



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Bsc Molecular life sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	10/07/2023 until 04/11/2023
Exchange destination: University	Victoria University of Wellington
Faculty	Biological sciences
Country	New-Zealand
City	Wellington

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I chose to go on Exchange, because I am someone that stays in their comfort zone out of habit and I truly wanted to challenge myself. What better way to do that, then to go to a different country, city, university system and environment. I threw myself in the deep end just to see how resilient of a person I can truly be.

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

I chose the VUW/New-Zealand, because it was the furthest I could go and because it was a dream to one day go on vacation there. I got in and spent 30 days after the end of the trimester traveling around the Northern and Southern island and the country is breath-taking.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

For the most part, you can reach Wellington quite easily with flights. However, I ran into a problem getting to my accommodation as I didn't have mobile data after I stepped off the bus. Wellington has some great buses, for how car-centric the city is, but buying a mobile plan in the airport might not be a bad idea.

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	Genetics	10	This course delves into the function, structure and genetic techniques that are used to study DNA, RNA and proteins	4	It has a lot of overlay with genetics courses that are found within the mandatory courses of Bsc molecular life sciences, apart from population genetics
2	Physiology and Pathology 1	10	This course delves into the structure, function and pathologies of a set of organs, like the heart, blood vessels, lungs and kidneys	5	It is a great course to gain insight into the way the human body has designed its systems and how they function
3	Cell and immunobiology	10	This course delves into how immune cells, like T and B cells develop, how they differentiate and what function they perform during an infection	5	The human immune system is incredibly complex and the course was quite difficult, but it gave me a new appreciation for how well our bodies are designed to fight off threats.
4					
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

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

The system is quite different, the lectures were only 50 minutes and practicals were usually, at most, 4 hours. Mornings were reserved for lectures and afternoons for practicals. You were on your own a lot more, I did not have any tutorials, so I had to process all information on my own outside of lecture hours. I would say there is no real academic difference between the VUW and WUR. Even molecular life sciences students are well-equipped to handle the biology courses that are taught at VUW

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 usually voluntary, but they do note that attending students get higher grades, but the choice is up to you. The lectures are usually more listening than interaction, which is more easily done during lectures, but the university organises a lot of activities as well as Everton hall if you are staying there.

What does the university offer students additionally?

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

The university provides a gym on campus with an indoor court that can be used for a multitude of sports, as well as a soccer and basketball field. There are also restaurants

and hang-out spots on campus, one of those also does 2-for-1 pizza deals every Friday. Laundry facilities were in my hall.

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?

What is the culture of the country like?

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

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

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

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: 2800

Visa if applicable: 140

Vaccinations if applicable: none

Insurances (extra, if applicable): 190

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: higher, shared appartement

Groceries: equal

Public transport: higher

Restaurant/going out for dinner: equal

Daytrips/sight-seeing: equal

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?

Getting outside of the city is a must-see area in New-Zealand and I would recommend around November, as that is when the weather gets a little better, but everything is still really calm and not very busy.

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

I have no answer

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

Honestly, just finding a good local restaurant is always a good thing

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

Well, I had to adapt to a new education system, a new country, new people, living arrangement, but most people are willing to help if you ask them, so just being open about your problems, helped me a lot

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

Definetely, the journey I went on during my vacation after the end of the trimester and standing on a glacier after taking a helicopter ride to it.

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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