

Moving in with the Brits

The first thing one must remember when moving into a new space is that you previously paid a deposit (£200 for Lancaster dorms), and your goal throughout your stay is to make sure that you get every cent of it back. First thing you do when getting in your dormitory room is to walk around and look for any signs of damage, scratches, or anything that looks like it needs a fixing. Once that is done we must then go online (or through your iLancaster APP) and fill out a survey. The survey will ask you to describe the conditions of every item. Don't be hesitant to call anything out because in the end it is your own money at stake. Moreover during the term if you see any damage make sure to go to the porters and report it.

Moreover one must also ensure the cleanliness of shared areas such as the kitchen and washing rooms as the whole flat could be fined if things get too messy. When you arrive ask if a trash disposal schedule is already in place and what are the rules of the house, if none are set make sure to set it up or you will end up being the only one doing all the cleaning. Also during exam times loud noises are not very well regarded, make sure you do not disturb any of the neighbors or you might be fined if you are reported.

Now with all the warnings aside, let me go more into detail of my interaction with my flat mates. Honestly I feel like one of the reasons why I felt that I had such a fruitful exchange was thanks to none other than my roommates. I lived in an 8 person flat sharing two showers, two restrooms, and a kitchen. The kitchen was a bit small, but all in all the rooms were very spacious and cozy! Well let's cut to the chase, I feel like living with these other 7 completely strange individuals was definitely the experience of a lifetime, and they definitely played a major part into my integration of a British College. My roommates were three Brits, a French girl, a Hong Kong man, a New Zealand girl, and a guy from Sierra Leone. I'm telling you the the coming 6

months some of them became what I will consider lifelong friends. They also gave me opportunities to experience things I think I would never had done alone. For example, the new Zealand girl told me about a sport I have never in my life even heard of, underwater hockey. At first I thought it was a gimmick, but when she took me along to one of their training sessions I was immediately hooked. That semester I eventually joined the underwater hockey team and fell in love with a sport that was completely foreign to me just a few months ago! I also had a blast with my friend from Sierra Leone, spending many hours in the kitchen cooking all kinds of cuisine. Sometimes he would teach me some British or African dishes, and I taught him how to make Chinese scallion pancakes in return!

All I'm telling you guys is that when you go out, embrace the things around you and try out new experiences. Or I promise you, it will be a long and lonely 6 months hiding in your dormitory.