



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student Information

<b>Field of study in Wageningen</b>	Nutrition and Health
<b>Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	5/9/2022 until 23/01/2023
<b>Country (exchange)</b>	Spain
<b>City (exchange)</b>	Valencia
<b>University (exchange)</b>	Universidad Catolica de Valencia
<b>Faculty (exchange)</b>	Faculty of Psychology

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

I finished my last two years of high school at an international boarding school. There I realized that I really enjoyed being in an international culture, surrounded by open-minded, social and culturally diverse students, similar to that of a study exchange. Furthermore, I wanted to develop myself more socially and become more independent. I also wanted to get out of the "bubble" I found myself in here in Wageningen, and see the world from a broader perspective.

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

I have always loved Southern Europe for their culture, food, languages, weather, etc. Especially Spain has always been one of my favorite holiday destinations. Also, I already had a foundation in Spanish, and really wanted to improve my Spanish skills. Therefore, an exchange in Spain was perfect for me. Furthermore, I had heard really good stories about Valencia, so I was very excited to live there!

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

There are many direct flights from different airports in the Netherlands to the airport of Valencia. The airport of Valencia is very close to the city centre.

I am not very sure about other (more sustainable) options to reach Valencia from the Netherlands; but I am sure there are other options.

## 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	Psychology of Groups	6	Similar to social psychology; covers why humans form groups, how groups function, how hierarchy is established, leadership styles, etc.	3	No previous knowledge required
2	Psychology of Sports & Physical Activity	6	Includes topics like how to motivate athletes, how to optimize athletes' performance (psychologically), the role of sports psychologists, drug abuse by athletes, eating disorders	2	No previous knowledge required  Very specific field of study
3	Psychology of Motivation & Emotion	6	Consists of two different parts -Motivation: why do we behave in the way we do, what motivates us, historical motivational theories, basic physiological systems (e.g. hunger) -Emotion: what are emotions, what are their functions, etc.	2	No previous knowledge required (maybe a basic foundation in human physiology)
4	Sleeping Disorders	6	Neurobiology of sleeping; sleeping disorders (such as insomnia); treatment of sleeping disorders (pharmacotherapy, behavioral psychotherapy)	3	A good foundation in biology/human physiology is not required but will make the course much easier!
5	Organizational Climate	6	Organizational psychology (chapters include organizational justice, psychological safety, leadership, etc.)	4	No previous knowledge required

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

The academic level of most courses is generally significantly lower than the level at WUR.

The study year is divided into two semesters (Sep-Jan, Feb-June). At the end of each semester (in January or June) there is an exam period of one/two weeks, in which you will have exams of all the courses you took in that semester. So I had to take five exams in January.

Throughout the semester, the workload is pretty low. You have to complete a number of assignments for every course, however these tend to be short and small assignments that do not require much time. Most teachers will also give you time in class to complete the assignments.

In most courses, the exams are around 60% of the final course. The other 20% is usually determined by attendance and participation, and the remaining 20% by the assignments. However, this differs per course.

**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?)**

UCV is divided into a number of different faculties. Each faculty has its own campus/building, and most of these are located in the city center.

The courses are given in small classrooms with maximum of around 30 students. Most classes are in lecture form, but there were also some cases where there were more interactive (group) assignments or games. The teachers are very approachable and you can build a good and friendly relationship with them. You call them by their first name, and they will make conversations with you about non-academic topics as well.

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

UCV offers sports facilities (such as self-defence classes) and day trips (such as a one-day ski trip).

In the Psychology faculty, there was no canteen, but in most other faculties I believe there were canteens.

UCV also provides Spanish classes for the students of different levels (e.g. A1, B1).

## 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?)**

You have to arrange housing yourself (there are no on-campus rooms). There are a number of different websites/organizations through which you can rent a room, such as Spotahome.com or Flats2Enjoy. The rent rate really depends on the location of the room (more expensive in the city center, cheaper near the beach), the size of the room, the facilities of the apartment, etc.

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

Spain is of course famous for its tapas, and (especially Valencia) for its paella. The local cuisine is mostly centered around meat and fish. However, Valencia has many different types of restaurants and cuisines to offer, besides its local cuisine.

I did not experience very big culture shocks. The culture is typical of that of Southern Europe. Notable differences are however that everything (e.g. administration) is less well-structured/organized than in Northern Europe, and that Spanish people are much more "tranquilo"; people are less stressed and everything is less fast-paced. But for the rest, there are only small cultural differences.

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

Generally, it is pretty doable to find rooms with good prices (around 400-500 euros per month); given that you will live in a big city.

The prices in Valencia tend to be lower than in the Netherlands. Eating out in restaurants or going for drinks is quite a bit cheaper than here, as well as the supermarkets. However, sometimes you have to pay to enter a club, and the drinks in clubs are very expensive.

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

There is extensive public transport in Valencia: trams, metro, buses. Especially the metro and tram-networks are very efficient and punctual. A single trip costs €1,50, but a 10-trip ticket is only around €5,50.

There are also many bike lanes in the city, making it very bike-friendly.

Taxi prices are also pretty low!

## 6. Free time

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

There are many trips that you can easily make from Valencia, such as day-trips to nearby small villages and coastal towns. It is also easy to go by train/bus to Madrid or Barcelona. It is also very nice to visit the North coast (cities like Bilbao, San Sebastian, etc.) or the south of Spain (Andalucia: Malaga, Sevilla, etc.). For this you can rent a car, which is relatively cheap in Spain, and this allows you to see a lot of the country. There are also many Erasmus organizations in Valencia that organize day and week trips, even to Portugal, Ibiza or Morocco for example.

Valencia is an amazing city because it has a big city center, it has beaches, it has a lot of parks and green areas, and it has The City of Arts and Sciences (a group of very modern, futuristic-looking buildings).

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

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

There is so much to do in the city! Even just walking around is so much fun and there is so much to see. There are countless nice restaurants and bars, there are nice clubs and music festivals. Many museums, and the list goes on. So I would just say, take your time to explore everything and try it out for yourself!

## 7.Challenges & best moment abroad

**What was a challenge you have experienced?**

At the beginning, it is always a bit challenging I think, because you don't know anyone when you arrive. Therefore, the first few weeks are challenging, a bit overwhelming, but at the same time very exciting! And don't worry, you will definitely make enough friends!

**What was your best memory abroad?**

Going on a road trip with some of my friends that I made there, to the North of Spain. We visited Bilbao, San Sebastian, Pamplona and Zaragossa!

## 8. Contact details (optional)

<b>Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?</b>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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