

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN EAU CLAIRE

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

# Study Abroad



**STIRLING, SCOTLAND**  
**FALL 2019**

*Program Guide*

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**CONGRATULATIONS** on being accepted to study in Stirling, Scotland! Living and studying in a foreign culture is both an exciting and a challenging experience. Past participants of study abroad report that the many advantages of international study include:

***Building upon existing foreign language skills***  
***Gaining new perspectives on a chosen academic field***  
***Increasing understanding of different cultures***  
***Enhancing personal development***  
***Developing different perspectives on U.S. culture***  
***Gaining self-confidence and independence***  
***Learning skills for the future international job market***

It is up to you to determine how you can best benefit from these possible advantages. This is your adventure!

This program guide is to be used together with the online Study Abroad Handbook. The handbook has information that is valid for all study abroad programs. This guide will provide you with specific information for Scotland and your Scottish university. It is designed to complement the handbook, study abroad orientation, and your individual pre-departure preparations.

All of the information available at the time of publication has been used, but it is impossible for any single resource to answer all of your questions. Your peer advisor will email additional information throughout the semester. We strongly encourage you to contact your peer advisor, the Center for International Education (CIE) staff, past program participants, and Scottish students on campus with your specific questions. Also make use of the written and web resources listed towards the end of this guide.

Basic questions only you can answer include:

- 1) What are YOUR goals for this experience? Common objectives of student travelers include advancement in a future profession, desire to expand personal and academic horizons, need for a change, and a wish to challenge oneself with immersion in a new culture; and advancing language skills.
- 2) Given the way the program is set up; how can you best prepare to meet your goals? For example, if one of your goals is truly being immersed in Scottish culture, how can you ensure that you do not spend too much time with other U.S. Americans or international students on your Scottish campus?

The information in this guide was current at the time of publication, though changes may occur at any time.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## *The Program*

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire has been sending students to the University of Stirling for more than 10 years.

At Stirling, you will live in the residence halls and take classes with Scottish and international students, taught by Scottish professors. It will be a true immersion into Scottish university culture.

Although you apply for the exchange through UW-Eau Claire, once you are accepted by Stirling, you will get information directly from the International Office there. It is CRITICAL that you read all correspondence from the University of Stirling promptly and carefully, and that you forward it to Cheryl Lochner-Wright ([lochnecb@uwec.edu](mailto:lochnecb@uwec.edu)), the Study Abroad Coordinator for the Scotland programs, with questions, if there is anything you do not understand.

## *The Location*

The city of Stirling is a 10-minute bus ride from campus. With a population of around 45,000, the city offers a warm community and is within easy reach of both Glasgow (50 minutes by train) and Edinburgh (25 minutes by train).

## *The University*

With a student population of 9,000, the University of Stirling is known for programs in communication & media studies, English, environmental science, social work, and sociology. Built in the rolling hills of a former estate, the Stirling campus boasts a friendly atmosphere and an active student

life, with a large percentage of students living on campus and many opportunities for student involvement. You can learn more about the University of Stirling by visiting their website: <http://www.stir.ac.uk/>. You may also want to consult the University of Stirling the "Incoming exchange and study abroad students" page at: <http://www.stir.ac.uk/study-abroad-exchanges/>. Scroll down to find the "Student Handbook for Study Abroad" and other helpful pre-arrival information.

## *Academic Calendar*

Below are the tentative Stirling Fall 19 dates.

**Do not make your flight arrangements until you receive confirmation of your acceptance and the final, confirmed dates from the University of Stirling.**

The Stirling academic calendar is divided into two equal semesters. **Autumn runs from September to mid-December.** Spring semester runs from mid-January to mid-May.

## **Stirling Fall 2019**

Depart the U.S.	Sept 6
Official arrival date	Sept 7
Orientation	Sept 8
Classes Begin	Sept 9
"Reading Week" (no classes)	Oct 21-25
Final Exams End	Dec 13
Earliest Departure Day	Dec 14
Student Accommodation Contract Ends	Dec 16

## ACADEMICS

*There is additional information on maintaining program eligibility, as well as topics such as registration, class attendance, credits and course load, grades, transcripts, and accessing the UW-Eau Claire library while abroad in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### **Semester Pre-Departure Planning and Course Equivalencies**

You can use the information from the [CIE Stirling academics page](#) to plan for your semester in Scotland and complete the module (course) interest section of the application.

If any courses you plan to take do not have equivalencies, email the course description, including department, course code, title, credits and summary of content, to Cheryl Lochner-Wright, your UWEC study abroad coordinator. She will ask the Admissions Office have department chairs evaluate the courses. Equivalencies are on the Transfer Wizard as they are evaluated.

### **Graduate Courses**

Some students have expressed an interest in taking graduate courses abroad. Although your Stirling faculty advisor may not have a problem with you taking graduate courses, UW-Eau Claire does. **You will not be granted credit for graduate courses taken abroad unless Stirling allows the graduate course to count toward their home campus undergraduate degree.**

### **Stirling Credits & Course Load**

Most University of Stirling courses are worth 5 U.S. credits. Typically, **you must take three classes (15 credits) per semester.** However, there are a few “half modules” that are equal to 2.5 U.S. credits, in which case you could take either 12.5 U.S. credits or 15 credits per semester.

### **Registration at UW-Eau Claire**

**Do not register for classes at UW-Eau Claire for the semester you will be abroad.** The semester before your program departs, CIE staff will work with the Registration Office to enroll you in a **temporary course number (INTX)** for 12 credits. This temporary registration for 12 credits will appear on your billing statements. You do not need to complete any other registration at UW-Eau Claire.

**Once your Stirling transcript arrives, your classes, credits, and grades from Scotland will be posted on your UW-Eau Claire transcript.** The INTX registration code will remain on your transcript so that the university can maintain historical records on study abroad. However, the INTX credit units will be removed and the INTX course will not be graded.

### **Registration in Scotland**

You indicated on your U of Stirling application which courses you would like to take. In your official offer letter from the U of Stirling, you will receive a list of modules that you have been approved to take. You will need to select your top three module choices and one reserve module and return the form to the U of Stirling.



You will be pre-approved to register for these classes by the International Office at the U of Stirling, based on the course information you listed on your offer reply/acceptance form.

You will also be asked to complete a four-step, online "Discover Process" via your online Stirling account. **Please follow the directions for completing the online enrollment forms. These forms must be completed BEFORE you will be allowed to apply for housing.**

Upon arrival, you will be assigned an Advisor of Studies. **You must set up a meeting with your advisor during the first week of the semester to discuss your registration.** You may make changes to your registration during the first two weeks of the semester, provided space is available in the classes you wish to take. All changes must be approved by your Advisor of Studies, and **you must report them to the Student Matriculation and Records Office.**

As soon as you are registered for classes in Scotland, complete the **course questionnaire in your BlugoldsAbroad** account for all courses **not already in the Transfer Wizard.** The relevant UWEC offices will use that information to request an equivalency.

Equivalencies are determined by the chair of the appropriate department, and that the process can take three to four weeks. Therefore, if you decide to take a class that has not been evaluated after you arrive in Stirling, you will not know exactly how it will transfer back to UWEC until after it is too late to change classes.

## **UK Academic System**

### **Expectation of independent learning:**

Returned students most often describe academic life at the UK as "different." They go on to explain that while they didn't find classes there more or less difficult than classes at home, they did need to adjust to a new way of teaching and learning.

From a UK perspective, it is hard to understand methods used in U.S. higher education, with lots of direction from the professors, many small, graded assignments, and the general "checking up" to be certain that students are learning the assigned materials. **This is how UK students learn in high school.** Once they enter university, they are expected to take responsibility for their own education.

**Class meetings and schedule:** Most classes meet once per week for either a three-hour lecture or two to three hours with a mixture of lecture and tutorial. For the lecture and tutorial, both sections are taught by the same professor (known as a lecturer in the UK system). Given that the course load is 3-5 courses per term, you may find yourself spending only 12-15 hours in class per week depending on your schedule.

**Lectures:** Like in the U.S., the lecture is a traditional method of teaching that allows lecturers to pass important information to a large number of students. However, lectures in the UK offer less opportunity for students to ask questions: questions and discussions are in the tutorial. Also, the lectures are not intended to tell you everything you need to know for the test or assignment. They provide an overview to allow you to place your course material or readings in context, or to focus on a difficult concept or theory.

**To take the best advantage of lectures, you should keep up with course reading and come to lecture prepared. By being prepared for lecture, you will be able to engage and ask questions in the tutorials.**

**Tutorials/Seminars:** Tutorials, or seminars as they are also called, are NOT mini-lectures. They are active learning opportunities where the tutor and students meet to discuss the material covered in lecture and the reading that you are doing outside of class. For tutorials to be effective, they require active student participation. This means you:

- must have read the assigned work and suggested sources in advance,
- should be prepared to contribute to the discussion,
- made note of any difficult concepts or points from lecture or your readings that you do not understand, and
- should be willing to raise issues for discussion.

**Tutorials are not optional.** Attendance is kept, and absences are noted. Tutorials also allow for closer professor/student relationships than are typically found at the undergraduate level in the U.S.

**Advance planning and independent learning:** With only 12-15 hours of class time per week, you may think your time in Scotland will be an academic vacation. This is not the case. Much of the emphasis is placed on private study. In the British system, students do not say they are "studying" history, for example. **They say they are "reading" history. And that is precisely what students are expected to do: read!** As one student said, "*You will*

*probably spend a lot less time in class than you are used to, but in exchange, you are expected to do a lot more independent work!*"

Upon beginning a class, you will likely be given a (very) long reading list. This is not a required reading list; it is a list of suggested readings that will expand your knowledge of the subject area. What you actually read from the list is mostly left up to you. **If you are told that "You may wish to look at these specific titles," take that as a strong hint to read those books.** You should also browse through several of the others and choose two or three to read carefully. These readings will form the basis of your contributions to tutorial discussions, as well as for the essays that serve as assessment for the module.

#### **Differences in assignments and exams:**

In the UK, you will rarely find a lecturer who makes short, weekly assignments. During the semester, you may have to give a few **tutorial/seminar presentations**, typically a group assignment where you and two or three other students need to prepare a short presentation about the week's topic in order to facilitate discussion.

In some courses, you may not hand in any work until the last few weeks of the term. At this point, you will probably be asked to hand in essays or papers, which will range in length from 5-15 pages. You often receive the essay questions with your syllabus at the beginning of the semester. Start writing early!

The essays give you the opportunity to 1) show the lecturer that you have done some of the course reading, and 2) show the



lecturer that you have critically thought about the material you have read. Generally speaking, you will be expected to present an original idea, or discuss opposing ideas, and *come to your own conclusion*.

Demonstration of clear thought and argumentation are as critical as backing up your arguments with knowledgeable sources. You may also take a final exam in essay format.

In case you're worried, take this advice from a former peer advisor: *"Don't be afraid to email them or go to office hours! I often went to office hours to get input on essay outlines!"*

**Participation points:** Another difference is that there are no "participation points" in the UK. You may be penalized for not attending but you will not earn points just for coming to class or participating, as that is a basic expectation for all students.

**Student services:** Another difference to note is that **"student services" are a relatively newer concept** in British universities than in the U.S. The university is there to provide access to academic resources. There are some student support units. However, universities do not have the mission, common to most U.S. institutions, of "student development." University students are considered adults who will work their way through the system, asking questions when necessary. As a newcomer to the system and the culture, you may need to ask questions often!

## Books

The main thing to remember is that there usually is not one specific text. Students are

given reading lists and are free to choose any of them to prepare for class and/or to write the essay or exam. The only exceptions are literature classes. Students often share books with other students or check them out from the library. **Past students have suggested getting to the library early in the semester as many books on the list will be checked out from the library if you wait too long.**

## Attendance

You are expected to attend all teaching sessions (e.g. lectures and tutorials), as material covered in these sessions forms the basis for your understanding of the subject.

Different departments/faculty may have specific attendance requirements and penalties over and above the general university guidelines. If you are in doubt about the attendance policy for your module/course, consult your lecturer.

## Grades

The grade conversion scale is as follows.

Stirling Grade	UWEC Equivalent
67-77	A
64-66	A-
60-63	B+
57-59	B
54-56	B-
50-53	C+
47-49	C
44-46	C-
40-43	D+
Below 40	F

## Transcripts & Graduation

U of Stirling will send a transcript for your time abroad to UW-Eau Claire. **Transcripts are not available until two or three**

### **months after the end of the semester.**

Due to this delay, you will initially receive a grade report with "NR" (not reported) for all courses. A revised transcript will be issued after the grades have arrived.

**If you are a senior** and are studying abroad for your last semester, please note that the different timelines in grade reporting **will most likely require you to delay your graduation from fall to spring or from spring to summer.** The UW-Eau Claire Bugold Central-Registrar must receive grades within 42 days of the last day of the UW-Eau Claire semester in order to confirm your graduation that semester. This is a UW-Eau Claire requirement, and our partners abroad cannot change their usual timelines to accommodate it.

**If you are planning to apply to a competitive program at UW-Eau Claire, such as Education or Nursing,** for the semester you return, contact the UW-Eau Claire study abroad coordinator to see if any form of grade can be sent prior to the review deadline. Please note that this is at the discretion of the Scottish university and may not be possible.

### **Service-Learning**

*See additional information on Service-Learning in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

Given that you will most likely spend fewer hours in the classroom in Scotland than UW-Eau Claire, you may find your term abroad an ideal time to complete some service-learning. However, to have this option, you must do the following **before you leave the U.S.:**

- **Apply for A Tier IV Student Visa**  
**See** the Learning Content "Visa Information: UK" in your BugoldsAbroad account for details.
- **Have A Criminal Background Check**  
Volunteer work with vulnerable populations (i.e. children, the elderly, people with disabilities, etc.) will require a criminal background check. Like in the U.S., the UK has experienced some tragic incidents where people with criminal backgrounds have victimized vulnerable people. The result: a required criminal background check of all volunteers. You can apply for a criminal background check through the State of Wisconsin Department of Justice (<http://www.doj.state.wi.us/dles/cib/crime-information-bureau>). You must apply for and receive your background check before you depart for the UK. Once you receive your letter, put it in a safe place and bring it with you. You will ultimately share it with the volunteer site coordinator.

Remember to submit your service-learning forms online before you begin your project! ([www.uwec.edu/SL](http://www.uwec.edu/SL))

## **MONEY MATTERS**

*Information about how payments are made, when they are due, the UW-Eau Claire withdrawal/refund deadlines, financial aid, scholarships, budgeting and ways to bring money abroad is in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

## **Cost Estimate**

You can find the most current Cost Estimate for your program, in easily printable format, on the [CIE Stirling webpage](#).

Be sure you are looking at the correct term. Remember that the cost estimate includes what you pay to UW-Eau Claire, what you pay to your host university, and what you pay directly to other vendors.

## **Exchange Option**

In Fall 2019, you will be going to Stirling as exchange students. On a tuition only **exchange program**, each participant pays the costs they would normally pay at their home school – so Eau Claire students pay UW-Eau Claire costs, and Scottish students cover tuition costs at their respective university, and they switch places. Students pay the host institution for their housing.

**No money is exchanged between the schools, and there is no direct monetary correlation between what you pay in Eau Claire and what you receive in Scotland.**

What is exchanged is not actual payment, but rather benefits. You should receive the same benefits a typical Scottish student receives, and the Scottish student receives the benefits a typical Eau Claire student receives. This type of arrangement allows students to participate in overseas programs at a cost similar to what they would pay to attend their home university.

## **Personal Travel**

Past participants who responded to our money survey spent between \$1,500 and \$2,500 on personal travel. To give you a

sense of what you can do for these amounts:

\$1,500-\$2000: *A moderate amount – I traveled about every other weekend.*

\$2,500: *A lot – I traveled almost every weekend.*

Personal travel depends on your budget and your priorities. Students who want to be involved in their host community generally spend less time (and money) traveling. Others travel every weekend with correspondingly high costs and fewer close connections in their new home.

## **Currency and Currency Exchange**

The currency of the United Kingdom is the pound, abbreviated GBP (Great Britain Pound) and symbolized "£." Just like the dollar, the pound is divided into 100 units, called "pence," abbreviated "p." Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 pence, as well as 1 and 2 pounds. There are £5, £10, £20, and £50 bills.

Scottish banks print their own versions of the pound, commonly referred to as "Scottish notes." Scottish notes can be used in all parts of the United Kingdom although a small number of students have reported trouble using Scottish notes in England. You can avoid this problem by simply withdrawing money after you arrive at your destination in England.

**The exchange rate as of December 19, 2019 was 1 GBP = 1.22628 USD.** You can find current exchange rates at <http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>.

## MONEY ABROAD

*In addition to the information about bringing money abroad in the Study Abroad Handbook, past participants report the following about the UK.*

### **Funds upon Arrival**

Stirling recommends that you arrive in the UK with approximately £200-£250 in British currency, more if you are traveling by taxis and other public transport to get to campus. Do not carry any more than this in case it gets lost. It is also advisable to bring some travelers checks with you for emergencies; they can be cashed at airport "bureau de change" offices and in banks. You can also withdraw money from ATMs using your credit or debit card.

### **Bank Accounts**

For yearlong students, it may take up to three weeks to open a UK bank account, so be prepared with cash, debit/credit cards, and/or travelers checks until then. Students studying in the UK for six months or less are not allowed to open an account.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

*In addition to the scholarship & financial aid information listed in your Study Abroad Handbook, there is one scholarship available specifically for study in the UK.*

### **BUTEX North American Scholarship Programme**

The British Universities Transatlantic Exchange Association (BUTEX) has a North American Scholarship Programme open to all undergraduate students currently registered at an institution in the United

States or Canada. To be eligible to apply, you must have been offered a study abroad or exchange place at a UK university with BUTEX membership for a minimum of one semester. The University of Aberdeen and Glasgow are both members. For further details on how to apply, please see [www.butex.ac.uk](http://www.butex.ac.uk).

## HEALTH & SAFETY

*In addition to the general information in the Study Abroad Handbook, you should be aware of the following health & safety information specific to the UK.*

### **On-Campus Medical & Counseling Services**

The University offers a range of on-campus student support services; you can find details at the following links:

<http://www.stir.ac.uk/campus-life/support-and-wellbeing/>  
<http://www.stir.ac.uk/student-support/>

You are also welcome to contact **Cheryl Lochner-Wright, the Scotland program coordinator**, at [lochnecb@uwec.edu](mailto:lochnecb@uwec.edu) with any questions you may have about on-campus medical and counseling services before you leave.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

Stirling can also provide accommodations for students with a variety of specific requirements. Details are here:

<http://www.stir.ac.uk/campus-life/accommodation/studentswithdisabilities/>

It is also important to look at the level of accessibility in Scotland. To find more information on this topic, please see the [State Department Country Specific Information page](#).

If you have questions or concerns about this, please contact your UWEC study abroad coordinator.

### ***Intro to the UK Health System***

The National Health Service (i.e. the UK national healthcare system) sometimes does not have a very good reputation in the U.S. The system generally works fine; however, it operates under a different set of assumptions from the U.S. health system. U.S. students and their parents need to be aware of some of the major differences between the U.S. and UK health systems.

1) **The UK system is set up to favor those typically most in need of medical treatment:** infants/children, pregnant women, and the elderly. People in traditional university age range are expected to be low users of the system except in the case of accidents or serious illness.

2) Because of this, **there can be a long wait to set up treatment for pre-existing conditions.** If you have a condition that will need ongoing treatment while in the UK, contact your UW-Eau Claire study abroad coordinator right away!

3) In the UK, **medical professionals do not consider a common cold/sore throat to require medical attention.** Being sick with a cold for three or four days is considered normal and of no major concern in a person of college age.

4) **Antibiotics are rarely prescribed in the UK.** Doctors point to research that shows frequent use of antibiotics leads to mutation in germs, rendering the antibiotics useless. Antibiotics are therefore used to treat severe illness. If you use antibiotics regularly, you may wish to bring them with you.

5) **Allergy shots are generally not recommended** by physicians in the UK. It will be difficult to find anyone who will prescribe or administer them.

### ***Vaccinations***

There have been large measles outbreaks in Europe. The [Centers for Disease Control](#) recommends that you are up-to-date on routine vaccines before your study abroad experience. These vaccines include measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine, polio vaccine, and your yearly flu shot.

Also, our university partners in the UK have indicated that the National Health Service has a policy of immunizing for Meningitis "C" and recommend that students who have not been vaccinated plan to have this done before leaving home.

### ***Safety in Scotland***

One main thing to remember about safety in Scotland is that they drive on the opposite side of the road, so **LOOK RIGHT!!** before crossing the street. Information on crime, road safety, drug penalties, and terrorist activity in the UK is included in the State Department Consular Information Sheet at the end of this guide. Safety in and around your host university

will be discussed during orientation in Scotland.

### ***Hiking***

Per the U.S. State Department, "Hiking in higher elevations can be treacherous. Several people die each year while hiking, particularly in Scotland, often due to sudden changes in weather. We encourage visitors, including experienced hikers, to discuss their intended routes with local residents familiar with the area and to adhere closely to recommendations."

### ***Sexual Harassment and "Lad Culture" in the UK***

"Lad culture" has become a concern among British universities. In [recent research](#), it was defined by participants as a "group or 'pack' mentality residing in activities such as sport and heavy alcohol consumption, and 'banter' which often sexist, misogynist and homophobic." Although some respondents found it influenced their academic experience at university, lad culture is seen as particularly influential in the social side of university life. Some commentators have compared it to "bro culture" or frat culture in the United States viewing it as an imported phenomenon from the United States.

Many respondents reported sexist jokes and rape banter in their friendship groups that made them feel uncomfortable or pressure to engage in sexual relationships. Sexual harassment was common, and there were accounts of sexual violence. Harassment ranged from verbal harassment and catcalling to physical harassment and sexual molestation. Groping in nightclubs was viewed by some as a part of a normal night

out. Excessive drinking is an often-cited contributing factor and the university drinking culture is seen as one of the biggest obstacles to eliminating lad culture. Some women were also found to participate in the heavy drinking and crude behavior associated with lad culture and have been dubbed "ladettes."

Undoubtedly, some UW-Eau Claire students have witnessed this type of behavior at UW-Eau Claire. However, it may be more difficult to speak up when you are in a new culture. You cannot change a culture but you can make smart choices about how to manage your interactions and reactions to lad culture:

- Ask your British friends, both male and female, how they think lad culture impacts university social life.
- Remove yourself from situations where you do not feel comfortable. Listen to your instincts.
- Drink in moderation if you choose to drink. [CASE at UW-Eau Claire offers advice how to drink in moderation.](#)
- Be careful about accepting drinks from people that you don't know. In particular, watch your drink when you are out at bars or clubs.

### ***Emergency Contacts***

Each Study-in-Scotland university has a designated advisor for students to contact. Numbers are listed on the Contact Information page of this guide. When traveling outside the framework of the academic program, you may not be able to contact the international advisor for help. If an emergency should arise while traveling, U.S. embassies and/or consulates can offer some assistance in the following ways:



- provide a list of local physicians and lawyers
- contact next of kin in event of emergency
- provide assistance during civil unrest or natural disaster
- contact relations on your behalf to request funds or guidance in an emergency

### **911 Equivalent in the UK**

If you are in an emergency situation in the United Kingdom, you will need to know how to reach the local police, fire, or ambulance services. The local equivalent to the 911 emergency line **in the United Kingdom is 999; in Gibraltar, it is 112.** Save this number in your cell phone in case you need it to use it quickly.

The U.S. State Department also provides a list of [911 numbers abroad](#). Please note that in some countries there are different numbers for fire, police, and ambulance. Plan ahead and research numbers before you go.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

*Passport and additional visa information is included in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### **Visa**

A visa is official permission to temporarily reside in another country and is granted by the government of that country. U.S. citizens studying in the UK for less than six months may enter the UK under two categories: Short-Term Study Visa or Tier 4 (General) Student Visa. **Most UW-Eau Claire students enter under the Short-Term Study Visa category.**

See the “Visa Information: UK” in the Learning Content section of your UW-Eau Claire BlugoldsAbroad account for basic information about the visa options. This information will be discussed briefly at study abroad orientation, also.

Note that **you cannot enter the UK for the first time via Ireland if you are using the short-term study visa option.** In addition, proof of onward journey, **usually in the form of a roundtrip plane ticket**, is required.

It is your responsibility to keep up-to-date about student visa requirements for the UK, and if required, to apply for and receive a visa from a UK consulate or embassy in a timely manner.

### **Visas for Travel to Other Countries**

If you plan to travel outside of the UK while abroad, verify visa requirements for each country you will visit by contacting the nearest consulate for that country, or your travel agency. Most Western European nations do not require U.S. citizens to have a visa for tourist travel of less than three months, but you should always verify the requirement as entry requirements can change with little notice.

## **PACKING TIPS**

*In addition to the general packing information in the Study Abroad Handbook, you should know the following about Scotland.*

### **Clothing**

The weather in Scotland is often cool and wet, especially in the fall and winter. Many

buildings are not centrally heated. Past participants suggest bringing clothing that you can wear, or remove, in layers.

Bring a few “dress-up” clothes for going out to restaurants or clubs. Some nightclubs will not let you in wearing jeans or tennis shoes.

A light and a heavy jacket are essential. One of these should be a raincoat with a warm lining. And don't forget your umbrella!

### ***What to Pack***

Your Peer Advisor will provide a suggested packing list at Orientation 2.

### ***Appliances***

The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volts. U.S. appliances such as hair dryers and razors run on 110 volts. If you plan to bring these appliances, you will need to buy both a **converter and a plug adapter**.

## **TRAVEL TO SCOTLAND**

*There is additional information on travel, including student-oriented travel agencies and instructions for booking a flight, in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### ***Travel Arrangements***

It is your responsibility to make travel arrangements to Stirling.

Remember:

- **you should not book your flight until your acceptance has been confirmed and the exact beginning and ending dates of the program have been confirmed by the University of Stirling.** However,

this does not mean that you cannot look online and begin price comparisons.

- **You cannot enter the UK for the first time via Ireland if you are using the short-term study visa option.**
- Most visas require a **roundtrip** ticket. If you are planning to travel at the end of the program, that is fine. You do not need to leave the UK immediately at the end of the program, as long as you will not be there/in Europe as a tourist for more than a total of 90 days before/after the program

### ***Arriving in Scotland***

Further details about arrival and departure will be sent to you with your University of Stirling "Offer Letter".

Stirling is located about a one hour and 20-minute drive from Glasgow and a 45-minute drive from Edinburgh.

### ***Immigration***

If you are using the short-term study visa option to enter the UK, you will be asked to provide documents to the UK immigration official at the airport. Please see your BlugoldAbroads Learning Content “Visa Information: UK” for details on what documents you need to have with you. Upon verifying your documents, the immigration agent will stamp your passport with the short-term study visa.

### ***Getting to Stirling***

You should plan to fly into either Glasgow International Airport (GLA) or Edinburgh International Airport (EDI). You can fly into

Glasgow Prestwick Airport (PIK), but the cost of getting to Stirling will be much higher unless you are traveling with a group (see below.)

U of Stirling does not arrange a pick-up service from the airport. Instead, they recommend that you use the transport service "Stirling Direct" since it is the least expensive way to get to the university. Current prices are from:

£18 per person from Edinburgh Airport  
£20 per person from Glasgow Airport  
£90 per vehicle from Prestwick Airport

For more information on airport collection, visit the U of Stirling website:  
<http://www.stir.ac.uk/study-in-the-uk/airport-collection>.

If you wish to book an airport collection with Stirling Direct, please do so through their website: [www.stirlingdirect.org](http://www.stirlingdirect.org). **Please book at least 7 days in advance of your arrival in Scotland to ensure your place on the shuttle.**

## SETTLING IN

### **Orientation**

You will have an orientation program upon arrival, including an introduction to the university and its facilities as well as a tour of the surrounding area.

### **Housing**

Study abroad and exchange students have the choice of two to three on-campus and one off-campus residence each year. Students apply for accommodation online and instructions about how to do this will

be emailed to you after you have been offered admission to the University and accepted the offer. You list your housing preferences, but you will be assigned where there is space available.

Student accommodation is apartment-style living similar to Chancellor's Hall at UW-Eau Claire. Students live in apartments or chalets, where three to seven students have individual bedrooms but share living, kitchen, and bathroom space. Each room has a desk, lamp, chair, bed, bookshelf, storage space, and sink. A bedding pack is provided, but you need to provide your own towels, cooking and eating utensils. Find details at <http://www.stir.ac.uk/campus-life/accommodation/visitingstudents/>.

**Stirling- students with disabilities:** U of Stirling does have some accommodation that was specifically designed to be accessible for students with varying needs. For more information on what is available, please visit the [Accommodation Students with Disabilities page](#).

### **Meals**

All accommodation at U of Stirling is self-catered, meaning you cook your own food. You will need to provide your own silverware, plates, cups, and other cooking utensils.

Alternately, you can eat at campus cafeterias and eateries. You can add funds to your U of Stirling student card if you like for use at these venues.

Most students choose to cook for themselves and limit the amount they eat at

the campus eateries as cooking is less expensive, and lots of social life in the halls centers around the kitchen. You can learn more the campus catering outlets at <http://www.stir.ac.uk/campus-life/campus-facilities/catering/>.

**Cultural differences in food.** Because tea is a more common drink than coffee, you'll find water kettles rather than coffee pots in most kitchens. When you go shopping, you'll find that eggs are not refrigerated. You'll find less beef and chicken, and more pork and lamb. Ketchup, peanut butter, and ranch dressing are hard to find and have a slightly different flavor. If you eat out, you'll find more Indian food and less Mexican food.

### **Common Scottish and English meals**

- **Haggis:** a traditional Scottish savory dish containing sheep's organs (heart, liver and lungs) minced with onion, oatmeal, suet, spices, and salt; mixed with stock; and traditionally encased in the animal's stomach and simmered for approximately three hours. Most modern commercial haggis is prepared in a sausage casing rather than an actual stomach. For those of you who are not fans of organ meat, there is also vegetarian haggis.
- **Black Pudding:** a type of sausage made by cooking blood or dried blood with a filler until it is thick enough to congeal when cooled; often served at the traditional Scottish breakfast.
- **Square Sausage:** Lorne sausage known for its shape is often served with breakfast or on a roll.
- **Tablet:** basically, sugar and butter; it is amazing.
- **Cloutie Dumpling:** a traditional dessert pudding made with flour, breadcrumbs, dried fruit, sugar, spice, and milk.
- **Stovies:** A Scottish dish based on potatoes; recipes vary widely but the dish always contains potatoes and variously onions, carrots, other vegetables, roast beef, corned beef or other meat.
- **Fish and Chips:** fried fish served with fries. Depending on where in Scotland you are they will ask if you would like vinegar or salt or both. You will also find a variety of toppings people put on just chips such as doner or curry.
- **Shepherd's Pie:** lamb pie cooked in a casserole with a layer of toasted mashed potatoes.
- **Bangers and Mash:** sausages and mashed potatoes.
- **Yorkshire Pudding:** popover served alongside roast beef with gravy on top.
- **Cadbury Chocolate:** an absolute must.
- **Doner:** found at the kebab shops; similar to a Gyro.
- **Fried Milky Way/Mars Bars:** almost anything can be found fried; just check out the menu at the nearest fish and chips shop.

### **Laundry**

The University of Stirling has various laundry facilities located in A K Davidson Hall, Murray Hall, Alexander Court, Spittal Hill, John Forty's Court, Thistle Chambers, Union Street development Stirling and in Polwarth House, central to the main residences complex. All have card operated washers and dryers. In the main laundry at Polwarth House, £4 buys a 12-point laundry card, which is swiped in the machines as they are used. Washes "cost" four points,

and 20 minutes in the dryer “costs” two points, so each card holds the equivalent of three washes, six dries, or two of each.

### ***Getting Involved***

A great way to get involved in the community is to volunteer your time. Check with the study abroad office on your campus to see if any positions are available on campus or within your city. Otherwise, look into student groups that participate in volunteer activities. Past students who chose to do this gained a lot from the experience. Not only do you get to meet people, you get to make a difference. However, please see the “Service Learning” information on page 10 of this guide as **volunteering in the UK will require a background check and Tier 4 Student Visa.**

Some students also attended a Scottish church on a regular basis. They really enjoyed doing this as they were able to meet and connect with a wide variety of people.

Stirling University Students' Association, or SUSA, helps students organize activities, from sport to cultural activities and more. SUSA also provides a framework within which students can organize clubs and societies which suit their interests. A list of clubs and societies can be found on the SUSA clubs and societies web page: <http://www.stirlingstudentsunion.com/>.

The university is a great place for sport and offers excellent sporting facilities. Facilities include a large indoor sports hall, a nine-hole golf course, squash courts, 50-meter swimming pool, indoor and outdoor tennis

courts, a fitness center (with a variety of equipment including free weights) and an athletics track.

You can also get involved with the International Society. It runs a variety of social events (including the famous Scottish ceilidh!), trips around Scotland and other opportunities to mix with people from the 80+ nationalities represented on campus. For more information, visit the Society's website:

<http://www.stirlingstudentsunion.com/clubs/societies/societies/internationalsociety/>.

## **COMMUNICATION**

*Information on accessing/forwarding your UW-Eau Claire email address and international calling through your computer is in your Study Abroad Handbook.*

### ***Time Difference***

Scotland is six hours ahead of Eau Claire. When it is 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon here, it is 7:00 p.m. in the evening there. Because of the time difference, you may wish to set up a specific calling time with people at home.

### ***Telephone Information***

**From the U.S. to Scotland.:** You must first dial 011, which is the international dialing code. Next, you must dial 44 to get Scotland, and then the rest of the number to reach a specific city and location.

**From Scotland to the U.S.:** Dial 001, the area code, and the number.

### ***Email***

The University provides email access, or you can access a web-based account via the

Internet. If you bring a laptop, there will be places to use it on campus and in your housing arrangement. There are also various computer labs on campus. You will need to purchase a UK adapter for your computer if you bring one. Make sure that if you have a three-prong computer plug that you purchase a two-prong converter (to plug into your adapter) that turns into a three prong so that you can charge your computer.

### ***Snail Mail***

International airmail usually takes at least 7-10 business days. Make sure you do not send anything valuable through snail mail until you are sure of where your mail will end up and that it is in a secure place.

## **CULTURE NOTES**

### ***Where am I going? UK, Great Britain, or Scotland?***

You are actually going to all three simultaneously. The United Kingdom is a country that consists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In fact, the official name of the country is "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland."

Great Britain is the name of the island northwest of France and east of Ireland that consists of three somewhat autonomous regions: England, Wales and Scotland. Therefore, Scotland is part of Great Britain, which is part of the United Kingdom. The UK includes England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

From:

[http://geography.about.com/library/faq/blq\\_zuk.htm](http://geography.about.com/library/faq/blq_zuk.htm)

### ***The Government***

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy, with a queen and a parliament that has two houses: The House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Supreme legislative power is vested in parliament, which sits for five years unless dissolved sooner. The House of Lords was stripped of most of its power in 1911, and now its main function is to revise legislation. In November 1999, hundreds of hereditary peers were expelled in an effort to make the body more democratic. The executive power of the Crown is exercised by the cabinet, headed by the prime minister.

The current monarch and prime minister are:

Sovereign: Queen Elizabeth II (since 1952)

Prime Minister: Theresa May (since 2016)

England has existed as a unified entity since the 10th century; the union between England and Wales, began in 1284 with the Statute of Rhuddlan, which was not formalized until 1536 with an Act of Union. In another Act of Union in 1707, England and Scotland agreed to permanently join as Great Britain. The legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland was implemented in 1801, with the adoption of the name the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The Anglo-Irish treaty of 1921 formalized a partition of Ireland; six northern Irish counties remained part of the United Kingdom as Northern Ireland and the current name of the country, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was adopted in 1927.



From:

<http://www.infoplease.com/country/united-kingdom.html>

## TRAVEL WHILE ABROAD

*Here is specific information about travel in the UK to supplement the Study Abroad Handbook.*

### **Independent Travel**

If you plan to travel in England, Scotland or Wales, transportation by train, ferry, bus (coach) and plane are all possible. When deciding whether to travel by train or air, remember this: they are often comparable in price, but train travel is considerably longer. For example, a train from Glasgow to London takes four hours versus a forty-minute flight. On the other hand, traveling by train allows you to see much of the countryside that you would miss if you fly. Also, train stations are usually closer to the city centers, while a taxi or bus ride might be needed if you fly.

### **Train**

A 16-25 RailCard gives you 1/3 off regular fare tickets. It pays for itself after three to four trips. Check out this Web site for more information: <http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/>. There is also a special rail pass just for southwest England (which includes London and Oxford) that gives you a discount on train tickets. When you buy a ticket to London using the pass, the ticket may also be used as a subway pass around London for the entire day.

### **Bus**

Scotland has a great bus system that can take you to many Scottish cities

inexpensively. At [www.megabus.co.uk](http://www.megabus.co.uk), you can get a roundtrip bus ticket from Glasgow to Edinburgh for 3-4 pounds (roughly \$7-9). If you're going further, a National Express Student Coach Card entitles you to one-third off all regular fare coach tickets.

### **Ferry**

If you have time, you can also take a ferry from Scotland to various cities in Ireland/Wales/England. Past participants have said they really enjoyed the ferry experiences. See <https://www.aferry.co.uk/> for more information.

### **Air**

Many past students have recommended Ryan Air as a helpful site with low-budget flights all around Europe: <http://www.ryanair.com/en>. Typically, Ryan Air flies into airports that are further outside the city so you may need to spend more on taxis, buses, or trains to get into town.

# CONTACT NAMES & ADDRESSES

GENERAL UW-EAU CLAIRE & CISI CONTACT INFORMATION IS IN YOUR STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK.

## UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING

Jo Hagerty  
Study Abroad & Exchanges Manager  
Study Abroad Office  
University of Stirling  
Stirling  
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UK  
Tel: + 44 (0) 1786 467042 or  
+ 44 (0) 1786 467224  
Email: [study-abroad@stir.ac.uk](mailto:study-abroad@stir.ac.uk)  
OR  
[j.m.s.hagerty@stir.ac.uk](mailto:j.m.s.hagerty@stir.ac.uk)

## U.W. EAU CLAIRE

Center for International Education  
Cheryl Lochner-Wright  
Senior Study Abroad Coordinator  
[lochnecb@uwec.edu](mailto:lochnecb@uwec.edu)  
Phone: (715) 836-4411  
Fax: (715) 836-4948

## BRITISH CONSULATE IN THE U.S.

British Consulate General-Chicago  
625 N. Michigan Avenue  
Suite 2200  
Chicago, IL 60611  
Phone: (312) 970-3800  
Fax: (312) 970-3852  
Web site:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/usa>. Scroll  
down to the heading "British Consulate-General  
Chicago."

**Please be aware that British Consulate in  
Chicago no longer offers visa processing  
services.**

## U.S. CONSULATE ABROAD

The U.S. Consulate General  
3 Regent Terrace  
Edinburgh EH7 5BW  
Phone: 0131-556-8315 (in country)  
Fax: 0131-557-6023 (in country)  
After-hours Emergency for American  
Citizens:  
Phone: 020 7499 9000 (in-country)  
Email: [edinburgh-info@state.gov](mailto:edinburgh-info@state.gov)  
Web: [https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-  
consulates/edinburgh/](https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/edinburgh/)

**Note: If you are calling outside the UK,  
please drop the "0". If you are calling  
within the UK, drop the "44" and begin  
the number with "0" plus the number.**

## WEB RESOURCES: STIRLING

COUNTRY	CITY	TRAVEL
<b>VisitScotland.com</b> <a href="http://www.visitscotland.com">http://www.visitscotland.com</a>	<b>City of Stirling</b> <a href="http://www.instirling.com/">http://www.instirling.com/</a>	<b>The UK Travel Guide</b> <a href="http://www.uktravel.com">http://www.uktravel.com</a>
<b>Scotland.com</b> <a href="http://www.scotland.com">http://www.scotland.com</a>		<b>UK Rail Schedules</b> <a href="http://www.nationalrail.co.uk">www.nationalrail.co.uk</a>
<b>The British Council—Welcome to Scotland</b> <a href="http://scotland.britishcouncil.org/">http://scotland.britishcouncil.org/</a>		<b>UK Weather</b> <a href="http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/">http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/</a>
<b>Scottish News</b> Telegraph: <a href="http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scotland/">http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scotland/</a>  BBC: <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/">http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/</a>		<b>Edinburgh and Lothians Tourist Board</b> <a href="http://www.visitscotland.com/destinations-maps/edinburgh-lothians/">http://www.visitscotland.com/destinations-maps/edinburgh-lothians/</a>
<b>Radio Scotland</b> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/radioscotland/">http://www.bbc.co.uk/radioscotland/</a>		

# PAST PARTICIPANT VOICES, 2017-2018

## WHAT THEY WISH THEY HAD KNOWN BEFORE THEY LEFT

- I wish I had known a little more about how the school itself runs during the semester. The University of Stirling is very different in regards to how students chose classes, having additional seminars during the week, and how grades are distributed. *(Eds: All of these topics are touched on in the guide: be sure to ask questions of returnees during orientation to get details!)*

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## THE BEST PART OF THEIR EXPERIENCE MID-WAY THROUGH

- Meeting people from all over the world!
  - The amazing scenery.

## BIGGEST ADJUSTMENTS THEY HAD TO MAKE

- Navigating around a completely unfamiliar area, time management, and patience with other abroad students where English is not their first language.
- Converting things like temperature, measuring, currency
- Lots of independent studying.

## THOUGHTS ON HOUSING

I really enjoy it my housing. Everyone I live with is amazing, and the space is a good enough size. A couple of things to be aware of--I am living almost a mile away from the main part of campus where all classes are held. Also, laundry is in a separate building and is quite expensive.

## HOW THEY SUMMED IT UP

I have never had so much fun at university. This experience has definitely prepared me for the future in my education and being able to live independently. I felt like I learned so much outside of the classroom as well. I met so many people this semester. Everyone here is so open and welcoming. I had nearly 15 people all offering their homes to me when I stayed over Christmas. If you go somewhere alone, you are most likely leave with at least 5 friends. I wish I could never leave; though I do miss my home and Eau Claire. *Michaela B.*

This semester I was able to experience some of the best moments of my life. Everyone at the University of Stirling was incredibly welcoming, the classes were interesting, and the location was perfect. *Natalie P.*

