

## Ask Aberdeen transcript – Episode 5

**Georgie** [00:00:07] I'm Georgie.

**Michaela** [00:00:08] And I'm Michaela.

**Georgie** [00:00:09] And we're here to tell you about the University of Aberdeen.

**Michaela** [00:00:11] In each episode, we will discuss frequently asked questions about topics such as applications...

**Georgie** [00:00:15] Go abroad...

**Michaela** [00:00:17] Student life...

**Georgie** [00:00:18] Sports and Society's...

**Michaela** [00:00:19] Budgeting for Uni...

**Georgie** [00:00:20] And life in Aberdeen.

**Michaela** [00:00:22] We will be speaking to current Aberdeen students, those who really know what it's like to study and live here.

**Georgie** [00:00:27] And we'll be getting exclusive tips from members of our amazing staff.

**Michaela** [00:00:31] Join us for this episode of Ask Aberdeen.

**Michaela** [00:00:36] Hello, welcome, everyone. Welcome to our episode of our Ask Aberdeen podcast. Today, we are going to be talking about going abroad and studying abroad while you're a student at the University of Aberdeen. We've got two guests with us today, our amazing student, ambassador Eeva, Hello.

**Eeva** [00:00:56] Hello.

**Michaela** [00:00:57] And we also have Mel from the go abroad office.

**Mel** [00:01:00] Hi there.

**Michaela** [00:01:01] So at the beginning, I would like you both to just introduce yourself very quickly before we dive deeply into the topic so, Eeva. Who are you? What do you study? Where did you go?

**Eeva** [00:01:12] So I study English and history. I'm a fourth year student at the moment, so working on my dissertation and I went to Oregon in my second year for a full year.

**Michaela** [00:01:22] Great, great. And Mel, what is it that you do at the university?

**Mel** [00:01:26] So my technical title is the lead Go Abroad Officer for International Exchange, which means I sort of oversee the international exchange team. So I look after students that both go away from Aberdeen and come in to Aberdeen.

**Michaela** [00:01:41] And you are not from Aberdeen yourself, are you?

**Mel** [00:01:44] I very much I'm not. I am Australian and to be specific, because I'm very proud, I am Tasmanian.

**Michaela** [00:01:50] Great. So you also have some personal experiences of what it's like to live somewhere other than Aberdeen, which I bet is really helpful.

**Mel** [00:01:59] Yes, definitely. And I have also studied at the University of Aberdeen, so I know what it's like to study in an international environment.

**Michaela** [00:02:06] Great. So let's dive deep into the topic now. You said that you are currently in your fourth year and that you went in your second year. How did that come about?

**Eeva** [00:02:18] Well, it was kind of like coincidence for me, actually. I just remembered first year thinking, oh, I want to go to Copenhagen, which was a silly idea because I'm from Finland and I don't know why I wanted to go to a Nordic country, but that was just the idea that I had. And then I just randomly decided, like, no, I want to go somewhere warm. So I decided all of a sudden that I was going to go to Florida. And yeah, then I just kind of applied and I realised that I need to have more options than just Florida. And then I just randomly picked a few. You should probably do more research, but I just randomly picked a few and ended up in Oregon. But I think it was the best option for me. So, I mean, I can't say I'm sorry for that.

**Michaela** [00:03:01] Well, you know, some of us might not really know where Oregon is in the United States, but I think when I think of Oregon, I sort of think of Twilight. And, you know, Robert Pattinson sparkling in the sunshine. Is that what it's like in Oregon?

**Eeva** [00:03:16] Well, I didn't see anyone sparkling in the sunshine, so.

**Michaela** [00:03:20] But it's that sort of area, right? It's rainy and wet.

**Eeva** [00:03:24] Yeah, absolutely. It does have the Twilight vibe. And it was like, I don't know, it was like forest and lots of hiking and the atmosphere was just lovely. I loved it there and it's on the West Coast. So I was able to go to Washington. And it was like the first time I'd watch Twilight movies since they came out, because that was something that we did in the halls to de-stress ourselves. We were like, OK, now watching Twilight,

**Michaela** [00:03:52] OK, I can relate to that pretty heavily. Over the last year I have watched Twilight movies quite frequently. But you mentioned that you sort of had the idea that you wanted to go abroad from the start. Mel, what if you don't? Is that something that you need to think from the start about? Like, do you need to come into the university and immediately start researching where you want to go for your year abroad if you want to go?

**Mel** [00:04:20] In a perfect world scenario, that would be good. But it's not a requirement for students who start thinking about this early, some will definitely have done more research. They'll potentially have more options available to them. And what I mean by that is students can go abroad generally in their second year and the third year, but you always apply to go abroad the year before you would go. So if students start thinking about it sort of immediately when they arrive, then they're all prepared to apply to give themselves the

option of going in second year. But then if they haven't thought about it, they can also apply during their second year to go abroad in third year.

**Michaela** [00:05:02] And is this something that's available to everyone or is it only people who are studying, say, languages or history?

**Mel** [00:05:09] We definitely try and make it available to all of our students. There are some degrees where there are less options. But for most of our degrees, students can study abroad. The areas where there are less options tend to be degrees that are accredited, like psychology or engineering. To give you an example, with those two programmes, you have to go abroad in second year. So that's the type of reason why it's a good idea for students to investigate as early as possible so that they can understand if that is a requirement for them and they need to be prepped ahead of time.

**Michaela** [00:05:44] And from what I understand, medicine students, they don't necessarily have the option to go abroad for a year, but as far as I know, they do have an option to go abroad for an eight week period during their studies as well. So if you are a medicine student, you know, there's not necessarily going to be a full programme abroad for a full year. However, you still do get the option to go abroad for at least those eight weeks when you can go pretty much anywhere in the world. So that's a nice thing, isn't it? It's definitely quite flexible. Do you have to go abroad for a full year or can you go for shorter amounts if you choose to go for, for example, a semester?

**Mel** [00:06:21] Absolutely. The vast majority of students do go for a single semester as opposed to a full year. And at the moment, we're also working really hard to try and get more short term summer school options available for our students as well. And they can be as little as two to four weeks.

**Michaela** [00:06:39] I think when we were talking to Eeva, we said that, you know, you chose you originally had in mind Copenhagen, that you decided that you wanted to go to Florida and you ended up in the Pacific Northwest, where it's definitely not warm and sunny. How do people have to make that decision or can they just apply to go anywhere in the world?

**Mel** [00:07:01] Well, firstly, I feel like there's a lot of Oregon slamming going on here. I do know someone in Oregon, it was 27 degrees Celsius there yesterday. For listeners, Oregon is lovely.

**Eeva** [00:07:15] Yeah, definitely. Oregon is not that not that cold as it sounds. But compared to Florida, I'd say. Yeah, but I mean, they did have huge forest fires recently. So it's not like a cold, cold place of

**Michaela** [00:07:30] Twilight is lying to me.

**Eeva** [00:07:32] It's more Washington, isn't it, though?

**Michaela** [00:07:35] OK, back to the topic. Do you have to apply for a specific place or can you apply for sort of a lucky draw, lucky dip sort of application?

**Mel** [00:07:44] You do have to apply for specific places and there's definitely a purpose and reason to that. So students applying for international exchange, we asked them to choose up to five different institutions and they can choose five from any of the partners

that we have available across the world. And why we ask for specific institutions is that we want students to do the research to make sure that they feel that where they're going is going to be a good fit and a good experience for them.

**Michaela** [00:08:13] And how is it decided where the student ends up? Because you put down five choices. So is, you know, is there some sort of competition going on? Who gets their first choice and who gets their fifth choice?

**Mel** [00:08:25] Yes, they're very much it is a competitive, merit based process and also to add layers of complexity to it. It's also very much based on the spaces that we have available at partners and where a student would fit better, where we think their experience would be better. So when a student applies, when they submit their application, that's given a score out of 10 and students that get the highest scores will be allocated their preferences first. So they therefore tend to get their first or second preferences. However, if students apply to an institution that, you know, our years of professional experience tell us, might not be the best place for them to be, and then we will offer them somewhere else. So we will speak to that student to discuss it with them.

**Michaela** [00:09:17] Great. Let me ask you about how it worked before you actually went away to Oregon. Did you have to research things yourself? Did you have to pick your own courses or did you sort of get told this is what you're doing? Here's your visa, go?

**Eeva** [00:09:32] No, no. You have to do a research yourself. I have to do an application to Oregon as well. So I have like a motivational letter to them and I look through their courses to be like, oh, I think taking these courses would be really beneficial for me and give me a new perspective. And yeah, I had to check my courses with my Aberdeen tutors to make sure that they were applying for my degree as well. And then you have to do like the visa applications and all that. Make sure that you have like the funds you need to travel.

**Michaela** [00:10:05] All right. And did you have to worry about things such as visas? Did you get guidance on that from the University of Aberdeen?

**Eeva** [00:10:13] Well, you have to do the applications yourself, but I mean, it's not really that complicated, though, like I got a lot of, like, information when I did the Oregon application, because it's specific to where you go.

**Michaela** [00:10:29] Mel, do you offer guidance to students who are going abroad? Do you have some sort of meeting beforehand or like Eeva said that she had to do her research? Do you guys offer guidance on that?

**Mel** [00:10:42] Yeah, definitely. I mean, it's a combination. We do expect students to do a lot of research because part of the beauty of going abroad, it's a real personal growth experience. But as well as that, we also do have compulsory meetings. So after students have initially been allocated their place, we have what's called the next steps meeting. So then we tell all of the students effectively the next steps, you know, what they will need to do what they should expect is going to happen sort of in the immediate period and then at the end of the semester that's occurring before they leave. We have what we call the final pre departure meeting, where we go really in-depth with them about all the things, the millions of things that they should be thinking about and that we give them as much guidance as possible to make sure that they have a good experience.

**Michaela** [00:11:35] And can you also tell us about how it works for tuition fees?

**Mel** [00:11:39] Yes, it's a bit complex, but to sort of give it the most simple at the most simple outline, basically with an international exchange programme, we have a contract with another institution and basically we waive the tuition fees. So our students going to Oregon, for example, don't pay the fees to Oregon and Oregon students coming to us don't pay the fees to Aberdeen. So a student would pay their tuition fees to Aberdeen, as they normally would in any other year, which means that students going to host institutions and in, you know, places like America where the tuition fees can be 20, 30, 50 thousand dollars, they're not having to worry about that. They're just paying their fees to Aberdeen, as usual.

**Michaela** [00:12:29] What can you tell us about what you did find you had to pay for when you were abroad, is it very much different from Aberdeen accommodation and food, your expenses that you would regularly have, or was it quite similar?

**Eeva** [00:12:45] I would say that it was probably a bit more expensive. I stayed in the halls, which were a bit more expensive, that they would have been here, but they did include like meal plan. And so you had a specific amount of points that you could use across the campus. But it was it was a bit more expensive. But I also really enjoyed it because it made my experience largely to be able to live in on campus and kind of get the full experience. And I also had to get their own insurance, even though we're insured by Aberdeen as well. But Oregon had the requirement that you have to have their insurance as well. But that came in useful because, you know, I had to use the health centre sometimes. So at least I knew that I could just go in, didn't have to worry about paying for it. And there were few like these to cover things like the rec centre. So you'd have access to a gym and to like swimming halls and stuff like that. But then you'd have to pay that fee every term. But I don't remember how much that was, but there were some kinds of fees like that that you have to just make sure that you paid for so it wasn't free, but.

**Michaela** [00:13:59] Yeah, of course, this will differ university by universities. So if you're going to a European university, you might find that the structure of the campus and of the accommodation might be quite different. But with the American universities, it's usually that sort of bed and breakfast style bed and all the food style and feeding and offering. So that is one thing to keep in mind. But you will not have necessarily huge expenses just because you're going abroad, because, as Mel explained, you will actually get your fees covered by the University of Aberdeen. So it makes it more affordable to go abroad. Of course, you have to buy your flights as well. But I think it's a quite a good option of how to go to a university abroad that is quite cost effective because you do not have to worry about that tuition fee requirement and you also get your doors open to all these different options that you might not have even known about before.

**Eeva** [00:14:59] Yeah, I mean, you do have to pay for your flights and these are things and stuff like that. But there are ways to make it more affordable according to your budget. If I had stayed outside of campus or if I'd like made my own food and things like that, I could have saved a lot of money with that. But for me, it was just an important part of the experience that I absolutely wanted to have. Like I wanted to be able to, you know, roll out of bed and go get a bagel and a coffee and go to class and feel like an American. So I was happy to pay for it.

**Michaela** [00:15:31] Yeah, I know. I think I would go for the same experience. But, you know, there's definitely more than one option that you can choose. Mel, can you just tell me, do you know how it works if a student has a loan from, say, the Scottish Government

Funding Agency or the Student Finance England, how does it work? Do they get less loans? Do they get the same maintenance loan each year?

**Mel** [00:15:56] I'm not a specialist in that one, to be honest. But as far as I'm aware, from my experience with students, those things are very much they're assessed each year based on a student circumstances. So my understanding is that they continue to get similar levels of maintenance loans, if that is what they're getting.

**Michaela** [00:16:14] Great. Thank you. And you said that while you were abroad, you went to get a bagel and you really had the proper American experience, did you? Where you the only student who was not from the US on campus or was there quite an international community and was there like an international club or anything like that?

**Eeva** [00:16:37] Yeah, there definitely was. There was like international like welcome week for students coming in where you got to meet a lot of like starting international students and exchange students and kind of make like friends with them. And there was like an international student organisation or something like that organise like a free food event every week on campus. So you could go and they'd have music and they'd have snacks and drinks and you could just eat there for free, which was nice when you were running low on meal points. But yeah, you would also get to meet lots of local students. So it wasn't that you just got stuck into like an international bubble. I feel like when you go abroad somewhere, you do kind of want to make local friends as well. And just like make sure that you get a good idea of what it's like to live there as a local.

**Michaela** [00:17:33] You've previously told me that you have actually attended some of those sorority and fraternity parties that we see in the movies. How was that in real life?

**Eeva** [00:17:44] That was exactly like in the movies. I don't think they exaggerated one bit. The fraternity parties were not my cup of tea, so to say. I think I said, that's enough for me, thank you. But my roommate was in a sorority and they organised more like philanthropic events. So that was nice to go there. And they would like collect items to donate or collect like money to donate. And they were more of like just tours of the place, taking pictures and fun little activities and things like that.

**Michaela** [00:18:24] Yes. I mean, experiencing new things. That's what the year abroad is all about, isn't it? Just really try something. You go somewhere you've never been before and learn from that. And, you know, even though you might have moved to, for example, you have moved from Finland to go to Aberdeen. So you were already going to another country to go to university, but then you took it a little bit further west and you went abroad, abroad, while abroad. So there's always that extra experiences that you can gain. And you also mentioned to me in conversation that you might have had an experience in a Taco Bell that was quite funny to people around you.

**Eeva** [00:19:05] Yeah, it was it was a funny spelling incident. I didn't, like, realise how to pronounce some of the menu items. And I had my roommate, who was a lovely person with me and I wasn't sure how to order. And I was just like, OK, and I have a quesadilla. And she just burst out laughing. And I was like, what's going on? And she was like, oh, like I thought you were saying like pronouncing it like that as a joke. Like, I didn't think you were serious. Like, it's crazy idea. That's like, oh, I just didn't know. And I just went like for it and she's like, no, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to embarrass you. I just thought you were joking like. I thought everybody in the world knew how to pronounce that word, and I did it for fun.

**Michaela** [00:19:55] Do you now have Taco Bell in Finland?

**Eeva** [00:19:58] Well, we're starting to get them now, but I did get a bit of Taco Bell addicted when I was in there, and they just opened one in Aberdeen and I was very happy.

**Michaela** [00:20:07] Same, girl, like you. Once you go Taco Bell, you can't go back. Those Taco Bells are addictive. But of course, you went to an English-speaking country. So technically, you know, you probably did not really expect to have a language barrier. But how does it work? If you go to if you do go for an international exchange to Europe and you end up in Germany, can you go to Germany without actually speaking German?

**Mel** [00:20:33] Yeah, we basically have exchange and agreements that come in two varieties in terms of languages. So we the international exchange, the vast majority of them are English speaking, except for those in Mexico and in Europe. We do have a vast amount of English speaking agreements, but we do have some native language speaking agreements for students that are studying on language programmes. So, you know, for example, a student who is studying, you know, the French degree programme or the German degree programme or Spanish, then they have the language to back up going to a country and speaking that language. So our contracts come in two different varieties.

**Michaela** [00:21:17] Would you also recommend someone who does not speak the language at all, say, I was interested in going to Germany, but I don't speak a lick of German? Do you think that would be too daunting or do you think that's an OK decision to make?

**Mel** [00:21:31] We definitely encourage students to do things like that, to broaden their horizons, to try new things. I mean, you know, immersing yourself in a country that speaks a different language can be an incredibly transformative experience. And we would obviously never send a student who can't speak the language to an institution where it was being taught. But, you know, to go to an institution being taught in English, but in a country where they're speaking another language, that's something a lot of students really put a lot of value in.

**Michaela** [00:22:00] All right, Eeva, I wanted to ask you, how would work this your grades? Did you have to go to classes and really study? Was it just sort of 'pass' scenario? How does it work? Do you really have to study in depth when you were at another university?

**Eeva** [00:22:21] I mean, technically, as long as you get a pass on your transcript, but I think it's always nice to add to your applications when you get the transcript from them. It shows that like even though you didn't necessarily have to get the greatest grades ever, you could have to spend more time on like other things. It's nice to have the transcript to show the like, OK, I actually did some work while I was out there as well. I didn't just like travel all the time. And for me it was part of the experience. I actually really enjoyed the classes that I was taking. So I think it's good to have a balance. And I didn't feel like I was just stuck in a classroom all time. All the time. When I was there, I felt like I was like getting a good balance. I was getting to like this. Other states make friends, go to events, have some fun. But I also went to my classes and did the assignments. And I feel like because they have at least where I went to, they had like more assignments, but they were smaller. It was easier to keep up with the work they were doing. You were just like suddenly faced with a long essay. You had like small little tests across the terms.

**Michaela** [00:23:32] And what sort of classes did you take? Did you take anything really interesting?

**Eeva** [00:23:35] I took some classes in gender studies, which basically just changed my whole studies in Aberdeen as well, because that wasn't something that I, like, ever realised that I could actually study. And I ended up taking a few and they worked really well with the classes that I was taking in English and History as well. So that kind of guided me in taking more like gender studies perspective on my history classes and English classes in Aberdeen that got what I'm doing for my dissertation this year. I'm going to start studying a gender studies master next year. So it really just affected the whole rest of my education. I took those classes and it was a complete coincidence. Like, I just realised I didn't have the classes that I had approved with my go abroad tutor. And I was like, would this be OK? This sounds interesting to me. And I said, Yeah, of course, that's fantastic.

**Michaela** [00:24:30] That's exactly what we hear often from students who have gone abroad as well, that that year really changed their life and sort of they found out things about themselves that they didn't necessarily know. While going to university in general is a huge character building experience, going abroad does give you that chance to try something completely new, reinvent yourself again. And it sounds like you did have that experience where you were just able to find yourself.

**Eeva** [00:25:01] Yeah, absolutely. It was really just a year of like self self growth and like self discovery. And it's because you're so far away from everyone that, you know, like you have to kind of. Take care of your take care of things yourself a bit, and like obviously the golf team is there if you need them, but I felt like I was really happy just doing my thing and, you know, just meeting new people.

**Michaela** [00:25:29] Great. Mel, have you heard from students you know about that's sort of what the year abroad has done for their confidence or for their path in life?

**Mel** [00:25:39] Definitely. And it's I mean, what I was explaining there is the dream that's really what we want for all students, for them to go abroad and find something really transformative. And I'd spoken last year with a student actually, who'd been abroad for a year in Hong Kong and found that really transformational. He had been a little bit nervous, you know, sort of a less self-confident sort of person in general and found that going and spending a year in Asia and Hong Kong really just massively increased his confidence in himself. He did heaps of travelling, really immersive experiences, and enjoyed it so much and got so much out of it that he ended up also applying for a summer internship in India as well later on, which actually changed the course of his career. So these things do happen not infrequently, which is really wonderful.

**Michaela** [00:26:40] And can you tell us a little bit more about how you might be able to use this experience in your career? Because you mentioned that he got an internship, but is it possible to also what else can it bring to your future going abroad

**Mel** [00:26:54] in terms of I mean, a very basic level and, you know, a lot of the statistics that we get back from the various national agencies and do tell us that employers look for students who have gone abroad because they look for students that have taken those independent roots and that have shown that they have that level of initiative, that they are prepared to put themselves out there so it can be a benefit for kick starting a career in that perspective. And much as I was saying as well, students, you know, will go abroad and



find courses that they never really would have had the opportunity to take it up. Obviously, we have a vast array of wonderful courses at Aberdeen. But when you are experiencing something somewhere else in the world, that institution also has a vast array of wonderful courses that are more idiosyncratic to them. So students can find a whole new path. And potentially we've had quite a number of students from Aberdeen go abroad, experience something fantastic, come back, finish their degree, and then actually go back to that institution to do a master's programme, which therefore opens up a whole lot of other things for them in terms of careers in that country, in other countries, changing things dramatically. So there are a lot of ways it can be incredibly positive for careers.

**Michaela** [00:28:15] Isn't that actually what you are wanting to do?

**Eeva** [00:28:17] Whatever it was I was wanting to do that then covid gone the way. But they weren't accepting any new people on their master's programme this year. But just because when I was there, I really enjoyed their gender history programme that they had, they had really nice research for it and they had like a good programme that would have made it a bit more affordable as well. But unfortunately, because of the situation, I had to change my plans and study here in Finland instead. But I think I might go back one day.

**Michaela** [00:28:50] I'm sure you will. It's such a lovely area as well. And we were so far we've mentioned, you know, Eeva's experience from the US and we've spoken about the possibility of going to a country in Europe where you don't speak the language. But of course, it's not just about the U.S. and Europe, is it? There are institutions all across the world. Do you mind mentioning some of the possibilities that people have?

**Mel** [00:29:15] Of course, at the moment, as well as Europe and the USA, we have partnerships in Australia, which obviously I'm a little biased about, and we also have partnerships, various ones in Hong Kong and we have some in China and we have Japan and we have South Korea and South Africa. And we have a couple in Mexico City. And we got the one we have in South Korea is generally hotcakes popular students really, really, really, really want to go to South Korea. And we are very lucky because the institution that we partnered with, there is a really, really good institution. So there are a lot of great options. We have three partnerships in Australia and we have about three in Japan, one in South Korea. Six or so in Hong Kong, we do have one in Singapore as well and a couple in China, so there's quite a lot of options.

**Michaela** [00:30:22] And how do people, like, find out about these options during their first year? Is there some sort of event where they can go and find out more about these options and speak to people about where they might go?

**Mel** [00:30:36] Actually, there is. So we have what's called a go abroad fair every year in November, and we will host that either in person or virtually depending on circumstances. So we tend to start plugging that as an event by doing a lecture drop ins and things like that sort of as soon as the year kicks off. But then students can come along, the more the merrier to our go abroad fair and they can speak to all of the staff. They also get access to our tutors, which are a wonderful academic colleagues who help us and the students in organising themselves, going abroad, and as well our wonderful team of student ambassadors who have obviously been abroad. And we do also try and get some volunteer students who've been abroad as well. So there's a lot of ways that they can sort of get different perspectives and more information on where they might want to go and what would be expected of them and what they should expect.

**Michaela** [00:31:37] So you can actually speak to someone who's already been in that country and ask them how it is for someone to come in from abroad.

**Mel** [00:31:42] Yeah, that's really the idea. We want to be able to give students the opportunity to speak to one of our students who went abroad to that country to be able to really give them an insider outlook.

**Michaela** [00:31:54] Great. So you don't really need to know anything about anything before you go to that served to you. You can just grab this opportunity as it comes and then decide on that spot while you're talking to people. If going abroad is something that you want to do or if you would prefer to be in Aberdeen for the whole four years.

**Mel** [00:32:14] Definitely. And actually, that's something that we feel quite strongly about in the go abroad team. We really like students to have an open mind. So walking into the go abroad fair with no specific idea doesn't remotely put you behind the eight ball. What it actually does is mean the whole world is your oyster. So you can come in and look at everything that we have available across the whole world and decide what might be a good fit for you. And as we say to students at the go abroad fair, we really, really strongly encourage a really wide open set of options. You know, much as Eeva has explained, you know, she wanted to go to Florida and ended up in Oregon and had an amazing time. And that's what we want students to think, you know, outside the box, think of the whole world because the whole world is available.

**Michaela** [00:33:04] So you actually when you come to Aberdeen, you know, if this is something that you want to do, if you do want to go abroad, you don't have to worry about keeping this at the back of your head. It will the opportunity will come to you in the form of Mel dropping in on one of your lectures and then the well promoted go abroad fair. So definitely, you know, think about it and imagine yourself in that South Korean setting for your second year of your studies. Feel free to do that. But you don't have to necessarily worry about it right now before even starting university. So, you know, this is something that we want you to do. So we will definitely reach out to you with those options and we will promote this to you. This is not a hidden secret that only a few people who have heard about this before will have access to. So I think that's it. Do you guys have anything else you would like to add?

**Mel** [00:33:56] I think the only thing I would really like to add is that, you know, students to remember that we're here for them. So before they even get to Aberdeen, when they get to Aberdeen, if they've been with us for a while, they are always welcome to reach out to study abroad by email. And we are very happy to help address any questions and guide them in any way that might be beneficial.

**Michaela** [00:34:16] Fantastic. Thank you. And thank you for sharing your experiences ever, because it was very helpful to hear from someone who's actually been abroad and who's gotten to experience that thing that we often only see in movies. And we don't really know what's at the other side of the story. So knowing that sorority parties and fraternity parties are as annoying as they seem is quite helpful. I have to say. And it's also lovely to hear that Oregon is actually a nice and warm place and it doesn't always just rain and it's not full of vampires. So that's the one thing I learnt today.

**Eeva** [00:34:51] It rains a bit, but it's warmer. It's beautiful. And I feel like as a Finn, I would have been too hot in Florida. So I feel like Oregon was perfect for me.

**Michaela** [00:35:00] Yeah. See, you just find things about yourself that you don't know like that Oregon is your happy place.

**Eeva** [00:35:07] It was. Yeah, it did. I went there and I was immediately like, oh, I'm home. I'm never leaving. And I remember by like, no. And by December, I was stressing to my remains and my friends like, oh, I'll have to go back, and they were like, you still have half of your time here. Like, you have nothing to worry about.

**Michaela** [00:35:24] Well, I'm glad to hear that you did end up back in Aberdeen for the last two years of your studies and now here in Finland studying from home. So I hope that is going OK for you. And you're missing Oregon too much. But thank you again very much for dropping in and sharing your experience. And thank you for providing the experts view on everything. Thank you again, all of our listeners. If you do have any questions, feel free to get in touch and we hope to hear from you. Or listen to us in our next episode.

**Voiceover** [00:36:02] Thank you for joining us for this episode of the Ask Aberdeen podcast, if you would like to suggest a topic we should cover, please email us at [ukteam@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:ukteam@abdn.ac.uk). We would love to hear from you to be alerted about new episodes. Subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.