Student Exchange Evaluation Form

You are one of our most valuable sources of information for prospective UWA exchange students and your cooperation in completing this evaluation of your exchange experience is very much appreciated. Please fill out the form as completely and accurately as possible. Feel free to use additional pages, enclose photos or any other information that you think would be useful for other students.

1. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: **AGBY DONKIN** Date: **02/09/2013**
Degree enrolled in: **BACHELOR OF ARTS**

Would you be prepared to give out your email address or telephone number to UWA students who are thinking about going on exchange? Yes  No

Contact phone: **+614 070 876 04**
Contact email address: **20938441@student.uwa.edu.au**

Name of exchange university: **UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS** Country: **UK**
Year of exchange: **2013** Period of study: **6 MONTHS** (fall, spring, full year)
Language of instruction: **ENGLISH** Did you take courses in your major?

List courses taken abroad:
- **Three units of which contributed to my history major:**
  - The Cult of Saints
  - Religion and Culture in Medieval Europe
  - Welfare and Development in Britain: 1914 - 64
2. EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE

How would you rate your overall exchange experience on a scale of 1 to 10?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10
Poor  Excellent

Explain your rating of the program. Be specific.

It was absolutely amazing being and living as an English local. However, the only reason I marked it down to an eight was because there in a monthly break mid-semester and yes it was great for travel, however it seemed too long to remember what I studied and there were only three teaching weeks after it seemed too rushed.

3. FINANCIAL EVALUATION

(Approximations)

Total cost: $9,000 - 
Books/Supplies: $100 - 
Airfare to host institution: $1,500 - 
Room: $2,000 - 
Holidays/travel expenses: $1,500 - $2,000 - 
Board: 
Extended medical coverage: $800 - 
Personal expenses (eg. Laundry, clothes, gifts etc): $2,000 - 
Other: $500 - 

How did your expenses compare to a similar period of time at UWA?

[ ] considerably more
[ ] moderately more
[ ] about the same
[ ] less

Comments: I travelled more and spent more on personal belongings than I usually would have at home. Although, travel expenses were a minimum, everything was basically within walking distance.

Did you encounter any unexpected costs? What were these? What items were more expensive than you expected? Less expensive?

I was expecting food shopping to be cheaper than I encountered; however, it was not too daunting and once you shop around, you came to find the cheaper or more reasonable shops.
What would you recommend as the best way of accessing money during your exchange programme? (tick as many boxes as you need to)

[ ] Using ATMs
[✓] Open a savings account at host university
[ ] Open a cheque account at host university
[ ] Travellers cheques
[✓] Credit card

Other: Travel credit card.

Do you have any comments or advice for future exchange students about finances, budgeting or the cheapest way of living/travelling whilst abroad?

When using overseas ATMs, make sure you take out as much money at one time (even if you leave most in your room) because the ATM do charge a lot and I found out that I could have saved a lot of money in the beginning if I had done it earlier.


4. ARRIVAL

Did you receive any assistance on your arrival to the host country? What help did you receive and from whom? Was there an airport pickup service available?

N/A.


Did you arrive early enough or would you recommend arriving earlier? Why?

I arrived on the first day of Orientation Weekend. It was perfect timing because I wasn't left to myself for the time before getting into activities and meeting fellow students. However, I had been in England for a few days before arriving in Leeds, which helped my jet-lag.
5. ORIENTATION

Is there a coordinating office for exchange students? Were they helpful? What advice was available from them?

There was an office for exchange students, and this is made clear on the first day of the Orientation weekend, and they were always helpful.

Did you receive adequate orientation? Please attach a copy of the orientation schedule if possible. What was the most useful aspect of the orientation programme?

Basically, the orientation began on the Thursday before classes began, and both Thursday and Friday had two welcoming nights offering the days were hours and tasks (like getting your student card) to fulfill. The weekend had other orientation programmes and fun nights.

6. ACADEMIC EVALUATION:

What difference did you find between the UWA system and the system at your host university? Please comment on the following:

Course content: There were many more units available in the history department, specifically for medieval history.

Contact hours: The contact hours were about the same.

Out of class hours: Similar.

Course format (eg lectures, tests, etc): The course format was similar in the arts department, as were exams and assessments.

Workload (eg heavier or lighter): The work load was lighter, however, this did not mean it was easier.
Assessment and grading (eg. harder or easier): I found because the workload was assessment-wise was lighter there was less room for improvement - an assessment meant that I couldn't greatly improve my mark in further more assignments.

What were the expectations of lecturers at your host university in terms of class preparation, accessibility, interest, presentation of classes, etc?
Depending on the lecturer, attendance may be compulsory; tutorials and workshops were compulsory to attend. No lectures were recorded and they were formatted/presented like classes at UWA.

Did you notice any difference in the way students at your host institution study and the way Australian students in general study?
There was a larger amount of students studying on campus because there were many more spaces for individual and group study throughout the university.

What advice do you have for future exchange students in terms of getting the most out of the academic aspect of their exchange experience?
Use your time wisely, and also become familiar with the resources and libraries made available to you and your faculty early in the semester to best time is spent on finding/searching and deciphering.

7. FACILITIES
What were the library facilities like at your host institution?
I had two libraries which were available and catered to arthurd humanities and both had a great range of sources and copies of sources were generally in both libraries, and most them are online generally available in each. However, there were less online textbooks.
What were the computer facilities like? Email? etc

There was a portal for students, a portal that included email and all other links and areas that would offend a student and catered to the faculty they belonged to.

It was great.

8. SOCIAL

Please comment on opportunities for meeting host country nationals, entertainment, travel tips etc.

Not only was the orientation program brilliant to meet international students, but there was a well-led club - Global Mackays Cafe, where exchanging students could meet and learn about each other. Within the first few weeks, clubs and societies held a 'Give It A Go' programme which allowed students to try out different clubs and if they wanted to join the club, they could also. There was a World Cafe event which put on shows, gatherings etc., for people to learn about different cultures and meet locals and international students.

9. ACCOMMODATION

When was housing available to students? Was the housing provided adequate for your needs? Were you on a meal plan or did you cook your own food? Are the residences close to the university? Can you stay there during holidays? What would you recommend as the best residence to stay in? Why? Please add any additional information that you think be of interest with regard to housing.

Housing was made available a few days before the beginning of Semester, but just one email could register you for your residence earlier, if necessary. I was in a self catered residence. There were many residences available through the university and they were located throughout the city. The majority were close to the university. The holidays were a part of the tenancy contract, so one could live there during the holidays, and when the contract ran out over a month after semester ended.

Dewsbury Hall was the best residence to stay because you can either be a self-catered or catered student. It is beautiful, it has its own gym on the property that you can go to anything, the workers there are lovely, and you are surrounded by both international and national domestic students.
10. PRE-DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Did the Pre-departure session and booklet cover the information you needed to know before your left for your host institution?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If no, what additional information would have been useful to you?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

What was the most difficult aspect of planning your exchange?

The most difficult was probably the insurance to cover myself during study break and the period after, however, this was hardly a struggle.

________________________________________________________________________

What advice do you have for future exchange students?

Be in the moment, embrace the academic and social structures that come your way. Yes, it may be difficult in the beginning, but it only makes it so much better once you find your feet. Decorate your room early on to get in and get comfortable.

________________________________________________________________________

What are the 10 most important things to take with you when you go to your host university?

1. All residence paperwork.
2. Paperwork of university acceptance.
3. Identification
4. Warm clothes - no matter what season it is.
5. A small token from home that reminds you of home and family.
6. A picture of your family & friends
7. Your laptop
8. Your phone
9. A camera
10. Your enthusiasm!
11. General impressions

Please write as much as you can in this section of the report. Remember that prospective students are interested in reading about both good and bad experiences. What were the most rewarding aspects of your exchange experience? What were the biggest disappointments? How has your perspective changed as a result of your exchange experience?

Studying abroad has become one of the most amazing experiences of my life. In the beginning, it was tough, but it only really took me two to three weeks to find my feet and once I had everything fall into place and I enjoyed the best months/weekend six months of my life, I have made amazing friends from all walks of life and from all over the world. I found my passion for medical history specifically and found out many skills that I posses that I had never known about before. I grew as an individual and I came to realize how capable I was to fulfill many tasks and face situations my cultural and worldly understandings expanded and I came to further appreciate the world. Academically I grew and engaged, and I have now reunited with many others who share the same academic interests as me.

I have learnt so much, and what I have taken away from my personal experience as an exchange student is nothing short of amazing. I evolved as a person, yes you may face some challenges and what you see as a disappointment at the time, but with hindsight you realise that not everything goes to plan and you learn so much more from these challenges and adventures.

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness.