



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student information

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|---|----------------------------------|
| Study programme WU | Bs. Biotechnology |
| Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy) | until 15/05/2024 |
| Exchange destination: University | National University of Singapore |
| Faculty | School of Science |
| Country | Singapore |
| City | Singapore |

2. Motivation for exchange

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

This is one of the best universities in the world and I really wanted to have an opportunity to go to Asia and learn about the culture and economic development.

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

Singapore is a safe and dynamic country in Asia, and as a melting pot is one of the most emblematic and interesting cases of how Asia is developing and how it relates to the west in a political and economic manner.

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

It's considered one of the best universities of Asia and has some really good professors. Student life is very nice, and the amenities are top notch.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

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

By plane, there is not really another way.

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 | Stem Cell Biology | 7.5 | This course went really deep in the current understanding of stem cell biology, from how a zygote turns into a baby, on what biochemical markers stimulate specific differentiation, embryoid bodies for research, pluripotency induction, cell tissue culturing and many more. The course also covered the applications and challenges related to tissue transplantation, teratocarcinoma formation, cultured meat and tissue regeneration. | 5 | |
| 2 | Topics in Biomedical sciences | 7.5 | This course covered the current developments in biomedical sciences related to human health and diseases. It went in depth on topics such as how cells age on a molecular level, the pathology of Parkinson and Alzheimer, and how the brain affects diabetes, satiety, and reward systems involved in obesity and addiction. Biotechnology can play a big role in creating treatments for these diseases, so the pathology and mechanisms were very insightful. | 4 | |
| 3 | Darwin and Evolution | 7.5 | This first course focussed on evolution and was given by renowned professor John van Wyhe. It mainly focussed on the history of how the concept of evolution came to be, and gradually accepted by society. The course got into the "history of geology, palaeontology and biology from the 1700s to the 20th century". | 5 | |
| 4 | Introduction to Quantitative Finance | 7.5 | This course is a mathematics course on how financial instruments behave over time and in combination with one another. I did not particularly | 1 | |

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|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | like it as its was very dry and the professors did not really explain anything well. | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |

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

Yes, everything is taught in English

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

Yes, there were many courses related to my study and the faculty provided a wide range of possibilities.

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

Yes, some were quite challenging, but some were more easy so that gave a good balance.

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

Yes, although the quantitative finance course was too much mathematics and I should have chosen a more case study based / business course in the end.

f. What is it like to study there?

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

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?

People are very hardworking, and career focussed. Professors are strict but approachable and there is a stricter culture concerning respect for elders.

h. What does the university offer students additionally?

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

Everything you could want, sports fields, swimming pools, gyms, courses, fun activities, well being mentors concerning mental and psychological health. You name it.

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?

Yes, housing was in a dorm on the campus, Exchange students get priority status for application.

b. What is the culture like?

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

Singapore is a very western country for Asian standards although there are some differences. The culture is very strict, long term oriented and based on hard work discipline and respect for elders/professors. There are hefty fines for misconduct and people can appear reserved. If you talk to Singaporeans, they are very nice and honest people and have a high regard towards Westerners and people that want to work in Singapore.

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

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

The metro is pretty cheap but quite slow although the network is extensive and gets you anywhere. There are taxis and busses going also which is very convenient and well organised.

6. Expenses

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

| Category | Expenses |
|---|----------|
| Travelling there | 800 |
| Visa - if applicable | 150 |
| Vaccinations - if applicable | 0 |
| Insurances (extra) - if applicable | 0 |
| Daytrips/sight-seeing | 1000 |
| Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation | 450 |
| Grocery costs per month | 400 |
| Public transport costs per month | 100 |
| Restaurant/going out for dinner costs per month | 70 |

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

Quite the same. Singapore is the most expensive city in the world to live in 😞. Singaporeans however do enjoy great PPP due to surrounding lower/middle income countries, which reduces costs on groceries. Namely healthy food, housing and quality products are really expensive.

c. Additional remarks regarding expenses?

Singapore is really expensive, students get free stuff and discounts a lot, but if you go to Malaysia or Indonesia prices drop ten /twentyfold.

7. Free time

a. What are must-sees in the area?

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

Kuala Lumpur: 20 euros by bus. Bali, 100 euros by plane, same for Vietnam and Thailand. Travelling is normal and many students do weekend trips. There is many bars and clubs in Singapore as well as museums, gardens and expo's.

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

Going to the beach or to Lazarus Island.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

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

Singaporeans have really high standards and the country is very strict. Sometimes you really have to work hard and have discipline.

b. Best memory?

Being in a club at Marina Bay Sands where they filmed crazy rich Asians and having a drink there with friends.

9. Contact details

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|---|------------------------------|--|
| Is the reader allowed to contact the writer? | yes <input type="checkbox"/> | no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Name & email address (if yes) | | |