



YOUR EXCHANGE STUDENT'S JOURNEY

Academic Year – Semester – Term – Bimester
IN ITALY

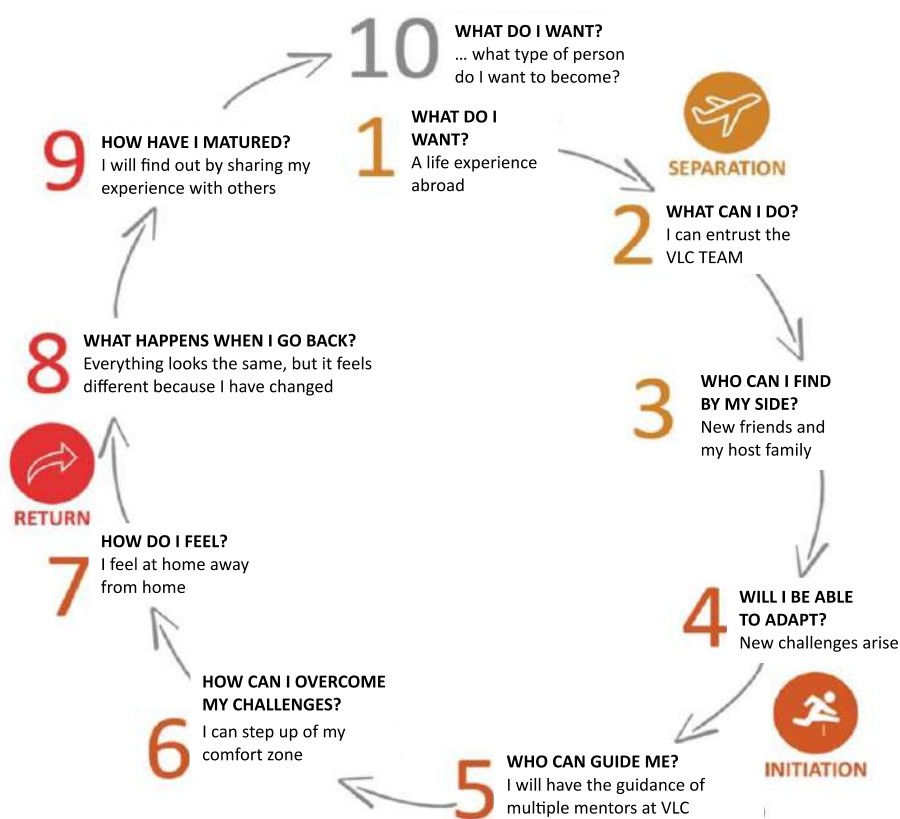


THE EXCHANGE STUDENT'S JOURNEY

This experience in Italy is much more than an opportunity to improve language skills – Students will learn the language because new words will gain their meaning as necessary to develop relationships with people living in Italy. The language will be indispensable to settle in, study, make new friends, and try to live in harmony with a new family.

It is much more than a mean to reach academic excellence – As the Italian Department of Education states, learning how to read and use different patterns and codes, knowing how to recognise foreign rules and principles, learning how to navigate outside of one's own human and social ecosystem, using maps of an unknown culture demand much more than what is required attending a normal school year (10 April 2013, n. 843).

At Victoria Languages and Cultures (VLC), we believe that a cultural exchange is a life and growth experience existing through the relationships with a multitude of people and a different culture. It is comparable to a Hero's Journey or, as we like to call it, an Exchange Student's Journey. Think of *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Harry Potter*, *Finding Nemo*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Pinocchio*... Every protagonist follows a fundamental journey through three important phases: **SEPARATION**, **INITIATION**, and **RETURN**. During an academic year, semester, term or bimester in Italy, you will too be the protagonist of your Exchange Student's Journey.



1. SEPARATION

Studying and living abroad, Exchange Students wish to discover new worlds, people, and relationships. They feel a *call for adventure*. With curiosity, they strive to challenge themselves beyond the limits of their comfort zone. Although they are worried of what lies ahead, so different and unknown, they eagerly choose to leave their home, waving goodbye to their family, friends, classmates and loved ones.



2. INITIATION

In a new place, Exchange Students will meet challenges, that yet they will be able to overcome, helped by new friends, their Host Family and through the guidance of new mentors. They will feel accomplished and in harmony with their home away from home.



3. RETURN

They will come home, changed, and matured, because they will have learned important things about themselves and the world that surrounds them. They will have the desire to share what they have gained during their quest and what challenges and feelings they had to face. Their own personal journey will have a ripple effect that will inspire their loved ones and community too, something so big that goes beyond their own experience.

VICTORIA LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

VLC is a cultural exchange organisation based in Modena, Italy. Since 1991, we have worked with passion to develop cultural exchange programs on different levels, for students who want to challenge themselves, step out of their comfort zone and broaden their horizons. With passion and artisan care, we follow every student's journey. We tailor our programs to have a high educational value, with the aim to improve intercultural communication beyond stereotypes and prejudice, developing a passion for studying foreign languages, and learning in a creative way. We are able to uphold this mission thanks to established relationships with associations, schools, universities, and government bodies in Italy and overseas.

2019

Beginning of a collaboration with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia Department of Engineering for the *Italian Motor Valley Experience Summer School*

2016

VLC opens a new office in Gorizia, Friuli Venezia Giulia and starts expanding the pool of local schools and host families, receiving students from all over Italy

2009

Beginning of the collaboration with Au Pair Care in the USA

2000

American Universities and Carpi Schools begins. In 2009, it wins the esteemed award *Heiskell Award for Study Abroad* through the University of Clemson and University of Kansas at the UN Palace in New York

1993

Launch of the *Inbound* program, hosting American students in Italy for three, five or ten months

1991

Victoria Languages and Cultures is born as an English school and study holiday company (especially to the UK) in Carpi and Modena, Italy, later developing in a cultural organisation

2020

A collaboration with *Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching, USA* starts with American teachers and international schools in Friuli Venezia Giulia

2018

Publishing of Beth D. Tolley's book *Studying Abroad What We Didn't See Coming* about the exchange between University of Georgia and Modena schools

2010

Launch of the twinning program *Athens Academy High School and Liceo Corso* in Correggio, Italy and Athens, Georgia, USA

2009

The exchange program *University of Georgia and Modena Schools* receives the patronage from the Town of Modena

1997

The *Inbound* program expands, and VLC starts hosting Australian students in Italy

1992

Launch of the *Outbound* program through Ayusa Global Youth Exchange, starting in USA, then expanding to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, UK, Germany and France



August 21, the core VLC team celebrates its 30th anniversary

STEPS OF YOUR JOURNEY



PRE-DEPARTURE STEPS

1. LEARN ABOUT VLC AND THE EXCHANGE STUDENT'S JOURNEY

Participate in one of our presentations and ask questions to our team.

2. PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERVIEW

VLC will learn more about yourself and your motivation for the Exchange Student's Journey.

3. RECEIVE A *CONGRATULAZIONI* EMAIL

After you have passed the interview, you will receive the green light to start the procedures.

4. PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

With VLC's guidance, write about you in an application so your Host Family and High School can get to know you. Start your VLC training to your journey.

5. WAIT FOR A PLACEMENT

VLC, together with families and schools in the areas of Emilia and Friuli, will work on your application and prepare your placement.

6. FIND OUT YOUR PLACEMENT

Learn about your paired Host Family and High School, while your Australian school is informed about your journey.

7. CONTACT YOUR HOST FAMILY

Contact your Host Family and start sharing your culture from afar.

8. SORT OUT YOUR FLIGHT AND VISA

Based on your placement area, VLC will advise on the best airport and flight for you to purchase. If you need a visa, VLC will guide you through the process and supply the documentation.

9. LEARN ABOUT ITALY AND GATHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Over four emails, we will teach you how to manage your phone and money, what to put in your suitcase, and which expectations you and your family will bring to the journey, or which ones you will leave home.

10. *INCONTRO ORIENTAMENTO PRE-PARTENZA (IOP)*

Join an online orientation with other departing international Exchange Students to revise and reflect on your upcoming journey. Parents will also participate in this mandatory event.



SEPARATION – Leaving Australia and meeting your new Italian home

- Take off: Airport check-in, goodbyes, passport checks, gate, boarding. *Che emozione!*
- Arrival: You are welcomed by your Host Family. Be patient and keep going, it will become home to you in a while... *Benvenuti in Italia!*
- Apply for *Permesso di Soggiorno*: On your first week in Italy, a VLC team member will guide you through to the process.
- Meet your new home: Begin familiarising with your surroundings, rules, and habits. Challenging and exciting at the same time!
- Italian school: Ask your school tutor or teacher about subjects. Learn more about the Italian culture and meet your new friends.
- *Incontro di Orientamento*: Meet the VLC team who will mentor you. During an induction, participate in team building activities, reflecting on your journey. You are now part of our team, and you are the protagonist of your Exchange Student's Journey. Please do ask for our support and follow our guidance.



INITIATION – Dive into your Italian life

- You will be placed in a High School class, but differently from Italian students, you will attend some classes with your classmates and sometimes you might move in a different class or grade. VLC will try to match your academic strengths to the school that fits you best.
- You welcome your new life routine. Life becomes easier, more enjoyable! You find the extraordinary in something ordinary.
- You could have some ups and downs, feel homesick or worried; there will be challenges to overcome, exactly as it could happen in Australia. You will need to trust your VLC mentors. Remember you are not alone! VLC will also keep your Australian family updated through reports.
- Every semester you will have the opportunity to partake in field trips with other exchange students in famous Italian cities, for example, Firenze, Verona, Venezia. These are included in your experience and organised completely by VLC.
- Join your Host Family's life, share your feelings, ask for explanations. Through each hug you ask and give... you are paving your way, living your Exchange Student's Journey in a world of relationships.



RETURN – You come full circle with your Exchange Student's Journey

- You are at home, in Australia. You are being celebrated and welcomed by those who love you and have been waiting for you.
- Everything seems the same but feels different: you have changed and grown. You are able to think and express yourself in another language. You have friends and family on the other side of the world. You feel the reward of overcoming your challenges.
- Italian High school reports will be sent to your Australian family and school. You study to feel gaps in your Australian school curriculum.
- You accomplish your Exchange Student's Journey, sharing your life experience with your community and might consider joining the VLC ambassadors' community. You feel grateful!
- You are ready for your next journey and all those to come.

VI ASPETTIAMO IN ITALIA, A PRESTO!



Victoria
LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

Strada Cognito 92, Modena, Italy
Office: +39 059 2929 652 | Mobile: +39 335 6863 625
avitaly@victoriateam.it | www.victorialanguagesandcultures.it
Partita IVA (Italian Business Number): 04085190363