



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

Study programme WU	MSc Aquaculture & Marine Resource Management
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	19/02/2024 until 15/07/2024
Exchange destination: University	University of Wollongong, Australia
Faculty	Environmental Sciences
Country	Australia
City	Wollongong

2. Motivation for exchange

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

Learn different topic complimenting my home degree in a country specialized in marine and coastal management topics.

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

Australia has top notch coastal management policies and research ventures in the marine sciences domain.

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

Because it has a partner relationship with WUR and was the least competitive one to get accepted for (compared to Melbourne and Sydney universities). Ideally, I would have gone to James Cook University for its expertise in coral reef science.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

Xiamen Airlines route Amsterdam-Xiamen-Sydney is cheap and reliable.

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	Multimedia Journalism Production	7.5	Producing multimedia content (social		

			media / news outlets)		
2	News 1	7.5	Writing news		
3	Data Journalism Research and Investigation	7.5	Data Journalism – combining analysis of data with engaging content creation for a wider audience		
4	Ocean Science and Policy	7.5	Learning to integrate and transverse ocean policy and scientific domains.		
5					
6					

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

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

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

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

f. What is it like to study there?

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

Independent study is the norm here, even in journalism classes, very different than WUR. Contact hours are less than WUR, usually once or twice per week per class for 3 hours (4 classes is a standard load per semester). Workload therefore depends on how much you do at home.

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, though you won't meet them often and therefore getting prompt replies to questions is hard.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

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

There's catering within the uni, plenty of options, self-paid. Plenty of sports facilities too, subscription-based. It's paid, but reasonably priced.

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?

There are campus rooms. They are expensive and warm. I lived in a privately-owned shared house found through flatmates.com. It was a lot cheaper and a lot of fun.

b. What is the culture like?

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

People are laid back compared to Northwestern Europeans. There's a blend of ethnicities in Wollongong and therefore also a blend of cultures and cuisines to experience.

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 in Wollongong is quite easy and reliable, cheap. Get an OpalCard and travel around. To get out of town, you can take trains to major cities. To enjoy more rural parts of the region a car is a must-have. Buying cars is no easy feat and expensive, though. Registration policies may be complex. Though, having a card is worthwhile in this country, because the cities themselves are a bit boring to me, the wider environment surely is not, with lots of wildlife and beautiful landscapes on offer.

6. Expenses

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

Category	Expenses
Travelling there	1500eu
Visa - if applicable	500eu, (potentially necessary medical bills may make this figure much higher, as was the case for me)
Vaccinations - if applicable	-
Insurances (extra) - if applicable	Health insurance though receiving institution is mandatory, 250eu
Daytrips/sight-seeing	Prices range from 75%-175% of what one could expect in NL.
Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation	Shared houses are the norm. room prices are similar to NL, paid weekly.
Grocery costs per month	Similar to NL, maybe 125% of NL cost of living.
Public transport costs per month	Lower than NL. Trains are cheap.
Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month	Similar to NL.

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

On average I reckon cost of living expenses were 125% of life in NL.

e. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

Local jobs are not easy to find – contrary to common belief of uni students and working holiday visa holders. Jobs in farming and mining are easy to get but are often not compatible with university studies. Jobs in cities are harder to obtain as Australians highly prefer hiring Australian nationals over work-eligible visa holders. This may be important if you expect any income while in Australia.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

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

Blue Mountains, Kiama, Sydney.

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

Go find out! The environment is vast in Australia – there's always something to see.

Embrace the adventure.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

b. Best memory?

Whale watching in Byron Bay region.

9. Contact details

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