



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Molecular Life Sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	15/08/2023 until 15/01/2024
Exchange destination: University	Lund University
Faculty	Science
Country	Sweden
City	Lund

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

To be in an environment with international students, and get experiences on another university.

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

I wanted to go to a Scandinavian country, since they (used to) be a leading example for the rest of Europe. I was also attracted to the snow. Lund has a good university and there are a lot of students around there.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

You can take the train. The connection is fine, it took me 9 hours.

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	Medicinal Chemistry	7,5	It's all about drugs: how they are developed, the uptake and breakdown in the body and a lot of examples of famous drugs.	4	No practical part. A lot of guest lectures from industry! You need some basic organic chemistry background.
2	Viking Age Scandinavia	7,5	Aspects of Viking Society: social structures, expansion, viking raids, blood feuds, silverware. There is an excursion (very fun!) and an individual project (writing of a paper) included.	4,5	The course is really made for exchange students from different backgrounds. The majority of students doesn't know anything about archaeology at the start of the course. There are 2 lectures a week so it's not intensive.
3	Sensory Biology	15	The sensory world of animals. We discussed all the human senses, but also all the sixth senses. The focus was not on humans, we learned about every animal class (mostly insects).	5	The best course I ever followed: the teachers are all the world experts of their topic and they do incredibly interesting research. The vibe in class was great: everyone was super motivated and people knew a lot of cool biology facts.
4					
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

Each semester is split up in two course periods. In every course period you follow one or two courses (so 2-4 courses per semester). The workload was quite low, but I still felt like I learned a lot. The academic level was high, especially in the sensory biology course. For my courses, we had a couple of small exams and if you passed these, you didn't have to do the final exam. Most courses do have a final exam for everyone.

Lesson material was available online. Everyone just used a (slightly old) pdf (including the teachers).

I had a combination of lectures, tutorials and lab work. In Wageningen we do more lab work. We also had a lot of guest lectures during the medicinal chemistry course, by people from the industry.

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?

Lectures are very approachable and they really encourage you to engage and make it interactive. The Swedish students asked questions that were so basic that I wouldn't dare to ask them, but the teachers took the time to answer all of them. Sometimes students even said: I wasn't paying attention when you explained this and this, can you ask it again? It's an inefficient way of teaching but you make sure that everyone gets along. In every course we chose a student representative. That person collected wishes/complaints/remarks of the students and had an evaluation moment with the head of the course halfway through the course. Very democratic.

Local students are open to small talks during the breaks, but I didn't hang out with them outside of uni. They made all their friends already in primary school.

There is a lot of awareness for the wellbeing of students. There are seminars about all kinds of topics during intro weeks and after that (about integrating in Sweden, how to cope with winter, etc).

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

Sports facilities are disappointing. You can go to Gerdahallen gym but it's not like the Bongerd (it's a normal gym that offers student discounts).

Food on campus is available, but it's all privately owned.

Funfact: every building of Lund University has a small room with a bed. You can get the keys and just go there when you feel sick or when you want a power nap.

The biology department organizes seminars from time to time. I went to one by Lars Chittka about bees and it was great! Keep an eye out for that.

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?

I didn't have housing guarantee. There are some things like Idealis (AF Bostader). If you're in the Science/LTH faculty, I recommend trying KC Housing. It's owned by the Chemistry department and they offer housing for internationals. I lived there and I had a nice room, with my own toilet and sink. I shared the living room and showers with 5 other internationals (mostly exchange students, one postdoc). We had a great time together. KC Housing sent me an email that there was a room available, but you can email them as well because quite a lot of rooms were just empty during my stay.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

Very chill, look up Fika and Lagom.

Local cuisine is mid. Sweets are great, cinnamon buns!

And enjoy all the cute little coffee places in Lund. I miss it already!

Swedish people are said to be introverted but I never talked this much with strangers.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

The price is comparable with Dutch prices. You have to download an app (skanetrafiiken) and you can buy single/24h/30days tickets for public transport. Lund has a good infrastructure with a train station, local bus and even a tram line. But I recommend buying a bike (and a good lock!! Lots of thefts over there) and cycle everywhere.

6. Expenses

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

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands.

Ticket there: 80 euros for train drive NL-SW

Visa if applicable: no

Vaccinations if applicable: no

Insurances (extra, if applicable): no

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: about 340 euros for room in a shared flat, including gas/water/light

Groceries: a bit more than in the Netherlands, but quite comparable.

Public transport: equal

Restaurant/going out for dinner: equal, unless you drink alcohol. That's very very expensive.

Daytrips/sight-seeing: lower, there are more common goods.

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Ales stenar (kind of Stonehenge. make sure to look up the bus! We didn't and had to hitchhike back because there was no bus back)

Ystad (cute medieval town)

Kullaberg (hiking with a view)

Skaneleden is a hiking trail. It's beautiful! Especially around the coast in the east (Simrishamn). Look on the Skaneleden website.

Not very close, but go go go! :

Gotland

Lapland

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

Sleep in a shelter! It's free. Most cabins have wood. You can look it up online. Skrylle is a beautiful area close to Lund.

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

The nations. ESN organizes cheap pub crawls in Copenhagen. It was a weird evening, but it's fun. Import alcohol from Copenhagen.

When in Stockholm: Hermans is a great restaurant! Cheap, vegan, delicious.

Going out in Lund is possible but there is not a thrilling night life.

Malmö has a sauna: Kallbadhuset. You should go there. It's only 80 crowns. You dip in the sea afterwards. And then: Ghee by the Sea (good restaurant for Indian food in Malmö).

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

Darkness is really a thing. You can't overcome it.

In the first weeks, I met a lot of potential friends but you meet so many people that you can't keep track of them all, so it could feel like a waste to invest in all the people that you might never see again. I was happy when I had a slightly smaller circle with people that I really could get to know.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

It's the feeling of being so extremely free, all the conversations with strangers, and my trip to Lapland with my best friends from Erasmus!

9. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	Yeah!	
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