

Marketing Your Study Abroad Experience



PRESENTED BY

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

AND

THE CAREER CENTER

Skill Development



What skills do you gain through study abroad?

Examples include:

- Flexibility
- Language Enhancement – foreign language skills and intercultural communication
- Cultural Adaptability
- Problem Solving

Why are these skills important to employers?

Format Your Resume



- Include your semester abroad in the Education section of your resume
- Create a separate category named International Education if you have had more than one international experience
- Internships or field experiences abroad should be listed separately under relevant category

Education

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Bachelor of Arts Environmental Studies, expected graduation May 2013

Swansea University, Swansea, Wales, United Kingdom

Study Abroad, Fall 2011

Describe Your International Experience



In addition to listing the details of where and when you studied, add several statements with action verbs.

For example:

- Immersed in a six month intensive language program.
- Conducted all coursework in Spanish.
- Demonstrated the competence and flexibility to function well in cross-cultural situations.
- Adjusted to living with a family in Ecuador.

Study Abroad action verbs:

Adapted, awarded, built, cooperated, developed, exchanged, fostered, implemented, immersed, improved, lived, managed, organized, overcame, practiced, realized, represented, recognized, shared, traveled, translated, visited.

International Experience & Resumes



For an internship or field experience consider formatting it like this:

International Experience

The Environment Centre

Swansea, Wales

Environmental Education Intern

August 2010 - December 2010

- Informed the public on local and global environmental issues with an emphasis on sustainability
- Worked closely with the coordinator of the Swansea Environmental Education Forum to coordinate visits and activities for local school groups
- Developed administrative skills and shadowed organization leaders

International Experience & Cover Letters



Focus on the transferable skills gained and how they relate to the job or internship

For example:

“During my semester in Montpellier, France, I studied translation for the first time. We translated literary texts and newspaper articles from French to English and from English to French. This not only greatly improved my French language skills, but also helped me to better understand the nuances of my native language. I learned how word choice, sentence structure, and grammar can influence meaning, which will help me with the detail-oriented job of copy editing.”

International Experience & Interviews



Interview questions that could relate to study abroad:

- Describe one professional/personal challenge you have overcome.
- Tell me about a time you have had to use problem-solving skills.
- Describe a situation that demonstrates the level of confidence you have in yourself.
- Provide an example of your ability to work independently.
- Tell me about a time when you have asserted yourself while under pressure.

Interview Example



In your cover letter, you describe yourself as adaptable. Can you give me an example?

“At Oxford University, courses were taught very differently from the way they are at the UNCW. Rather than listening to lectures three times a week and taking notes, we met with individual tutors once a week to discuss our assignments. At first, this way of learning was very intimidating. I had to be prepared every week, completing all of the reading and jotting down discussion notes and questions in advance. I felt a lot of pressure to perform and unsure of what was expected of me. But, soon I came to enjoy the more active engagement with the readings that this approach required. I think I got a lot out of my studies and it has influenced the way that I approach my studies now that I’m back at the UNCW. I am more apt to approach professors during office hours and ask them questions about the material. I find that I prioritize my study time better, and I get more out of my classes than before I studied in England.”

Interview Dos and Don'ts



- Be professional when describing international experience
- Avoid shocking stories
- Describe successes and accomplishments
- Use relevant examples only
- Emphasize how you want to use the skills you developed abroad
- Avoid telling employers that your goal is to travel more
- Do not exaggerate language ability

Questions



Additional International Resources:

www.uncw.edu/international/abroad/workabroad.html

www.uncw.edu/career/international.html

UNCW Career Center

www.uncw.edu/career

Fisher University Union 2035

910-962-3174

Express Hours

2-4pm Mon-Fri

9-11am Wed & Thurs

Office of International Programs

www.uncw.edu/international

Friday Annex

910-962-3685