It’s common knowledge that to do an MSc you have to be willing to put in a lot of work- it’s not an easy ride and will push you further than an undergraduate degree. Expectations are high and it can be stressful. However, the level of support you get at York is amazing. The Environment Department has an open-door policy, which is invaluable when dealing with tough deadlines that you need advice on asap. The willingness to help doesn’t just apply to the core lecturers either- if the desired lecturer isn’t available then other members of staff are just as keen to be of assistance. This attitude is invaluable when it comes to meeting deadlines and making the most of your course.

With the content of the course, it covers a wide range of subjects and it can be tailored to your interests, experience level, and desired future career. Each module is not merely about learning new information however, they’re also keen to teach important skills such as presentations, scoping documents and tools for environmental assessment. The multi-dimensional aspect of the course is aimed to improve career prospects. Speaking to potential employers they are keen to find individuals that can demonstrate these abilities.

The Sharm-el-Sheikh trip is of course an amazing experience, although it’s definitely no holiday! It’s a long day and can be very tiring, however learning biological survey methods with some of the most attractive yet heavily impacted reefs in the world has many advantages. For those that have previously used methods such as line transects and quadrats on expeditions it may not be as advantageous as to those that have never done it before.

Do not despair though- there are plenty of field trips for those that can’t make it to Egypt! It may not be as exotic but there are several trips along the North-west coast undertaking several studies. It gets a bit wet and muddy but is actually great fun- really gives you a chance to get stuck in as well as learning valuable field techniques.

As for York itself- it’s a wonderful city with a lot of character, although there may not be the same level of activities as you might find in a larger city. However, it is friendly and welcoming, and the Graduate Students Association are great for helping out with any number of queries and setting up activities to tear you away from your work for a while!