

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING THE STUDENT REPORT

You can write the report either in English or Icelandic

Name of the University: Universitat Politècnica de Valencia

Names of the students: Sigurdur Olafsson

Exchange semester: Fall, 2013

Faculty: ETSID (Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería del Diseño)

I GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV) is a young, prestigious public institution providing modern and flexible degrees tailored to the needs of society. Its history dates back to the early 70s, although some of its schools are over a hundred years old. Currently, its academic community comprises more than 38,000 students, almost 2,500 lecturers and researchers, and 1,500 administration and services professionals. It is composed by three fully equipped campuses. One is located in the city of Valencia (Vera) and the other two are located in Alcoy and Gandia. The Vera Campus covers around 700.000 m² (7,534,737 ft²) and is almost 2 km (1.24 mi.) long from one end to the other. It is a pedestrian campus with over 106,000 m² (1,140,974.4 ft²) of green areas. The cafeterias and terraces, kiosks, banks and other establishments are meant to make day-to-day university life more comfortable. Its offer for students includes all types of resources and services: classrooms, libraries, laboratories, state-of-the-art computer equipment, wireless network, email account from the first day, lessons in Spanish, Valencian and English, scholarships and grants provided by the university itself so that no one is deprived of the opportunity to study, and much more. All of the UPV campuses share the same philosophy and provide the same opportunities and, although there are no significant differences between studying in one city or another, Alcoy and Gandia provide a more personalized education and a more intimate environment. In fact, the number of students per group is smaller than in other public universities, so students receive one-on-one attention, which will ultimately lead them to be more successful in their studies. With this goal, faculty members and students help newcomers adapt to university life. Not only is their initial contact with the university facilitated, but new students are also monitored at key times during the course year, and given advice on which electives to choose and how to improve their performance. Moreover, the UPV has official accreditations of quality. For instance, the American Agency ABET, the most important in the world, has accredited four UPV degree programs and recognizes its equivalence to the Master's Degrees taught in USA. This quality seal guarantees that the referred studies fulfill by far the requirements of the corresponding professions. For the graduates, this guarantee implies better opportunities of labour insertion and a better employment projection. At the same time, it allows the UPV to create more double degrees and to attract a larger number of foreign students. The UPV organises over 1,800 courses a year in all specialties so that each student is able to shape their curriculum to meet their interests, and has signed agreements with 400 different universities, under which students have the possibility of spending a semester in one of the 50 countries worldwide where exchanges are offered: not only in Europe, but also in the US, Japan, China, Australia, Canada and Latin America. On the other hand, the UPV has excellent sports facilities throughout the campus. Students can choose from 75 different sports disciplines: sailing, rowing, diving, sport fishing, fencing, climbing, mountain climbing, archery, aikido, taekwondo, capoeira, cycling, yoga, rugby, handball, swimming, beach volleyball, athletics, tennis paddle... With their UPV ID card, they can participate in a large variety of cultural activities: classical, pop and jazz concerts, painting and photography exhibitions, urban arts festivals, etc. Students can also participate in writing, gastronomy, wine tasting, and percussion workshops, among others. The institution pays special attention to the insertion of UPV graduates to the labour market. It promotes the contact with the business world through remunerated internships. Students have the opportunity to do internships in private and public enterprises, the Public Administration, technological institutes, consulting firms, non-profit organizations and engineering firms. In addition, the UPV's Servipoli Foundation assists them in finding part-time jobs that are compatible with their studies both on- and off-campus so they can earn extra money without having to miss classes. The UPV is an innovative university that aims at developing creative and relevant ideas with an impact on society. That's why the UPV has the Ideas Institute, the first support program for the university entrepreneurship in Spain, which has backed the creation of more

than 400 companies since 1992. For all these reasons, the UPV is one of the best starting points for beginning a career in research in both public centers and innovation departments in companies. Internationally, it is the leading university in technological research in numerous areas, and it is one of the top three Spanish universities in terms of R&D research cooperation agreements with companies. Additionally, it is on the leading edge in terms of patents and technology licensing. The UPV strives to use optimally its teaching, technological and financial resources to be a competent and qualified university, capable of generating and attracting national and international talent. And all this effort has its rewards: it is the only Spanish technological university ranked as one of the top universities worldwide, according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), and has been ranked among the 100 best universities of the world that are less than 50 years old (THE). In short, the UPV is among the universities preferred most. Each year hundreds of foreign students choose UPV because of its academic level and its typical Mediterranean life style. Graduates like and are satisfied with the UPV. In fact, 94.5% would study at the Universitat Politècnica de València again if they had to start all over.

<http://www.topuniversities.com/universities/universitat-polit%C3%A8cnica-de-val%C3%A8ncia/undergrad>

II PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Information before you left

- When did you receive the information package from the University?
2 months before
- Any difficulties?
Yes plenty, but it all worked out in the end.

Visa Procedure and travel experiences

- What problems, if any did you encounter? None
- Does the visa cost anything? No VISA for Icelanders
- How did you order your ticket – any problems? no

Academic Calendar

- Arrival date – introductory week: 28th of August
- First day of the semester? 5th of Sept.
- Last day of classes? 21st of Dec.
- Examination period? 18th of Dec.
- Any special events? Not really.

Reception

- How was the reception at the school? Good – got a really good ambassador that helped me a lot to figure out the ins and the outs of this.
- Was the administration and faculty well prepared for your arrival? When hundreds of foreign students arrive at the same time general and utter chaos is inevitable.
- Did the school's students participate in the reception of the exchange students? Yes.

Housing

- Did you have housing at your disposal or did you have to find your own housing? I found my own.
- What support did you receive from the school in locating housing? None.
- Any special issues or good ideas for prospective students? Depends on what they want.

There are plenty of affordable housing options. look for a shared apartment on idealista.es or loquo.com or on the website from the UPV for students looking for apartments:

<http://www.upv.es/perfiles/estudiante/alojamientos-buscador-en.html>

There seem to be plenty of options available.

Costs

- Describe the most important expenses such as rent, books, food, etc.
Rent, the rest depends of what you do.

The International Office

- Is there an international office? yes
- Who is responsible for incoming exchange students? The international office
- How does the international office function? Just fine
- Do you receive all relevant information? Yes and no

Exchange promotion

- What kind of activity did you take part in to promote exchange to Iceland at your exchange university? Formally at an Introduction lunch and then people were generally interested about the country so they asked a lot.

Social Activities

- How is your relationship with other students? Good.
- How is the relationship among the exchange students? Very good.
- Is there a student organization, and if so, are the exchange students part of it? Yes.
- Are there any special activities and gatherings for exchange students? Yes plenty.
- How do you like it at the school? It was good in general.

Culture and Language

- Do you have any language problems with the faculty or other students? Yes sometimes.
- How are the possibilities to experience the country and the culture? Great.

Cultural and Social Effects from the Exchange Experience

- How do you think the exchange experience will affect you from a cultural and social point of view? It is still affecting me.
- How do you think the exchange experience influences your future career possibilities? In a very positive way I hope.

III ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The Teaching situation

- In which language are the courses taught? Any problems? English. No.
- How would you evaluate the level of study in relationship to the level at RU? Bit more rudimentary than I expected.
- Is the teaching primarily practical or theoretical? Both
- Are the professors using cases, group work or lectures (or a mix)? All three.
- How is the workload compared to that at RU? The EPS program isn't structured like any course I took at RU so hard to compare.
- How is the relationship between faculty and students? As different as Spain and Iceland are. More hierarchical.
- What is the relationship between the students in the classroom? Very respectful and nice.

Required Literature

- Is the literature in English? Yes.
- How do you estimate the level of the literature?
- Is the literature used for detailed knowledge or a broad overview? Both.
- Is exam based on the literature or on the lectures? Final assignment would depend on knowledge of both.

Exams

- What types of exams were you given?
- What knowledge level was required to pass the exams?

Other

- Do students have easy access to the library and its resources? yes
- How is the access to the computers? There are a number of labs around campus.
- How is IT used in the teaching or as a distributor of information?

Description of Courses

Please list all the courses you are taking in the form below:

- Name and code of the course
- Prerequisites, if any
- Exam form
- Comments: Relevance, Difficult/easy, Practical/theoretical, Enrolment problems

Example:

<i>Course name:</i>	<i>Prereq.</i>	<i>Exam</i>	<i>Major at RU</i>	<i>Approved as</i> <i>(Common/elective/extra)</i>
<i>1234 finance</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Written</i>	<i>Finance</i>	<i>Elective</i>

Please fill in all the courses you have taken

EPS is a four-month course addressed to 3rd, 4th or 5th year students from Design, engineering, technology and economics, designed to work in international and interdisciplinary teams.

EPS is a program offered by 10 European universities in 9 countries throughout Europe. It is crafted to prepare students with necessary skills to face the challenges of today's world economy. International student teams work on interdisciplinary projects, usually with commercial businesses and industries, carefully selected to match the students' specializations and capabilities as well as to develop their intercultural communication and team work skills.

Any other experiences:

Spanish at International House, great language school.

<http://www.espanole.es/>

Names and e-mails:

The International Office will appreciate if you will inform about your e-mail addresses, so that other students can contact you for more information.

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