

English at Nottingham,  
written by students for students  
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The University of  
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# Year one guide





# Welcome...

...to our Year One Guide, written for students by students from the School of English at The University of Nottingham.

We are so pleased that you are considering joining us and we hope that this Year One Guide will convince you that this really is the best place to study. Whether you are already planning to study abroad in Venice, are desperate to join our world-famous Quidditch team, or can't wait to get stuck into learning Old English, Nottingham is the place for you.

As a student editorial team, we love studying English at Nottingham and we hope that our passion for the course and the university is reflected in this guide. We've covered everything from careers to creative writing, Impact to Improv, and we hope that this will show you why Nottingham is the best place to study English.

### We can't wait to meet you!

Beth Rowland  
Year 2, BA English and History

Follow us during Welcome Week via Twitter with regular tweets from the School about what is happening and where you need to be!

@UoNEnglish #welcome

## MYTHBUSTER

Lots of freshers have pre-conceived ideas about what university will be like. Whenever you see a 'myth-buster' in this booklet, we'll be revealing the truth about your first year.

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### Editorial team:

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Anna Brown  
Chengcheng He  
Tamsin Parnell  
Curtis Tyler  
Scarlett White

## Guide to week one

### Social:

English society meet and greet – meet other students on your course and society members.

Check out Students' Union 'Welcome' events – try out some free taster sessions with established societies.

Join societies – meet friends and do activities you enjoy together.

### Course:

Register on-line and at university – if you don't, you can't start your course.

Meet your Personal Tutor – discuss any course worries with them.

Sign up for subsidiary modules in English and in other schools.

Pick up module readers – to get started on some reading.

Meet your Peer Mentor – they'll answer your questions.

Year 1 introductory lecture – see what it's like before you start.

## MYTHBUSTER

You don't have to wait until you get here to start your student experience: the School will let you know how to get in touch with your peer mentor with any questions, and you can arrange to meet up in your first week.

### Other:

Register for Cripps Health Centre

Book sale – pick up your books for a cheaper price from second year students.

Go to Exchange Opportunities Session – learn all about where you can study abroad.

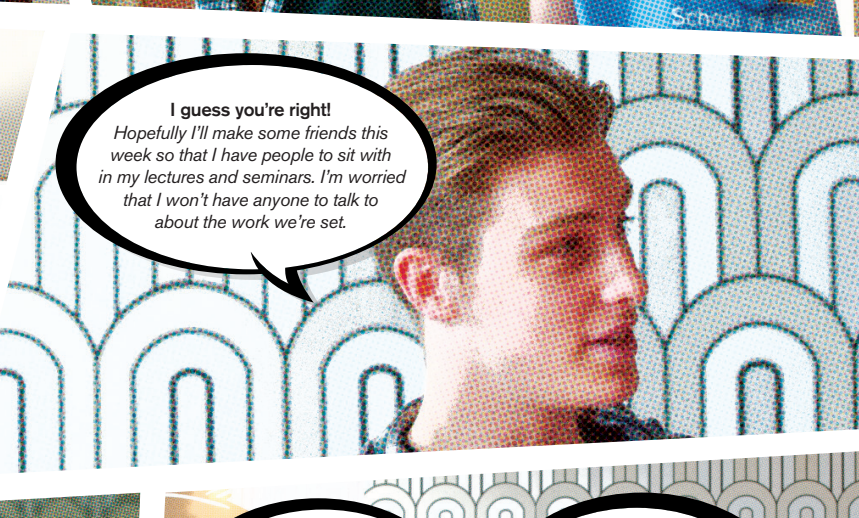
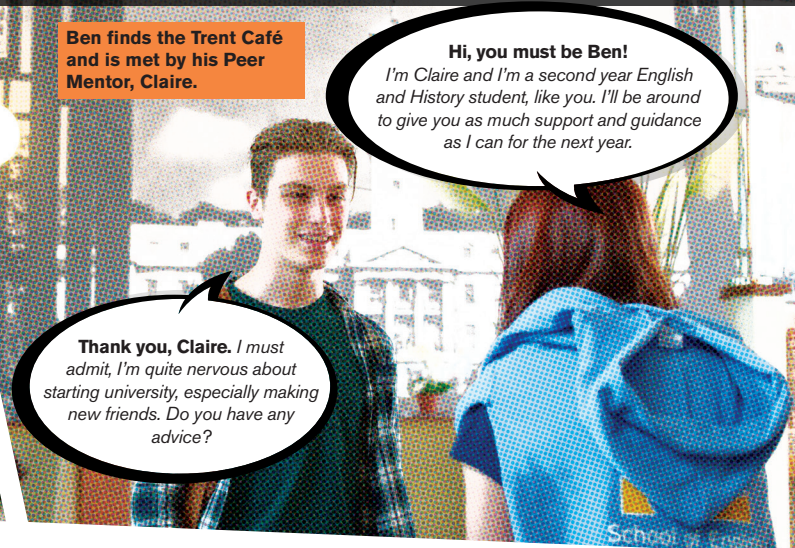
Find out about the Advantage Award scheme.

Arts Faculty Futures Festival – learn about internships and volunteering.

Literacy Support Project meeting – sign up as a literacy volunteer in a local school.

Vikings for Schools – sign up as a volunteer in local primary schools.







MYTHBUSTER

All of the societies are open to everyone – just join the societies that appeal to you!

# Student societies


## What did we join?



**English Society:**

"I have loved being part of the English society this year – it has given me the chance to meet loads of new people. It's worth joining as you can meet others on your course so definitely come and find us when you start in September."

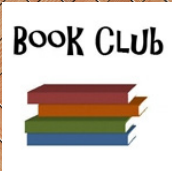
Rebecca Sealy  
Treasurer of the English Society  
Year 2, BA English



**Musicality:**

"Even just one year with Musicality is like finding a huge family of the most talented, loving and downright crazy people you will ever meet. I love it, and you will too!"

Charlotte Flett  
Year 2, BA English and History



"Impact is engaging, worthwhile and fulfilling. The feeling you get when your article is published in print or online is amazing, and the team is so friendly and welcoming. It is a fantastic opportunity!"


Amy Wilcockson  
Year 1, BA English



**MADSoc:**

"Marketing, Advertising and Design Society (MADSoc) aims to help students who are interested in these industries by running workshops and inviting guest speakers. The society is re-launching in September in order to gain more members and get more people involved, starting with a competition to redesign the MADSoc logo. In my opinion, it's a great way to gain experience in very competitive industries to help with applications for internships and future careers."

Laura Sage  
Publicity Secretary of MADSoc  
Year 2, BA English with Creative Writing



**New Theatre:**

"This is one of the only 100% student-run theatres in England. In my first year alone, they have produced almost 30 shows, two of which will be heading to Edinburgh Fringe. New Theatre is incredible because you can be involved as little or as much as you want to be, and you can gain experience in all aspects of theatre, like technical or backstage, not just acting. Also, this society is different because there isn't a drama course at the university, so members are from all different departments across the uni, all doing something they love."


Jessica Millott  
Year 1, BA English



**Ultimate Frisbee:**

"I have been in the Ultimate Frisbee First Team for three years, on the China campus and now at Nottingham. I never played sports before coming to university. But trust me, frisbee is great fun and I am also thinking about promoting this sport in China after graduation."


Tammy He  
Year 3, BA English Language and Applied Linguistics



**Improv Society:**

"Tired of being told what to do? Want to learn life skills in a fun and supportive environment? Improv Society is all about thinking on your feet and having a laugh whilst doing it! We teach (and play) drama based comedy games designed to bring out your funny side and hone your skills as an individual! And if you don't feel like playing, you can come along and watch to get an idea of what it's all about! Not only can Improv change you as a person for the better, but you'll also meet loads of amazing new people!"

Steven Hardy  
Year 2, BA English  
with Creative Writing



**Blowsoc:**

"Blowsoc is quite possibly the most welcoming society at the University of Nottingham with a wide range of un-auditioned and auditioned ensembles. There is something for everyone, including smaller, un-auditioned ensembles such as the Flute Group and Concert Band. As a non-music student I thought it would be quite difficult to fit in, but everyone is so welcoming that you feel at home straight away. This is a great opportunity to meet people from other ensembles whom you would not have otherwise met, as well as truly integrating with the friendliest society on campus!"

Isla McLachlan  
Year 1, BA English



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// Latest Posts

UoN Blogs / Words on Words

Dear 17 year old Scarlett,

Having just turned the scary big 2-0 and heading into my last year of university, it seems very strange that you were 17 and youthful a mere three years ago. One of the first things I can tell you though, the hours of revision and hard work did pay off and you got into Nottingham! Well done you. And now that I am an old wise woman in my twenties (I know it's weird), I feel that I can impart some golden nuggets of wisdom to help you through the changes in the years to come. Buckle up kid you're in for a ride.

First of all I know you're beginning to question the decision to pick a university that's so far away, but the main thing I am very pleased to tell you is that the gamble paid off and it is one of the best decisions you ever made. You've met some amazing people who are going to be your friends for life. However, remember to keep in touch with home friends too, as they are always there for you.

Secondly, let me give you some advice about university work. DO ALL OF THE READING. While unfortunately I know that this is advice you will immediately disregard, all I will be able to do is look back and shake my head in despair. Don't worry too much though when you're sitting in seminars feeling like a fraud, just remember: you ARE competent and you are definitely good enough to be there. Work hard and it will pay off!

A few practical notes on basic living – despite what I (and everyone else) thought, you are capable of surviving on your own. As it turns out you can cook and to date you haven't poisoned yourself. Living independently and without mum will definitely be a learning curve, but one that has led to you taking steps towards becoming that adult that I am still hoping I will one day turn into. There are a million other things I could tell you, but the best piece of advice I can really give you is to make the most of everything that comes your way and prepare yourself for an amazing time! Good luck with everything!

Love Scarlett

Scarlett White

Year 2, BA English

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About this blog

Welcome to Words on Words - the School of English's official blog.

We have a wonderful team of bloggers among our students and staff, who write regularly about their experiences and life within the School to keep you in the know. If you want to learn more about what goes on here, stay tuned, we post regularly!

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My Love Affair with Coffee

Dear 30 year old me...

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The next chapter

A combination of both excitement and anxiety begins to take hold of your thoughts as you near the start of university. Burning questions remain at the forefront of your mind... Will your peers accept you? Will you be able to make friends? Will you like your course? Can you survive away from home?

For many of us, living so far away from our friends and family presents the greatest challenge. Complete independence seemed hard for me to contemplate. Could I really look after myself? The answer is, yes. It can be a daunting time. We undergo a massive change, not just academically but personally as we begin a new chapter of our lives. It's completely normal and understandable to feel nervous about taking this next step.

But the reality of the situation may differ considerably from how you expect it to be. You'll generally spend the first semester finding your feet, giving you a grounding for the rest of the year. Once you've started to feel at home, you'll begin to really flourish and blossom as an individual. People tend to forget that everyone's in the same position: all wanting to make friends, strengthen those connections and achieve. I surprised myself: befriending people with ease, discovering hidden talents I never thought were possible, beginning to adore all aspects of university life and everything it offers. Embrace every opportunity you have and at Nottingham they will be endless. Although prior to university, the transition can seem almost overwhelming, you'll surprise yourself at how capable you truly are and realise that the trepidation you felt was genuinely misplaced.

Serena Green

Year 1, BA English

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## MYTHBUSTER

Don't wait until you graduate to develop your CV. There are lots of opportunities to do some amazing things every year. It is never too soon to start!

## Curriculum Vitae

**Name:** Rebecca Sealy

### Profile:

I am currently in my second year of studying for an English BA degree and alongside my studies, I have participated in a number of extracurricular activities and different types of work experience.

### Education:

**2013 to date:** The University of Nottingham, BA Hons English

### Work Experience:

**Course Rep:** I attend meetings with the Learning Community Forum and discuss issues about the course, which has helped me to develop confidence and organisational skills.

**Treasurer for the English Society:** I am in charge of taking care of the society's funds, which has developed my leadership skills.

**School of English Photographer:** As a photographer for the School of English, I liaise with members of staff to work on various projects, such as newsletters and online blogs.

### Skills:

**Nottingham Advantage Award:** The Nottingham Advantage Award is an accredited qualification which I am working towards. I take different modules with both the School of English and the Careers and Employability Service. Each module has given me the opportunity to develop new skills which will be extremely beneficial in any future workplace.

**Peer Mentoring:** I volunteer as a Peer Mentor for a group of first-year students to offer advice and guidance with different aspects of student life, which has helped me to develop my spoken communication skills.

**Careers Skills for English Students:** This module has given me the opportunity to work with members of the Careers and Employability Service and to gain experience in producing a successful CV and giving a great first impression at future interviews.

**eMentoring:** The eMentoring scheme assigned a graduate of the University of Nottingham to mentor me via email, which gave me the opportunity to receive expert advice from someone who has followed the same career path I am interested in.

## What about?

- Helping to organise a conference
- Setting up a reading group
- Becoming a literacy volunteer
- Joining the student editorial team at The Letters Page, a journal of letters, run by our writer in residence
- Dressing up as a Viking and helping out in local schools
- Working as a student ambassador
- Gaining work experience on a placement

## In addition to volunteering and internships, how about going abroad...?

### 10 things to know before studying abroad

#### 1. It's not cheap...

Studying abroad may sound like a great and exciting idea but assessing your finances is essential! You have to pay for visas, accommodation, and flights, even before you get there. So checking you can afford these things as well as money for travelling and living is a must before applying.

#### 2. ...but you can get help!

Fear not! Student finance is always there to help. Not only do they give you extra money for every term you are abroad, they also have other ways of helping you. The biggest one is their travel expenses reimbursement.

#### 3. Need advice? Ask students

The best place for help is people who have already done what you're doing. Reach out to other students who have been on Study Abroad and ask them for their first-hand experiences.

#### 4. Leave plenty of time to apply...

Make sure you know early on that you want to study abroad. Applications need to be sorted by the middle of first year so there is plenty of time to get everything done.

#### 5. ...that includes visas and accommodation

By everything, that means applying for your visa, accommodation, insurance, the modules you want to take, and all the other things which have to be sorted before you can go anywhere.

#### 6. Prepare for stress!

Especially in the short time leading up to leaving, you will be faced with a number of things which you either haven't done or still need to finish. Don't worry, last minute preparations are all part of the experience.

#### 7. Research and respect the cultural values of your host country

Try not to have too many expectations of what life or the people there might be like. You could be surprised!

#### 8. Expect change

Going somewhere new means whole new experiences that will probably make you see life differently. Studying abroad for a length of time will subject you to new perspectives, people, and places. So be prepared to be changed by your experiences.

#### 9. Balance your time between study and travel

Just because it's called "study abroad" doesn't mean it's just about studying. Make sure you leave plenty of time to enjoy yourself and see a different country.

#### 10. Culture shock happens both ways

You will feel differently when you arrive and it may take some time to get used to a different way of living. Be patient and embrace the culture. And also prepare yourself for returning home. Old habits become strange and it may take a while to adjust to being back.

**Anna Brown**  
**Year 3, BA American Studies and English**

Anna wrote this on her year abroad at Albany, State University of New York



# Write, create, perform

## New Theatre

The first entirely student-run theatre in England is right here on University Park campus. Write, direct, produce, perform, work backstage and more!

## Impact Magazine

The official student magazine of the University of Nottingham. Endless opportunities to write for the student community.

## Creative Writing Soc

Develop your creative writing skills alongside your fellow students. From fairy tales to play scripts and everything in between. Just write!

## English Showcase

A student-led conference event that allows students to show off their work to their peers whilst developing their networking skills.

Find out how you can join in:  
[www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/write-create-perform](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/write-create-perform)



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