



Reflection Letter

The aim of this Reflection Letter is to help you develop your studies abroad into something more than just a great time in another country. The aim is also for you to be able to put words on your newly-gained knowledge, so that you can describe – for example to a future employer – what your competencies are and how you can make use of them.

DURING YOUR STAY ABROAD

Make sure to benefit as much as you can from your period in another country. Decide different goals that you would like to achieve. List at least three specific things that you can do abroad to achieve those goals. In order to gain new perspectives you might want to be inspired by David Wick's (2014) tool box:

ACADEMIC GOALS Gain a global perspective on your field of study	PROFESSIONAL GOALS See how business works in host country	PERSONAL GOALS Develop interests and friendships
1. Interview two professors from your field of study. 2. Attend an optional lecture on your area of interest. 3. Plan visits to museums, companies, or organisations that work in your area to learn how things are similar and different.	1. Obtain an internship. 2. Secure at least two informational interviews. 3. Partner with local students on research papers or presentations.	1. Volunteer to speak to school children about your home country. 2. Plan a trip somewhere new or do something new for you. 3. Celebrate a local holiday with a family. 4. Spend a week with only speaking Swedish in public.

NEW COMPETENCIES

We suggest that you take time during your study abroad period to make notes of your different experiences and your own reflections. This will help you in the future when applying for different job positions. Did you know that many employers find people who have studied abroad much more attractive as future employees than those who have not ("Det akademiska värdet av mobilitet", UHR Rapport 2018:9).

During your exchange period you have gained several international competencies. Be inspired by the following domains and descriptions.

DOMAIN	INTERNATIONAL COMPETENCIES	DESCRIPTION
LANGUAGE SKILLS	Writing a text in another language	The student is able to express themselves in writing in at least one language other than the mother tongue, in such a way that they are able to produce a clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to their field of study.
	Speaking a foreign language	The student is able to express themselves verbally in at least one language other than the mother tongue, in such a way that they present detailed descriptions in work-related contexts, on a wide range of topics, and they are quite able to participate in a fluent and spontaneous conversation with native speakers
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE	Cultural self-knowledge	The student knows and understands their own frame of reference and worldview and they are able to link these to other view points.
	Cultural flexibility	If necessary the student adapts their behaviour and communication style in an intercultural context.
	Cultural resilience	The student will deal with the difficulties and negative feelings that may arise in intercultural encounters in a constructive way.
	Cultural knowledge	The student acquires knowledge about other cultures and employs this knowledge in an appropriate manner with respect for the uniqueness of each individual human being.
	Multi-perspective approach	The student approaches and understands a situation, an issue or a problem from multiple cultural perspectives.
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT	International orientation	The student can place local events and practices in an international context by indicating the international consequences of local events and the influence of the international or European contexts on these local situations.
	Showing social involvement	The student understands how they are personally able to contribute to the societal solution of international problems in a positive way, and they are able to act accordingly (either as an individual or as part of a socially involved organisation).



PERSONAL GROWTH	Co-operating and networking	In work-related settings, the student is able to easily connect with colleagues, clients and other stakeholders; they are able to communicate in a clear way, and they are able to function well in a team.
	Investigating other perspectives	The student is open to alternative ideas and opinions, will examine them and consider the value of the alternatives.
	Showing creativity	The student devises innovative solutions to problems they encounter at work or internship.
	Holding one's own in stressful situations	In stressful work-related situations, the student has sufficient capacity and coping skills to either maintain their professional performance, or to seek appropriate support.

PREPARE FOR YOUR FUTURE

We suggest that you write a personal letter to a fictive future employer, presenting yourself and all your skills. Remember to reflect upon your experiences as well! For example, instead of writing that you have been on exchange studies you should explain what you have learnt:

"I studied one semester at Université Lumière Lyon 2 in France. During this period I became fluent in both written and spoken French. I was also able to adjust to a new academic culture which mostly consisted of lectures for over 100 students, and a much more formal relationship with the professor. This was very different from what I was used to in Sweden, where the classes are smaller and more interactive. I believe this shows that I can adjust to new environments and that I am able to adapt my behaviour and communication style in an intercultural context."

Get inspired by the empowering descriptions that you find in the [*ELD list of competences/skills*](#).

STAY CONNECTED!

It is of great importance that you continue to network and develop also after your exchange period is finished. One option is to join the Lund University Alumni Network. The Alumni Network is a great resource for broadening your network and making new contacts while also keeping in touch with old friends. You can connect with international and Swedish alumni who are located across the globe.

You can read more about the network here:
Lund University Alumni Network

**"One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things."
– Henry Miller**



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