

Erasmus Exchange Report

Nottingham Trent University

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About me

My name is Sophie-Amalie, I'm 22 years old, and I live in Copenhagen whilst studying a BA of Architectural Technology and Construction Management at KEA. I finished my 5th semester at Nottingham Trent University (NTU) as I primarily wanted to expand my English vocabulary and really get to know the technical terms. Furthermore, a semester abroad shows that you can take initiative, that you have courage and that you are curious, which are all things a future employer will look for in you. If you are not these things already, you will definitely be afterwards, as you will learn so much from the other cultures, schools, people ect., and most importantly about yourself. These are only a few of the reasons why I decided to take a semester abroad. Additionally – it is so much fun!

Before leaving

Accommodation

Accommodation is something you would want to have sorted first! Nottingham is a city with a population of mainly students and there are plenty of student accommodation to choose from – flats, rooms, houses etc., but don't wait too long with finding a place to stay. In the beginning of every semester around 60.000 students arrive in Nottingham so the best and cheapest places are of course quickly rented out.

It is very common to share a house or a flat with a bunch of friends, peer students or with strangers. Not many UK students live by themselves as we do in Denmark. They basically move out their parents' house and move to the city where they're studying, and live with friends throughout their time in university. Hence the many house parties you probably will be invited to.

Since we were four Danish students from KEA we decided to stick our heads together and share information a couple of months before leaving. We also decided that we should try and find a flat together. There are various sites where you can find accommodation. We found our flat through Homes for Students (<http://wearehomesforstudents.com/>). They offer accommodation all over the UK. You should have in mind that when renting a house, flat or room in Nottingham, the rent period is for a whole year and no less or more. We found only one place in Nottingham where we were able to rent for only half a year, but unfortunately it was insanely expensive and far away from campus.

Furthermore, if you don't have UK guarantor (a person who lives in the UK or owns a property in the UK) you will not be able to pay by instalments – meaning paying an amount of money for rent every month. A guarantor is a person who will be able to pay the rent for you if you can't pay the rent that month, but since none of us had a UK based guarantor, we had to pay the rent for a whole year up front. We made a deal with the company (Homes for Students) that we would get our money for the remaining rent period back. All we had to do was to find four other students to rent the flat and they did all the paper work after that.

Other sites we looked at were:

- <https://www.student.com/>
- <https://www.gumtree.com/> (UK's "Den Blå Avis")
- <https://sturents.com/>
- <http://trentstudentaccommodation.co.uk/>
- <https://www.unipol.org.uk/home>

Before booking or paying money to anyone make sure, the company or the person is not a fraud! Since you are a foreigner, and not able to check out the place or meet up with person renting out. you are an easy target. Do your research and ask around for advice about renting accommodation in the UK. If something or someone seems suspicious, don't jump in to it, but instead keep looking for a place. There are not much to do when the money has been transferred and you don't want your exchange to start off in a bad way – it is supposed to fun and exciting!

Insurance

Make sure your insurances have you covered during your time there or take out an insurance in the country you will be staying. My insurance in Denmark had me covered for the first three months meaning the last month in the UK I was not covered, since it would be too much trouble to go through if I took out an insurance for one month – and expensive! Check out what options you have with your current insurance company and what options you have in the exchange country if you your phone, laptop, wallet etc. is stolen.

Financial

Ask your bank in Denmark about what they can offer you and let them know you will be staying in another country for a longer period so they don't get suspicious and block your credit/debit card. Since you will be in another country for quite a while, they might be able to make deal with you, so won't have pay for all sorts of charges/fees. You don't have to change to an English bank.

Before leaving, you might want to make a budget. Danske Bank offers a free template, which I always use (<https://danskebank.dk/da-dk/privat/konti/unge-og-studerende/pages/budget.aspx>).

Living in Nottingham is neither cheaper or more expensive than living in Copenhagen. We each payed 100 £ a week for the flat which is approximately 3000 DKK a month and is about the same I pay for my apartment in Copenhagen. Since I moved their right after Brexit my money was worth more in the UK and therefore it was a bit cheaper for me, but almost every store, restaurant, bar etc. offers students discount.

Getting there and getting around

When leaving for Nottingham I would recommend flying to London Luton Airport. From here you can catch a train (East Midlands Trains <https://www.eastmidlandstrains.co.uk/>) from the airport to Nottingham Station.

Nottingham offers cheap public transportation such as busses and trams. I've never had to use the busses or trams since everything is within walking distance but the prices are very low compared to Danish public transportation and I'm pretty sure they offer some kind of student deal. A bus ticket is 2-3£.

Trams <http://www.thetram.net/>

Busses <https://www.nctx.co.uk/>



It is also possible to buy a cheap second hand bike and just bike around the city – try looking at Gumtree <https://www.gumtree.com/> . Nottingham Trent University rents out bikes as well for a small amount of money.

Nottingham Trent University

Nottingham Trent University has five campuses; Arkwright and Newton, Waverley, Bonnington, Maudsley and Chaucer. Most of my classes were in Arkwright, Bonnington and Maudsley and there are all within a five minute walking distance from each other. Arkwright and Newton were recently renovated so the facilities there are new and very convenient.

Classes

The classes I attended was very much like the ones I have at KEA, though the projects are more focused on the design and design justification, which is very much different from the projects at KEA.

The course includes these four classes:

Technology & Design Studio focuses on large and small issues with integrated design and technical aspects.

Planning, Survey & Development teaches us about the building regulations, how to plan the building process, and how to approach the local authorities when applying for planning permission.

Construction Technology explains the different types of building materials and structures, and teaches how to choose the right materials.

Integrated Design & Communication improves your understanding of Building Modelling Information (BIM) and your design communication skills.

Library

The university has a library, which is open 24/7 and used by many of the students, when they are working on their assignments and projects. During busy days the library is filled with students, and it can be difficult to find an available computer, if you're in after 9 am. It's a good and quiet place to work and on the ground floor you'll find a Starbucks, where you can pay with your student card!



Boots Library – fourth floor and ground floor.

Nottingham Trent Students' Union

The Students' Union offers a wide variety of activities, social clubs and sport clubs so if you're in to a specific sport they'll definitely have a team you can join. The students can join any society they want, and it is a great way to meet new people and make friends. There are over 80 different societies and everyone can join. Check them out here <http://www.trentstudents.org/societies>.

Check out the sport clubs as well <http://www.trentstudents.org/sports>.

Sightseeing

Places to visit in Nottingham is definitely Nottingham Castle where you'll also find the Robin Hood Statue. Take the tour around the castle grounds and through some of the caves underneath the castle (5£ with any student card).

Around the corner you'll find Britain's oldest pub *Ye Old Trip to Jerusalem*. Grab a beer or a coffee and let the historic place take you back in time.

Take the bus to Wollaton Park and Wollaton Hall, which was used in the Batman movie as Wayne Manor.





Socialising

There are definitely many ways to meet new people. The Students Union is a great place to start and City Life Nottingham offers trips to cities around the UK and social events for international students. Buy the City Life card and get a discount on all the events and trips you attend. It is a great way to meet people from all over the world and maybe someone from your own country.

<http://www.citylife-nottingham.com/>

You will definitely meet new people during classes and through friends you get along the way, so don't worry.

Nightlife

Nottingham is the city in the UK with the most bars and clubs per square metre so you'll definitely find something you like. Since there are so many students everything is student friendly – also the prices. Here are some the bars and clubs you could visit:

- The Boilermaker (go there on Wednesdays – the drinks will only be 5£!)
- Pryzm
- Ocean
- Pom Pom
- Coco Tang
- Tilt
- Lacehouse
- The Hockley Arts Club
- Horn in Hand
- Stealth
- The Orange Tree

Eating out

Places to eat:

- George's
- Bar Iberico
- Bill's
- Copper
- Fox Café

- Curious Manor
- Sinatra
- The Ugly Bread Bakery
- Spanky Van Dykes
- Rocket at Saltwater
- Handmade Burger
- Gourmet Burger Kitchen
- Wagamama

Conclusion

Overall my time in Nottingham was very satisfying on many levels. The teachers are very professional, competent and dedicated to teach you everything they know, and the students here are all very friendly and open to help you with anything. Nottingham Trent University offers so much to its' students and everything is very well organized and planned for you, so only have to worry about reading your books and doing your assignments on time. This said, I definitely feel I've succeeded in improving my language and vocabulary skills and I've grown on different levels which were my main expectations and hopes for this trip.

Nottingham is a great city with everything within walking distance. It has various restaurants with food from all over the world and all the big brands we all love. The opportunities for fun, shopping, entertainment, food, bars etc. are endless and the city never gets boring in spite of its small size.

Photos





