

Partner University: University of Nottingham

Country: England/United Kingdom

Faculty: History

Dates/Terms: January

local restaurants, and go to the shop that only sells milkshakes, the cat café, or an independent café that serves amazing coffee, all of which are just off of Old Market Square. Old Market Square sometimes hosts farmers' markets and similar events, so it's a good place to go if you're looking for something to do.

In terms of transportation, St. Peter's Court has a free bus for its residents that will take you to campus, and to city centre. There are also public buses that have a one-pound (about \$2) student rate fee. Nottingham also has a trolley system, but buses go to more places. There is also the Broadmarsh coach station, which has coaches that will take you around the U.K., and the Nottingham train station, which will also take you around the U.K. The coach tickets are almost always cheaper, but it takes longer to get to your destination. The train is often more fun.

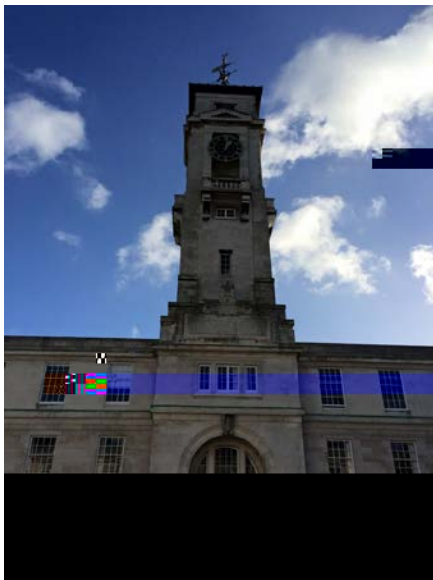


Photo 3 Trent Building on Campus

The weather in the U.K. is very similar to Vancouver, in that there are sunny days but also a fair amount of rain. It is also colder, and a lot windier at times. English culture shares a lot with what you will find in Vancouver, but there are some differences that you will need to adapt to so don't go in expecting it to be identical simply because they are also an English-speaking country.

Nottingham is located in the East Midlands, which is right in the middle of England. As a result, you're well-situated to go on many weekend getaways and short trips, depending on your budget. You can take the train to Wales and Scotland, and you can take a plane to Ireland, sometimes for less

than \$150 round-trip. Flying is a lot cheaper in Europe than it is in Canada, so take advantage of it

if you can. Don't be afraid to go on spontaneous trips, because you'll always end up having a great time.

I was able to travel to Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and Portugal, and each time the trips were fairly affordable because the transportation costs were fairly inexpensive. It's also important to take time to explore England itself—travelling to London is expensive so you probably don't want to do it all the time, but there are plenty of small towns or nearby cities that are also worth exploring. The Peak District is near to Nottingham and is a beautiful place to go hiking—it's probably one of the best places in the country.



Photo 4 Hiking in the Peak District

Nottingham is home to Robin Hood and there are plenty of touristy things to go along with that, including the alleged oldest pub in the country, but the city has

a lot more to offer as well. The city museum, which is quite small, is a treasure trove of English history, and gives you a chance to explore some of the city's many caves. Sherwood Forest is also an option, however it's much further away than you would think. Newstead Abbey and Chatsworth House are great daytrips, and you can take a picnic and spend time exploring their vast grounds.

Reflection After Exchange

Before leaving for exchange, I was really nervous about going. I actually spent my first night in Nottingham worried that I wouldn't meet anyone and would have a lonely six months (this was an irrational fear!) What exchange taught me is that wherever you go, you're going to have the opportunity to meet new and wonderful people, and create new relationships that you will always value. Going to Nottingham gave me the confidence boost I needed to know that I can go anywhere and do anything, and that sometimes going with the flow is important in order to get the most out of your adventure. Being so far away from my friends and family was definitely a challenge, but that's why it's important to create a support network wherever you are, of people who can and will support you. Studying in a new academic environment is also an experience I hope many people can partake in, because I believe it provides you with a different perspective that is crucial in university studies.

My advice for other students is to not only apply to attend universities in the big-name cities. Nottingham is a top-ranked university and living in a smaller city was a really worthwhile experience. It gave me the opportunity to explore places that are not as well known, and because of that I think I was able to learn more about the country and its culture. Choosing to go on exchange was not an easy decision for me, but from the moment I arrived in Nottingham I've been nothing but grateful that I took the leap to do something different.