

## **Testimonial for my semester at Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland from 01.09.2019 – 31.01.2020, from Bianca Selzer**

As part of my studies of International Business at the Hochschule Landshut, I was required to spend a semester abroad. Since I have already lived in Edinburgh a few years ago and absolutely loved this city, I was quick to decide where to go for the semester abroad. It was even possible to obtain a double degree from Edinburgh Napier University and Hochschule Landshut.

Before you go to Edinburgh, there are a few things that I have learnt and that I would like to share with you:

- 1) **Get a credit card.** If you want to pay anything in the UK, e.g. if you want to buy tickets in advance for an event or pay the copy shop, you will need a credit card. They are widely accepted (I would daresay almost everywhere) and very convenient. I got myself a bank account with DKB, which enabled me to get cash for free at the ATMs in Edinburgh, in case I needed it.
- 2) If you plan on working in Scotland or if you have to pay rent via bank transfer, you need to open a bank account. I can recommend the Royal Bank of Scotland. Opening a bank account was rather easy and very quick. Be sure to pop in any bank branch and make an appointment.
- 3) Be sure to look for a flat well in advance and be super cautious as there is a tremendously high amount of people trying to scam you (speaking from experience). I have met many students who either found a flat and it was horrible, or others who supposedly found a flat, paid a deposit, only to notice upon arrival that there is no flat. Be especially careful with websites like gumtree.co.uk as there are a lot of scammers. I would recommend to spend a bit of money and invest in a premium account of spareroom.co.uk – here most of the people are verified. Also, NEVER pay a deposit in advance or before actually viewing the flat. There is also student accommodation, however I personally think they are too expensive. Also, if you go there as part of a postgraduate programme, you cannot rent an apartment as the minimum tenancy is one year. You should calculate with GBP 500 – 600 for a good flat.
- 4) **Get a Ridacard!** This is a bus card and it is so convenient. You pay in advance, either for a week, month or multiple months and then you can simply hop on the bus, tap your card and enjoy the ride. The card is about GBP 50 for four weeks for students and absolutely worth it, if you ride the bus regularly. You can get one at the Lothian Bus Shop at Waverley Bridge.
- 5) **Get yourself a good raincoat.** I had the experience that each time it rained in Scotland, it was also windy at the same time – which meant the death of many (cheap) umbrellas. It makes more sense to get a good raincoat with a hood and a waterproof backpack.

Finally, when you start your studies be sure to proactively look for information and in case you need to write an email regarding any organisational issues, be sure to send multiple follow-up emails. Also, coursework is different to Germany. I was required to write four papers/reports and spent a lot of time in the library.

If you are going to do the double degree programme, be sure to think about your thesis topic early. You are required to hand in an outline within the first 6 weeks and you have to write a proposal on your thesis as coursework for Research Methods. Finding a topic takes a lot of time and consideration, therefore it makes sense to think about this a bit earlier.

Classes were quite different, I had one class with only 10-15 people and another class with around 100 people. ENU has a lot of modern equipment in their classrooms, although the classrooms look a bit old (and some books in the library are ancient). I have had three days of classes, each class was around three hours long. The lecturers were really nice and tried to explain stuff on real-life examples, which made it really interesting and useful.

Be sure to visit some of the Fresher's Week Events to meet other students

Edinburgh itself is a marvellous city and offers so many things to do for every taste. You can go for hikes either up Arthur's Seat, in the Pentlands or along the beach. There are many cinema venues, small comedy clubs, an insane amount of pubs and bars and of course, many clubs, restaurants – but also parks and beaches. If you have time to enjoy the city, it will be an adventure you will never forget. There are also plenty of things to do for free, such as visiting museums. Also, if you want to see something from Scotland, there are many tour operators that offer one- or multiple day trips to the highlands or other places in Scotland.