

My name is Olga Dadon and I was an exchange student at Newcastle University (Newcastle upon Tyne, England) in spring semester 2013. Here are a few things I want to share about my living and studying experience there.

Arriving to Newcastle

Since my flight to Newcastle arrived at night, I did not ask anyone to meet me at the airport. So, I just took a taxi straight to my student accommodation (Richardson Road), which was very cheap (around £10, which is approx. 50 NOK) and took me about 20 min. By the time I arrived, Richardson Road reception has been closed; therefore I had to call Security Service in order to be able to get the room key. They arrived in 10 min and followed me to my room, so there were no problems with it.

Introduction week

There was an introduction week at the university where we all could learn more about the university itself, modules, different activities, organized by NUSU (Newcastle University Students' Union) etc. They provided us with a lot of brochures containing useful information about the city, university, night life in Newcastle and so on, which were very helpful.

There also was a meeting with the representatives from different schools where we were provided with more detailed information about the courses and their availability.

Module Choice

In spite of the huge range of modules offered by Newcastle University, I found it difficult to choose courses. Some courses that I found interesting were not available because of the lack of free places. Some did not match the study program at Østfold University College. Some modules simply overlapped with each other. After all, my module choice was:

- **BUS2028: Human Resource Management II (10 credits)**

This module was organized as a one hour lecture once a week and one hour seminar every second week. Besides, students were expected to study independently as well as be able to work in team. The course was primarily focused on employee engagement and commitment, organizational culture, employee motivation, the role of HR in organization and so on. The final assessment was a group project.

- **BUS3019: The Representation of Management and Organization in Popular Culture (10 credits)**

This module consisted of weekly lectures. The course focused on how organizations and management are presented by media. The final assessment was to write an analysis of a TV program, film or video that portrays an organization, using both theories we have learned on the lectures, and our critical thinking.

- **COM1026: Introduction to Social and Cultural Studies (20 credits)**

The course was aimed at exploring different theories of culture and society as well as developing critical thinking and analytical skills. The module contained both lectures and seminars. During the semester we got two assessments – a critical response and an essay.

- **COM2034: Introduction to Public Relations (20 credits)**

This module was also structured as lectures and seminars. The course introduced the main principals of working as a PR person. That is how to organize events and write for different PR (commercial, private, voluntary), how to manage crisis situations, how to apply the methods we have

learned in particular situations. This module also had two assessments – a written proposal and a presentations test.

All modules were well organized and essential readings for the courses were provided by the module leaders via Internet, or/and were available at the university library.

Social life in Newcastle

The social life in Newcastle was great. There were a lot of events organized by NUSU, to name some: International nigh (with learning the basic of salsa, followed by salsa party), pole dancing lessons, different languages workshops (Spanish, German, French...), workshops on how to write a CV and job applications and many others. Most of them were for free for the first time, so one could see if find something to their liking.

There is also the University Sports Centre with two multipurpose gym areas, a variety of exercise classes like Zumba, Pilates, Yoga, Aerobics, Spin Cycling and so on, and sport activities such as football hockey, basketball, rugby. I am sure each person can find something they are interested in. What is more, health and fitness services like massage, designing a fitness programme with consideration of personal features are available at the Sports Centre.

Newcastle is also full of bars, clubs, shopping centers, so one will definitely not be bored there.

Student accommodation

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/accommodation/students/accommodation/richardsonroad/>

Richardson Road is located approximately 10 min walk from Newcastle University and 15-20 min walk from the city center, which is a benefit of this student accommodation. Moreover, the entrance of the building I lived in (12F) was opposite the University Sports Centre and laundry, what was very convenient for me. There are also two little shops nearby Richardson Road where I can buy food, household chemical goods, and so on. However, the big food stores such as Marks & Spencer and Tesco are located in the city.

The student accommodation is a group of four-storey buildings with two flats on each floor. The flat consists of six rooms (each student has their own room), bathroom, toilet, and kitchen joint with a living room. The common areas are supplied with all necessary furniture, household appliances, dishes and so on. The room also contains everything needed for a comfortable living: a bed, a desk, a chair, a cupboard, book shelves, and a bedside-table.

Richardson Road will be a good choice for those who are not bothering with the outside noise, since there are a lot of student parties (the majority of students are 18-20 years old). The sound proofing of the building is not so good, so one basically can hear everything what is going on in the next room.

On the whole, I was quite satisfied with living in Richardson Road student accommodation.

Recommendations

Newcastle University will be a great choice for those, who value a high quality education and eventful social life. Everyone who chooses this university will absolutely find activities to their taste. More than

that, there is one month Easter break in the middle of spring semester, which allows traveling a lot around Great Britain and deeping into the culture of this amazing country.