



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student information

<b>Study programme WU</b>	BES
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	06-01-2024 until 20-06-2024
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	Western Norway University of Applied Sciences
<b>Faculty</b>	Environmental Sciences
<b>Country</b>	Norway
<b>City</b>	Sogndal

## 2. Motivation for exchange

### a. Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to experience how it was to live abroad for a while. Make new friends, and explore a new country with different surroundings and culture.

### b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

Because Norway is the most beautiful country ever! I love the outdoors and nature, and there is no place like Norway with its beautiful fjords and mountains.

### c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

This university has several campuses in the west of Norway, and offered an 'Outdoor Education' program in Sogndal which enabled me to be outdoors and experience Norway's nature to the fullest.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

### a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

It took me 30 hours to reach Sogndal, but this is because I wanted to take the bus instead of flying. My advice would be: take your time! Don't try to push moving out / travelling / moving in into a couple days, but take time to arrange everything and enjoy the ride!

## 4. University and studying

### a. Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
--	--------	------	-----------------------------------	---	---------

1	Experiential Education and Friluftsliv	15	The course explores experiential learning and friluftsliv through three modules; Experiential learning, teacher role, and lastly outdoor education in culture.	4	Converted in 10 ECTS at WUR
2	Friluftsliv Winter	15	Friluftsliv Winter consists theory and practical excursions in the winter mountain and forest. Students will acquire basic knowledge and experience linked to safe backcountry skiing in winter conditions. Factors as; terrain, snow conditions, weather and the human factor are central in the Nordic backcountry skiing traditions.	5	^
3					
4					
5					
6					

**b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):**

There were sufficient courses in English, but I didn't know that I needed to choose a whole minor instead of individual courses, which is why I changed from going to Bergen to going to Sogndal – as the courses offered in a minor package in Bergen were not what I was looking for.

**c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain):**

See above.

**d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain):**

I think that the academic level of the courses were not as high as I am used to in Wageningen, but that was also shown in the conversion of credits, as I got 20 ECTS instead of 30. However, I did learn a lot on a personal level and in other fields, and the teaching methods were quite pleasant and personal.

**e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):**

Yes.

**f. What is it like to study there?**

My program was all about the practical stuff. So, lots of excursion, reflection and hands-on learning. We had a couple of 'big' overnight excursions that we planned in advance and reflected on afterwards. We also had day excursions and some in-class lectures. During the second part of the semester, we had student-led projects where we could give our own input and create our own projects.

**g. What is the culture of the university?**

Pretty chill, and super sporty, everybody is into climbing skiing or any other outdoor activity.

**h. What does the university offer students additionally?**

You can borrow all kind of equipment from student associations.

## 5. Housing-traveling-living

**a. What are the possibilities for housing?**

Housing was super easy as this can be arranged through uni. I even paid less rent than I did in Wageningen. However, during the Autumn semester it can be the case that you need to share a room with somebody else.

**b. What is the culture like?**

As Norwegians are known for, they are quite reserved. However, I experienced them as super kind, even if they get a little warming up to. They always will want to help you. What I loved about Norwegian culture was their trust. Bikes and cars left unlocked, clothes on sale outside with payment information, borrowing out expensive equipment for free; everybody is super trusting and the chances of your belongings being stolen are extremely low. So, be sure to respect this and not abuse this trust.

**c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?**

I walked everywhere and made little use of public transport. I have to say though that it can be tricky to travel through Norway without a car, as busses and trains are not very regular and do not always go to remote places.

## 6. Expenses

### a. Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	150 (by bus)
Visa - if applicable	x
Vaccinations - if applicable	x
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	x
Daytrips/sight-seeing	Nature is free, but equipment is expensive!
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	330
Grocery costs per month	350
Public transport costs per month	10
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	20

### b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:

Yes, definitely higher, especially alcohol and groceries.

### c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

I spent a lot of money beforehand to buy all the equipment needed for this specific program (1000 euro, but can be more if you buy everything new) but afterwards I spent little money on trips as the main thing we did was go into nature.

## 7. Free time

### a. What are must-sees in the area?

See all the mountains! Go kayaking, go climbing, go hiking, the surroundings are beautiful and there is so much to do.

### b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?

Something I did which I think was super cool but would not be the first thing you would think of was snow kiting! It is usually super expensive but through one of the student associations I could go on their trip and it was great! Other associations also organize surfing trips, skiing trips etc.

## 8. Challenges & best moment abroad

### a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?

The biggest challenges were the physical ones during the snow excursions, sleeping in tents in minus 20 degrees was quite something.

### b. Best memory?

Too many to choose from! I would say when during the second excursion, we were done building snow caves and skied up the mountain to watch the sunset.

## 9. Contact details

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Name &amp; email address (if yes)</b>	Stelonie Lauterslager – stelonie.lauterslager@wur.nl	