

**Telfer School of Management
International Exchange Winter 2025
Newcastle University**

1. Program of Study

I am a student double majoring in Marketing and Healthcare Analytics at the Telfer School of Management, and I have been on an exchange semester in Newcastle, studying at the Newcastle University Business School. As I am doing only one semester abroad, I am required to complete 30 ECTS, which is the general European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. At Newcastle University, the credit system works slightly differently, with the university credits being exactly double ECTS credits. Therefore, 30 ECTS is equal to 60 Newcastle credits. Classes here are referred to as modules. Each module can be 5 credits, 10 credits, and 20 credits. Because I know that I only wanted to do three modules, I chose the ones that are 20 credits each, which add up to 60 credits and suffice my exchange requirements of completing 30 ECTS.

Number of lectures is less than at uOttawa. Each class can either be one hour or two hours, and each module has either one class or two classes per week. Additionally, each module has bi-weekly seminars, which is equivalent to DGDs, where you engage in discussions and activities that evaluate practical implications of the learnt materials. Some classes include a workshop for a whole semester. It further reinforces your understanding through analytical activities and group work that link the themes of the lectures and the final assessment. I strongly recommend attending the seminars and workshops as you can learn more in the examples that may not be taught in lectures. There is also a strong emphasis on independent study, and you are expected to do further readings and research. Two of my modules are entirely graded based on individual reports, therefore additional study beside classes and seminars is extremely needed to attain a good result.

In the UK, the undergraduate program is 3 years instead of 4, therefore 3000-level courses are typically for 3rd and 4th year students at uOttawa. The modules I have chosen are as follows:

- BUS2019 Understanding Work and Organizations
 - Lecture hours: 22
 - Assessment method: written exam (100%)
- BUS2031 Managing Change
 - Lecture hours: 22
 - Assessment method: case study (100%)
- BUS2074 Global Perspective in Managing People and Organizations
 - Lecture hours: 16
 - Assessment method: report (100%)

2. Timetable

Academic Calendar:

UK's semester is quite similar to uOttawa as it is divided into two main semesters and a summer semester. However, each semester runs slightly longer. The exact semester dates at Newcastle University is as follows:

Semester dates 2024/25

Semester	Start date	End date
One	Monday 16 September 2024	Friday 24 January 2025
Two	Monday 27 January 2025	Friday 6 June 2025
Three	Monday 9 June 2025	Friday 12 September 2025

Holidays / Breaks:

Because I went on exchange during the second semester, I had an Easter break. Different from at uOttawa where we have a reading week for each semester, at Newcastle, the main break is exactly a month from March 28th to April 28th, fitting in Easter holiday.

Below is the important university closure dates that align with the break:

2025

- Wednesday 1 January (New Years day Public Holiday)
- Thursday 2 January (University Closure Day)
- Friday 3 January (University Closure Day) The University **reopens Monday 6 January**.
- Friday 18 April (Good Friday)
- Monday 21 April (Easter Monday)
- Monday 5 May (Early May Bank Holiday)
- Monday 26 May (Spring Bank Holiday)
- Monday 25 August (Summer Bank Holiday)
- Thursday 25 December (Christmas Day)
- Friday 26 December (Boxing Day)

Registration dates:

uOttawa will nominate you as an exchange student to Newcastle University, and if accepted, Newcastle will email you in September and invite you to apply on their own portal called Terra Dotta. There will be many documents and tasks to complete, and the application deadline (if you are going in semester 2) is October 31st.

The application form will ask you to provide some general information such as contact details. You will also be asked to indicate the modules you would like to study at Newcastle and to provide a personal statement. You may also need to submit an English language test certificate, which does not apply to Canadian citizens as our official language is English. Various documents will be required to upload, such as a valid passport and transcript.

Because the application date closes at the end of October, you won't hear back from the university until mid-November. Once accepted into Newcastle, other instructions will be sent to you through email and tasks are to be completed through Terra Dotta.

Beginning and end of classes:

Classes can start at 9:30am and can finish at 6pm. Detailed descriptions of how they run are outlined in section '1. Program of Study' above.

3. Procedures to Follow upon Arrival

Services by the International Exchange Office:

The Terra Dotta portal (where you initially apply to Newcastle) lays out most important tasks and activities required upon arrival. It is recommended for exchange students that you arrive a week before your classes start to settle in, attend welcoming services offered by the university, and explore the city while the campus and residence is still empty.

The university offers an airport 'meet and greet' service for students arriving in Newcastle for the first time. They will arrange a bus or a taxi to your housing accommodation, or a drop-off location nearby, from the airport. This service operates on one specific chosen date from 8am till 8pm. I personally went with my family when moving in, therefore I did not have to use this service at the airport. However, most other international students choose their flight, or trains/buses if coming from bigger cities, to land in Newcastle on this exact date so they can use this service as it is operated by the university.

Additionally, there is a 'global opportunities welcome session' during this first week where they provide essential information for exchange students, such as school induction, university closure dates, exchange documents. Furthermore, an 'international welcome' session also takes place during the same week and provides additional information regarding club fairs, information sessions, campus and city tours, and social events. These sessions are a great way to meet other exchange students and learn more about fun student social events that are outside of the university.

Settling in:

The main and most important thing to do once you get to campus is to get a student card. This is very important and I advise you to keep it on you at all times. Your student card is used for class attendance, access to certain buildings on campus, to your exams, and discounts at many stores. Class attendance is mandatory, and it is taken by tapping your student at the start of each lecture. This helps the school keep track of how many lectures you miss and they can fail you if your attendance is low.

The second most important thing is to register with a general practitioner doctor (GP) who will be your main contact of service if you have any common health issues. Consultations are free and most of the time walk-ins are available.

Course selection:

After being accepted, the university will send out instructions on Terra Dotta portal to rank the courses that you would like to take. This depends on when you are accepted into the school, usually in November or December. However, these rankings do not guarantee access to them, and you will finalise your list of modules after you arrive in Newcastle. It is possible that the modules you indicate in your application may not be available to you due to many reasons such as class sizes, conflicts in class times, staffing changes etc.

Once you arrive at Newcastle, there will be an in person session with exchange coordinators to help you choose classes that fit best with your preferences and schedule. You will also have a week after classes start to make any changes.

4. Budget

When studying abroad, it is important to carefully budget as the exchange rate and cost of living in the UK is more expensive than Canada. If you are like me and want to take this opportunity to also travel Europe, having a budget will help manage your expenses while being able to explore new places. Below is the outline of the main categories of my spending during my time here.

a) Airplane tickets to and from Newcastle (\$1100)

This cost accounts for flights from Halifax to London, and from London back to Halifax, not including checked bags. Additional costs are incurred when taking the train or bus from London to Newcastle, and back. My buses there and back were \$36, and the train would be more expensive but takes a shorter amount of time.

b) Housing (\$5410)

This cost covers 5 months of rent, from mid January to mid June, for a university housing accommodation offered for exchange students exclusively. This accommodation did not offer a meal plan, so this cost is solely for housing and amenities that came with it. Because this is a university residence, it is quite expensive. However, if you are able to find off-campus housing (through group chats, facebook marketplace etc.), the price may be significantly cheaper.

c) Meals (~ \$300 - \$400 monthly)

The budget I set for monthly groceries is around \$300, which is equivalent to the monthly groceries expenses back in Ottawa. This may vary as when taking into eating out days, this cost may go up. I find prices at the grocery stores here are only slightly higher than Canadian's groceries, however, eating out will be significantly more expensive.

d) Textbooks and other school supplies (\$0)

I personally did not have to pay for any school supplies here. The textbooks I needed for my modules are either posted by the professor, or available at the library. Course materials are easily accessible through the school portal, therefore there is no need for additional supplies.

e) Travel costs (\$1300 + ~\$3000)

This cost solely accounts for transportations, including flights, buses, and trains throughout my travels to different countries and different cities within a country. Extra expenses on the trip, such as food, activities, souvenirs, shopping etc., are budgeted for \$3000 (for a total of 35 days traveling).

5. Procedures before Arrival

Visa:

Canadian students don't need to apply for a regular student visa when studying in the UK when you are living in the country for under 6 months. However, you still need a standard visitor visa letter to show border patrol officers once arriving in the UK. The university will send this visa document through Terra Dotta.

Course registration:

After being accepted into Newcastle university, there will be tasks to complete on Terra Dotta, including modules registration. See 'Course Selection' in Section '3. Procedures to Follow upon Arrival' for detailed explanation of this process.

Housing Deposit:

My housing accommodation at Leazes Parade required an initial deposit of £99 (~\$183) due in December. After signing the contract, there are different payment methods depending on the bank account you hold. Regardless of the method, an upfront payment in full (£2,833.14 ~ \$5410) for the entire term of your stay is required. This is quite a large amount and takes days to complete the transaction, and during these days the exchange rate may fluctuate, therefore it is important to use a reliable bank card with the least amount of international fee charge.

6. Housing

Address:

Essential Student Living Leazes Parade, Off Holland Drive, Barrack Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4LB

Description:

Leazes Parade accommodation is reserved exclusively for exchange students, making it feel very easy to settle in and meet people as everyone is in the same boat. It is around 15 minutes walk to the business school, and 20 minutes to the main campus. Each flat has 4 or 6 bedrooms, with a shared kitchen, living room, and bathrooms. Each bedroom comes with a double bed, desk and chair, dresser, and a sink (which might sound off but it actually is quite convenient, especially in the morning you can get ready without having to fight over the bathroom). There are also two main common rooms for the entire residence, offering games, lounges, and this space is often used for social hangouts. There is on-site laundry and a small gym as well. This housing accommodation does not come with a meal plan.

Cost:

Total cost for Leazes Parade with a fixed term of 21 weeks (January 22 - June 18) is £2,833.14, so roughly around \$5410. There is also a £99 initial deposit, which you will get back at the end of the lease term if no agreement is broken.

7. Other Recommendations

Across this essay you will find that I have made some comments from my personal experiences. However, I would still like to point out a few things that could enhance your experience here.

Newcastle is known for having the best student night life in the UK. and the nightlife culture here is quite different from Canada. Even if you are not a big going out person, I recommend trying out a few places. There is a 'designated good spot' for each day of the week, ranging from bars to clubs, and exploring these places will give you amazing opportunities to be immersed in the "Geordie" culture as well as meeting new people.

As the biggest city in the northeast region of England, Newcastle itself is very pretty with a deep history running through it, and it is close to many historical landmarks and famous site-seeing spots. During the weekends, the streets become very lively with buskers and multiple Sunday markets. I highly recommend exploring the city every chance you get, as well as doing day-trips to surrounding cities and towns.

8. Personal Experience Summarized

Choosing Newcastle as my exchange destination is one of the best choices I have ever made. I have been able to make great friends, explored different aspects of British culture, take courses that are different from the uOttawa's offer, and traveled to many places in the UK as well as other countries in Europe. Newcastle has consistently been ranked among the top student places in the UK and my experience definitely lives up to that expectation. The city is so rich and vibrant in its "Geordie" culture, while maintaining a welcoming space for diversity. Even though it is a smaller city compared to Ottawa, there are always events and activities to engage in, making me feel pleasant and less likely to get home sick, even on the dull rainy days. The quality of education here is no less than what I get at uOttawa, offering a lot of similarities in the

business environment but also differences in daily lives such as the teaching, the assessment approaches, the business events. These similarities have made me feel comfortable and confident in tackling coursework, while the differences have expanded my knowledge immensely that I would only be able to get by experiencing it in-person. Overall, I am very grateful for this life-changing experience, and I am thrilled to bring these memories back to Canada with me and cherish them forever.