

2012-2013

University Attended: University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

FEEDBACK 1

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

There was much less orientation available than at Manchester. There were a couple of days where we attended an orientation with other exchange students from the business school. This included a tour of the campus and class sessions discussing things like why we would come to UBC and cultural differences. I didn't find these very helpful at all but it was a good way to meet people so I would definitely still advise going. This was the way in which I met most of my friends in the first week

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Teaching is a lot more laid back and casual at UBC. Participation often counts for at least 20% of the course so you have to go to all of the classes. Lectures are small with a maximum of about 30 – 40 people depending on the course so they are a lot more interactive and consist of a lot of discussion. All classes are on campus and a 5 minute walk from the residence where I live so very easy to access. There is a lot more continuous assessment. There are often midterms, essays, a lot of group projects, and I have had multiple projects where we worked with real businesses as clients which was a good experience. Altogether classes are easier than at home but the work load is much higher

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

I didn't have many issues while away but when I did need to contact Manchester about things such as course changes, Sue was really helpful and always got back to me quickly

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

All the support and information was helpful and I was as well prepared as I could have been when I arrived

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

I didn't really come into contact with the international office but the business school undergrad services are helpful. They signed and sent off all the forms I needed for Manchester for me and advised me about courses to take and helped me sign up to them in the second semester.

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

The first 3 months is covered by imed which you have to pay to the university as part of your fees. \$120 covers this as well as a bus pass which is a really good deal because the bus is expensive without one and you will use it all the time as UBC is far from downtown. After the first 3 months you have to pay \$60 per month for health care. You have to fill out a few forms to sign up for this but they will help you with this and talk you through it when you need to. It is compulsory and there's no way around paying it.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

Just the \$120 that I mentioned before that covers the first 3 months of the health insurance and the upass for the bus

ACCOMMODATION

As much information as possible on what accommodation is recommended or not recommended.

I live in Walter Gage residence and would really recommend living here. I live on the 17th floor and have the most amazing view possible! This is lucky though and not everyone does. It has got the perfect location on campus and a lot of the more lively people and exchange students live here. It isn't too loud as there are rules about noise in the night but this is the same in all residences. The other residence that many exchange students live in is Fairview crescent. This is really nice too, a bit bigger in a house style layout but is further away from classes and the bus loop, which does make a difference. Marine drive is the nicest residence but there are few exchange students living there and it is slightly less social. The first year residences are nice too and the exchange students I know who live there like it but I think at first they found there was a big maturity gap between them and the people living there. Food is included in this hall. Also they are pretty strict about drinking in this residence which some people find annoying. These halls are quite social and have a lot of events through the year as it is for first years.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport, travel, social life, integration with local students, student activity groups

The UBC campus is amazing and really beautiful. Everything you need is on campus so you don't have to leave all the time which is convenient.

Public transport in Vancouver is really easy with the UPass, buses allow you to get anywhere in the city. It can take a while to get places, downtown is an hour away but the area closer to the campus (kitsilano) is really nice with loads of shops, places for food and bars.

I managed to travel a lot while I was here. I advise getting up to Whistler as much as possible, especially if you ski or want to learn. There is a facebook ride share group where you can hitch a ride from other UBC students who have cars for really cheap. I also went to Hawaii in spring break for really cheap from Bellingham airport which was amazing. I've been to Seattle a few times too which is really easy to get to using the greyhound or bolt bus. Vitoria on Vancouver island is also really nice.

At first it was a bit difficult to make friends as the orientation wasn't until a few days after we arrived. A lot of people in the halls didn't really seem interested in becoming friends either as they are 2nd – 4th year students who already had a group of friends (this wasn't always the case but was for a quite a few people I know here). A lot of the friends I made on exchange arrived before the move in date and stayed in hostel where they met a lot of other exchange students. This was arranged through the facebook group for incoming students, and I would advise doing this if the same happens again. I made a lot of exchange friends through the orientation. In my first semester I didn't make many Canadian friends, but by the second semester I had a lot more. In first semester when you want to go travelling and sightseeing it is good to have other exchange students to do this with. It's really nice to have a big group of friends from all around the world too!

Nights out take a bit of getting used to (they go out at 9pm) but are really fun! I wasn't part of any student societies but there are a lot to join if you want to. There is an outdoors society which lends tents etc if you want to go camping which is really nice in the summer when you first get here. I wasn't a huge outdoors person but you find yourself going on hikes etc a lot more because it's just so beautiful here. The ski and board society are also pretty big. There is soo much to do that I didn't have time to join societies in the end.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Best year of my life, I couldn't have had a better time!

FEEDBACK 2

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

A day with several talks, a BBQ and a campus tour. It was great to meet other exchange students in the Sauder School of Business and very nice to socialize with them. The talks, however, were only somewhat helpful, I found, as many topics had been covered in MBS meetings before or were simply common knowledge such as culture shock. Overall a great opportunity to meet people!

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

It is very easy to get into courses. Even if they appear to be full on the system the international team at Sauder can still add you to them. I had a Finance course that was restricted to 50 students and I was added as #51. Just email them and ask.

Courses here are usually not bigger than about 50 students, at least in the 4th year which most of my courses were. The topics are very interesting and I'd definitely recommend taking some that are not offered in Manchester. I especially enjoyed Negotiation, Marketing Management (if you didn't take Marketing in Manchester) or you can also try a course from a different faculty. I did some Economics: International Trade. The methods of assessment are very different. Everything seems to be marked and you will always have something to do that counts for a few percentage points. But don't be fooled, it sums up in the end! Also about 10% of the full grade on average are allocated to participation marks. Besides that most courses have midterm exams and a final exam or simply loads of coursework. Think about that when choosing courses. Overall I found it a bit easier to get a good essay grade here than in Manchester whereas exams are about the same, I guess. The style of teaching is a bit more personal since there are only a few other people in the course and a lot more interactive than in Manchester. Classroom discussions are very common and most courses have group projects to support the learning. Group work is definitely a big thing at Sauder.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

I never had any problems and found the information provided more than sufficient. Great work!

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

All information needed was provided. The meetings were very informative and helpful.

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Very supportive, quick to reply and overall very nice people. Make sure you join the facebook group they set up!

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

It was a requirement to purchase IMed (CN\$150), a temporary insurance through UBC that covers you for the first three months. After that you must have applied for the Canadian Medical Services Plan: MSP, the British Columbia health insurance and pay a monthly fee of CN\$66.50 (may change over the year). You will get an invoice in the mail and can pay the fee online. Neither of them can be waived.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

Initially it said not to include transport costs but UBC requires students to purchase the UPass, a Vancouver wide bus and transit pass. It costs CN\$ 35 per month but is worth every penny!

Also sometimes certain courses ask for a mandatory course fee to be paid to use labs etc. This should be mentioned in the course outline and can in some cases be substantial, make sure you check.

ACCOMMODATION

I lived in the Gage towers and found them absolutely fantastic. Very convenient location, close to the SUB (Student Unions Building) with its pub, close to the gym, close to the (free!) pool and close to the bus loop... basically the Gage towers are close to everything you need.

You live in either of the three towers (North, South or East) in an apartment with five other people (so 6 in total) and share a kitchen and a bathroom. The bathroom has two showers and sinks but only one toilet cubicle. This

was never a problem in my flat, though. If you get lucky and live up high the view is absolutely amazing. I wasn't that lucky but living on floor three has its pros as the elevators break down somewhat frequently. The residence is self-catered.

The other option were many of my friends lived was Fairview Crescent. This residence feels like a little village in itself with pretty townhouses and the Beanery, an amazing place to have coffee. It is a bit out of the way but you feel more like living in a house-share than living in halls.

Marine Drive is the third self-catered option but rather more expensive than the other two. Again if you're lucky you get an ocean view and overall this hall feels like a hotel, I found.

Totem Park and Place Vanier are both catered, first-year residences that offer the roommate experience and a buffet-type, time independent restaurant. Totem is a bit far from the Business School but newly refurbished, Vanier is closer but older.

The campus is a bit of a construction site at the moment and as far as I know they're building a new residence, Ponderosa, right next to the business school that is scheduled to open next year.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Public transport in Vancouver is maybe not fantastic but definitely sufficient to get around and back to UBC at any time of the day/night. You will learn to love the #99 bus. With the UPass basically any bus, skytrain and the seabus in Vancouver is free to use.

For travelling Vancouver is absolutely amazing! I've spent many weekends skiing powder snow in Whistler, have been to Seattle and Portland during the year, hopped on the ferry and surfed in Tofino on Vancouver Island. Whatever you like to do there is a place to go and if you get a group of people together it's not that expensive either.

For social life there are many UBC clubs you can join or join a REC sports team (or more than one) that's what I did. I played football both semesters and made some really good friends doing so. If you're into the outdoors the VOC is the best club to join as they organize everything from rock climbing in Squamish, to snowshoe tours to full-on backcountry ski trips. They also offer equipment rentals for free (deposit necessary).

Wednesday night, at least in the beginning and end of every semester is a good night for the Pit, the campus bar/pub or if you like a bit more relaxed pint the Gallery or Mahoney's on campus are really nice. However, to really go clubbing you need to go downtown which is about an half-hour bus ride away if you're lucky. Also clubbing here starts and ends fairly early. You go out around 9 or 10pm and come home around 1 or 2am.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

Do you really want just one sentence? I could write a book!! Fantastic!

FEEDBACK 3

INDUCTION/ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

What did this involve, how long did it last, was it useful?

The introduction period was not long enough. It lasted only two days, and minimal activities were organised.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Style of teaching, courses, ease of access to courses, methods of assessment, teaching support

It was classroom based teaching, rather than lecture based. The classrooms consisted of 25-30 people. There were lots of in class activities, and attendance is compulsory. 10-15 percent marks are allocated for in class contribution and attendance.

As compared to Manchester where the final exam is worth 75-100 percent usually; In UBC the assessment is broken into multiple parts that are usually worth 20- 50 percent each. There are lots of small assignments and midterm exams.

The teaching support is intense since, the classrooms are small and the professor knows each student very well.

MBS INTERNATIONAL TEAM

Level of support, additional information that could have been useful

The MBS team has been extremely helpful. They provided comprehensive information and the team was always available for help.

MBS SECOND YEAR MEETINGS

Any additional information that you feel could have been provided

The meetings were helpful and provided sufficient information

HOST INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Level of support, additional information that could be useful for future students

I did not require any support from the host international office; although I was aware of the vast support that was available.

INSURANCE, HEALTH COVER

Please include any information relating to the purchase of compulsory health insurance ie costs etc. or whether this was waived by having the University of Manchester Insurance Policy

In British Columbia, the necessary government insurance is required. It costs \$65 dollars a months and covers everything except for Ambulance charges and the medications.

Although, the iMed covers your first three months. It covers all the medical charges.

The University of Manchester Insurance was extremely helpful. I required medical assistance in the States which cost me \$1100 dollars, and was fully covered by the University of Manchester Insurance.

INFORMATION ON ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS

This should be information on any extra fees that the University charged but should not include accommodation, books, transport, visa etc.

Some courses in Sauder school of business required you to pay Copyright fees for the course material provided by the professor, which was generally around 30 dollars.

ACCOMMODATION

As much information as possible on what accommodation is recommended or not recommended.

I stayed in Totem park residence. It is a first year residence, although a lot of exchange students live there. It is a very safe and cheerful place. The people were extremely nice. Although you have to pay compulsory fees for the food. The food is expensive in the residence and not very nice. Overall I would recommend Totem park for exchange students.

Marine drive is also a very good residence. Its new and spacious. Clean and very popular with 2nd and 3rd year students.

Guage residence is old, but is close to the bus loop and village. Very convenient.

DESTINATION INFORMATION AND OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Transport, travel, social life, integration with local students, student activity groups

The living costs in Vancouver are high and are generally more expensive than Manchester.

Vancouver is extremely beautiful, clean and very safe. The transport network is wide, and efficient.

I have visited multiple cities in Europe, America and Asia and Vancouver is perhaps the safest city, and has the friendliest people, than any other city.

DESCRIBE IN ONE SENTENCE YOUR YEAR ABROAD

A live changing experience.