

# Exchange Report:

Edinburgh Napier University

Scotland, United Kingdom

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Abdulla Ali

## Page of contents

Why Edinburgh? .....	1
Why Edinburgh Napier? .....	1
My Verdict: .....	2
The University: .....	2
Social Life: .....	3
Economy:.....	4
Transport:.....	4
Summary: .....	5
Pictures: .....	6

## Why Edinburgh?

There are many reasons why I decided to choose Edinburgh out of all the cities that were available at the time. There are practical and personal reasons why I went to Edinburgh.

The first practical reason is affordability: The UK in general, and especially Scotland is relatively cheap for a Dane. Food is about 3/4<sup>th</sup> the price of what we get in Danish supermarkets. Rent is about the same. Transport, although horrible was cheaper too. Plus, I got SU and the Erasmus grant, which was enough for my short stay there.

The second practical reason why Edinburgh was my choice was, that it is close to my hometown, Copenhagen, and cheap to fly to. Meaning, that I can go home every second weekend if I saw fit. (of course I didn't)

Personally, I love Scotland, its nature, its people, its culture and believe it or not? Even the food! I have visited the country before in 2016, and fell absolutely in love with the beauty of the Scottish highlands, the warmth of the Scottish people and the overall feeling of its cities. And I am still in love!

## Why Edinburgh Napier?

The main reason why I chose the Napier is because it happens to be located in the wonderful city of Edinburgh.

I also decided to go with Edinburgh Napier over my second choice, The Technical University of Madrid (where many of my friends went), is because I thought I would learn something from a prestigious university, because let's face it? Who goes to Spain to learn? I wouldn't.

Moreover, I really liked the fact that I could choose out of many modules what I'd like to study. I could have taken modules that were completely unrelated, and from different years if I liked. One could even have taken a module called "Wine Studies" on a Friday afternoon if one see's fit. (I didn't)

Napier also had many social clubs one could participate in after school, literally everyone can find a club of their interests.

## My Verdict:

### The University:

There was a lot of confusion in the beginning about whether the modules I have chosen many months ago were full or not. Which forced me to change a module that I really wanted to another. Even though it was confirmed that I got a spot there. That was very annoying. First impression was bad.

I ended up choosing 3 modules:

1. Architectural Technology 3 – 3<sup>rd</sup> year
2. Sustainable Development – 4<sup>th</sup> year
3. Building modelling 1 (I wanted Building modelling 3) – 1<sup>st</sup> year

When I got the modules I wanted and teaching started, I noticed the difference in the style of teaching; it was a lecture, you are supposed to listen, and then go home and study by yourself. I am not used to that. I am used to discussion with the lecturer and group work.

Moreover, I felt like as an exchange student, I did not get sufficient help from anyone to get to know where to go, what is expected from us in terms of delivery of the course's material. ..etc In short, no one cared enough about the exchange student from the University's side. Which was annoying too.

The Quality of education in of itself is not better or worse than that of KEA's, it is different. There is more focus on delivering individual work, such as essays and posters. And the examination methods are also different, better than KEA's; the grade is divided between 3 courseworks and a final exam. This means if one fails one course, there is always a second and third chance in the next coursework. Where as in KEA, you have 15-20 minutes to present 4 months of work and if you don't do well, tough luck!

Even though the education of itself was not as I expected, the social clubs that were there made life much more bearable. I joined the Drama Society and European Languages society and made loads of friends. So that was quite nice.

**All in all, I'd give Edinburgh Napier University 3/5 (better than KEA)**

## Social Life:

Edinburgh is a very international city, with many students from all over the world. It is very easy to make friends there, as there are many events around the city. Scottish people are very friendly too, especially when they get some alcohol in their system.

Pubs to recommend:

1. Finnegans Irish bar
2. Stramash live music bar
3. Monkey barrel comedy club
4. Find out the rest for yourself!

There are many social activities that can be arranged privately or via an international student association to go up to the highlands, visit gin or whiskey distilleries, or go to Glasgow.

Moreover, Edinburgh is known for its theatre. There are multiple plays every weekend. That is a must!

There are many concerts, art shows and other events going on in Edinburgh all year round.

My friend Zoltan (another KEA exchange student) and I decided to go to Lanzarote in the Spanish Canary Islands in December for less than 1000 DKK both ways! As we found a gap in our schedules we went. We had such an amazing time. This would not have been possible if we stayed in the KEA. As, the time and the flights would not have been possible to arrange.

**I'd give social life in Edinburgh 4/5 (Better than Copenhagen)**

## Economy:

As mentioned earlier, I knew prices are relatively affordable in Edinburgh when it comes to food, accommodation and transport.

I was right about the food. Its cheaper and better than that of Denmark.

I was very surprised with the accommodation part, it was difficult to find a place to stay. So, I was desperate, and I decide to go with a private dorm which was quite expensive but nice and close to the University. I paid £620 a month (£155 a week) which is about 5300 DKK for a room with a toilet, with a shared kitchen. That was the best I could find.

Alcohol prices are quite similar to Denmark. Cigarettes are very expensive, prices vary depending on what you smoke but it is generally in between £8.5 to £11.5 which is about 70 to 100 DKK. Bring your own smokes from home, and only share with people who deserve it!

Shops are cheap too, everything you buy from clothes, necessities and electronics are easily 25% cheaper than Denmark.

**In summary, I'd rate Edinburgh 4,5/5 in terms of affordability.**

## Transport:

I was lucky that I lived relatively close to the University, so I did not have to suffer with the late busses nor the traffic. Therefore, I did not get a monthly pass (£42), as I did not need it. I did however get single tickets which were £2.4 (about 20 DKK).

I did buy a bike, as I thought that I would be able to handle the short distance between the dorm and the University. That was a mistake. The roads are horrible, as there are virtually no bike lanes and vehicles will not give you way, I almost got hit by a bus! That was a waste of money.

Trams were in my part of town, so I did not use them often. They are slightly faster than buses. Same price.

Uber exists too, its faster and cheaper than taxis.

Getting around Edinburgh is not too difficult, but it is certainly not as good as that of Copenhagen in terms of speed and accessibility. I would recommend either taking a bus or walking for daily commutes.

**In summary, transport in Edinburgh gets a 2.5/5. (Worse than Copenhagen)**

## Overall Summary:

### **All in all, my experience in Edinburgh is 3.5/5.**

I had a great time in Scotland, I loved the country, the people and the culture. It is an experience I will never forget. But the reason why I would rate my journey in Edinburgh a mere 3.5 out of 5, is because I expected more from the university in terms of actually learning something challenging, but I was disappointed the quality and style of education. That may be because I chose specific modules that did not challenge me, or that is the case with all modules (one will never know).

I would neither recommend or not recommend Edinburgh Napier and the city to future exchange applicants. It is all up to the person who wants to go. My advice is, do your own research and find what you want to do because this report is only MY experience. Who knows? Maybe you will have a completely different experience?

Few pictures:



Trip to the Highlands



View of Edinburgh from Arthur's seat





Christmas / Goodbye party



Zoltan getting sunburnt in December. Lanzarote, Spain