



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	BVG
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	14/02/2023 until 21/06/2023
Country (exchange)	New Zealand
City (exchange)	Wellington
University (exchange)	Victoria University of Wellington (VUW)
Faculty (exchange)	Health

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

Going abroad for study was something I wanted to do during my Bsc. Being able to live in another country while also still learning and earning credits is a surreal experience that I really wanted to have. I wanted to learn how to rely on myself, while also exploring another country and making friends from all over the world.

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

For my exchange experience I wanted to go as far as possible. In my opinion, if you're going to live in another country for half a year, better make it a country that you would otherwise not visit so quickly! I always wanted to visit New Zealand for its nature and culture. Being able to do this while also studying and living there was a really nice opportunity.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

If you're going to New Zealand, you have to take a lot of planes :) Timewise, it doesn't really matter if you fly east or west. One of the better flights is Amsterdam->Singapore->Auckland->Wellington. This takes about 30 hours. My tip is to arrive a couple days/weeks in advance of the start of your exchange so you can get used to the time difference and the new country/place you're in. Partying during the introduction week while having a gigantic jetlag is not really a vibe. Also, if you arrive early, you can take the Northern Explorer from Auckland to Wellington instead of another plane. This train ride is about the same price as a flight and it's the most beautiful train ride I have ever had!

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	Brain and Behaviour	7.5	Brain physiology and psychology in one course	4	I learned a lot of interesting stuff about brain physiology. However, the course was pretty confusing with a lot of different assignments to do.
2	Physiology & Pathology 2	10	Really in dept information about the human body and some nutrition and sport physiology	5	This was by far the most interesting course I followed. Even though I already had 3 physiology courses, I still learned a ton!
3	Sociology of health	10	A course about health care system in New Zealand	2	To much about the NZ health care system for me to be interesting for a nutrition student. Essays count for about 60% of your entire mark.
4					
5					
6					

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

Study material consists almost entirely of lectures and essays. No groupwork at all. Academic level about the same as Wageningen University, or a little bit easier. Midterms and final exams halfway and at the end of the 12 week semester. Essays and assignments deadlines vary and are throughout the whole semester. There is a lot of freedom on how you plan your study (rewatching lectures, visiting tutorials or not, etc.).

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?)

At this university everyone is really easy-going. Lecturers are easily approachable and people are generally really nice. Making engagement with local student can be quite hard, since there are pretty much on their own. Generally, you spend most of your time with other exchange students.

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

There is a cheap but really nice sport centre on campus. Also, housing is offered by the university, so you don't have to worry about getting a room. Also there are a lot of (sport)associations to join that offer a lot of different fun activities.

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?)

Housing is available through the university for about 800 euros a month. All exchange student are put in the same neighbourhood so it is really easy to make friends. Also, it is really close to the university. I stayed at Kelburn Flats, which I would definitely recommend. It's 5 minutes from campus and pretty close to the city centre. You could rent cheaper by not renting through VUW, but finding a room at the other side of the world is kind of difficult, and it is going to be a lot harder to get to know people this way.

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

In NZ, people are pretty easy-going and not in a hurry whatsoever. This can be really chill since deadlines are pretty much optional at VUW, but also annoying because no one is ever in a hurry. If you need a certain document do not be surprised if it takes a couple weeks. Cuisine is Asian infused so you will find extremely tasty take out. Also, since Wellington is the coffee capital of the world, you will find amazing coffee everywhere at a really good price :)

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

Most places rented through university are around 1600 NZ dollars a month. This is about 800 euros. If you rent with catering this will be about 150 euros a month extra.

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

Public transport is extremely cheap in NZ. A 50 minute bus ride will cost you about 1 euro. However, the bus is really slow and there are not a lot of trains in NZ. Also, cheap Ubers are available throughout the whole of Wellington. You pay for public transport with a 'snapper card', which is their version of our OV card.

6. Free time

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

There is so much to do in Wellington. You can do hikes everywhere, go to the movies, visit a restaurant, go for a coffee, go thrift shopping and go on. If you want to go outside of Wellington a car is advised since the public transport is not really good outside of the cities. Also, all the hikes are not really reachable by bus or train.

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

My favourite places in Wellington are coffee place Qilin Tea house, the te papa museum, the light house cinema, cuba street or the sky stadium to see a rugby match. The best hikes in Wellington are stairway to heaven, red rocks, mount Victoria, and mount Kaukau. Also Somes island is definitely worth a visit. Try out as many food places as you can!

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

Courteney place is the going out centre in Wellington. You can find all the bars and clubs there. My personal favourites were the sports café, circus bar and the rooftop bar. Most people go out on Friday and Saturday. Going out in the middle of the week is possible, but often really quiet.

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

The biggest inconvenience of living in NZ is that your so far away from the rest of the world. Mainly the time difference is huge (10-12 hours). Because of this, you can only text or call friends and family at home early in the morning or late at night. This can make you feel quite isolated at times.

What was your best memory abroad?

Halfway the semester there is a two week study period (=holiday)! I travelled by car around the south island with some friends. NZ is beautiful and driving around and hiking is the best way to actually feel like your actually abroad. Sharing this with friends you made a couple weeks ago from all over the world is absurd but amazing. During trips like this you get to know each other better than you know some friends at home. Definitely recommend driving around NZ and visiting everything!

8. Contact details (optional)

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