



**Faculty of Engineering**

**2002-03 academic year  
International Exchange Program  
University of Warwick, England**



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## **Foreword**

This report is an amalgamation of the knowledge that I have gained while completing my third year of studies at the University of Warwick. It is meant for students who intend to study abroad; more particularly, for students who plan to participate in the University of Warwick exchange.

The currencies used in this text are the Canadian dollar denoted as CAD and \$, and the English pound denoted as GBP and £. The rate of change used is \$2.7 for £1, which was the current rate of change in September 2002; the month when I departed for England.

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## **Introduction**

One of the greatest experiences of my university career was the year I have spent in the United Kingdom, studying at the University of Warwick. The international exchange experience is not only a chance to complete your studies in a different country, but it is the opportunity to get immersed in a new culture and learn about them as much as you will learn about yourself.

This report contains a summary of what I have learned during my year in England as well as tips that I would have found useful before I would have left Canada.

## **Planning the Exchange**

The obvious first step in going in an exchange program is the planning phase. This chapter focuses on the preliminary steps which must be completed before you can buy a plane ticket and have the adventure of your life.

## **Deciding on Location**

The biggest decision to make once you have decided to participate in an exchange is to determine which university you would like to go to. The University of Waterloo offers a great selection of programs spanning several continents. The only stopping point for any exchange is your language skills; although some universities, such as the Tottori University exchange in Japan, offer certain courses in English.

Several reasons pushed me to choose the University of Warwick in England. English being my second language, I decided to further my language skills by going to an English speaking country, thus limiting my choices to Australia and the United Kingdom. Since I wanted to also broaden my cultural horizon, I decided to go to England as it would allow be to easily travel throughout Europe. Warwick being one of the highest ranking universities in the UK, I decided to apply for their exchange program.

## **Deciding the Time and Length**

Exchange programs typically last for one or two terms. It is also necessary to have completed your 2B terms before leaving for your exchange. I would highly recommend spending the maximum amount in the new country as possible.

I made the decision of spending an entire year at Warwick as it would not only ease course selection, but because it would also allow me to learn much more about the European culture. I would be able to gain much more from it and I would get to develop closer friendships. However, completing my third year abroad required me to shuffle my work-term schedule. Bellow are tables showing how I re-organized my school terms to accommodate for my exchange.

Winter	Spring	Fall
2A	Work Term 3	2B
Work Term 4	3A	Work Term 5
3B	Work Tem 6	4A

*Normal Schedule*

Winter	Spring	Fall
2A	Work Term 3	2B
Work Term 4	Work Term 5	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Abroad
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Abroad	Free Time	4A

*Revised Schedule*

It is important to note that it was necessary for me to complete my fourth and fifth work terms back-to-back. This was made possible by extending my coop contract to an eight-month contract encompassing both terms. Also, I have not completed my last work term. This was possible as only five credited work terms are required to graduate from the engineering department<sup>1</sup>. This was necessary as I did not have sufficient time after my return from Europe to complete the minimum of twelve weeks of work required for a placement to count toward a work term<sup>2</sup>.

### **Coop Work Terms**

An alternative possibility for the exchange program is to find a work placement abroad. This would allow you to complete the work term and school term sequence in order. This can be done by participating in exchanges with a pre-scheduled work term, such as the Université de Technologie de Compiègne exchange in France. Alternatively, you can arrange you own work term with a company abroad.

### **Applying**

The application process in of itself is relatively simple. Application forms are available from the engineering exchange office situated in the engineering undergrad office. An additional form specific to the University of Warwick is also required. This form can also be obtained from the exchange office.

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<sup>1</sup> Systems Design Engineering website, "About Coop". Accessed April 21, 2004  
[http://www.systems.uwaterloo.ca/UnderGrad/Co-op/about\\_coop.htm](http://www.systems.uwaterloo.ca/UnderGrad/Co-op/about_coop.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Co-operative Education & Career Services website, "Co-op Student Manual", Section 7.13  
<http://www.cecs.uwaterloo.ca/manual/index.htm>

## **Visa**

Student visas are required in order to enter the hosting country. In the case of England, a visa can be obtained from the custom agent as you enter the country. The following three documents will be required:

- Acceptance letter from your host institution
- Bank statement showing sufficient funds for the duration of your stay
- Return ticket

Note that this information was valid during the year of my study abroad. However, due to the ever changing nature of international politics, it is recommended that updated information be obtained from the university or the government of the hosting country.



## The Academics

First and foremost, you have to remember that you still have to obtain course credits for your year abroad. This section will concentrate on the academic aspect of the exchange program.

### Course Equivalents

Before leaving for Warwick, it will be necessary for you to start looking for course equivalents. Although it is difficult to find exact matches, it is usually possible to find courses which follow the curriculum of a course closely enough to be considered equivalents. The following table shows a list of courses taken at the University of Warwick and their equivalent obtained at the University of Waterloo.

Courses from the University of Warwick	Equivalent from the University of Waterloo
CS328 – Artificial Intelligence	CS 486 – Introduction to Artificial Intelligence
CS201 – Numerical Algorithms	SyDe312 – Numerical Analysis*
MA228 – Numerical Analysis	
ES330 – Control I	SyDe 352 – Introduction to Control Systems
ES164 – Fluids and Energy	SyDe 381 – Thermodynamics 1
ES312 – Systems Modeling and Simulation	SyDe 351 – Systems Models 1
ES379 – Finance & Accounting	SyDe331 – Engineering Economics
ES410 – Group Project	SyDe362 – Systems Design Workshop 1
ES477 – Intelligent Systems Engineering	SyDe558 – Fuzzy Logic and Neural Networks
IB317 – Nature and Methods of OR	No equivalent

\*Note that both CS201 and MA228 were required in order to obtain the SyDe312 credit

### *Course Equivalents*

The following sections provide the syllabus for each of the courses as well as a short description when further information is necessary.

#### ***CS328 – Artificial Intelligence***

The module will consist of an introduction to selected topics in Artificial Intelligence. The actual topics taught in any particular year may vary, but will usually be chosen from the following list.

Knowledge representation: Logic representations, semantic networks and associative mechanisms, frames, representation and inference, production rules.

Search: Blind search, heuristic search.

Learning: Survey of learning techniques; rote learning, learning by analogy, concept learning, inductive learning.

Planning: Survey of representation and control techniques; STRIPS formalisms, hierarchical planning, non-linear planning, the frame problem.

Intelligent Agents and Multi-agent systems: Reactive agents, deliberative agents, hybrid agents, agent interaction.<sup>3</sup>

### ***CS201 – Numerical Algorithms***

This module gives an understanding of some basic techniques for obtaining the numerical solutions of commonly occurring mathematical problems. The need for such techniques is established and the concept of iteration is introduced. We then study simple but robust algorithms from a selection of the following application areas: systems of linear equations, non-linear equations, curve fitting, differentiation and integration, eigenvalues and eigenvectors and ordinary differential equations. The module includes practical examples with exercises and solutions.<sup>4</sup>

### ***MA228 – Numerical Analysis***

This module focuses on basic numerical methods for problems arising in mathematics and the physical sciences. Through selected examples such as multi-dimensional zero-finding and the solution of ordinary differential equations, the important concepts of iteration, convergence, cost, accuracy and stability will be covered.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> University of Warwick, Computer Science Department. “CS201 Numerical Algorithms”  
<http://www.dcs.warwick.ac.uk/undergraduate/modules/cs328.html>

<sup>4</sup> University of Warwick, Computer Science Department. “CS201 Numerical Algorithms”  
<http://www.dcs.warwick.ac.uk/undergraduate/modules/cs201.html>

<sup>5</sup> University of Warwick “Year 2 Maths/Phys Outline”  
[http://www.phys.warwick.ac.uk/teach/mathphys/year2\\_outlines.html#ma228](http://www.phys.warwick.ac.uk/teach/mathphys/year2_outlines.html#ma228)

### ***ES330 – Control I***

Determine steady-state values and analyze stability for analogue control loops and digital control loops. Design of P, PI, and PID analogue controllers, and conversion of these to digital form. Example of a digital controller design. Non-linearities in control loops – use of describing functions to analyze limit cycles. Familiarity with feedforward control, cascade control, and ratio control.<sup>6</sup>

### ***ES164 – Fluids and Energy***

This course covers material covering both fluid mechanics and thermodynamics. Although I have only requested credit for the thermodynamics part of the course, it may be possible to obtain a credit for fluid mechanics as well.

### ***ES312 – Systems Modeling and Simulation***

This course gave an overview of the simulation model for mechanical, electrical, fluidic, and thermal systems. It also presented methods for identifying the model structures as well as for parameter estimation.

### ***ES379 – Finance & Accounting***

The objectives are for students to gain a working knowledge of:

- financial accounting and in particular companies' published financial annual reports, and
- management accounting and in particular its role in cost accounting, budgeting, standard costing and decision-making.<sup>7</sup>

### ***ES410 – Group Project***

This is a year-long fourth year group project. The projects offered differ every year and are similar in nature to our own design projects.

### ***ES477 – Intelligent Systems Engineering***

This course provides an introduction to various intelligent systems including expert systems, neural networks, genetic algorithm, fuzzy logic, and neuro-fuzzy systems.

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<sup>6</sup> University of Warwick, Engineering department. "ES330, Module Details" Course handout, 2002-03

<sup>7</sup> University of Warwick, Engineering department. "ES379, Lecture Pack" Course handout, 2002-03

### ***IB317 – Nature and Methods of Operational Research***

The module aims to enable students to use mathematical and computer models in ways which reliably reflect the reality they are intended to model, and which provide usable support for decision.

This includes:

- An analysis of various aspects of building and using mathematical/computer models
- Examination of the development of operational research in the UK, North America and Europe.
- Examination of various approaches to theorizing the practice of OR.<sup>8</sup>

Note that this course only provides a qualitative description of soft and hard OR methods. It does not have any technical content, nor does it currently have any equivalent at the University of Waterloo. I do not recommend taking this course.

### **International Orientation Week**

One week prior to the start of classes, the University of Warwick offers the international orientation week. This week is designed to meet international students, get acquainted with the campus, learn about the different services on-campus, as well as being the official enrolling period.

### ***The Registration Process***

It is not possible to register for any courses until one week prior to the start of classes. During the international orientation week, activities are planned to introduce you to the entire registration process. Also, being at the university, you will be able to meet with representatives from each department and faculty which will be able to answer any question and help you find proper course equivalents.

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<sup>8</sup> University of Warwick, Warwick Business School, “Prospectus of Undergraduate Modules for Visiting & Exchange Students 2002-03”, p.28

Registration is done by filling a form listing all of the courses in which you wish to enroll as well as the signature from the respective course tutor – which most of the time is the course lecturer. Certain faculties also requires you to fill additional forms indicating the courses you wish to register for that particular faculties as well as student specific information such as student ID, contact information and the name of your personal tutor.

### ***Personal Tutors***

During the orientation week, you also get to meet your personal tutor. The University of Warwick matches each of its students to a member of faculty. Your tutor is there to help you with all aspects of your life on campus, from academic questions such as course enrollment to more personal questions regarding your stay at the university.

### ***Meeting People***

Above all, the aim of the international orientation week is to meet people and to make you feel at home in the new environment. Activities are planned to get you oriented, to keep you entertained, and to develop new friendships. This first week is a great opportunity to get settled in before classes begin.

### **The University Term System**

The school year at the University of Warwick is divided quite differently from that of the University of Waterloo. Their school year is broken up into three 15-week terms separated by four weeks around Christmas time and five weeks around Easter. The exact term dates for the 2002-03 year was as followed:

<b>Term Dates</b>	<b>Begin</b>	<b>End</b>
Autumn Term	Monday Sept 30, '02	Saturday Dec 7, '02
Spring Term	Monday Jan 6, '03	Saturday Mar 15, '03
Summer Term	Monday Apr 23, '03	Saturday Jun 28, '03

Warwick offers the longest Christmas and Easter vacations in all of UK. These are ideal times to travel and visit Europe. However, this also means that their school year ends quite late. As a result, especially if you are planning to travel after the end of your year abroad, it will not be possible to complete a coop work term before the start of the 4A term in Waterloo.

## **Examinations**

In the UK, students are not examined at the end of each term. Rather, the examination period takes up most of the summer term, usually starting around the fifth week of the last term. Rarely any classes are given during that term. The only exceptions would be for the first five weeks as well as for the occasional review class.

If you are not planning to spend the entire year at Warwick, alternative arrangements can be made in order for you to obtain a grade for the course material covered. These can include special examinations, take home tests, and reports which can be mailed to your course tutor.

## **Credits Transfer**

After attending the lectures and writing all the tests, there is still the question of obtaining credits from the University of Waterloo for the courses taken while being abroad. The first step to take is to ensure that the registrar's office and the international office of University of Warwick have the contact information from the University of Waterloo. This will allow them to be able to send an official copy of your transcript back to your home university. It would also be advisable to provide your personal tutor with your contact information so that you have an alternative route that will allow you to obtain a copy of your transcript. My tutor was able to provide me with an unofficial copy of my transcript, which allowed me to know my grades before a transcript was made available to the University of Waterloo.

Upon your return to Waterloo, a meeting will be set with your undergraduate chair once your transcript has been received from Warwick. This meeting will be your chance to convince the department chair that the courses taken abroad are equivalent to certain courses given by Waterloo. This can be as simple as referring to past exchanges. However, in the case of new courses, you will need to provide detailed information of each course. The information that was most useful consisted of course syllabi and final examination papers. Assignment papers and a list of required textbooks can also be useful.

## The University of Warwick

The University of Warwick is situated near the middle of England, next to Birmingham. The closest cities are Coventry and Leamington Spa, which are both about fifteen minutes away by public transport. Coventry is 25 minutes by bus from Birmingham airport and 30 minutes from Birmingham. London is 2 hours away by bus and 45 minutes away by train.



*Warwick's location in UK<sup>9</sup>*

## The Campus

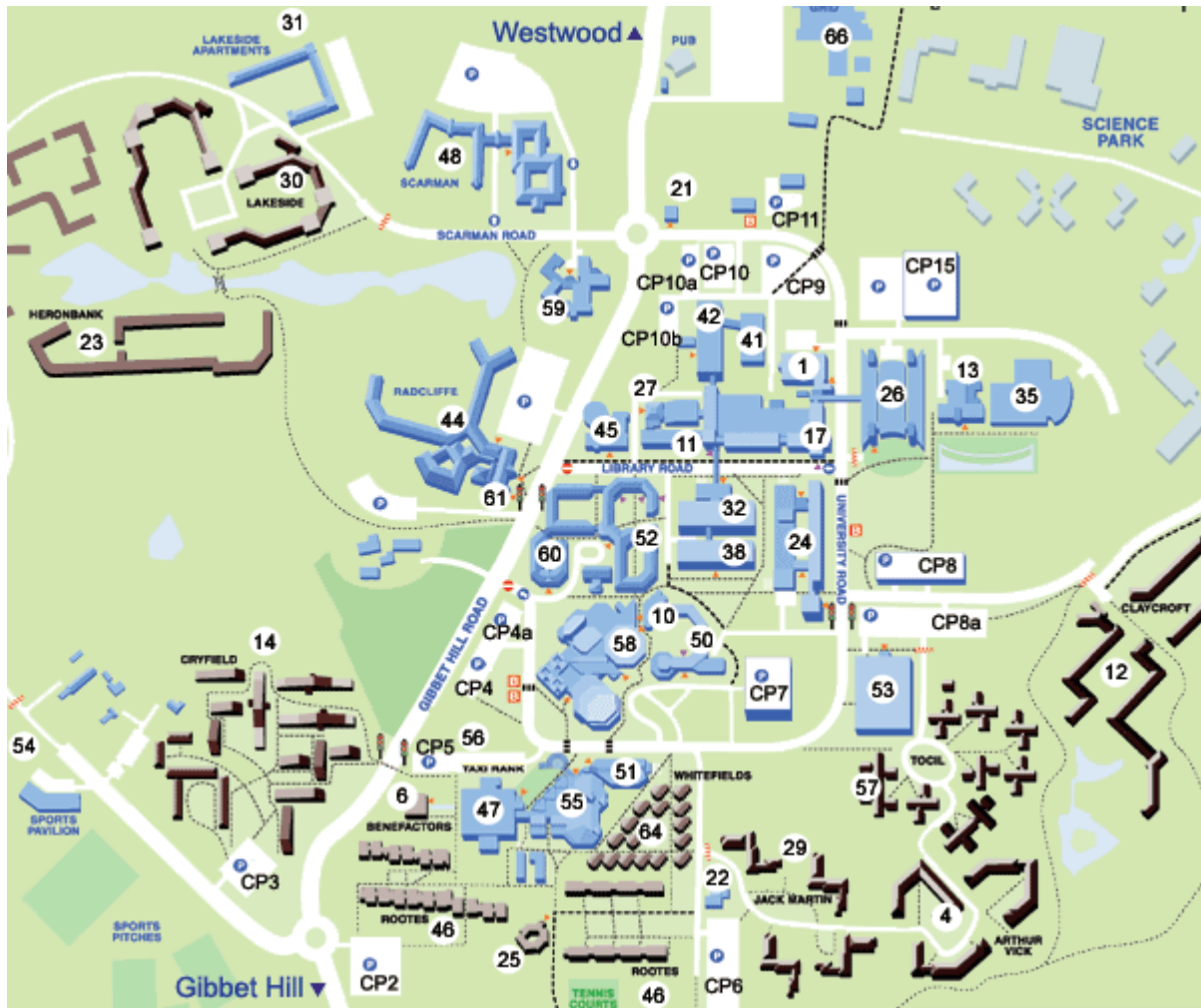
The university is located away from cities. Thus, several facilities are located on-campus. It is composed of three campuses. The main campus is home of most departments and is the hub of student life. Further details about main campus will be provided in the following sections.

A little bit North of central campus is Westwood campus. Westwood houses more residences and gymnasiums. It is also home of the art faculty, including design and music. South of central campus is Gibbet Hills campus. It is home of the biological and medical departments.

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<sup>9</sup> University of Warwick, Maps of Campus

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/>



Map of central campus<sup>10</sup>

### ***Engineering***

The engineering department is located in central campus and is denoted as number 17 in the map. Several laboratories are made available to engineering students. The entire lower level of the building is devoted to heavy testing machineries as well as for a metal and wood shop. On higher floors, an electronic lab is available, complete with testing equipment, wave form modulators, and soldering equipment. To complement this lab, an electronic store is available for students and faculty. The store can provide any electronic component required, from resistors to IC's. If they do not hold a certain item in stock, they can order it and obtain it within a few business days.

<sup>10</sup> University of Warwick, Central Campus Map

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/central/>



Two computer labs are also available for the exclusive use of engineering students. They provide students with specialized software such as AutoCAD, Protel DXP from PCB design, and other CAD and simulation applications.

### ***The Business School***

The Warwick Business School is one of the most prestigious business schools in the UK. The buildings belonging to the business school are represented by the numbers 50, 60, and 61 on the map.

### ***Mathematics***

The mathematics and statistics department has recently moved from the Gibbet Hill campus to central campus. It is shown as building 35 on the map. The computer science department is indicated by number 13. Specialized computers labs are also available offering different working platforms such as Windows and UNIX. These labs can be accessed by computer science and computer engineering students.

### ***Other Buildings***

The humanities building is represented by the number 24 on the map. This building houses the language center where students can borrow tools for learning new languages as well as enroll in language courses. Counseling services and a multi-ethnic prayer room can also be found in this building.

Several other faculties are present on campus, although I have not listed them. For a more extensive listing, please refer to the maps available on the University of Warwick website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/central/>.

### ***Gymnasiums and Physical Activity Locations***

Tennis courts are also available near the student residences. The sport center – number 53 on the central campus map – offer several activities. There is a swimming pool, several squash courts, bouldering walls, and a weight room. There is also a gymnasium and several rooms used for different sports.

The Westwood campus also offers several activity areas. The Great Hall is a gymnasium used for various sport. An outside track, fields, and additional tennis courts are also available. There is another swimming pool as well as various sport halls for gymnastics and other sports.

### ***Residences***

Most residences are located on central campus. However, there are some residences situated on both Gibbet Hill campus and Westwood campus which are reserved for students in certain faculties. Several types of accommodations are available. Roots and Jack Martin residences are the common kind of student residence: about ten students live on every floor and they all share a common kitchen and bathrooms. One interesting aspect of these residence is that each room has its own private sink. Whitefields residences are more like small townhouses, or flats. Eight to ten students live together in their own little townhouse, sharing a common room and kitchen. Private and semi-private rooms are available at Arthur Vick and Claycroft residences, although the kitchen is still shared amongst about ten students.

It is important to know that residences are closed during the Christmas and Easter holydays. This is due to the fact that the University of Warwick rents these accommodations for conferences held during these period of times. As a result, two options are provided. First, storage space is made available to students for them to temporarily put all of their belonging during these periods. Additional storage can be rented if there is not enough room to place all of your belongings in the allocated space. Second, you can rent a room on-campus during the holydays. Note that it will cost extra and that you are not guaranteed to have your room during that period of time. As a result, it is more than likely that you will have to move to a new location during the one-month break and then move back to your room once classes start again.

### ***Computer Labs***

Several computer labs are made available to students. These work-stations have standard desktop applications such as word processors and internet browsers. These are available at several location on campus such as next to the library (number 32), in the chemistry building (number 11), and in Gibbet Hill to name a few locations.

### ***Library***

The library is situated on central campus and is indicated by the number 32 on the map. Several books and journals are available to loan and a special reserve section is available for course material. Common work areas for group meeting and quiet areas are available to students. The library also houses the career services which can provide guidance and help in your career and job search.

## **The Student Life**

Once you have settled in and have registered to all of your courses, you can get down to the important part of your stay abroad: student life. One of the most important aspects of your experience abroad is to meet new people and learn about new cultures. The easiest way to accomplish this is by being an active member of the university.

As it was previously mentioned the University of Warwick is surrounded by farms and is not located near any cities. As a result, a lot of effort was put in place so that a wide array of on-campus activities was made available to students.

### **Places to Relax and Grab a Bite**

An important activity part of student life is to hang around with friends. It is not surprising that Warwick offers plenty of opportunities to do so. Here are descriptions of some of my favorite places on-campus.

#### ***The Student Union***

The student union is always alive at any time of the day and any day of the week. During the day, it provides a nice place to meet with friends, sit on one of the numerous couches, and enjoy the music. The floor space is often used by merchant which sales various products from jewelries and music, passing by fair trade products, to posters and clothing.

The union also has several alternatives when it comes to food. Cholo is a quick service location serving breakfast and lunch. South Central is a cafeteria style restaurant offering sandwiches. Mundo's is a quick coffee stall. Xanana's is a nice restaurant serving specialty coffee and lunches.

At night, the student union doubles as an on-campus club featuring different style of music everyday of the week. The huge two-story dance floor offers plenty of space and it is separated into two rooms to offer even more music diversities.

If all these fail, there is the Graduate bar on the third floor as well as a pool room. On the fourth floor, Zippy's is yet another bar which usually has a different flavor of music such as Jazz or Latin.

### ***Rootes Building***

Another good location to meet friends is Rootes Building. The main floor contains the reception area where you can address any enquiries regarding your accommodation. There is also VIVA, a quick coffee and sandwich restaurant. On the second floor, an open sitting area with projection television allows you to watch major sporting events such as football and cricket.

The Bar-Food serves quick fast-food, while the Bar servers alcoholic beverages. Rootes Restaurant is also situated on the second floor offering a wide variety of food from their all-day breakfast to their lunch menu.

### ***The Art Center***

The on-campus Art Center is the second biggest art center in the UK, being second to London. It is the cultural hub of the West Midlands and has regular theatrical presentations. It also contains several movie projection rooms showing major movie releases.

Sozo is a gift shop within the Art Center which contains several interesting items. There is also the Art Center Café for quick meals and the Bar which usually opens during the evening. EAT is a more trendy restaurant serving meals that is a notch – in quality as well as in price – above other locations on-campus.

### ***The Piazza***

Weather permitting, the Piazza is a nice outdoor plaza in front of the Student Union and the Rootes Building. It offers a nice look-out point to just enjoy the weather. A live feed from the Piazza is available from the Warwick website at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/about/webcam/>.

### ***More Hang Outs***

The campus offers a lot of green spaces where you can just sit outside for a little while. These spaces are scattered throughout the campus and allow you to relax between classes or study in

the sun. The Chaplaincy, number 10 on the campus map, also offers a quiet little safe haven that allows student to just clear their thoughts for a few moments.

### ***More Food***

Several other food outlets are available all over campus. There is the Social Studies coffee bar in the social studies building (number 60) which offers quick snack. Raffle, in the Humanities Building offers sandwiches and warm meals. Kaleidoscope, situated by the library, has quick warm meal at a fairly decent price. The Varsity is a restaurant just outside central campus, on the way toward Westwood campus. The Surfer Bar is yet another bar on the Westwood campus. CostCutter's is an on-campus grocery store, and a Tesco is located about 10-15 minutes away by foot.

### **On-Campus Commerce**

Several stores are available on-campus for the convenience of students. These include three major banks: Barkley's, NatWest, and HSBC. There is also a hair cutting salon, an insurance broker and well as a STA Travel agency. More over, there is a shopping mall situated about 10-15 minutes away by foot. These make life on campus much more convenient.

### **Trips with the International Office**

The international office organized several trips every term at diverse locations throughout the UK. Some examples include London, Stone Henge, and the Baths. These trips are rather inexpensive as they usually only include the cost of transportation. This is an ideal way to get a taste of England at a fairly moderate price.

### **The Clubs and Societies**

The University of Warwick has over 200 societies and more than 70 sports clubs. With that much diversity, it is nearly impossible not to find something that interests you. Here is a small sample of a few clubs and societies which I was a part of. But no matter which club you choose to join, you are guaranteed to meet interesting people and to have tons of fun in the process.

### ***Shotokan Karate***

The Shotokan club is a very good martial art club which welcomes both beginners and advance members. The classes are tailored to suit members of all levels and thus challenging for

everybody. They also provide members with the opportunity to participate in national and international championship.

### ***RAG***

RAG stands for Raising And Giving. This charitable society has for mission to raise money in a variety of methods and to donate these funds to a number of charitable organizations. This was sometimes done through the traditional method of asking for money. However, more unconventional ways included getting sponsorship for hitch-hiking to Dublin and the infamous RAG Week. RAG Week is a week of mayhem when beers get delivered in class and students get cling-filmed to a tree, get soaked in water, and receive flour and baked beans on their head. But remember that all of this is done in the name of charity.

### ***Wine and Whisky Association***

This club is dedicated in teaching you how to properly appreciate wine and whisky. No further detail is required.

### ***Warwick Student Cinema***

The student cinema shows daily movies ranging from mainstream presentations to independent releases. These movies are made available for only £2 and are shown on-campus. The lecture hall used as the projection room is surprisingly comfortable and offers a great sound and picture experience.

### ***Working***

It is actually possible for international student to work part-time while in the UK. UniTemp is an on-campus employment center designed to help student find temporary employment. This allows students to ease the financial strain of living abroad.

## A Year Abroad

This section will cover two important aspects of living abroad for a long period of time: finance and health. These two aspects need to be taken care of before leaving for the UK.

### The Finances

It is important to ensure that sufficient funds will be available during your stay abroad. This is primarily due to the difficulty of transferring funds across countries.

#### *Cost of Living*

It is important to note that although the conversion rate from Canadian dollar to British pound is more than two to one, the buying power of the GBP is almost identical to the buying power of the CAD. As a result, items in the UK end up costing twice as much as in Canada.

#### *Financial Break Downs*

Here is a break down of the expenses for a year abroad. Note that tuitions fees are paid at home and that most incidental fee can thus be waived. Also, the calculations assumed that one week will be spent at home during the Christmas holidays.

	Value in £	Value in \$
<b>Tuition</b>		
Fall Tuition		3,500
Winter Tuition		3,500
Total:		7,000
<b>Living expenses</b>		
Accommodation	2,610	7,047
Food (per week)	50	
Food (total for 45 weeks)	2,250	6,075
Entertainment (weekly)	15	
Entertainment (45 weeks)	675	1,822
Total:		14,944
<b>Traveling</b>		
Plane ticket (Sept – Dec)		700
Plane ticket (Jan – Jun)		700
3 weeks traveling during Christmas		550
5 weeks traveling during Christmas		850
Total:		2,800

*Financial break down for studying a year at the University of Warwick*



From this calculation, it can be expected that studying one year in at Warwick will cost about \$25,000, including tuition, accommodation, and travel expenses. This is about \$10,000 above what one might expect from studying at one's home university.

### **Health and Insurances**

The other issue at hand is health and travel insurance. The health care system in the UK is very organized and can respond to any health issues as well as, if not better than, the Canadian system. Also, if you are a student staying for more than three months, you are automatically covered by the government funded National Health Service.<sup>11</sup>

Personal belonging can be insured upon arrival. Travel insurance is a convenient addition to have in case of emergency while abroad. This is particularly important if you are planning to be traveling through Europe, which is most likely to occur.

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<sup>11</sup> University of Warwick, "Welcome Guide for International Students, 2002" p.14

## **Traveling**

While studying at Warwick, it is only natural to feel the urge to travel across UK, and even Europe. This section is devoted to distilling some of the knowledge that I have gained during my visits in various countries

### **England at a Glance**

One thing to remember is that the notion of distance is quite different in the UK than it is in Canada. We are used to traveling for a few hours to reach the next city. In England, this amount of time allows you to cross more than half of the country. As a result, any city is relatively close to the University of Warwick given that it is almost at the center of UK.

#### ***The Bus System***

The bus system is a cheap and convenient way to move around England. The bus service is fairly regular and connects major cities and airports. Exact information about routes, schedules and pricing can be obtained from the National Express website at <http://www.nationalexpress.com/>.

#### ***The Train System***

The train system is also well in place in the UK. Routes are available connecting all major cities and airports. The service is also fairly regular. This is a good alternative to taking the bus. It is a little bit more expensive, but quite a bit faster. More information about scheduling and prices can be obtained from the National Rail website at <http://www.nationalrail.com/>.

### **International Traveling**

From Warwick, it is quite easy to travel to all major destinations in Europe. With a Canadian passport, it is possible to visit all Eastern European countries without obtaining a visa ahead of time. The only major destination requiring a visitor visa is the Czech Republic.

#### ***Cheap Flights***

There are several airline companies offering low price tickets between lots of European destinations. These flights have slightly smaller seats and do not provide any in-flight entertainment or refreshment. On the other hand, they often offer seat sales with tickets for which you only have to pay the airport tax fees. In general, the sooner a flight is booked, the less

it will cost. I recommend checking the websites of these companies on a regular basis to obtain the best deals. The three major discount airlines are:

EasyJet: <http://www.easyjet.com/>

RyanAir: <http://www.ryanair.com/>

My Travel Lite: <http://www.mytravellite.com/>

### ***The Train System***

The train system throughout Europe is known to be one of the best ways to get around. Trains are much more frequent than in Canada. This is the best alternative if you are intending to visit several cities which are in the same area. EuroPass can be bought which allows unlimited travel in certain zones of the train systems or allows you a certain amount of stops along the way.

There are a lot of packages available and one is likely to suit your needs. For more information on available passes, visit the EuroRail website at <http://www.eurorail.com/>.

### ***The Bus System***

Certain countries, such as Spain, have a good bus system in place which is much cheaper than their train counterpart. I would recommend reading up on each particular country you wish to visit in order to find out the cheapest, yet reliable, way to move about the country.

## **What I Have Gained**

There is much to gain from a year spent studying abroad. The most significant impact on my life was the development of strong friendship bonds with people from around the world. I still have friends in the UK with whom I keep regular contact with. They are the people with whom I have shared the extraordinary experience of living abroad for a year. Reciprocally, they had the experience of meeting and fraternizing with a Canadian.

Beyond the friendship, there is the cultural knowledge that I have gained. I have acquired a new perspective, not just academically, but also with regards to life in general. Being immersed in a new culture allows one to discover idiosyncrasy about one's own culture which would otherwise go unnoticed. This discovery continued upon your return to Canada when you get to rediscover your own country.

All in all, the exchange experience was well worth the time and money investment it required.