planning. Everything in Vallendar

was cheaper than what I expected.

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

Use an OneSmart card! Not only can you buy currencies when the NZD is up, but you also collect airpoints for every NZD100 spent. I bought my flight home from Auckland with my airpoints.

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

Living in Vallendar is so cheap in comparison to the rest of Europe! Budget money for weekend trips.

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

Both €2.

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?

The International Relations Office will give you all the information during orientation. There is a residence permit that they will give you all the forms for and costs €100.

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

Get your forms handed to the IRO on 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?

Insurance was mandatory.

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

I would recommend STA Travel as it was cheap and they paid out within the week when I lost my phone.

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					
German 1.1	English	GERM 103		1	Pretty basic German class.

Venutre Capital Organizations	English	MGMT 3XX		3	Kind of more a finance class.
Competing on Emerging Industries	English	MGMT 317		2	Really interesting course on emerging industries.
Sustainable Urban Development	English	ECON XXX		1	Interesting, but really fluffy and focuses a lot on German cities.
International Management	English	IBUS 212		1	Pretty standard introductory international management course.
Digital Marketing	English	MARK 312		2	This was one of my favourite courses.

Course Registration/Enrolment

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

There was an information session on registering for courses. The website was not user-friendly and courses open at different times. The IRO will answer any questions you have.

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 into all the classes I wanted to. There were lots of places, so do not worry about missing out.

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

Some lecture are quite long. There are no tutorials, so it's all just lectures with discussion as the class sizes are quite small (40ish). Usually, there is a group project so just get stuff done on time.

Academic Experience

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

It's a lot of content to get through but the difficulty of the content is not necessarily harder. The semester is split into two 'quarters' which run for about six weeks and then an exam week. Since there are only six lectures for each course, the lectures could be around three and a half hours where they cram the info.

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?

At WHU, it is less about analysis and more about understanding the concepts. The assignments are less intense than VUW but you often have a shorter timeframe for individual assignments.

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?

Any German course! I did the most basic German course and it really helped when travelling around Germany.

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

In group projects, some groups will assign 'Tauschies' a very light workload. Do not get offended as the whole school understands that international students tend to travel a lot. Exams are often an hour and short answers or multi-choice rather than essay questions. Just know what is in the slides and have a cursory glance at the readings and you should be good. Some courses have an intense workload and some don't but it's really hard to tell. A lot of my friends only had two classes a week while others had four group projects due within a week. Everyone here is very intense about grades because it is competitive to get accepted as a domestic student. Be ready to work hard for grades and pull your weight. Keep in mind that half of the people in your class will end up being VPs or fund managers at big firms. I was relatively relaxed and it made Vic feel like a liberal arts school, despite having the same majors as WHU students.

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

I found printing to be cheap and WIFI fast. Didn't really visit the library much.

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?

Everyone speaks English at WHU and you can get by fine in Vallendar, and Germany, with just English.

E: Accommodation

What form of accommodation did you stay in?

CKK - An block of studio apartments for both domestic and international students.

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

Pros: cheap, everything was included (linen, kitchen utensils, etc), power and internet provided, living around students, the landlord was really helpful, close to campus.

Cons: none.

What accommodation would you recommend to future students?

CKK!

How early can you move into accommodation?

A couple of days before the official start of semester. An early move-in can be arranged with the landlord.

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

There is a kitchenette with all your normal cooking utensils. No oven though.

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?

There are so many options for housing, so do not stress!

F: Personal & Cultural Connections

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

The international students tend to stick together. You get a local buddy who is a great gateway to local students. However, there are plenty of opportunities (group work, parties, clubs, etc) to become friends with local students.

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

There really isn't a big cultural difference between NZ and Germany. Recycling is big in Germany. Sarcasm isn't.

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

n/a

What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?

Just walking down the Rhine during early Spring. Having a beer at Biergartens. Being a train ride or a flight away from an European city.

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

Respected, valued. I didn't feel like they looked down on international students or anything. If anything, international students were treated very well and given a lot of leeway.

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?

Very easy, could not see any kind of discrimination. There was a LGBT and equality group at WHU.

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

Lost my phone at a party (they hold parties in a cellar on campus, with FREE BEER), go to the police station and bluff your way through a report. Claim travel insurance. You have to report the loss first!!!!

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?

SO MANY. Are you into sports? They have a gym for €6 a semester!!! I never joined but I heard it was sehr gut! They had yoga, rowing, basketball, volleyball, HIIT, etc. Just join the gym for sports. There's a theatre group, slam poetry, finance club, start-up club, social entrepreneurship club. Some of them are in German but if you're competent, you should be all good.

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

TRAVEL. Cologne Airport is about an hour on the train and Ryanair operates out of it. So many cheap flights, so little time.

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

A couple of German students worked at the student cafe Korova but it may be difficult to find a part-time job in Vallendar, even if you spoke German (it's a small town).

What volunteer or internship opportunities were there for students?

Fundraising concert if you're a singer or musician. Tbh, I was away for a lot of the time so idk. There were a lot of emails sent out about careers and internships if you want to work after the semester ends. Not sure about the pay and terms though.

5 things to take to your host country or region

1	Layers
2	\$\$\$
3	Milo
4	NZ food recipes for the cultural dinner and Tauschi Tuesday (I made vodka gummies)
5	An open mind

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

1	Learn how to say 'WHU' in German (vee-ha-oo)
2	Learn the WHU chant because it will be chanted in the club
3	Appreciate Deutsche Bahn and get a Bahncard (sampler 25% for €19 for 3 months, and then buy another sampler if needed)
4	Bring a good smartphone, I recommend the Sony Xperia Z3 compact
5	Choose your courses wisely

Top 5 Things to do

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

1	Travel around Europe!!!!!!
2	Drink lots of German beer!!!
3	Drink lots of local beer at the places you travel to!
4	Buy Spotify premium for your travels.
5	Study to get good grades!

H: Personal Experience

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

Oh my god. I did not want to come back to Victoria. Do yourself a favour, go on exchange for a year. You will meet so many people that you click with and you would have never met them if not for going on exchange. You need to travel. You need to see the sights. NZ is so far from the hubs of different cultures, histories and experiences, you need to further your horizon for your own sake. Everywhere you go, it's just an eye-opening experience. Even if you've been there before, you get to see it through a new lens and do what you want to do (and not what's on your parents' itinerary). You WILL find people to travel with, you will find new friends. Booze up, study hard, and go on exchange! I don't want to serenade you with Sinatra but 'there's such a lot of world to see'.



The Sahara.





Typical train home on the Rhine.



Barcelona v Getafe (Barca won, dw)



Krakow, Poland. Alcohol is v cheap but there is so much to do in the city. Also, go to Auschwitz!!
(I've been to Cambodia but I legit thought I was going to cry @Auschwitz)

Nice, France. I loved this place@

