



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Water Management
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	13-01-2022 until 17-05-2022
Country (exchange)	France
City (exchange)	Beauvais
University (exchange)	UniLaSalle Beauvais
Faculty (exchange)	Agro-ecology, Hydrogeochemistry and Environments & resources

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

Previous to my exchange I started my studies in Wageningen during the first year of Covid-19. Even though I had finished all my courses, and was supposed to get started on my MSc thesis and internship, it did not feel like I actually was already half way during my studies. Besides, my year had been really tough and I needed a change of scenery. I decided to take some extra time for my Masters and thus came to the idea to fill that time with an exchange. I thought it would be an extra to my resumé and could help me for my personal growth too.

What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

I decided quite late that I would take an extra year, so I decided to just take a look at the options that were left. There were not many, but amongst the options was this one in France. I chose it mostly because these courses were most fitting for me and because it already included a fully ready and composted programme. That made things less stressed and easier to organize.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination? (E.g. bus, train, etc.)

I would recommend asking friends or family to drive you there. That way you can take more stuff and the journey is way less stressful. Especially because it is not far away. You can get there with the car in 5 hours. You can also take the train to Paris, then the train to Beauvais and then the bus to campus, but with all your stuff it would be increasingly more uncomfortable.

4. University and studying

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	Cross cultural communication	1	Discussing cultural differences within the group and miscommunication	2	The examination was kind of out of the blue and a lot of work, but the general course was super easy
2	Water: Current needs and further challenges	2	Introduction to water problems	2	
3	Aquatic chemistry and water pollution	2	Defining the processes within the chemical composition of water systems	2	
4	Hydrogeology	2	Talking of aquifers	4	Lots of exercises such as computing water flows
5	Environmental biogeochemistry	2	Discussing the biogeochemical cycles	2	
6	GIS applied to hydrology	2	Working in GIS, working with hydrological data and workflows	5	Amazing if you are interested in QGIS
7	Surface water and groundwater modelling	2	Using FREEWAT in GIS	5	Amazing if you like QGIS
8	Soil hydrology	2	Characteristics of the fate of water in a soil	3	
9	Water management across agroecosystems	2	This was supposed to be in Italy but the trip was cancelled due to Covid-19		
10	Watershed hydrology	2	Discussing the water cycle and stream flows on a watershed scale	5	Delineating the catchment area was really interesting and fun.
11	Ecological engineering applied to water management	2	Techniques to reduce runoff and the impacts from that		
12	Field trip	2	Trip to Lille and le Havre to understand how anthropogenic activities influenced the landscape	5	So much fun!
13	Water quality monitoring	2	Going to the field and lab work to do some invertebrates sampling and ranking the water quality status accordingly	4	The practicals were super interesting, but the examination was poorly managed.
14	Water policy and governance	2	Very basics of how water is governed	1	Disliked the examination

15	French as Foreign Language	2	The basics of french thought in very slow pace	2	The teacher was a sweetheart
16	International Seminars	1	Lectures given on a certain topic with other French students as well	1	We only had one or two seminars in total
17	Wetland Management	2	Hydrological specificities of wetlands and the measures to conserve the wetlands	3	Course and excursions are nice, examination not very educational.

How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

You have classes almost every day of the week. During these classes you will have either lectures or practicals. Also almost every week you have at least one practical (either in lab or computerlab) or you go on a small fieldtrip. At the end of the week you will have an examination on Friday or a deadline on Sunday. The examinations are both presentations or exams. Luckily most of the preparations can be done during planned hours and you do not have a lot of extra work load during the week besides these hours.

What is the culture of the university? (E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?)

The lectures are highly approachable. They are very friendly and because you are in small classes you can interact very easily. Engagement with local students is way different. Often they are afraid to make mistakes with their English so are hesitant to come to you. However most of them are willing to try and can be very eager to improve their English with you.

What does the university offer the student additionally? (E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?)

There are a lot of facilities on campus. Besides the housing and the lecturer halls, there is an library where a lot of students come to study. There is a farm and a laboratory. The campus provides laundry facility, a gym (both indoor and outdoor), there is a cafeteria, a bar, lots of sports committees, there is a big (rugby) field in front of the housing, there is a bbq outdoor area, the organize lots of activities throughout (arts classes, cooking workshops, big parties every Thursday and every other Friday).

5.Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing? (E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?)

They provide a room for you on campus in the international housing building. You can sign a form indicating your preferences. The rent varies between 285 (small room shared) to 450 something (private room). Highly recommend the sort of in between room (rent is 330 or something), biggest room, it is shared but there is plenty of privacy and space.

What is the culture of the country like? (E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?)

I found that on campus the French could be quite judgemental at times. The manners were different and sometimes not friendly at all. Especially at the big parties you should be weary that they can be quite hostile. However many were also super friendly and the ones that were open to internationals were incredibly open and cordially.

Could you give a general price indication of the place of residence compared to living in Wageningen?

Groceries were more expensive. I recon you will spend about 60eu every week. If you like to go to all the events, you would also need to include the prices for drinks which are another 20eu a week. The residence is about 320 generally a month. I think in many ways it is comparable to Wageningen.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure? (E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

You walk to the university. You go by bus to the city centre (one euro a trip): make sure you always have coins on you. Taxi is super expensive. Busses to Amiens are also just one euro, but the train to Paris is about 15eu.

6. Free time

What are must-sees in the area? (E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?)

Travelling by bus and train is really easy, but busses go on very specific times. If you have a car I recommend bringing it.

Visit Paris ofcourse, but also Amiens is super nice, Rouen, or the castles of Chantilly. A day trip to Versailles (bit more difficult with trains but worth it).

What does not appear in the travel guide, but is worth a visit?

The Canada lake next to campus, or going to the coast (le havre)

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time (E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?)

There are many activities on campus, try to indulge yourself completely into campus life and you will have many parties, dinners and fun trips. Try to interact as much as possible with the French who are studying there.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

Some of the people on campus were quite xenophobic, especially to some of my friends and that was quite annoying and upsetting.

On another note, there is also a lot of gossip amongst the internationals.

What was your best memory abroad?

That is way to difficult to say! There are so many. I think in general the nice people I've met, the dinners we held, the parties we had and the many many trips we made.

8. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Name/e-mail	Sanne Valentijn Sanne.valentijn@wur.nl	