

Elisabeth Thompson: University of Edinburgh (Semester 1, 2010)

UQ Program: Bachelor of Marine Studies

Mid-way through the 2nd year of my Bachelor of Marine Studies I became increasingly sure that it was time to live somewhere new and to expand my horizons. I chose to go to Edinburgh University on exchange to learn things that life in Australia could not teach me. It was an amazing experience, and one that I never wish to forget. The exchange enabled me to study Meteorology, Catchment Water Resources, Oceanography and several Geology courses. It exposed me to different expectations and helped me to develop my writing and scientific skills to be more globally aware.

One of the most valuable and cherished aspects of the overseas exchange I experienced was about the relationships I forged. The people I met taught me a lot about the world and about myself. Living in Edinburgh in Pollock Halls college accommodation provided a great base to meet a large variety of new people. I have made some amazing friends from many different countries whom I sincerely hope to never lose contact with.

Edinburgh itself is a city with a vibrant cultural history. From the tourist shops bursting with tartan clothing and other kinds of Scottish paraphernalia, to the busking bagpipe players in their kilts serenading shoppers on Princes street. There are numerous quaint pubs and underground clubs set into the cobbles of the old town. These make for many a great night out, as do some brilliant bigger clubs sprinkled throughout the city. However I will warn that the accents can sometimes be extremely hard to comprehend, especially those of the Highlanders.

The Highlands of Scotland are also a must see. The beauty of the abundant lochs and mountains can take your breath away. Blanketed in snow it can look like a forgotten landscape. It is a sight I will never forget. It is also hard for us to realise how much is accessible from Edinburgh. The travelling I was able to do throughout the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe was fabulous and I was able to see so much more of the world than I could have otherwise been privy to on holiday breaks from Australia. The year I spent in Edinburgh was inspiring and taught me to see the world in a completely new light. I am incredibly happy I was given the opportunity to experience everything I was able to in bonnie Scotland.

