

Ellie - University of British Columbia, Canada

My experience has changed me in that it has made me more confident to deal with challenges on my own and has made me more independent. I don't think that I would have developed this confidence whilst staying in York as when I went to UBC, I knew nobody there. I had to forge entirely new relationships and navigate new places without familiar faces to fall back on. As a result of this, I have made some amazing friends that I had some brilliant experiences with. I became more outgoing, more willing to try new

things and generally improved as a person.



My experience has been, in one word, amazing. I loved learning about new topics, in subjects that I would not have access to at York, which has influenced the direction that I think I am taking my postgraduate work, as I am now considering taking a Masters in Egyptology and pursuing a career path in that field. I also loved seeing new locations and travelling with my friends and with the Exchange Student Club to places that I would probably not have got to see on my own. I tried surfing for the first time and have gotten into hiking as a result of these

trips. I loved being at UBC and I miss it very much, but I am so, so glad that I got to be there.

Managing money

Vancouver is more expensive than York, even after one takes into account the conversion rate. The UPass compass card system means that the cost of travelling around Vancouver is lessened and means that a lot of places, including places such as Capilano Bridge, Stanley Park, Lynn Canyon and Grouse Mountain are all accessible without having to pay for transport tickets every time.

I set up a Starling Bank account to access funds whilst abroad. It's an international bank account that gives you a debit card to use whilst abroad and in the UK. There is an app that you can download and it sends you notifications every time you spend or withdraw money and gives both the currency amount and the amount in pounds. Some of my friends opened up Canadian bank accounts, but I relied on Starling, which worked fine for the whole year.