



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Field of study in Wageningen	Earth & Environment
Study period exchange (dd/mm/yyyy)	25/07/2022 until 18/11/2022
Country (exchange)	Australia
City (exchange)	Melbourne
University (exchange)	University of Melbourne
Faculty (exchange)	Faculty of Arts

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

For a combination of reasons: I wanted to experience academics in another country, but also to just experience live surrounded by a different environment, culture and people. Moreover, I wanted to meet people from all over the world and improve my English.

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

Once again, there were multiple reasons. I chose Australia because it is English-speaking and because of the quality of the universities there. Moreover, I am a big nature-lover so all the outdoor opportunities Australia has to offer spoke to me. Lastly, I wanted to experience live in a real metropole, which Melbourne definitely was (and which is less the case for the majority of European cities available for exchange). The fact that Australia is so far away was a reason rather than a downside for me; this made the experience even more intimate because no one was able to go home or have a lot of people visiting during the exchange.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Being very far away, the only real option to get to Melbourne is by plane.

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	Philosophy: The Great Thinkers	7.5	In this course, every week another philosopher was discussed during two lectures and one tutorial, for which some literature had to be read. We followed a chronological order, so we started with the Indian Hymns and Plato and ended with recent thinkers like Rawls.	3	The course was rather unpersonal and there was barely any integration between the thinkers that were discussed, which was a little sad.
2	Dictators & Democrats: The Modern World	7.5	Following a chronological order, both general developments as case studies regarding forms of government and suffrage throughout the world, mainly in the last 200 years, were discussed.	5	This course was highly interesting because the topics discussed still have relevance today, as well as it gave insight in the history of a lot of countries Europeans generally do not know about. Moreover, it was very well organised and the teachers were super enthusiastic.
3	Debating Science in Society	7.5	In this course, each week a statement relevant for science and society was discussed, during two subsequent lectures given by two different professors: one being in favour of the statement, and one being against it. In the tutorial all students had a discussion about the statement.	5	This was a form of education I had never experienced before, but it was very personal, interesting and definitely broadened my scope and nuance on a lot of topics.
4	Financial Management	7.5	Each week, a different financial topic was discussed during a three hour lecture. Students had to the exercises about this topic following this lecture.	7.5	This was a rather independent course which was not very inspiring, yet did give some useful knowledge in finance.

			The course was rather quantitative: it mainly involved calculations.		
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How is the study formalized? (E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material)

All courses consisted of two lectures and one tutorial a week. Apart from that, there was a lot of reading required. Examination is mainly through essays throughout the whole semester, so that requires quite an amount of work. The academic level is similar if not higher than that in Wageningen, which is similar for the workload. The biggest difference is that there is not so much groupwork and more essays.

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 university is very well organised. Even though it is large, the lecturers are very approachable and you get personal feedback at any point if you need it. This is therefore quite similar to the WUR in my opinion. Local students are also extremely open and interested to get to know you, even though it is somewhat easier to really to things besides uni with fellow exchange students.

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

A lot! There were events almost every week, for example international weeks, weeks promoting mental health and a lot more. There are a lot of free food stents and there is also a free food programme by the uni. Moreover, there is a big sports complex offering almost anything at campus. You could just go by for any kind of question or help at the Stop 1 reception. Laundry facilities were available in most student accommodations.

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?)

Most international students stay in either university run accommodation (e.g. UniLodge) or in any of the Scape accommodations. Finding a 'normal' room is generally perceived difficult from home, and if you start looking once you arrive in Melbourne it can easily take a month or longer (which is quite sad considering the fact that you are there for 4 months). The student accommodations are very fun to meet a lot of exchange students, and most have super convenient locations.

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

Australia feels quite European, specifically English. People are very nice and welcoming. Food is super international.

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

It is definitely more expensive, I would say that including travel expenses you probably spend twice as much as in Wageningen.

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 free in the centre and the university provides you with 50% discount for all other transport. Most accommodations are in Carlton, walking distance from the campus and the centre of the city. So transport is definitely easy and not something you spend a lot of money on.

6. Free time

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

There are a lot of nice weekend-destinations in Victoria. I would definitely recommend the Grampians and the Dandenongs. Also Mornington Peninsula is very nice, as well as the Great Ocean Road.

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

See previous comment mainly. Also, just explore all the great parks Melbourne has.

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

Not so much, going out and eating out is expensive in Melbourne, so I did not go too often. But there are plenty of nice spots, just ask a local or buy a guide!

7.Challenges & best moment abroad

What was a challenge you have experienced?

During my first week, I had to quarantine because I got COVID. That was especially hard because I did not know a lot of people that well yet.

What was your best memory abroad?

The best memory was probably the Spring Break road trip from Sydney to Melbourne, as well as my last night in Melbourne during which I had drinks on the rooftop of my accommodation with all the friends I made there.

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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