



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	BCs Environmental Sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	16/02/2024 until 21/06/2024
Exchange destination: University	University of Melbourne
Faculty	Engineering and IT
Country	Australia
City	Melbourne

2. Motivation for exchange

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

I went on a study exchange to have the opportunity to study in a country where English is the first language to be fully immersed in the language. Moreover, I wanted to take courses related to energy and policy that Wageningen did not offer and the University of Melbourne was very well known for its research on energy technology.

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

I have always dreamed of going to Australia and going on an exchange there was an incredible opportunity to spend 6 months in the country. Australia offers a lot of opportunities for hiking and camping in wild, untouched nature which is something that almost does not exist in Europe. Moreover, I want to stop taking the plane to travel so this was probably my last over-the-world trip and it also allowed me to do a long stop-over of several weeks in South-East as there is no direct plane affordable from Australia to the Netherlands.

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

The University of Melbourne is considered the best university in Australia and the quality of education there is high. Moreover, the University of Melbourne was ideally situated, close to the city and have many very interesting courses that I could not study anywhere else (Australian wildlife management for instance).

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Unfortunately, the plane is the only option to get there unless taking a semester off to travel via public transportation through Europe and Asia.

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
1	Energy and the Environment	7.5	This subject provides a quantitative survey of the chemistry and physics behind conventional and alternative energy sources, including fossil fuels, bio-fuels, the capture of energy from solar, geothermal, hydro and wind sources and their storage, and the generation of energy from nuclear fission and fusion processes. Each energy source is assessed in terms of its environmental impacts, its dependence on critical or scarce resources and the social or political consequences of reliance on it.	5	This course was awesome !! The teachers were great and many professionals also came (experts in carbon capture, air and water quality related to energy, gas foraging, wind energy market...). We touched all aspects of energy and heavy physics and chemistry components on new technology not even industrialised yet.
2	Wildlife Management	7.5	Wildlife Management has varied goals, addressing issues as diverse as conservation and biodiversity, human-animal conflict, pest animal control,	4	There is no class for this course, it's only excursions in natural parks around Melbourne. It was very cool, we could observe kangaroos, count bats in the sky, see the penguin parade on Phillip Island, study

			overabundance and potential for disease spill over. This subject will expose students to real-life examples of wildlife management in Australia, and provide them with opportunities to meet and interact with relevant professionals in this field during synchronous online teaching sessions		bandicoots and wombats. Very fun course and ideal to meet people with a full day excursion fortnightly. Only downside is that there are A LOT of readings and writings to do but it's worth it and still very interesting.
3	Economic Analysis and Policy	7.5	The subject begins with a general introduction on the application of principles of microeconomics for guiding the formulation of policy options and their interpretation. It then explores in detail specific topics drawn from health economics, microeconomic reform, income distribution, poverty or other relevant policy areas. For each specific topic the subject presents and evaluates results in the literature and analyses future policy options and their effects.	5	Very interesting course that will teach you to think critically about governmental reports and policy about economic issues. The teacher is amazing and very approachable.
4	Basic Econometrics	7.5		3	Extremely intensive course (especially if you have never studies economics), expect you to know how to code in R or learn very quickly and there is a big group work that takes a lot of time and is quite

					complex. Even though it was super interesting and applied, I would not take it during your exchange in Australia as you would probably enjoy more going camping in the wild during your weekends than working on your econometrics groupwork...
5					
6					

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

c. I had sufficient possibilities to select suitable courses in my field of interest (Yes, No - Explain): I could take courses in every faculty I wanted (I had courses in the engineering, sciences and economics department).

d. I am satisfied with the level of the courses that I followed (Yes, No - Explain): It was a high level of education but still very doable and sometimes, even though you don't have the prerequisite, you can text the teacher before hands, show him that you are very motivated and still join the course.

e. I am satisfied, in the end, with the selection of courses I followed (Yes, No - Explain): I am very satisfied of my courses even though I abandoned Econometrics after 6 weeks because the group work was too overwhelming and I had enough credits from Wur to drop it.

f. What is it like to study there?

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

The examination buildings are CRAZY, I had my exams in the royal exhibition building (check it out, it's amazing), they were challenging and I had the time to finish none of them but still managed to get first-class honours so don't stress about it. The workload was about 4h per week in class per course and some exercises to do at home weekly. The lessons material was all available in a website very similar to Brightspace.

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?

Lectures are AWESOME, very knowledgeable, kind and approachable. I was not friends with any exchange students but I was part of a very close group of Australian friends and we did many trips together around Victoria so don't hesitate to talk to locals, they are awesome. There are lots of associations as well so it's easy to meet people. Compared to WUR, it's a very big university and the university will not help you making friends (the intro week is not very good and the classes are huge with sometimes amphitheater with 300 students in economics class) so you really have to make the first move and talk to people and join associations (the Triathlon association is very cool).

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

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

I did not use the sport facilities because the membership was rather expensive and I had a gym and swimming pool in my building but they have everything you might think of with great food as well on campus.

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?

Bruh, it's hard and expensive to find a room....Plan a budget of 1000€ monthly if you want in a student building (shared). I paid 750€ for a room in the CBD in a homestay, so living with Australian family, it was cool but they had a 6-week-old baby when I arrived and yeah, I was very sleep deprived so not that cool. Keep in mind that isolation in Australia is non-existent, they are known to be the worst.

b. What is the culture like?

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

It's very European/American...it's a mismatch of every culture in one country. There are very few Australian aborigines in Melbourne, everyone is an immigrant from first, second, rarely from third generation, usually from Europe or Asia. The amazing things I loved about "local" cuisine was vegemite on bread and butter and very cheap sushis as well as amazing vegan food from every country.

c. 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 can be pricy with around 3€ for a tram ticket valid for 2 hours. I would advise you to get a bike even though the city is not very bike friendly, it's still doable, nice and budget friendly. You can also easily take the train to go everywhere around Melbourne but for hiking and national park, a car is a necessity. You can either make some friends who have a car or rent a car, it's easy as well, only remember to get your international driver licence with you.

6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	950€
Visa - if applicable	480€
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	275€
Daytrips/sight-seeing	Free in parks but expensive activities and hostels

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	800-1200€ for student housing
Grocery costs per month	150€
Public transport costs per month	150€ (so get a bike)
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	100€

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

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

You can easily get a job. I worked as a barista in a very nice company specialized in hot chocolate.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

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

Wilson Promontory, the Great Ocean Road, Mornington Peninsula, the Grampians, Kosciuszko National Park, Phillip Island, Werribee Gorge State Park, Cement Creek Redwood Forest, Dandenong Park.

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

Go overnight hiking in wild spots in appearing shitty camping with nothing. There is usually none but in the evening, it gets full of kangaroos, wallabies and sometimes koalas.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

b. Best memory?

Overnight hike in the Kosciuszko mountains, we got caught in a tempest with over 130km/h wind, one of our tents flew away, it started raining and we left the camp around 6am under pouring rain to continue hiking for about 15km. That was the first time we went on holiday for a week with my group of Australian friends and we became very close from that moment.

9. Contact details

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