
A Loyola Student's Guide to Living in Newcastle



Hi, if your reading this it means that you have chosen to study abroad in Newcastle, England for this semester or year. This is the best decision you will ever make so congratulations! I know this because I am a former Loyola-Newcastle student. My name is Kylie Geis, I am in the class of 2016 at Loyola and I spent my entire junior year in Newcastle. This guide is something that I wrote during the summer after my abroad experience because

I wish someone would have done it for me. I didn't write this for a grade or for Loyola, I wrote this for you to ensure that you have the best time possible in Newcastle!

All of the things in this guide are based on my year in Newcastle and traveling in the UK and Europe, my experience is not the same as anyone else's but I hope that this will help you to prepare for and enjoy your time in Newcastle. I'm hoping this is something you can hang on to throughout your time abroad and if you need help finding something your looking for or just somewhere to eat, or go out for the night you can take a peek in here.

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Before You Leave

Phones

What I found to be the most effective way to use my phone abroad was to buy a SIM card once I arrived in Newcastle. (I will write about this more in the "Arriving in Newcastle Section"). If you plan on doing this, go to your phone store and **MAKE SURE YOUR PHONE IS UNLOCKED!** It is super difficult to do this once you are already in Newcastle. Make sure your phone is backed up to your computer.

Contacting Your Family

You should talk with your family and decide how you will get in contact with each other while you are abroad. If you have a smartphone there are tons of free texting and calling apps that can be used. Some methods that my friends and I used were:

Viber

iMessage /Face Time

WhatsApp

Facebook messenger (you can also use for calls) All of these apps can be used on Wi-Fi, and are free to use. I suggest picking at least one, possibly two different ones to use and having your friends and family get it too.

Finances

I suggest checking with your bank to see if they have some type of travel rewards credit card, a lot of times they don't charge a fee for the currency exchange, and you can earn points for flights and things!

As far as how to handle your cash I suggest getting a "Travelex" card. I opened a Santander bank account once I arrived in Newcastle, so I would just take a few hundred pounds out at an ATM and then put it in my British account. This method worked but a couple of my friends had the Travelex card and it worked out really well, especially when traveling outside the UK because you can load many different currencies onto the card and then after your trip you can convert them all back into dollars. You can order them online or get them in some airports/ malls. For more info or to find one near you go to Travelex.com.

Packing

If the airline rules are the same as my year, you will be allowed to bring 1 checked bag, a carry-on and a personal bag. You can pay to bring an extra suitcase for about \$100. This is what I did, so I brought two of the largest possible size checked bags, a duffel bag and a large backpack. I will admit I definitely over packed, but I'll tell you what I would pack now if I were to do it again: (I also used space bags to pack which definitely helped to fit more, it just meant I had to watch the weight of the bag because I could fit more.)

1-2 pairs of shorts

3-4 pairs of jeans

4-6 short sleeve shirts

5-8 long sleeve shirts

3-5 undershirts (camis)

8-10 sweaters/sweatshirts (I wore one almost every day)

A raincoat!!! (Super super important!)

A windbreaker

10-15 pairs of normal socks (more if you don't plan on doing laundry often)

2-3 pairs of warm socks (i.e. Tube socks or leg warmers)

2 pairs sweatpants

2-3 pairs yoga pants

A light jacket or north face

Going out clothes:

2 pairs high waisted pants/shorts

5 crop tops/ nice shirts

3-5 dresses

Converses/vans or something similar (your going to want to bring heels but it's not worth it, I wore them once and hated it, there is a lot of walking in Newcastle) will probably get ruined so don't bring your favourite pair

Shoes:

1 pair gym/ good walking sneakers

1 pair flip flops

1 Pair sandals

1 pair closed toed shoes (i.e. toms)

2 pairs boots

Medicine:

They have equivalents of most of our medicines but I would recommend bringing any of these things if you use them regularly:

Nyquil/ Dayquil- this isn't available in Newcastle!

Tylenol- their equivalent is paracetamol

Sudafed/ Advil Cold- cant get it over the counter their

Excedrin Migraine- they had something similar but it didn't work as well for me

Midol

Any type of sleep medicine or vitamins such as melatonin

Vitamin C- your going to get freshman flu, just take this often and you should be fine.

Contact solution is ridiculously expensive so bring what you will need for the whole time

Adapters/Chargers

I would suggest bringing at least two adapters for England and if you plan of travelling through Europe I would say at least one of the European ones.

You can get inexpensive wall plugs for phone chargers on amazon before you leave, if not they sell them pretty much everywhere in Newcastle just like here, I wouldn't recommend using an adapter for things like your phone and/or laptop. (Mine charged much slower and seemed to die faster.)

You can do the same with laptop wall chargers (I know this for sure about Macs, not positive for PC but I assume so.) For Macs you only need to buy the half of the charger that plugs into the wall and the square part, since the part that connects to the computer is the same.

If you use a hair appliance I suggest purchasing an inexpensive one in Newcastle and either coordinating with someone from the next semester to leave it for them or give it to one of your flat mates at the end. This saves room in your suitcase and it will work better, and you will be at no risk of ruining your good one from home.

Miscellaneous items

I would also get a change pouch or a wallet with a decent sized zipper pocket for all of the coins they use there.

Deodorant- they mostly use the aerosol kind there, so if you want the stick kind I would bring your own

Neck Pillow-preferably inflatable-not absolutely necessary, but you will thank me after the plane ride

Things you can buy in Newcastle to save room in your suitcase:

A winter coat

A towel

Sheets/blankets

Extra pillows

Shampoo/ conditioner / body wash

An umbrella- it's too windy for one anyway but if you want it get it there

School supplies

Hair Appliances

Arriving In Newcastle

Things to do during your first week:

Get a SIM card for your phone- if that is what you choose to use

I went to a store called "3" there is one on Northumberland Street (the main shopping street in Newcastle) and there is also one in the mall which is called Eldon square. Explain how long you will be there for and that you would like SIM card with a Pay As You Go Plan, with NO CONTRACT! They will most likely have different packages depending on the amount of minutes/ data you would like, so just pick the one that suits you. There are tons of other phone stores such as "EE", "Orange" "O2", "Vodafone" which may also have plans that would work for you; this is just the one that I decided was best for me. If you are interested in any other places most of them can be found on Northumberland Street or in the mall as well or you can go to "carphone warehouse" which has many different carriers.

Go to the Societies Fair and GET THERE EARLY!!

The societies fair will happen some time during your first week or so in Newcastle, you definitely want to go to this! It is the same thing as the activities fair at Loyola, all the clubs and sports will be there so you can see what you would like to do for the time you will be there. It will say it's an all day thing, but most of the tables will be gone about half way through. I know it will be tempting to want to take a nap and get rid of your jet lag, but try to power through and get here early and I promise it will be worth it.

Connect your Timetable to your phone Calendar

During your orientation week, you will pick your classes. These are not as simple as classes at Loyola when they are all in the same place at the same time however many times a week, they change sometimes. To deal with this I suggest connecting your timetable (class schedule) to the calendar on your phone, it makes life so much easier. There are directions on the Newcastle IT website, and they usually point it out on the day you pick out your schedule.

Get the Newcastle App

It has your class schedule, in case you didn't take my previous suggestion or in case it gets screwed up one day. Also it has an interactive map of campus, which is super helpful finding classes.

Find the Buildings Where Your Classes are

It is much easier and less stressful than doing it on the first day of classes

Find Your Way Around the City

Most likely, your advisor will have tons of activities for you to do in your first week to get you accustomed to life in Newcastle, I suggest you to find a buddy or a group and just walk around town. These are the places that would be helpful to find:

Kings Gate-The Loyola office is in here, and it's where your advisor will most likely have you meet for most things

The Student's Union-Could be considered the center of campus, the Boulder of Newcastle

Monument-it's a giant tall pointy thing with Earl Grey on top, acts as a good meeting point, it's easy to get to, and everyone in town knows what it is

The Quayside and the Millennium Bridge- (pronounced key-side) this is area along the river Tyne and the tilting bridge that's rainbow at night

The Gate-giant complex with the movie theatre, a bunch of restaurants and a casino

Northumberland Street-The main shopping street in Newcastle

Intu Eldon Square-The Mall, has many different entrances/exits

Haymarket Metro Station-The closest metro stop to Campus

Central Station-The main train station in town

The Stadium

The Hospital-kind of self-explanatory

The Library

Jesmond-an area of Newcastle where upperclassmen live, but also tons of bars on Osborne Road here, and a gorgeous part of town.

Find your way to the stores on the "Shopping" page

Find Three Different Routes to Your Room

This might sound silly, but I promise it will help you to find your way around town, and you will be able to find the most efficient way to get home from all different parts of town.

I put a map at the end of the guide with all of these places roughly circled

Shopping

Stores

Primark-if you mixed kohl's, target and Wal-Mart clothes and home sections

Poundland-same thing as a dollar store but with no tax! So everything is a pound!

Clas Ohlson-kinda like a not as great ikea

British Heart Foundation-like a salvation army

Wilkinson's (Wilko)-housewares part of target

Magic Box-costume shop

Sports Direct-sports attire, Newcastle United gear

T.K Maxx-exactly like TJ maxx in the US

The Retreat-student run spa through the local high school (kind of like a vocational school for spa treatments, so they are super inexpensive)

The Man On Northumberland Street- (referred to from now on as MONS) Sounds crazy but there is a man about halfway down Northumberland street who sets up a tent and sells a bunch of different stuff and it changes depending on the season i.e. coloured contacts at Halloween or umbrellas when its raining. If he has it, it will be much less expensive than in a store, so I would try there first.

NUSU (Newcastle University Students Union)- in the middle of campus, has fast food, bank, bar and club, as well as study spots and the student store for Newcastle apparel and school supplies and snacks (same as Loyola Bookstore)

Drug Stores

Boots-Pharmacy-more medicine

Super Drug-Pharmacy-more beauty supplies

Groceries

Tesco-grocery store

Waitrose-health food grocery store-great pre-made meals

Sainsbury's-Grocery Store-Express only by campus

Grainger Market-Many small stores all in one place: Butchers, Produce, Fast Food,

Marks and Spencer-more expensive grocery store, go here only if you couldn't find it at Tesco

Items you may be looking for (Alphabetically)

Alcohol-Tesco

(Extra) Baking equipment- Poundland

Extension Cords- Clas Ohlson

Band aids-Tesco/Boots (Called Plasters there)

Blankets-Primark

Blow dryer-Boots

Coffee mug- Poundland/ Tesco

Conditioner/ Shampoo-Poundland/ Tesco

Christmas lights (aka Fairy lights)-Primark/ Clas Ohlson

Christmas Sweaters-Primark/ MONS

Curling iron-Boots

Dry Shampoo-Superdrug/ Boots (Batiste is a good brand)

Hairbrush-Poundland/ Boots/Superdrug

Hangers-Primark

Lotion- Superdrug/ Boots

Makeup Wipes-Primark/ Boots/ Superdrug

Newcastle United Gear- Sports Direct/ The Stadium store

Pillows-MONS/ Primark

School Supplies-Poundland (notebooks, pens and things)/ NUSU (If you need a large binder id get it from here) Ryman Stationary (in the mall)

Soap/ shower gel-Poundland/ Boots/Superdrug

Sheets/ Duvet Covers- MONS/ Primark

Shoes- Primark has them super inexpensive,

Sneakers-Sports Direct

Straightener-xtras in the mall (mine was from here, super inexpensive (like £14) it wasn't the best brand but it worked for the year.) Also you could go to Boots or Superdrug

Tacks/ Push Pins-Poundland/ Clas Ohlson

(Blue) Tack-NUSU

Tea (plain Tetley black tea)-Poundland

Toothbrush-Poundland

Toothpaste-Poundland

Towels-Primark

Tumbler Cup-Primark

Wallet-Primark

Classes-please don't skip this part!

You will have your classes picked out before you arrive in Newcastle. Just remember that this is not a definitive list, and that you may have to change it up. Just have a couple classes as back ups just in case. This day is very stressful and time consuming for everyone, just be patient and flexible and it will all work out.

The way that classes work in Newcastle is slightly different then at Loyola. You will most likely be in a larger lecture hall for class and then some classes have a seminar once or twice a week which will be a smaller group of students with a leader where you can learn more and talk about what you have learned in lecture that week. If you are in a science class with a lab, plan on being there for the full amount of time on the timetable.

There is something called ReCap, which some professors use (but not all!) that records the class so you can watch it again later as you are studying (they call it revising). This is also super helpful if you are sick and have to miss class one day. Please don't use this instead of going to class! You are still expected to go and some classes there will be attendance taken.

Attendance

It is not taken in every module (what they call a class). Sometimes they will take attendance in every single class, others will only take it on the Tuesday class not the Thursday or vice versa. Sometimes they will just pick random days to take it. Your best bet is making every effort to go to class, and if you cant make it emailing the professor. Since you will be living with freshmen (They call them first years or freshers) you might notice that they don't go to classes or that they are not studying as much as they should be. This is because freshman year for them is pass/fail. Do not get into this habit, yes you are abroad, and yes you should be having fun, but take your classes seriously because all of your grades do go back to Loyola at the end of your time there.

The style of teaching is much different in Newcastle than it is at Loyola. It is much more independent. By this I mean that you wont have homework in most of your classes, and you will usually only have a paper or two or a final exam as your grade for the entire class. This doesn't mean to not do work all semester and then study for two weeks straight at the end. You are going to want to enjoy your last couple weeks in Newcastle so if you do a few hours of work a week you wont be so loaded with work towards the end.

PS if you are in a math/science class, bring a non-graphing calculator

Pubs, Clubs and Restaurants

Tea (and coffee) Shops

Quillams Brothers Tea House-Go here your first week in Newcastle, even if you don't like tea, I promise you will love it! Also try the cheese scones

Olive and Bean-Try the shortbreads, tiffins and cakes!

Tea Sutra-you get to sit on pillows!

Jesmond Dene House-You can go here for traditional high tea.

Pink Lane Coffee-Awesome Hot Chocolate, right across from central station

Flat Cap Café-Hipster coffee place, down a side street of Northumberland

Restaurants

Fenwick's American Diner-if you need a little American pick me up, it's on the top floor of Fenwicks past the kids section.

Fat Buddha-similar to a PF Changs

The Fat Hippo-There is one in town (fat hippo underground) and one in Jesmond, they have really good burgers

The Pitcher and Piano-has a great view of the Quayside and the millennium bridge

The Slug and Lettuce-super yummy everything

Handmade burgers-in the gate

Dabbawal-indian food

La Vina-tapas restaurant

Pubs

At most pubs you have to pick a table, decide what you want to eat and then go up to the bar to order your food. There is usually a number on your table that they will ask you for.

Red House-One of My favourite pubs in Newcastle. They have the most amazing meat pies! On Mondays you can get a pie and a pint for £8.99 and Wednesdays you can get two meals for £10 (they say a tenner).

Longhorns-BBQ- you need to go here!

Bierrex-BBQ

Stein Bier Keller-£5 steins on Wednesdays and Thursdays tons of different beers

As You Like It-Jesmond

Lane 7-bar with food drinks, bowling, karaoke, pool and ping pong

The Fourth Hotel-fancier pub food

The Town Wall

Bridge Tavern

Hop and Cleaver

Bar loco

Fast Food

Eat 4 Less-a baguette sandwich, fries and a soda for £1.75 and the jacket potatoes are yummy too

Greggs-get the chicken and steak bakes

Munchies/Salt and Pepper-great pizza and cheesy chips with gravy when you're drunk

Grainger Market-many food stands, a great pizza place, donut shop and dumplings among others

Cocktail Bars

(If you join cocktail society, you get to go to some of these places super cheap)

Jalou- try the cookie monster! 2-4-1 cocktails Wednesdays, 50% off all cocktails on Thursdays

Vodka Revolution (Revs)- a converted bank, super gorgeous inside, and great drinks!

The Botanist-get the watering can!

Lola Jeans

Deccantes-Gin and Tonic Bar

Pleased to meet you-Gin bar

Fat Buddha- try the Flaming Lamborghini

As You Like It-Jesmond

Poppolo

Tokyo-super classy

The Poison Cabinet-on Friday and Saturday nights after 6there is a speakeasy in the basement of Bierrex

Bars/Clubs

I'll put the big nights at each place next to it but you will quickly figure it out

Sinners-pre-pre bar

Sam Jacks-pre bar American themed, get the 4th of July shot and ride the bull

Players-in the gate, pre-bar

Empress-pre bar

Floritas/Madame Koos/House of Smith-all combine on Mondays for Club Trop and Waikiki on Tuesdays

Tiger Tiger-Wednesdays and Fridays

Riverside-Saturdays

O2 Academy-Fridays

Throwback at the **NUSU**-Saturday nights

Swingers-Thursdays

Perdu-Wednesdays

Tup tup palace-Sundays and Mondays

Vineyard-classy dancing

Things to Do in and Around Newcastle

In Newcastle:

- The Quayside market-every Sunday down by the quayside
- Quayside seaside- a man-made beach along the river Tyne
- Boiler Shop Steamer- the first weekend of every month, all different food vendors from town and drinks too. Older crowd but still tons of fun
- ½ price movies on Tuesdays at Empire Cinemas in the Gate-get your tickets online ahead of time so you get seats
- See the Bridge tilt- you have to see it at least once while you're here
- See the Christmas lights turned on in town-a truly beautiful sight
- Go to the Christmas market-when the time comes around its really nice
- Go to Bonfire night on November 5th in Gateshead
- Go to a Newcastle United Game and be part of the Toon Army
- Have Sunday Roast at a pub with your flat mates
- Go to Jesmond Dene-an absolutely beautiful park

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- The Victoria Tunnels-tours of the tunnels that run under the city, through the school (give it a go society)

A short trip from Newcastle

- Alnwick (pronounced ann-ick) -an awesome castle with an amazing garden to match, the castle where Harry Potter learned to fly! -a bus trip away
- Tynemouth-a short metro ride from town to a ruined castle and beach town
- Whitley Bay- more deserted beach town but still nice to walk by the water-off the metro
- The Angel Of The North-The symbol for the North of England right on the other side of the bridge
- Durham-another college town with a great market, church and castle that students live in and you can get a tour of. 15 minute train ride.
- Edinburgh-2 hour train ride could do a day trip or a weekend here, so much to do and see. If you can do Hollyrood palace and the castle I would.
- Beamish-a living museum that shows what England was like over the last century
- Hadrian's Wall-the wall that separated the Romans from the Saxons and Celts
- York-30-45 minute train ride, a cute little town with a beautiful church and lots of cute shops

Traveling Tips

- Don't plan any trips before you get your class schedule
- If you plan on using trains in the UK, I suggest getting a student (16-25) railcard. You can get it online for £30, and you get 1/3 off the price of all of your train tickets in the UK.
- I suggest getting a private cabin (with the people whom you are traveling) on night trains
- Use Hostelworld to find the best/most inexpensive hostels
 - Make sure you are okay with sharing a room with strangers and if not, pay the extra few pounds to get a private room with those you are traveling with
- Use Skyscanner to find inexpensive flights
- Beware of charges for extra baggage on cheap flights
 - It might only be £20 for the flight but your bag might be £40 more

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- Be careful with groupon trips
 - Often you have to choose from a specific calendar after you purchase it
 - For traveling during spring break:
 - Plan where you want to go first, then choose the best method of travel
 - If you choose to use 95% trains I suggest getting the Interrail/eurail pass
 - Again, make sure this is right for you before you purchase it
 - You may still have to purchase seats even with the pass
 - Try the Native Foods, they may surprise you
 - Eat tons of Gelato, especially if you make it to Italy
 - Pay a little extra for the guided tours in the places you are most interested in
 - Go on the double decker bus tours, they include your transportation throughout the city and you get a tour
 - In some of the major cities (for sure in Paris, Nice, Rome, Dublin)
 - Always plan what you want to do first then see if the pass will work for you
 - Don't plan your day around what the pass will get you
 - In most cities there is some type of metro system, check it out and see if it is something you will use (you most likely will)
 - See how much it is for a single ride versus a 1/2/3 day ticket
 - Passes sometimes (mentioned above, i.e. Rome, Paris etc.) work for metros too
 - Pack Light
 - Think about how you are carrying it all
 - You want to leave at least 1/3 of your bag empty for souvenirs
 - Make sure you have enough cell phone credit to make calls in every country if need be
 - Be extra careful about pick pockets and general safety
 - Have a currency converter app so you know what your spending

Final Tips From Me

- Make friends with your flat mates
- Your British friends will make fun of the way you say things and vice versa, just embrace it and don't take offense
- Join a sport/society! Even if its something you haven't done in years or if you've never tried it before, just go for it.
 - (And then you get to go on socials on Wednesdays, which are awesome!)
- If you are on a sport you will most likely need to get a gym membership at Newcastle
 - If not there are tons of gyms in town that are much less expensive

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- Full-year students-bring things home over Christmas break and try not to bring too much back to Newcastle, you will want the extra room at the end of the year
 - Change your Language on your computer to British so you get all the spellings right
 - Introduce Thanksgiving to your flat mates, make hand turkeys or make thanksgiving dinner for them-they will love it
 - If you are sick, go to the walk in clinic, not the ER
 - Get Zenmate to be able to use American websites (like Netflix) BUT...
 - ...Don't waste your time in England watching Netflix all the time
 - You don't have to go away every weekend to travel
 - Enjoy your time in Newcastle and get into the culture
 - Do the Poly v. Posh bar crawls!
 - Take full advantage of the Planned Loyola Trips
 - They are already paid for so why not?
 - They take you to awesome places
 - Stay with the chaperones, they know the best spots for food and extra activities
 - A lot of work goes in to making these trips and activities fun and exciting for you all, so give it a try

I hope this Guide will help you to have the best time possible in Newcastle. If there is anything else I can do to help that, I would love to. You are all welcome to contact me by email kyliegeis@love.com about any questions you might have whether it be before you leave or when you are arriving, or planning trips to other countries. Have an amazing time and enjoy every second.



