



# WUR Goes Abroad

## 1. Student information

<b>Study programme WU</b>	Bachelor Plant Sciences
<b>Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)</b>	15-01-2024 until 10-05-2024
<b>Exchange destination: University</b>	University College Cork
<b>Faculty</b>	-
<b>Country</b>	Ireland
<b>City</b>	Cork

## 2. Motivation for exchange

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

To explore living in another country, experience the culture and get to know people from all over the world.

### b. What is the reason you chose for this country?

Ireland is both an English-speaking country as well as a country with a unique culture and nature.

### c. What is the reason you chose for this university?

The university looked nice on pictures and I wanted to study in a smaller city than Dublin, since I had already been there a year before.

## 3. Accessibility to reach destination

### a. Do you have any advice about reaching your exchange destination?

Unfortunately, there is no green way to reach Ireland. I took a plane to Dublin and a bus to Cork, since it was cheaper (being part of ESN gives you free luggage for Ryanair and 10 % off). However, if you pick the right date (cheapest dates), I would recommend to take a plane to Cork, because it saves you 4 hours of time.

## 4. University and studying

### a. 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
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<b>1</b>	Current Trends in Ecology and Environmental Science	5	An ecological course meant for engineers. Engineering solutions to counterattack climate change	2	Lecturers did not seem to be interested to provide us information. Lectures were cancelled without notification. Content was not of adequate level.
<b>2</b>	Advanced Ecology and Biogeography	5	Introduction of theories and practice in ecology and biogeography	4	Fun lecturer, a lot of new information about a topic I am interested in.
<b>3</b>	Sustainable Food Production	5	Understand food production in modern world with emphasis on environmental impact	4	Not so fun lecturer, but every aspect of food production was discussed well.
<b>4</b>	Indigenous Knowledge: Herbs and Healing in Irish Folklore	5	Examine a range of most renowned herbs in Irish folklore, healing and herbalism, study of Irish ethno-botany in a European context using folkloric sources and indigenous concepts of healing and curing	3	Interesting new view on the use of medicine. Lecturer was often not understandable because of her soft voice. Big part about other things than herbal medicine, which is not my topic of interest.
<b>5</b>	Language and Culture in an Irish-Speaking Area	5	Introducing practical elements of Irish-language culture through a 4-day, residential course based in an Irish-speaking area	5	Met many new people here, learned much about Irish culture and language. Take some extra food with you ;)
<b>6</b>	Food Biotechnology	5	Examining the role of molecular biotechnology in the food industry	4	Good lectures. A bit too much emphasis on crop biotechnology for me, of which I already had some knowledge.

**b. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses that were taught in English (Yes, No - Explain):**

Yes, UCC is an English-speaking university.

**c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain):**

Yes, UCC has many chair groups with a big variety of courses to offer. In biological field, but also in gender studies, economics, history, etc.

**d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain):**

Yes, it costed me less effort than at the WUR to keep up with the content, but still I gained much knowledge during my stay.

**e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain):**

Yes, apart from Current Trends in Ecology and Environmental Sciences, the courses were of sufficient level, provided new knowledge, and met my interests. It is good to know that biological courses have less practical hours compared to the Netherlands.

**f. What is it like to study there?**

*E.g. Study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material?*

Workload is less compared to the Netherlands. Lessons are more lecture than practical based. Nearly all examinations will be given to you near the end of the semester (essays / written examinations). This means that you won't have much to do during the semester, but I had a pretty intense last month of studying. It will be okay though, if you plan well :)

**g. What is the culture of the university?**

*E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with WU?*

Lecturers are approachable and you can almost talk to them like you would to fellow students. Irish students are happy to help you and some start a conversation with you, but at the end I mostly talked to other Erasmus students.

**h. What does the university offer students additionally?**

*E.g. Catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?*

A free gym, which was of good quality. The campus provides a restaurant, student-centre and scenic buildings (most beautiful place of Cork if you ask me).

## **5. Housing-traveling-living**

**a. What are the possibilities for housing?**

*E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?*

Note that you will probably pay 2 – 3 times the amount of rent you would pay in Wageningen. You can show your interest in rooms from the university, but you still have

to apply for them. I rented at EazyCity. It was not the best room, but I was assured of a room and lived near campus. Also, be aware of scams on Facebook.

**b. What is the culture like?**

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

Differences in cuisine: less vegetarian options in supermarkets, groceries cheaper in general, fatter diet.

Culture: people are generally very kind and less direct compared to Dutch people. I feel like their manners are pretty similar the Dutch ones, but they have of course their own things like instruments, sports (hurling / gaelic football), and a big pub-culture of course. People generally don't meet at home, but in pubs.

**c. Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?**

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

Taxi prices are a bit lower compared to the Netherlands. Almost everything in Cork is within 30 minutes walking distance, so I nearly always walked to my lectures. Renting a bike is a bit expensive, but I rent a TFI bike for 10 euros. You can bike from stand to stand for a maximum of 30 minutes. You can also get a student leap card to get more than 50 % off your bus and train ticket (would recommend).

## 6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	150 (return)
Visa - if applicable	-
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	-
Daytrips/sight-seeing	600
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	940 (single room, shared kitchen and bathroom)
Grocery costs per month	120
Public transport costs per month	60
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	75

**b. The price levels were in general [higher; lower; equal] in comparison to in the Netherlands:**

Lower for groceries, public transport and restaurants, higher for housing.

**c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?**

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## 7. Free time

**a. What are must-sees in the area?**

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

Ballycotton, Blarney Castle, Kinsale (Charles Fort), Crosshaven. All reachable by bus.

**b. What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth seeing/doing?**

Ballycotton is definitely a must see, the cliff walk is one of the most beautiful things I saw in the area.

## 8. Challenges & best moment abroad

**a. Any challenges? How did you deal with them?**

I had a hard time getting used to not seeing my family, friends, and girlfriend. To deal with this, I called them often, or I just went doing something with friends in Cork.

**b. Best memory?**

Having fun parties with friends. Also, we went on a weekend trip to Belfast with friends which was great. In short, I feel like the people you meet will make your exchange worth-it.

## 9. Contact details

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