

# Newcastle University



A guide to student living in Newcastle upon Tyne

Newcastle University Singapore Society  
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# Student Accommodation

We recommend that 1st year students live in varsity-managed accommodation for the following reasons:

1. Reasonable standards of rooms and flats
2. Maintenance and general area hygiene and cleanliness is managed by accommodation staff
3. Generally good locations near the University and city.
4. No utility bills (eg internet, water, electricity) thus less hassle, better for settling into new environment.
5. Opportunities to interact with British and International students from various schools and courses.

Below are sites managed by the university meant for undergraduates.

## **Windsor Terrace**

Commonly said to be one of the better site options. Known for its location near the city, being part of the university campus and right next to the library. Standard of accommodation is high with friendly management staff. Rooms tend to be slightly smaller than some other sites, but the difference is not significant.



## **Richardson Road**

Commonly known among students as “Ricky Road”, it is a short 5-10 minute walk away from academic buildings and directly opposite the Sports Centre. Richardson Road flats are a good choice for its location in the city. Also one of the cheapest accommodation available as rooms do not have washbasins. However, students who prefer a tranquil environment should avoid Ricky Road due its lively atmosphere and high density of residents.

# Student Accommodation

## **Marris House**

Opposite Ricky Road flats. Known to be cozy, and has a lower density than Ricky Road. Reasonably sized rooms, 5 mins walk from school. Reasonable quality of accommodation, refurbished in recent years.



## **St Mary's College**

Located 5 minutes away from the city and campus by bus and 30 minutes by walking, St Mary's may not be the nearest to the campus, but it is known for its environment. Unlike accommodation sites closest to the city and campus, it has more facilities like a large TV area, free car parking and coffee shop.

## **Henderson Hall**

The furthest university-managed accommodation site, Henderson Hall provides a more traditional student hall of residence. About 20 minutes from the city and campus by bus. However, the rooms are very spacious, and there are many facilities, like vending machines, ATM, tv room, football field, and a PC cluster part of the school network.



## **Castle Leazes Hall**

Similar to Henderson Hall, being a traditional student hall of residence. Not too far from the campus and city, with about 10 minutes walking. Has similar facilities as Henderson Hall. Known to have a slightly livelier atmosphere.

# Banking Matters

## **Arriving in the UK for the first time**

It is of **utmost importance** that students arriving in the UK for the first time bring **cash money** with them. This is because banking facilities take some time (up to 2 weeks) to be set up and the cash is needed to buy necessities like food and other materials. It is recommended that new students bring about 2-4 weeks worth of money with them. But do note, always be careful when handling cash and keep it secure.

## **Major Banks available in Newcastle**

The major banks with branches in Newcastle are:

1. Lloyds TSB (located opposite the varsity campus)
2. HSBC (located at Monument)
3. Natwest (located opposite the varsity campus along St Mary's Place)
4. Barclays (located between the campus and Chinatown)
5. Santander (located in the Students Union building and Northumberland Street)

Being a major financial hub in the North-East of England, there are also many other smaller British banks in Newcastle like Northern Rock.

## **How to get a bank account**

Students need to decide which bank they would like to use. They then get letters from the university meant for banks. These letters are obtained during student registration, and counters meant for the issuance of letters will be set up during registration. With the letter, students then go to banks and apply for bank accounts.

It is **highly recommended** that new students get their letters and apply for bank accounts as quickly as possible. **DO THIS QUICKLY!** Try to apply for a bank account within Monday to Wednesday of International Welcome Week. Do this even if it means missing talks in welcome week! This is because there are many international students applying for bank accounts after Wednesday, and the queue for applications can last



for **2 hours or more!** Doing this on days before the long queues start only require a 15 minute waits. Be warned!

### **Our Recommendations**

We recommend students have an account from Lloyds TSB. A basic current account is free, and a debit/ATM card will be issued. Internet banking will also be available. If a premium account is used, free mobile phone insurance will also be included. Do note, however, that Lloyds TSB tend not to have instantaneous online transactions like funds transfers.

A second account will be useful for future use, especially for the collection of rent, so that students can better manage their funds. An HSBC account has a monthly usage charge, but online transactions like funds transfers will be instantaneous.

# Daily Necessities (1)

## **Textbooks/Books/Stationary**

Textbooks can be found from Blackwell's, which is just on the edge of the university campus, or Waterstones, which is next to the Monument. Textbooks are also available on Amazon, who will send the books to you via mail for free. Textbooks tend to be cheaper online, but they take about half a week to reach you. The visa debit card issued to you by your bank can be used.

It is highly recommended that students buy and bring stationary along with them to the UK. This is because stationary can be quite expensive in the UK. For example, a Pilot G2 pen which costs \$2 in Singapore can cost £2 from the Union Shop. Certain specific stationary items like 0.38mm pens are not easily available in the UK as well.

## **Computing Equipment**

It is highly recommended that students bring computing equipment like laptops, USB drives and other computer accessories with them to the UK from Singapore. This is because the UK has a VAT rate of 17.5% (rising to 20% in Jan 2011) and less competition when it comes to the retailing of computing equipment.

Computing equipment like printers can be found at electronics shops like Curry's (along Northumberland Street) and Argos [www.argos.co.uk](http://www.argos.co.uk)

# Daily Necessities (2)

## **Mobile Phones**

We suggest that students bring a mobile phone from Singapore, as British Telcos tend not to allow international students to sign 2 year contracts before having them as customers for 3 months.

A good service is from 3, where students can use mobile Skype via 3G with a brand new phone from £30, and face no extra charges for Skype usage. This is the best deal out there for calling to phones in Singapore.

It is not necessary to buy a sim card from Singapore for use in UK, as all Telcos in the UK give out free pay-as-you-go SIM cards.

## **Supermarkets**

There are a few supermarket outlets in the city centre. There are 2 Tesco supermarkets (of different sizes) and a Sainbury's. These supermarkets tend to sell items at a low to mid price level. Other supermarkets in the city centre that sell better quality items at slightly higher prices (think Cold Storage or Fairprice Finest) are Marks and Spencers' and Waitrose at Haymarket Bus Station and Eldon Square respectively.

Refer to our annotated Google Map for locations.

## **Chinese Supermarkets**

Newcastle has a few fairly large sized Chinese supermarkets with collections comparable to other major cities like Manchester and London. Items from Newcastle Chinese Supermarkets are also competitively priced compared to these major cities. A Chinese Supermarket Guide can be found in this student guide.

# Chinese Supermarkets

Chinese supermarkets in Newcastle offer a wide variety of ingredients from Asia. You can expect to find things like instant noodles, condiments (eg soya sauce), raw ingredients and frozen items (eg roti paratha, or dim sum). Others include milo, typical canned chinese food like fish and luncheon meat, and chinese vegetables. Do take your time to shop in these supermarkets, as some items are placed in obscure locations. You'll be surprised what you can find there.

## **Tsang's Supermarket**

Tsang's supermarket has 2 outlets. A smaller outlet is located along Percy Street, the main road that links Chinatown and the University. A larger outlet is located in Chinatown. Carries most chinese ingredients including items from Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia.

87 Percy Street, Newcastle NE1 7RW



## **Wing Hong Supermarket**

The most convenient Chinese supermarket, with a good range of items, similar to that of Tsang's Supermarket. Located along the main street of Chinatown.

45-51 Stowell Street, Newcastle NE1 4YB.



# Climate in Newcastle



## September to November (Autumn)

Weather tends to be relatively cool (not very cold) between 10-20 degrees. Some rain, no snow. Leaves start to fall from trees in October. 2-3 layers of clothing (eg T-shirt and jacket).



## December to February/March (Winter)

Temp may vary due to severity of winter. Tendency to have not too strong winters due to urban environment. Very cold with occasional sub-zero temperatures at night. Days are short with sunset as early as 3.30pm. Winter clothing with 3-4 layers of clothing recommended. Boots recommended.



## March/April to May (Spring)

Early spring may still be a bit cold. Further into March and April, temperatures can warm up to about 20 degrees. Most days clothes worn are similar to autumn. Some warmer days can be very comfortable for guys in t-shirt and berms or girls in skirts. More sunshine, longer days ending at 8 or later.