



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Bachelor Environmental Sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	07/09/2023 until 15/12/2023
Exchange destination: University	University of Stirling
Faculty	Arts and Humanities
Country	Scotland, UK
City	Stirling

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

It was an amazing opportunity to see if living abroad and studying abroad was something for me. The exchange period was not too long, which made it a perfect chance to have a look whether it was something I enjoyed or not. Next to that, I love travelling and meeting people from different cultures and wanted to broaden my view on different topics, among others by following courses that are not offered at WUR.

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

Even though my study programme in Wageningen is in English as well, I wanted to improve my English by going to an English-speaking country. I did not want to take a plane and therefore the USA or Australia were no option, which made me choose the UK. Stirling seemed a nice city (not too big), with a nice campus and all that made me decide to go there!

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

I took the train from Rotterdam to London, changed there for a direct train to Stirling: it was perfect! On the way back, I took the ferry from Newcastle, which was very convenient as well.

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	Navigation and Mountain Skills	10	Learning how to navigate in UK areas, lectures on weather	5	Lots of walking, enjoying the outdoors, and gaining useful skills.

			patterns and access regulation.		
2	Reputations in History	10	Discussing the reputation of a number of important historical (mostly Scottish) figures through the ages	5	Very interesting perspective, I really learned a lot about history and historiography in this course.
3	Green Politics in the Age of Climate Change	10	Philosophy on sustainability and how to make green politics practical.	5	More challenging, but very interesting course with a lot of room for discussions in class.
4					
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

Studying at the University of Stirling is comparable to studying in Wageningen. It might sometimes feel a little less professional (especially during the exams, and the way teachers are addressed by students), but the level of education is similar I think. This however really depends on which courses you follow. The workload was slightly lower compared to Wageningen I'd say, more self-study as well, but that gives you time to enjoy the country.

What is the culture of the university?

As already mentioned, the culture is slightly less professional compared to Wageningen, but I enjoyed that. Teachers are all very friendly (at least the ones I had) and so are the students studying in Stirling.

What does the university offer students additionally?

There is a reason Stirling is nr. 1 in the UK for campus environment: the facilities are amazing. The gym is enormous, the uni has a sports club for every sport you can imagine and there is a student union (kind of student association) for every kind of person. There is a supermarket on campus, as well as enough laundrettes, a pharmacy, lunchrooms, an arts centre with a very cheap cinema and a piano to play on.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

The Uni arranges a room for you on campus (or in town if you prefer), mine was a 20 minute walk to the main university building, but I had the accommodation the furthest away from Campus Central. The rent rates are higher compared to the Netherlands I think (I paid around £126.46 per week, which was one of the cheapest options). I had my own room with sink and shared two bathrooms and a kitchen with 6 other girls.

What is the culture of the country like?

I'd say it is similar to the Netherlands, but the Scottish people are in general friendlier and more polite (learn to say 'sorry' every other second!). The locals were in general very interested in foreign students, I made a lot of amazing Scottish friends!

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

There is a dense network of busses, but they are not very reliable. The prices are reasonable, try to apply for a Young Scots Card, which makes taking the bus free of charge! The trains are not too expensive either (and way more reliable), and the university has a contract with Santander Bikes, which means you can use the Santander Bikes in Stirling for free for the first 30 minutes (which is enough to bike from campus to the city centre).

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: **360 euro return ticket**

Visa if applicable: -

Vaccinations if applicable: -

Insurances (extra, if applicable): -

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: **Flat with shared bathroom/kitchen, around 600 euros**

Groceries: **60 euro per week, slightly higher than NL**

Public transport: **50 euro in total I think for taking the train, cheaper than NL**

Restaurant/going out for dinner: **100 euro, comparable or slightly more expensive**

Daytrips/sight-seeing: **I had a Young Scots card, which made e.g. visiting the castles in Scotland very cheap. So probably in total 300 euros including a trip to Ireland, museums are free as well.**

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

Edinburgh, Glasgow, the highlands are all easy to reach by both bus and train. It's also very easy and cheap to take the bus + ferry to Belfast. Make sure to visit all the Christmas markets (I went to Edinburgh and Belfast, they say Glasgow is nice as well), they're worth it!

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

Climb the hill Dumyat (easy walk from campus) for sunsets! Also, take the bus to Callender and climb Ben Ledi, it's steep sometimes but still a very enjoyable walk.

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

Fubar nightclub is popular, but I haven't been there. A lot of nice pubs around in Stirling, Edinburgh is wonderful as well. Nice shops in Falkirk, but most of all, don't forget the hillwalking. Even when it's raining, with the right clothes you will definitely enjoy it. Scotland is so beautiful!

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

Not too many to be honest. Can't really think of anything right now, everything was very well organized by the university and my exchange in general was very smooth.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

All the moments spend with my flatmates, they were the best!

9. Contact details (optional)

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