

Post Study Abroad Evaluation

THE BASICS				
Your Name	[REDACTED]			
Your Program of Study/Year	GDMA YEAR 3			
Host Country	NEW ZEALAND			
Host School/Agency	UNITEC → Graphic Design + Animation (GDA) program			
Participation Dates	JULY - NOV 2012			
Type of Study Abroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exchange	<input type="checkbox"/> Practicum	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
GENERAL EVALUATION				
Please rate your overall exchange experience on a scale of 1 to 10 (one being poor and 10 being exceptional)			8	
In a couple of sentences, explain why you rated your experience the way you did.	Support for international students and the country/city life was great. But student accomodation and unitec design instruction and grading I didn't like.			
ARRIVAL				
How difficult was it for you to obtain your travel documents (visa, etc.)? <small>*Always verify immigration regulations with the consulate or embassy of your host country*</small>	Lots of paperwork to complete to get a student visa for New Zealand. Trying to register for credits and courses at unitec properly was difficult. I was late at applying for housing so I didn't get my first choice.			
Describe your transportation arrangements to your host country. Would you change any part of those arrangements?	Flight. Vancouver → LA → Fiji → New Zealand			
How was your experience clearing customs and immigration upon arrival in your host country? Any surprises?	Everything was fine. Just had to show my student visa to prove I was going to NZ to study at Unitec.			
Describe how you traveled to your host facility. How long did it take and how much did it cost?	Campus was only 20 min drive from airport. School can pick you up or you take a shuttle. So arrival was pretty easy. \$95 - \$60 dollars.			
ORIENTATION AND ASSISTANCE				
How satisfied were you with the orientation and assistance available to at your host school/agency.	Unitec International office offered a good orientation and initial student set up. But there were a lot of students wanting help.			
What help did you receive from				

the international staff or office? What was your impression of the international staff or office?	Very friendly and helpful. They helped me get my student card, internet access, and fixed my class schedule.
What was the orientation like at your partner university, if there was one? How well did it suit your needs?	There was some misinformation and I went to the design orientation instead of the international one.
What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange site? Were there people you could talk to about what you were experiencing?	Culturally similar to BC - multicultural, lots of nature. Very laid-back culture. Lots of other international students so there were people to talk to.
How receptive were the local people in providing assistance?	Friendly. Lots of international visitors to NZ so they are used to it.

HOUSING

Describe your accommodation arrangements.	Unitec Student Accommodation
How early could you move into housing before term and how long after the end of term were you allowed to stay?	Could move in earlier than when the term starts and stay later → had to pay based on weeks rent
How comfortable were you with your accommodation?	It was decent. Facilities old and cheap.
Describe what you did about meals and what other options were available. How satisfied were you with the food?	There was a shuttle bus that went from the school to the grocery store, so getting food was pretty easy. Not many food places on campus.
How close was your accommodation to where you had to study?	Right on campus.

COURSE REGISTRATION

Please describe the registration process at your host institution. What assistance was available to you? Were you satisfied?	I couldn't register online, I had to do it through the international office & with paperwork. The International Office helped me choose classes.
How successful were you in registering for classes? What advice would you offer to another exchange student about how to register at your host institution?	The design program had a confusing timetable. It's good to establish when your main classes are and then pick electives that fit into your schedule. It's good to have no classes Friday, Sat, Sun for travelling & trips.
How many courses did you	

take per semester? What course load would you recommend for future students? What particular courses would you recommend to other students?	3 courses per term. 60 credits (full load). Full course load was okay to handle but making a good class schedule is important. Lots of options in class times.
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ACADEMICS

How satisfied were you with the amount of knowledge/skills you obtained from your host?	Have new knowledge and skills because I chose courses different than what I study normally.
How did the style of teaching compare with that in Canada? How did the workload compare to what you would expect in Canada?	I didn't like the style of teaching. Attending classes didn't matter. It was mostly self-directed work. You don't hand in assignments to be marked, you just submit your workbook at the end.
How many courses did you take during your time abroad?	3
What impact did the language barrier have on your learning?	None.
What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, internet access, specialized equipment and supplies available at your host facility?	Not sure about facilities/tools at Unitec generally but for Design students there were great labs, design spaces, tools, equipment.

COSTS

Books and Supplies – per term	\$100 - \$200 - no texts but had to buy art supplies + printing costs
Flight	\$1800
Accommodation – per month	\$180 a week - student housing prices vary
Meals – per month	about \$200 if you buy cheap groceries
Local transportation – per month	each bus trip is \$2-5. small discount for students.
Health insurance – per term	Health + Travel Insurance was \$400
Communications (internet, phone, etc.) – per term	Cell phone was cheap \$20 a month. Internet in NZ is expensive. Used the school's wireless.
Travel documents (passport, entry visa, etc.)	Student visa to NZ was \$200
Vaccinations	Didn't need any
Personal Spending (eg. entertainment and extra travel) – per term	Depends on how much you want to travel. If you go on a big trip you could spend \$1500.
What unexpected costs did you encounter? What items were	

less or more expensive than you expected?	Car rental and accomodation while travelling was expensive.
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EXTRA-CURRICULAR/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

How satisfied were you with the out-of-class opportunities at your host site?	Lots of outdoor activities and touristy things to do and see in Auckland + NZ.
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What organized activities (clubs, sports, etc.) were available to you while in your host country? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future students?	The Unitec Student Association Union (USU) plans lots of big group trips at a low cost that lots of international students do. Very fun. Can experience a lot.
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What opportunities were there to work or volunteer. Did you require special permits to do this?	It was easy to get a work + student visa combo but I didn't get it.
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What do you recommend other visiting students see or do on their weekends or holidays?	Rent a car/van and travel around to see the sights. Fly to the South Island. Visit Australia, Fiji, et if you have the time and money. But there is plenty to see in NZ too.
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SAFETY AND HEALTH

Describe any safety concerns you had during your experience.	If you're driving around - road safety (they drive on the left side). Its very cold in fall/winter and easy to get sick.
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PERSONAL AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

What was it like making friends? How successful were you at making friends with local (i.e., not international) people?	easy to make friends with international students and students that live on campus. Made some friends in my classes but it was hard to hang out with them outside school.
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What was it like to adjust to the culture of your host site?	Pretty easy, NZ has some wierd things to get used to.
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What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging?	Some NZ slang I had to get used to. City life is very relaxed. Lots of farm/ countryside. Not easy to find cheap, health food.
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What parts of the culture did you most appreciate?	Laid back, friendly. Outdoor activities. Nature/Countryside.
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How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?	There are lots of international students/ visitors/ workers in NZ. Everyone is friendly.
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As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your	
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partner university?	I'm not sure.
For students who are visible minorities in your host country?	Probably okay because there are lots of ethnicities.
For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?	I think it would be okay.

TAKING STOCK

What are the 5 most important things one should take with them when going to your host country or region?

- 1 WARM clothes for the fall/winter
- 2 a very strong sunscreen for the spring/summer → sun is VERY strong
- 3 sandals / flip flops (everyone wears them there)
- 4 CAMERA → lots of beautiful sights
- 5 An international drivers licence if you want to drive/travel in NZ

What are the 10 most important things you would tell another student who is going to your host facility/agency: (Already answered in past questions).

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- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

What was the most rewarding part of your study abroad experience?	Travelling around the whole country with other international students to see everything.
What was the greatest challenge you faced during your experience abroad?	Trying to keep up with school work while travelling, being social with people, etc.
As a result of your study abroad experience, how has your perspective changed?	Many international students so I was got a very multicultural experience. Not much difference between young people from different nations - we all got along and liked the same things. It's a very globalized and connected world. Many people have lived in, visited, or want to visit Vancouver + Canada.
What else do you want to say about your study abroad experience?	