



**Aberdeen**, the so called 'Granite City' is the third biggest city in Scotland. With about 200.000 inhabitants it is quite small, but at least big enough for one (or two) terms. The city is quite nice and always busy during the term. There are lots of student bars and pubs, but unfortunately due to the United Kingdom's Anti-Social Behaviour Act all clubs, bars, pubs, etc. have to comply with curfews. Anyway you won't get bored. The best is to take an intensive look around when you are there. Other cities are Stirling, St. Andrews or Edinburgh, which are totally worth to visit.

In general **Scotland** is a very beautiful place for people who love nature. Please enjoy the beautiful landscape if you spend time there! It is absolutely worth it to rent a car and go around at least a week. Really beautiful is the west coast and the Isle of Skye (picture 1) as well as the Highlands and the area around the Trossachs in the North-West of Stirling. Scottish people are really nice and helpful so far you are not from England ;)



Picture 1: Isle of Skye

## **University**

The University of Aberdeen is very nice. Many old buildings like the King's College (picture 2), which are located on the campus, are renovated and good in shape. There is also pretty much room for students to socialize and do their lunch break. I felt really comfortable on the campus. There are lots of international students, which makes it easy to get new friends.



Picture 2: King's College

## **Orientation**

I arrived a few days earlier in Aberdeen than necessary. It was a good time to get to know the city and the campus without the “stress” of fresher’s week. Fresher week is an orientation event for new students in the first week of uni. It is really helpful and as a new student of the University of Aberdeen you should take part of it. You get a lot of information there for nearly everything you will need during the term. There are also a lot of societies and sports clubs at the University. The clubs and societies present themselves during fresher’s week and new fellows can sign up. You can always sign up later as well, but that’s the easy way. It is absolutely worth it to join at least one club or society. The best is to join as many as possible! Most clubs don’t only do sports; they socialize a lot and have regular night outs. It is a very good possibility to meet new people. I joined the volleyball team and met most of my friends there. We had training twice a week and games on Sundays.

## **Courses**

I had my meeting with my advisor (departmental coordinator) during fresher’s week. He was very kind and helpful, although making my schedule didn’t bring up any problems. It was really hard for me to find courses which were equivalent to my

courses at the BOKU. It was not a big deal in the end, because I wanted to do something different anyway and extend my knowledge.

The courses I have chosen were:

Environmental Pollution – 4<sup>th</sup> year course

A really good course with a lab day and a risk assessment computer modelling

Global Soil Geography – 3<sup>rd</sup> year course

Also a very interesting course. Unfortunately with lots of basics in soil science, although it was not a big problem, because you learn the terminology in English. Also with some really funny and interesting field trips.

Marine Resources – 1<sup>st</sup> year course

Not a good course at all. Only basics and a really really bad lecturer. I think you should avoid taking first year courses generally.

### **Accommodation**

I lived in University Halls. It is quite easy to get a room there, but you should request for halls as soon as possible. They were not really comfortable, but you meet a lot of people there. I have chosen the cheapest possibility of halls but it was expensive anyway. Everyone who wants to live cheaper should look for private accommodation. Please be aware if you live in halls you have to bring everything with you. There were no bedding and no plates and pots. And do not choose catered rooms. I heard no positive feedback about that!

### **Costs of living**

I was very lucky with the exchange rate during my stay. Great Britain is really expensive and so is Aberdeen. Although I think an exchange semester is expensive anyway. The costs of my accommodation were about 75£ a week, approximately 330€ per month. You will have nearly the same charges for food. Going out is not cheap, I can recommend some student pubs, like The Bobbin near the campus, which always have special offers. Studying at the University is not that expensive. The field trips I had were paid by the department, the library is quite good to get some books and you can achieve the records from the lectures online.

### **Arrival and departure**

For arrival and departure there are a few possibilities. The easiest way, but the most expensive one is directly from Vienna to Aberdeen with British Airways or KLM. You can take 20 kilos with you and some cabin language. A cheaper version is to fly from Bratislava to Edinburgh (or to other Scottish or English cities) by RyanAir and travel to Aberdeen by bus or train. There are really cheap bus connections between larger cities via megabus. The train is faster and not much more expensive when you book in advance.

In general I had a really brilliant time in Aberdeen. I make a lot of new friends, extended my English and had a lot of fun. I also did a lot of trips around the country. I also enjoyed the time at University, because it is really well organized and I didn't have any problems to find my way. The only thing I missed were the Highland Games which take place in summer. Concluding I can say that the Scottish weather is not that bad as I expected. It is always windy, and rains quite a lot, but we had also really warm and sunny days. And in worst case, always think about that Glasgow has twice as much rain as Aberdeen ☺