

EDINBURGH COMMENTS FALL 2024

Alexis Ashby '26 - Materials Science Caltech/Physics Edinburgh

Studying at the University of Edinburgh has been amazing. For one it is nice to have a slightly longer semester. I feel like I have so much more time to thoroughly understand the course material at my own pace. However, the limited homework means there is less opportunity for practice. There are weekly tutorials that provide time to work on more challenging practice problems and interact with TAs and instructors to answer any questions you have about the course. The course set up requires you to manage your time well and develop a more independent study structure.

While the weather may be much colder than that at Caltech, the city has so many great things to offer. There are many museums with free entry as well as a wide variety of activities ranging from teatime at the Edinburgh castle to escape rooms. There really is something to do for everyone here perhaps represented best by the societies at the university. Despite knowing the University of Edinburgh is much larger than Caltech, I was so surprised to see not only the number of students during welcome week, but also the sheer number of clubs and societies. There are so many that visiting all of the booths spread over three days. There are plenty of sports, dance, and even game societies including video and board games.

Another benefit of a large campus is the availability of many classes outside of your major. In particular, I have an interest in music and have been taking Musical Acoustics and Scotland and Orality. Musical Acoustics is an interesting way to learn about how music and how instruments work in relation to basic physics principles. The instructor is very passionate and sometimes plays instruments for you. Scotland and Orality is a great way to learn about Scotland's many cultures and history in relation to forming traditions such as ballads, folk lore, dance, and children's games. This class has been a great way to learn more about Scotland as a whole. It's interesting to compare what I learn in class to what is shown in museums and tours around the city, I have been approaching things with a new perspective after taking this class. It even has an emphasis to begin learning more about your own heritage and traditions.

One other thing I enjoy doing around the city is discovering little shops and cafes. In particular I am a lover of hot chocolate and have enjoyed finding my favorite places for a cup. There is one very close to center campus called Uplands Roast that is well known and even toasts a marshmallow to top it with. If hot chocolate isn't your thing there are many more restaurants and cafes with a wide variety of options to explore or try learning to make your favorites on your own. It is a great time to expand your cooking abilities.

As a final note, Scotland is beautiful. I would recommend taking a trip or two outside of Edinburgh such as to Isle of Skye or Loch Ness. The scenery is amazing and the stories

the tour guides tell give you an idea of the rich history of Scotland, old and new. Overall, I am so glad I had the opportunity to come to Edinburgh.

Nika Chuzhoy '26 - CS Caltech/Informatics Edinburgh

I chose to take a term at Edinburgh for the same reason most students probably join the Study Abroad program -- for the new experiences, and to try out a change of pace from Caltech.

As a Computer Science major, I appreciate that the University of Edinburgh provided the opportunity for me to take some courses that aren't offered at Caltech. For example, I am taking Computer Security and Stochastic Differential Equations. I think that, so far the overall quality of the courses has been quite high and the material goes in-depth. I've enjoyed all five of my courses here.

The whole system of instruction is very different here. Most classes have only one or two graded assignments, and the bulk of your grade is based on the final exams. Office hours are usually only by request, although about half my courses have weekly tutorials where you typically work through some practice problems with TAs available to help out. One nice thing is that exams from previous years are provided for each course, so you know what to expect. You definitely have to be a bit more self-motivated if you want to have a balanced study schedule. So far though I've found I have significantly more free time than at Caltech. One thing to note is that the term length varies between study abroad programs and at Edinburgh you spend about 5 more weeks than you would doing a fall term at Caltech.

The city of Edinburgh is beautiful. It's small, dense, very walkable, full of medieval architecture and green spaces. I enjoy going to the Botanic Gardens to work and going for walks through the Meadows. It is definitely cold here, and the shortening daylight hours have driven me to wake up much earlier to catch some more sunlight. Caltech students live in Kincaid's Court, which is very conveniently located in the Old Town. Everyone lives in a single in a 12- or 5-person flat. It's a very short walk from the main campus, which is where the CS classes are, but the math and physics courses are usually in King's Campus which is a 20 min university shuttle bus ride. The Pleasance Gym is nearby and is very nice, although you need to purchase a membership. It's also easy to go on weekend trips to explore the UK or visit continental Europe. Most of all I've really enjoyed hiking in the Scottish Highlands and visiting and touring the Scottish Isles. Overall, I'm definitely glad I chose to study here!

Maya Dickson '26 – Electrical Engineering Caltech/Electronics and Electrical Engineering Edinburgh

Study abroad at the University of Edinburgh has been one of the most unique experiences of my life. The city itself is very different from any place I have lived in before – the walkability that is typical to so many European cities is something that I find myself appreciative of every time I go outside. Partially due to this, there are many

more public resources that feel readily available. The public transportation system, multiple (non-university) libraries, and varied design and maker spaces are not as developed or accessible in Pasadena, and I've enjoyed being able to go without being limited by not having a car. Similarly, the number of social spaces is larger than I could have expected – a multitude of coffee shops, pubs, green spaces, etc. are all within walking distance. One effect of this is that the different parts of the University of Edinburgh's campus are spread out within the city, but any necessary places for science/engineering classes have a free shuttle service or are easily walked to, and any further travel gives another chance to explore the city. Additionally, Kincaid's Court (the residence Caltech students stay in) is very central and convenient.

Classes have been very enjoyable, and all my professors are good at teaching, so I have been learning a lot. There is definitely an emphasis on self-study which is interesting to adjust to, but there is a lower stress level due to the lack of sets as long as I am keeping up with lecture material. It can be fairly intimidating for a majority of a grade to come from one exam (this is more typical for the STEM classes), but the professors do a good job in preparing their students. I am taking two engineering classes here, both of which have equivalents at Caltech, but cover slightly different material and with a different, more practical, perspective than Caltech, which tends to be heavily theoretical. There are also tutorial sessions or seminars every week that usually give ungraded practice problems that I can use to assess my understanding and ask questions, along with a database of past final exams for classes that I will use to review before the exam. Two of my classes are more humanities focused and are not classes I could have taken at Caltech. Both are very fun and it is interesting to take classes with many people who do not study STEM and see their perspectives on topics that I wouldn't typically be exposed to at Caltech.

The size of the University of Edinburgh makes it very easy to find people with something in common. While class sizes are larger so there may not be as much classmate interaction as Caltech, the large number of flatmates and many societies of incredibly varied interests makes sure there are always social events to go to and interact with new people. The sports teams are also well-run and a lower commitment way to stay in shape, especially as an athlete that will be entering Caltech's season when I return in winter.

Overall, I would highly recommend studying abroad. It is an incredible way to go live and study in part of the world you may not have experienced before, and it is an opportunity that you may not have at any other point in your life. It's a very different environment to Caltech and has helped me learn more about balancing more mundane responsibilities like cooking or finding time to go out and do fun human things with doing work. I hope to bring some of the habits I've gained here back in the winter, and motivate myself to explore surrounding Pasadena and LA more.

Jessie Gan 25' – Chemistry Caltech/Chemistry Edinburgh

I originally decided to study abroad because I wanted to have a chance to explore and learn in another country. I knew that studying abroad would be a once-in-a-lifetime chance that I wouldn't be able to replicate in graduate school or in working life, so I took the chance and discovered much more than I had originally intended. Everything that I've done here has been more than I expected and better; Edinburgh is a city full of surprises and studying here has been a profoundly reorienting and eye-opening experience in my undergraduate years.

First, while the courseload is much lighter compared to Caltech, I have found many enriching opportunities compared to the courses I have taken at my home university. I am taking Biological Chemistry 2 and Data-Driven Chemistry in my major. At Caltech, I have a concentration in biochemistry, so I thought I would know most of the topics in Biological Chemistry 2, but I was surprised to find that the Edinburgh system of teaching chemistry is so divergent from the Chemistry core at Caltech. For example, I was able to learn the basics of inorganic chemistry and ligand field theory applied to enzymes. While I haven't taken inorganic chemistry at Caltech because I was intimidated by its distance from my interests, this class was able to reframe this essential chemistry material in the context of proteins, making it much more accessible to me.

Overall, I'm finding the pace of the courses emphasizing self-study, and because there is more free time, I'm finding opportunities to delve into topics independently. I am also taking two humanities/social sciences courses here, which are Pre-modern East Asian History and Creating Edinburgh. Both classes are very unique from anything which I could have taken at Caltech. Pre-modern East Asian History has allowed me to engage critically with a central piece of my Chinese heritage that is not offered at Caltech. And Creating Edinburgh is a multimedia, unique course that explores different aspects of the city through walking tours and discussions. I had very eye-opening experiences with the "Decolonising Edinburgh" topic, which discussed the history of slavery in Scotland, and I found these perspectives to be profoundly different from those I was exposed to growing up in the US. These types of discussions have been deeply enriching in my worldwide view of other countries.

Student accommodation has been a great experience here in Edinburgh. We live in Kincaid's Court in flats with other students, and notably we do not have any meal plan here. This has been an excellent practice in managing my time and meals just like if I was living in my own apartment, all good practice for graduate school and beyond. My flat is very friendly and fun; we just held a huge Halloween party and I'm planning a "flat Thanksgiving" to introduce them to an American tradition. Speaking and understanding the experiences of UK students, other study abroad students, and students of many majors has taken me far outside the Caltech bubble.

By far one of the most fulfilling things about this study abroad experience is living in a new city and in a great location to explore. Because of the relatively lighter workload, I get the chance to explore new and old hobbies such as hiking, climbing, and cooking. Every weekend I do something different: day trip to Sterling Castle, window shopping on Princes Street, hiking in the Pentlands, walking along Portobello Beach, or even taking a trip to Isle of Skye. Scotland has so much to offer that I didn't expect, and I love the serene countryside and living in the heart of old city, everything accessible by foot or bus. I always found the car-centric component of Los Angeles to be extremely limiting on my ability to do anything new. But here, I'm always finding novel things to do every week, whether it's visiting a craft or farmers market next to Edinburgh Castle or finding an exclusive live music pub. Compared to Los Angeles and SoCal (of which I am a native), it's a literal breath of fresh air with the low air pollution and frequent rain.

Being in Edinburgh this term has been an adventure. The work-life balance I've attained here has not only increased my new experiences but the enjoyment and excitement I bring to my work and research. Living here has also given me a much-needed perspective on my senior year: on one hand, I've gained a wonderful experience in a new country, and on the other, I've learned to appreciate the things I missed at Caltech. I would highly recommend study abroad for anyone who can fit it into their packed Caltech curriculum.

Brian Hu '26 – CNS Major and CS Minor Caltech / Informatics Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh has a lot of new experiences to offer. It's located in a capital city where tourists from all over the world come to visit so there's much to do and see. The university itself is split across multiple campuses scattered around the city so you walk through public touristy areas every day to get to class. This makes it very hard to become isolated within the university bubble unlike at Caltech where everything is in one place. You'll be living in Kincaid's Court which is very conveniently located as you can walk to most of the popular locations within 15 minutes. When combined with the good public transportation, the entire city becomes very accessible with many different areas to explore. At the same time, the city center is surprisingly small and dense so it only takes a few days to get familiar with the layout. At which point, you'll stop relying on Google Maps as much and begin to feel like a local.

At Kincaid's, you live in a 12-person flat and since its located next to multiple pubs, there will be more partying, drinking and smoking than what you are probably used to at Caltech. Depending on what your preferences are, this can be either a positive or negative thing. Additionally, the accommodations are self-catered, so you'll have to come up with your own meal plan and restock toiletries yourself. As a result, living in Kincaid's is a lot closer to what living in an apartment with roommates feels like compared to living in the Houses. It was nice to have the ability to choose where and what to eat instead of being stuck with whatever CDS serves up. There's a very wide variety of restaurants (and grocery stores) within walking distance so you'll probably be something that suits your taste. My go-to restaurant is this cash-only hole-in-the-wall

that serves very authentic Chinese food at a reasonable price (#NotSponsored). However, since you'll be living in a touristy area, you will also have to pay tourist prices when eating out (as is true for all major cities in locations people want to visit.)

For coursework, their system is very similar to what you'd find at most other large public universities in the US. Generally, each week consists of multiple lectures, a recitation, and occasionally some assigned, ungraded homework. Your grade consists of 1-3 assignments due in the middle of term and a final exam that's worth most of the points. The amount of material covered is about the same but since Edinburgh's on the semester system, the content is stretched out over 15 weeks instead of 10 weeks. This gives you more free time for extracurricular activities and weekend trips. Overall, my study abroad experience has offered a good balance of work and leisure that's hard to find at Caltech: I was able to explore new places and try new activities while still staying on track academically.

Eli Kugelsky '25 - CS Caltech/ Informatics University of Edinburgh

Caltech is a tremendously wonderful place to spend your time during undergrad. It's nestled between a major city and a gorgeous mountain range, and the campus is a very tight knit with a small community. However, sometimes you want to get out and see the world a little. My motivation to study abroad was because I wanted to experience something new and challenge myself in said new environment. I chose Edinburgh because it would take me out of my comfort zone the most but also be the most rewarding.

At first the learning style at the University of Edinburgh seems a bit odd and daunting. But as the semester goes on you become more accustomed to it. The lectures are fantastic and offer a lot of insight into the material being covered. In addition to that, there are tutorials which provide a great complement to the lecture materials and allow you to ask either the professor or a postdoc questions directly. The coursework is also very evenly spread out throughout the semester, so you never feel overwhelmed, and it means you get more time to go and explore the amazing city.

Studying in a city that's over 900 years old is incredible. (Note: The earliest known human habitation in the Edinburgh area dates back to 8500 BC, with evidence of a Mesolithic site in Cramond. The first signs of habitation on the Castle Rock and Arthur's Seat date back to around 900 BC.)

Old Town, where the school and housing is located, has tremendous charm. The weathered cobblestone streets make you wonder how many others throughout history have walked them as well. There's gorgeous architecture everywhere you look and combined with the verticality of the city makes it feel like a fun maze every day. Even after spending some time in the city, you'll still stumble upon a new alley or close (narrow pedestrian passageway) with something interesting hiding there. It's the perfect size so you don't need a car or bike to get around. From one end of Old Town

to another end of New Town is only a short walk with so much to do and see along the way. Some of my favorite activities have come from me just stumbling into them.

The University of Edinburgh has an incredible student life. If you have a hobby, passion, or interest there is most likely a club here for you to join. Your whole first week is catered to going to club intros and seeing how you want to spend your free time while in Scotland. I found myself joining an open source machine learning project and building a connection with the professor leading it. It's also always fun to do a pub crawl with your friends. I did one every week and we'd bring a pack of cards to play a new game every time at the last pub. There are also great restaurants that are very much worth checking out. Some of my favorites include Singapore Coffee House, Franco Manca, The Outsider, and Nandos.

Lastly, the people you'll meet come from so many different backgrounds. Some are also studying abroad from the USA, or studying abroad abroad but from Europe, while others are just UOE students there already. But no matter where they're from, everyone is extremely awesome to meet and hang out with. I've formed a big friend group of others in the same major as me and we've hung out many times a week without a miss.

Diya Kumar '26 – Astrophysics Caltech/Physics Edinburgh

I've always loved to travel and experience other cultures, so studying abroad was a huge goal of mine when I was applying to college. The connections Caltech has with incredible schools across Europe and the UK were one of the reasons I ended up applying. Studying in Edinburgh specifically has been nothing short of magical, and I'm so glad I chose the University of Edinburgh as my study abroad spot.

First off, Edinburgh is a beautiful city. I'm living in an accommodation called Kincaid's Court, right in the heart of the city. It's on Cowgate, which is a street with a lot of nightlife, so it's super convenient. I'm living mostly with first-year students, plus a few other exchange students, which has been a nice mix. Everything I need is close by: grocery stores, the gym, the pool, etc. The city is very walkable, and since I don't take the bus much (I don't have a YoungScots card), I end up walking everywhere. The walks are enjoyable and beautiful. Sometimes it feels like I'm living in a Harry Potter movie!

Making friends here has been really rewarding too. I joined the swim and water polo teams, where I have met a lot of English and Scottish people. Plus, having practice in a warm indoor pool is especially nice as it starts getting dark and cold in late fall and winter. It's nice to have a reason to get out of my room, and I've met other study abroad students this way too. Edinburgh is such a student-focused city that I end up meeting people in class, around town, and nearly everywhere.

The academic setup here is definitely different from Caltech. Back at Caltech, classes are highly structured and rigorous, especially my physics classes, so I was ready for a change of pace. The lectures here are easier to follow, with a lot more focus on independence. For many of my classes, I don't have regular assignments; the final exam is nearly the entire grade. While that's scary, it gives me more time to review and understand the material instead of constantly working on assignments. We are also on credit/no credit here (note that students do get an official U Edinburgh transcript with grades) so it takes some of the pressure off exams, and I can focus on learning over grades.

Exploring Edinburgh has been really fun. The city feels very much like a college town, which is different from Caltech. There's so much to do: Arthur's Seat, beautiful walking trails, the Castle, palaces, and endless coffee shops. There are also tours to the Highlands and Isle of Skye, and Waverly train station is only a ten-minute walk away. There are also shuttles to the airport, making weekend trips easy.

This experience has been awesome, and I definitely recommend it. It's been a nice break from Caltech, I've met wonderful people, and I'm having a lot of fun!

Lana Lubecke '25 – Applied and Computational Mathematics Caltech/Applied Mathematics Edinburgh

Studying abroad has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I highly encourage everyone to do. In Edinburgh you get a bit of bustling city life, but against a majestic backdrop of a towering castle. You can easily take a walk through the Meadows or up Carlton Hill, and if you want more of a hike, you can try Arthur's Seat or the Pentlands.

If you choose to study abroad, you will live in Kincaid's Court, which is very well situated. The train station, grocery store, night clubs, best restaurants, and library are all within a 10-minute walk. The only place I take the bus for is to go to King's Campus, which is where all the STEM classes are apart from CS, and the university has free shuttles to take you there every 20 minutes.

The University of Edinburgh is unique in Scotland due to its high percentage of international students, and because of its size there are always social events. This has made it not only very easy, but also very interesting to go to events and meet new people. I have joined the water polo team here, and every Wednesday we go to another city to play a game. There are no lectures on Wednesday (but there might be tutorials) to make full days of travel possible. For our first game we went to Newcastle and I didn't even realize we had gone to England until after the game! I've gone to socials with the water polo team, friends I've made in math recitation, my lovely freshman flat mates, and other exchange students I've met while here! There is just such a large breadth of what you can do. I've really enjoyed getting to know my flat, and as freshman they are really socially engaged and willing to meet new people. We

have people from Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Poland, Hong Kong, England, and Germany!

The courses here are well taught and well-paced. All of my professors post clear and thorough notes online, so when I had COVID and had to miss class, I had no trouble catching up. Attending tutorial automatically gives you a group of people to work on the homework with, and the homework is very manageable. This has given me the extra time to apply to fellowships and grad school. Also, I highly recommend taking a class you wouldn't be able to take at Caltech while you are here! I am taking a class called "Creating Edinburgh," where each week you explore a new part of the city and another mechanism that shapes it. I am also taking "Geologic Evolution of the British Isles" which included a 1-day field trip to see the Highland Boundary Fault! Essentially, Edinburgh has many ponds, and you will have the time to dip your toes in all of them!

Dilichi Nwankwo 2025 - CS Major & Philosophy Minor/Informatics Edinburgh

Now, halfway into my study abroad experience, I can pleasantly say that studying abroad at the University of Edinburgh has been one of the best decisions of my life. During my time here, I have had the pleasure of meeting many interesting people with different backgrounds, picking up hobbies, calling my loved ones, taking classes not offered at Caltech, and visiting new countries! It has been amazing to be in an environment that not only prioritizes education but also supports students having a well-balanced life outside of their classes. It has been so refreshing to be able to have more time due to the lower frequency of assignments Edinburgh has compared to Caltech. And though a lot of time is still spent studying and going to classes, the rest of the week is mine and I can explore topics and activities that I usually don't get the chance to at Caltech.

One of my favorite parts about the University of Edinburgh that I brag to my friends on campus about is how the university is deeply entangled in the city and the benefits of having such a centrally located dorm. I love the placement they have us in at Kincaid's. It is by all the entertainment, shops, nightlife, cafes, museums, monuments, malls, etc. Anywhere I want to go is at most a very scenic 20-minute walk with most places being much less than 10. It is so nice to get the moderate exercise and fresh air that comes with walking and seeing the beautiful city center. It is freeing to not need a car and still be able to go wherever I want even if it's miles or hours away. Regularly there are tourists, buskers, shopkeepers, and all types of people that you're able to see and interact with on a regular stroll. As someone who has always been clowned by my American family for my poor geography, the amount of knowledge I've learned about European culture is irreplaceable. I've loved being a part of a city where there's always more to explore and one that is a quick bus to Glasgow for a day/night trip, or a weekend trip to the Scottish Highlands to see the most beautiful mountains and waterfalls. I have even had the pleasure of buying cheap ~50-pound flight tickets to other countries.

Furthermore, the University itself has such a vast student body. The population of 40,000, accompanied by the increased amount of free time allows for there to be a very large amount of student identity and clubs aka societies on campus. Thus, no matter who you are or where you come from there is a large group of other students you can always connect with. Also, as someone who hates the cold, the weather has been easily manageable with a single good coat.

I could go on, but genuinely, I have loved my time so far at Edinburgh and I am so happy that I studied abroad at the University of Edinburgh specifically, I wouldn't have been able to have this type of experience at any of the other schools the FASA department currently supports.

Rucheng Pan '25 – Computation and Neural Systems Caltech / Biology Edinburgh

Studying abroad at the University of Edinburgh has been a really rewarding experience so far. I always knew I wanted to study abroad going into college, so it wasn't a matter of if I was going to study abroad, but rather where I would.

Edinburgh itself is a gorgeous and spectacular city to live in. The population density is pretty high, especially with the tourists and students, so it's a very lively city especially around the downtown areas. There are people around at all hours of the day. My friends and I are often traveling in the wee hours of Saturday morning before sunrise and coming back after sunset the next day to maximize our time in the new city; despite these odd hours, when we walk to the train station/bus station, there are always people walking around and it feels super safe. The public transportation system is great.

All living essentials, from Costco, Ikea, are all just a 30-minute bus ride away. The buses come on time and are clean and orderly. One common concern is that the cost of living in Edinburgh is extremely expensive, and I just didn't find that to be the case. Most meals are around £14-20, which is honestly around the same or even less than I'd spend on a meal back in Pasadena, especially when you factor in the tip in the United States. Furthermore, most restaurants and supermarkets in Edinburgh offer meal deals. In restaurants, this looks like a £10 meal that contains an entrée, appetizer, dessert, and drink. In supermarkets, it's a £3.5 meal containing a sandwich, a snack, and a drink. In this manner, it feels like a metropolitan city without some of the cons of a major city such as safety and cost of living.

This has also been a great opportunity to grow as a person, meeting so many different people from around the world. There are so many exchange students, and the school facilitates a lot of opportunities to meet them during Freshers week. The 12-person flats in Kincaid's also provide an automatic support system, as you have 11 other people you befriend and interact with on a daily basis.

On the academic side, the courses are slightly less time-consuming than Caltech, but they have their work cut out for them in that regard. In my experience, all my courses offer multiple weeks to complete an assignment. You may have multiple assignments at once, with differing due dates, but it's not like Caltech where every week there's a specific assignment you must complete. The flexibility of the Edinburgh schedule gives you time to really absorb the material, as spending one hour a day on an assignment for two weeks compared to nine hours a day on an assignment for two days allows you to really learn the material. The one difficult aspect of Edinburgh is the lack of assistance outside of class as there are no office hours, but there are tutorials, like recitations at Caltech, so I can normally seek the help from instructors after tutorials. The more time to really absorb concepts has allowed me to fill in some of the weaker aspects of my scientific foundation.

Overall, studying abroad in Edinburgh has been a great experience, and I would recommend to everyone.

Josh Saha '25 - Physics at Caltech / Physics at Edinburgh

My time so far at the University of Edinburgh has been incredible. Being in a new city, in a new country, and at a larger university was much more meaningful to me than I was initially expecting. The culture at Edinburgh is much more relaxed than Caltech and I feel like I can enjoy my University experience again. The past few years at Caltech were very tough for me, balancing the insane course load from the Physics department as well as the physical exhaustion of being a student athlete on the track and field team. Here at Edinburgh, I am taking advanced Physics courses and am a very active member of the athletics society, but it is much more manageable and less stressful.

The social life at Edinburgh is a lot different than at Caltech. Caltech offers a unique experience, with a tight-knit community divided into houses on a small campus. At Edinburgh, I find myself traveling all over the city, visiting friends' flats and different pubs. Being in a university city is definitely a highlight for me, which I was not expecting. The majority of the friends I made were from the Athletics society and we have one Social Event per week. They often involved drinking, as it is the UK, but it was never required, nor were there any type of initiations or hazing.

So far, I have taken a weekend trip to the Isle of Skye, which was incredibly beautiful and unlike anything I had ever seen. Additionally, some friends and I went on a "wellbeing hike" after Halloween week in the Pentlands. It's incredible that Edinburgh offers a city life as well as beautiful scenery just a bus ride away.

The course content I've covered so far hasn't been too different than Caltech, however the method of teaching is fairly different. In my quantum theory course, in particular, we had some of the same problems as from Ph125bc, but they gave us hints as to how to approach the problem or what mathematical trick to use. It's more straightforward in that way but it makes sense due to Caltech's focus on collaboration to alleviate the

need for such hints. My Greek Art & Archaeology course is unlike any humanities course I've taken at Caltech and involves much more memorization and understanding. My peers in the course are majoring in the subject and so have a different attitude towards it than I do. Two of my courses, Quantum Theory and Nuclear & Particle Physics, are judged only on the final exam grade.

My time at the University of Edinburgh has been so valuable to me. With how difficult Caltech can be, having a change of pace is important to maintain a healthy perspective. I would recommend looking into Study Abroad at Caltech for anyone remotely interested.