

Study Abroad Evaluation

General Information	
Your Name	[REDACTED]
Host Country	Finland
Host School/Agency	Metropolia University of applied science
Participation Dates	January 7 th , 2014 to May 20 th , 2014
Your Program of Study	Fashion and Technology
Type of Study Abroad	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exchange <input type="checkbox"/> Practicum <input type="checkbox"/> Independent <input type="checkbox"/> Other
General Evaluation	
In a couple of sentences, summarize why you rated your experience the way you did	I had a great experience abroad because of the friends I made and the beautiful country I got to live in -
Arrival	
How easy or challenging was it to obtain your travel documents (visa, permits, etc.)?	It was very challenging as we had to go to Ottawa to apply for our permanent residency.
Describe your transportation arrangements to your host country. Would you alter any part of those arrangements?	I took a flight with a stopover in Calgary and London, through my housing in Finland (HOAS) a tutor picked me up in a cab and drove me to my house. It was very helpful - would not alter it.
How was your experience clearing customs and immigration upon arrival in your host country? Any surprises?	They were very relaxed and didn't ask to see anything to prove my stay apart from as said previously a tutor student resident council from Metropolia picked me up, arranged through HOAS. The school paid + gave me a sim card for my phone + keys to house. (very easy!)
Describe how you traveled to your host facility. How long did it take and how much did it cost?	as said previously a tutor student resident council from Metropolia picked me up, arranged through HOAS. The school paid + gave me a sim card for my phone + keys to house.
Orientation and Assistance	
How satisfied were you with the orientation and student assistance available to at your host school?	very satisfied! 2 day very informative orientation + student assistance office always open to answer questions or exchange co-ordinator Marika!
What help did you receive from the international staff or office? What was your evaluation of your host schools international staff or office?	I found our school not very helpful with preparing for exchange. Lists of things to bring + documents did help me organize though. The int. staff in Finland was very helpful w/ transcripts, credits + arranging courses.
Orientation and Assistance (cont'd)	
How was new student	



orientation at the host university? How did it suit your needs?	it was very helpful. 2 day - covered everything we needed to know from school to HMAS housing events, etc. Also for all "culture" students so met everyone.
What was it like to adjust to the culture of your exchange site? Were there people and resources available for you to talk to about what you were experiencing?	it was a smooth adjustment but a month and a half in it became difficult at times w/ the weather + quiet. No one had warned me of the difficulty in adjusting to long/dark
Housing	
Describe your accommodation in your host country.	Through HMAS I had an apartment in VANTAA with one roommate. Spacious, lots of storage + basic furniture. Close to train (4 min walk away) and grocery stores
How early could you move into housing before term and how long after the end of term were you allowed to stay?	Before term - not sure I think you could move in on Jan 1st I moved in on the 3rd. After term - not rented out over summer, so could have stayed rent free until September!
How comfortable were you with your accommodation?	very comfortable.
Describe what you did about meals and what other options were available. How satisfied were you with the food?	very satisfied. at school great buffet meal 3x a day for 2,40€ LIDL (cheapest grocery store) close by w/ decent selection.
How close was your accommodation to where you studied?	4 min walk to skytrain + 2 stops - 20 min total door to door
Academics & Course Registration	
Please describe the registration process at your host institution. What assistance was available to you? Were you satisfied?	very confusing from Kwantlen, courses available kept changing and wasn't clear how to register when arrived. I was not satisfied and wished the staff at Kwantlen was more informed w/ Metropolia staff!
What advice would you offer to another exchange student about registration at your host institution?	Contact the metropolia exchange coordinator for course info, not Kwantlen. Ask past 2014 students!
What course load would you recommend for future students? Are there particular courses you would recommend?	The course length vary from only a few classes to the whole semester. course load depends on what you take and how long they are. Yes - Photography + Finland close up
Academics & Course Registration (cont'd)	
How satisfied were you with the	Finnish for 'exch. students

amount of knowledge/skills you obtained from your host?	Satisfied
How did the style of teaching compare to Canada? How did the workload compare to Canada?	much more independent than Kwantlen - less spoken direction & more time for independent work. workload was more spread out + easier
How many courses did you take during your time abroad?	9 courses
If applicable, what impact did the language barrier have on your learning?	some teachers spoke very little english, so difficult to learn from them w/out a student to translate.
What was your impression of the computer facilities, library, internet access, specialized equipment and supplies available at your host facility?	very good, easy to use and informed of how everything works by teachers. many computers, printers, access key for school, cost sufficient sewing facilities.
Books and Supplies/per term:	0
Flight:	\$1800 (both ways included)
Accommodation/per month:	\$750/month
Meals/per month:	\$230/month
Local transportation/per month:	\$65/month
Health insurance/per term:	? not sure
Communication (internet, phone, etc.) - per term	Phone - \$170 / term Pay as you go w/ DNA
Travel documents (passport, entry visa, etc.)	including flight to Ottawa (\$650) + Residency (\$550) = \$1200
Vaccinations:	
Personal spending (entertainment and extra travel) - per term	\$2500 - 3000 > flights to 4 country, boat to tallinn, weekly extras (night out, museum, etc), etc.
Were there unexpected costs you encounter? What items were less or more expensive than expected?	when we arrived in Ottawa I had no idea the residency would be so much. in finland, most expenses were expected.
Extra-Curricular & Social Activities Food less than expected!	
How satisfied were you with the out-of-class opportunities available at your host site?	very satisfied! In helsinki there are many activities to do → many parks, places to go out, go for a walk, shop, surrounding islands.
What type of organized activities were available to you? What extra-curricular activities would you recommend to future	Many activities organized through museums Met cat + Esn such as trips to russia, finland, sweden, etc and in school / club / bar / park activities + events I would recommend any of the organized trips to neighboring countries!

students?	
What opportunities were there to work or volunteer? Did you require special permits to do this?	none
Health and Safety	
Did you feel safe in your host country?	Very safe
Describe any safety concerns you had during your experience.	none
Personal and Cultural Connections	
How successful were you at making friends with local (not international) people and students?	made many friends in Helsinki from all over and a few friends from Finland that I still keep in contact
How did you find it adjusting to the culture of your host site?	I found it relatively smooth (same today!) small differences were expected from previous
What, if any, cultural differences did you find particularly challenging?	travels to Nordic countries) people are more silent → not times more difficult / easier to feel alone
What part(s) of the culture did you most appreciate?	many parts - some of them - respect for private space, progressive / open minded culture, high appreciation for design, roots to nature +
How were you treated by local people? By university staff and faculty? By students?	Very well - friendly and helpful. (traditions)
As far as you could tell, how easy would it be for students with disabilities to study at your partner university?	many shy at first but once start talking they are very friendly and let me know where to go, ask me about what I like / if I need any help
As far as you could tell, for students who are visible minorities in your host country?	I wouldn't say easy, but probably better than many countries! Public well informed and equipped in health care and support, Education high standards
For students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered?	yes, from Africa, Romania, Israel, gypsies
	Finland is a progressive and open minded country very acceptable to titles of being gay, bi, lesbian and trans.
Overall	
What are five important things other students should know before going to your host country/region?	

1. where they are living (organize through Host - easiest)	
2. A bit about the culture, design and traditions (such as sauna)	
3. The weather + bring proper clothing	
4. Basics of the language	
5. Finnish people can be quite silent - not rude but part of respect	
What are ten important things you would tell another student who is going to your host facility/agency?	
1. Be prepared to be in cold dark weather during winter	
2. Finnish are quite silent in public as they respect personal space	
3. There are many ways to live cheaply - include cafe @ school	Silence
4. The courses don't run all semester, vary in length + time	
5. So many museums and events > make know how to find them	at
6. I would tell them about Lapland and Northern lights	
7. parks w/ many layers and 2 seasons - spring + winter	
8. train/tram/bus system is great + train very easy to get	around
9. travelling to Tallin, Estonia is very cheap a beautiful place	
10. Be prepared to not want to leave!	
What was the most rewarding part of your study abroad experience?	meeting so many people + making close friends, living in an open culture w/ focus on design and living well + healthy
What was the greatest challenge you faced during your experience abroad?	adjusting to silent atmosphere during winter dark months
How has your perspective changed as a result of your study abroad experience?	opened my mind more to the possibility to live in an open culture w/ strong pride in country and culture. more appreciative of design, personal space and independence.
What else do you want to add out your study abroad experience?	It was such an amazing experience!