

A week in the life of... local students

We asked some current students to tell us what a typical week in their University lives is like. Below are some accounts from some of our local students.

Jagpal Pahal



Programme: Law LLB

Department: Department of Law

Year of Study : 2

About me: My name is Jagpal, I'm 19 years old and I am a second year student, currently enjoying studying Law whilst living at home.

Meet Jagpal...

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I have also just been elected as the new Home Students Officer 2013-14 in the Guild of Students, here to represent the best interests of all students living off-campus during their studies and look after their welfare to give them the best possible experience at university. My typical week is mostly a barrage of course reading and essays, followed with an occasional night out with my law friends, which is very enjoyable!! I currently work part-time at a retail store but my ultimate goal and aspirations are to become a Solicitor at a Commercial law firm after graduation.

Typical week

Monday

I wake up early and travel in to University by car for a Land Law seminar at 9am followed by a short 2-hour break. This break may be filled with work in the library or usually I tend to go to the University Centre to eat after having skipped breakfast. After, I would attend an hour lecture on the Legal Foundations of the EU, by which time I would be exhausted, ready for a nap at home! Then I would spend my evening in the local pub in Selly Oak with my course friends followed by seminar preparation at home.

Tuesday

Another early seminar at 9am on the 'exciting' [using the term loosely] module of Equity and Trusts. This followed either an entirely empty day of no lectures and seminars or, on alternating weeks, a 6-hour break before a 2-hour lecture at 4pm on Jurisprudence. The usual course of action after the end of any day would be followed up with food in the Guild of Student's very own bar/restaurant 'Joes Bar' with the guys on my course. This may also be followed up with an event or meeting held by one of the societies I have joined such as the Sikh society or Pro bono work as part of the Law Society.

Wednesday

On alternating weeks I would have a 2-hour Jurisprudence seminar at 8am followed directly after with an hour lecture on Land law. The rest of the day would be free and as soon as my lecture I finished I would normally race back home, usually to take a break from doing any work now that my seminars are over for the week by catching up on the TV programmes I have missed out on all week. The exception being that me and my fellow home students [from my course] would go in to the city centre to eat or catch an afternoon showing of a film.

Thursday

Again another early morning start with a 9am lecture for 1-hour, followed by a short 2-hour break usually filled with reading in the library followed by another 1-hour lecture. The rest of the day would be filled with either incessant printing out of seminar work for the next week, reading/preparing for next week's seminar work or multiple attempts at general module reading. The positive to having early starts is that I do not have particularly far to travel and so I don't have to wake up extremely early. However I rarely have the time to travel back in between lectures as do most of my fellow home students. For my friends who do travel quite far it would be a wasted journey to travel immediately back home after lectures and so the rest of the day is spent either in the university gym, in the library or some down time in the Guild restaurant.

Friday

Probably the best day of my life at university, with no early morning start and it's the end of the week. Only one lecture in the afternoon followed up with an entire day free to do as I please. Me and my friends often debated as to how to spend the rest of our day, either going in to town to shop or see a film or find somewhere new to eat! The evening may alternatively by chance be the evening of a Guild Council meeting, which any student is free to attend, and provides a good insight into the work that students are carrying out to better the services the University offers such as extending library opening hours and the ideological/sociological issues it aims to tackle such as equality of women on campus and in the guild, and helping students with personal issues.

Saturday

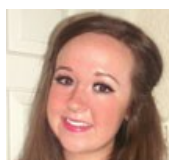
Either a full day at work or a short shift at work followed by a day of attempting some module work and possibly a student night out at 'Fab n' Fresh', at the Guild of Students. I began my part-time job shortly before starting my second year which has been easily manageable by working under 12 hours a week and prioritising my time effectively!

Sunday

Another lie in followed by preparation for the next week's seminar work!!

The difference between the life of a home student and a student in accommodation is the social life. The key is to put yourself out there and introduce yourselves to others, especially home students who are in a similar situation, which even as a reserved shy person myself felt quite daunting before I came to university. Although in reality this helped me meet a great number of people who have helped me have a great time at university. I regularly enjoy a nice lunch at the Guild during the day and often fantastic nights out with my fellow home students and on campus law students. The benefit is that I also have the support of my family at home, home-cooked food and being able to save money from living rent-free! Being a home student is ultimately just as enjoyable as if you were living on campus, as long as you make the most of university, join societies, introduce yourselves to others and you will absolutely enjoy yourself!

Sarah Huxley



Programme: BA Drama and Theatre Arts

Department: College of Arts and Law

Year of Study : 1

About me: I am a full time student. I have just started studying at the University of Birmingham. I live with my parents in Selly Park, which is only a mile or so from campus.

Meet Sarah...

Studying Drama and Theatre Arts means I study at the Selly Oak campus of the University for the majority of the time, which is the same distance for me.

Typical week

Monday

I have no scheduled lectures or seminars on a Monday. If I have nothing specific for University to do I will spend this at home with my family and visit my baby nephew. A lot of the time I am in the process of rehearsing for a practical piece and so will have a rehearsal booked for some point in the day. A pretty relaxed start to the week.

Tuesday

An early start for me with a seminar at ten o'clock. My next lecture isn't until two on the main campus so generally I'll walk home and drop some books off and have some lunch before heading back to campus. This makes my week far cheaper! The lecture at the main campus is my MOMD, Media and Communication Studies, which is a chance to learn about another subject as well as meet other people who aren't on my course. I try to make the most from these visits to main campus by exploring the Guild or getting some books from the Main Library. I'll then walk home in time for dinner. This is usually the night that I'll socialise with my friends from Drama, either by watching movies in their halls for the night or going out to a club or bar.

Wednesday

Another morning start for a lecture and seminar session, finishing at one. We'll start with a lecture on a subject that we have read about during the week to clarify facts and then debate certain questions in our seminar. This can often get heated which makes for an interesting day, as we discuss issues such as race, gender and class in the Theatre. My course mates and I have made it a routine now to go for a pub lunch after this session to chill out from our debate. I'll then walk home with a friend who also lives away from campus.

Thursday

Today I have a more practical session, which doesn't start until the afternoon so I have a free morning. I'll generally do some reading in this free time and recap what we looked at last week in preparation for the session. This finishes at 2 and so it's the perfect time to go for lunch with friends in my group or I'll meet some friends that live in Birmingham to catch up before some last minute reading before Friday's lecture.

Friday

An early lecture, which is usually on one or more plays, so requires a lot of reading. The topics vary from week to week so you have to try to stay on the ball. This proves hard when at least half of us are hungover during this lecture... After this the single honours students have Theatre Crafts, which can be Stage Management, Design or Stage Technologies. These are usually more relaxed and quite practical. The small groups also mean there's a lot of laughing and joking as we are all good friends on our course. I'll then go home and see if I can make plans for the evening, or do some work.

Saturday

I always go to dance class on a Saturday morning and I have been able to carry on with this with no problems whilst at University, as I live at home. The amount of time I am there varies from week to week, but I generally finish around two in the afternoon. That gives me time to take a trip to the Bullring, meet some friends or catch up on some work and enjoy Saturday night TV.

Sunday

I'll generally have a lie in and a long shower before my family come round. Everyone likes to see the baby and there can be up to 7 adults trying to fit into my tiny living room at one time! I'll then do some work or chill out and recover from the week.

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