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Transcript

[INTRO] Millie:

Welcome to Edinburgh Napier's Find Your Uni, this podcast looks at the different factors which can be important when it comes to choosing which university to go to. Everyone on this podcast is a current student in Napier, so we have been in your shoes before when choosing what to do next.

We look forward to sharing our experiences and we hope that it helps you in your journey.

Millie:

Hi everyone, I'm Millie

Erin:

and I'm Erin.

Millie:

And we're both students at Edinburgh Napier in this episode, we're sharing all the info you need to make the right steps towards starting uni. From making your choices from what to pack to move into halls. We're covering it all.

Today, we're joined by Shannon to help you get ready for university.

Shannon:

Hi, I'm Shannon and I'm a third year Marketing with Digital Media student here at Edinburgh Napier.

Erin:

So how did the both of you choose which universities you were going to be going to? And was Edinburgh Napier your first choice?

Shannon:

So it took me a wee while to kind of figure out what I wanted to do, but I knew that for the most part I knew I wanted my course to be something that was a mix of both practical and academic. I knew I wanted experience with placement and things like that, and I also wanted a university in which I could really get involved in the community and get... Get up to things essentially. So when it came to picking universities I attended at that time online open days because we were still in the midst of COVID and...

And So that was where I could kind of really get to go with what my course would be about, speak to lecturers, see what kind of societies and things there were. I researched the courses as much as possible, just going through the university website. I think now if I was to do that now, definitely looking at students online and things like that. So things like TikTok.

Or Unibuddy, things like that is a great way to kind of get in touch with current students and get a real understanding of what a day in their life looks like or what kind of things they get up to that might not be on the website.

Millie:

Yeah, definitely, totally agree. I think for me, I picked like a quite a wide range of different unis in England and and like Edinburgh but it came down to, I think student life was a big part of it and like the city themselves, like a lot of it was the courses obviously. But I think like you said, four years, that's a long time. Like you wanna be somewhere that you're gonna, the student life is good and societies are good, And the unis. But yeah, I mean the the cities in themselves as student. Like how good the student life is, it was a big part of it.

But also, I looked, did a lot of research. I think I gave myself, looking back. I think I gave myself a lot of time to like. I was so torn, basically between all my options and I was like, I don't know to do.

Every day I'd wake up and a different one what I wanted to go to, but looking at like I said before about you can find like on guardian things and what ranking uni is. I mean I would say take that stuff with a pinch of salt cause it's like you know, it's all subjective and. Yeah, doesn't. Yeah, but.

It's important to know that you know how actually good objectively the course or the Uni is as well but yeah things like placements and like study abroad options were big part of my options, but yeah, I mean they were all pretty.

They felt like they were all pretty equal, but now that I've chosen Napier, it's so obvious. That was always the right choice. I think I was just, like, overwhelmed with the amount of choices out there. But just so much, did so much research and it came down to that. But yeah, So what would you guys say now that you are at Napier? Why was that the right choice for you?

Shannon:

Again, whole mix of things. So I think my course is very industry led, it's very practical.

So I do Marketing and Digital media. So a lot of that is physically creating things, whether that's animation, videos, photography, that kind of thing. And I think that's what I really love about it. Is a lot of...

When I was like weighing up courses, it's a case of are you going to be learning the kind of software that they would use in the industry? Are you going to be creating stuff or is it very essay LED? And and I think kind of weighing up those options are really important for how you learn and because ultimately, yeah, you want to like, pass your classes and things like that, but you want to take in as much as that information as possible.

And if you learn by doing things. Yeah, I think that's why this course is so good. At least for me. Also like looking at things like societies and things like that. Like, I would go through the student association websites on whichever university.

And it was like, could I picture myself taking part in that in a thing? What kind of option could there be to try societies that I never would have considered and? And I think that's what I really like about Napier's. There's such a huge variety, whether it's a sport that you've never tried before or a sport you've done in school, whether there's a really niche

society for something that you're interested in, or there's even societies based on your subject area. So there's like a marketing society ehm there's so much to get involved with, and I think that's what I really wanted out of it.

I wanted to get involved in the community. I didn't really want to get, like lost in the crowd and struggle to, like, do things and just kind of go in day by day and not really do much. And I feel like with Napier, I've really gotten to be a part of the community and get to know people which I really love.

Erin:

Yeah. I think it's really important. There's such a big community here. So you're just so easy to get involved with it.

Even if there's not a society that's there yet for a little community that you want to start, it's easy enough to start it. Which is really important.

Shannon:

Yeah, like I think a thing I always say in like in campus tours and things like that is that even though Napier is small in comparison to like larger city universities, the smallness of it works so well because it's like you create these little villages. So there's, like a Craiglockhart community, Merchiston community and a Sighthill. And they all kind of come together through societies. So you don't get lost in that crowd, which is really lovely, but it's still, it's not too small that you're like seeing the same people every day.

Erin:

Yeah. So after you decided on Napier, what did you do next?

Shannon:

So I got my offer from Napier on kinda whatever the like last day that that universities can give you the offer that was when Napier did it. And so I was actually on holiday with my friends. We were doing the North Coast 500, which for anyone that doesn't know, it's like, yeah, the North Coast of Scotland. You like drive it. I was the driver.

Which was terrifying. But it was so much fun. Highly recommend anyone does it. But yeah, and like some sort of like, wild driver. I got patch of signal. I got that little UCAS notification. So celebrations all around.

Which it was really nice to be with friends when I found out that was super lovely and because I went to university a little bit later my friends were either in university or had were like on the cusp of graduating. So it was really nice to feel like them, to be excited for me to start what they've gone through. So I didn't have to meet conditions, thankfully.

It was an unconditional offer, but in terms of like preparing kind of as soon as I got back from that trip, I was like looking at things like flats and kind of researching Edinburgh a little bit more.

I moved from Aberdeen so like I'd been to Edinburgh a couple of times for like trips and stuff, but I didn't know the city that well other than like Princes St so getting to really know the city, looking a little bit more at Napier and kind of like they sent me lots of emails about like congratulations on your offer.

They give us, like, there was dates for like offer holder days and like open days and things like that or like links to chat with lecturers, that kind of thing. So just looking at everything that Napier sent me as well, I think was a really nice way to prepare for it. Like they were excited for me just as I was excited to join them. Yeah, which I think was super lovely.

Millie:

Yeah, yeah, I was the same as I got an unconditional because I took a year out so it was kind of, there was less pressure in that sense. It's like I was lucky in the way that I could just enjoy my summer after I got the offer. But I went to yeah, I went to visit Edinburgh, my mum because I hadn't really. I'm from Brighton. I've been here like I think a couple of times. But like you say, nothing more than Princes Street and stuff like that. But yeah.

Yeah. I went to visit with my mum, and it wasn't. I didn't actually attend the open day cause I actually went to Thailand. And then I went to Italy for like 2 months that summer. So it was like there was no. Yeah, it was amazing. But there was no time. I couldn't have gone to the open day, but I still went. And it was that was important. I went to the halls and I went to the uni just to see it even. Yeah. Yeah.

Shannon:

Like even if you can't go to an Open Day you can book campus tours and tours, yeah.

Millie:

Yeah, yeah, I think it's important just to like, obviously, you can't always make those things. But just to yeah, find ways that you can still visit and umm, but yeah, I've had, uh I had a great summer. It was great.

Erin:

It sounds amazing.

Millie:

It was just nice to like as well. A couple of my friends were going to uni, so it was nice for us to kind of just celebrate together, it's an exciting thing. I think at the end of the day like it's so it's so fun. And it was just like oh my god we're going to uni. Going and doing things like we went shopping for stuff like me and my friends that we're also going to uni for like stuff that we needed. It was just fun like, it was just it's important to, it's scary, but it's like that's and also the last summer that you'll have at home before you go to uni. It's just like you're saying so yeah, spend a lot of time with friends. But also I booked to my halls, which was another thing that I that was important to do that summer. But and just getting that over and done like over and done with.

And then yeah, it was, yeah

Erin:

I think it was important to enjoy it at the same time. Although, you've got to prepare for things. You do still have to celebrate as well.

Millie:

Yeah, of course, yeah, it's exciting. It's like also it's a really good achievement to get yourself that. (**Shannon:** *Yeah It's an amazing achievement*). It's really important to celebrate yourself. You did that, but also being on top of things like, you know, getting ready and making lists and stuff like that. That's also important.

Shannon:

Yeah. Make a packing list like that is the biggest piece of advice I can ever give anyone make a packing list .And you will still forget things, even if you've listed everything, you'll

always forget something, but.

Erin:

Yeah.

Shannon:

Try and be as organised.

Millie:

The amount of stuff that I bought that was just not needed and like just the amount of stuff I didn't bring that was so needed. Just.

Shannon:

The amount of clothes. And I'm like, why do I have so much clothes?

Millie:

Literally and I'm still buying more like it says.

Shannon:

Yes. Still buying more! Yeah, of course, yeah.

Erin:

Yes. I was kinda similar to you, Shannon. I was on a trip with my friends for my birthday and I remember we were out in this bar and I got like a text message that I got into it. (**Shannon:** *Happy birthday, what a present*). Like goodness, I've gotten to you like, no way and you're all so happy because the same they were either sort of in the third year of uni or in full time jobs. So they were like, so happy and that made like sort of the weekend even better than it would have been. Yeah. And then for me, it wasn't as exciting. I quit my job, which was exciting. But then there's kind of all that stuff. Go through paperwork and, and all that not so fun stuff. And then finding a job was really important for me. I had to had to get on that. Yeah. But I think kind of balancing it is getting yourself organised but still celebrate at the

same time because it is a really big achievement that you're getting into.

Millie:

Yeah, totally it's important not to forget that.

Erin:

Well, yeah. And I also, I really loved buying stationery and stuff, that was my favourite thing.

Shannon:

There was a lot of stationary shopping, things like I do every single year like, even though I'm in third year now, like, yes, I do want glittery gel pens. And I do want a cute pencil case...

Erin:

Just looking for like deals on anything I could get like laptops. And all that kind of stuff. Really fun.

Shannon:

That lovely, lovely student discount. One of the best bits about being in uni honestly is that student discount.

Erin:

Half the time that I shout about it.

Shannon:

You've got to.

Erin:

So Shannon, in the first episode of the podcast, you mentioned that you moved from Aberdeen, so you moved into halls as you've mentioned. And So what was that like?

Shannon:

So I didn't live in halls in Edinburgh. I moved straight into a flat here, but before I came to uni here I was in College in Aberdeen and I lived in halls there, so that was definitely an experience. So I was I was 18/19. I think it's a fantastic thing for whether you're in college, university, whatever to do, because this is often when you go into halls.

This is your first experience of living alone and so you get to know what it's like to live with other people and also how to live independently, like you have to cook for yourself and clean for yourself and get yourself organised for classes and things like that.

You don't have your mum and dad telling you to do your homework or make your bed, that kind of thing. And so I think, especially for people who have never lived alone before, I think it's a really great.

UM, it's also really great because you'll be put in with people from the same year as you, but they could be in totally different subject areas. Yeah. And I think that's really cool just to like learn more from them because it's people you probably wouldn't have passed otherwise. And then so when I came to Edinburgh and I moved straight into a private rented flat and just because I was slightly older and I knew I didn't want to live with people who had never lived alone before, that's just a personal choice for me.

Yeah, that was definitely a good experience. But a big learning process if you are moving to Edinburgh, the housing market can be a wee bit tricky. And so you've got to be quick with flats.

So I would say for anyone looking into private rent, be as quick as you can, get on as many websites as you can, and also don't think that you have to live smack bang in the middle of the city centre. Like that was one I definitely realise is there's so much different types of transport here where it's buses, trams, trains or if you drive and so you. Like I live on the outskirts of Edinburgh, kind of near the Sighthill campus, but I still get to campus really easily. But yeah, I would say definitely be organised with looking at flats and things like that.

Millie:

Yeah. So my experience with halls while I'm still in halls now, but. So I'm met my flatmates on Facebook before I came, which was I think, a really big thing because we kind of like made a group chat and then it felt like way less scary because it's quite nerve wracking thing to move into. (*Erin: yeah, yeah*). Actually, when you never lived alone and you're moving with people that you've never met, but just to even just know their names or their

faces was so reassuring, like we didn't meet them all. Obviously some people just don't like. They're not on Facebook or whatever.

Yeah, I met a couple of them on the first day but. I'm really lucky I get on really well with my flatmates and we're really close.

But it's not always gonna be like that. And I think just being civil is an important thing, you know, you're gonna find friends no matter what, and they don't have to be your flatmates. But in my case, it was like that. We just gone really well. But a big part of that was just meeting them on Facebook or something like that and just kind of getting to know each other a little bit.

But yeah, also when we first moved in, we did a lot of things together as a flat like we did. We went to the golf range and we did that. We went to the cinema, we went into town a lot, just like bonded. It's it's it's fun as well. At the end of the day like it's scary and like you say your mum's not there anymore. To make your bed or. You know not specifically make your bed, but yeah.

Just getting used to being on your own and there there will be things that people, everyone lives differently and everyone comes from different backgrounds. And everyone's gonna like live differently. And it can clash sometimes, you know. But yeah, just it's important to just embrace it. And like I do value my own space. A lot of the time. But that doesn't mean that I don't enjoy halls because it's actually like you don't.

Just living in halls doesn't mean that you constantly have to be in the kitchen socialising like you got a room for a reason, like you can be as private as you want and still live in halls. And if you're more introverted it it can still work. And but yeah, my my experience with it was really positive, but I was really lucky that I've got on really well with them.

Erin:

I think even if you don't have kind of straight away a positive experience within halls it's not going to last forever.

Millie:

No exactly

Erin:

Which and I know I personally didn't live in halls, but I'm really thankful for halls cause I've made friends through my friends at uni that lived in halls and they had friends that they lived with. So that was really important.

But even then, there was a mix of people. So I had some friends that are introverts and never left their room at halls and then other ones that socialise with their whole group, which is really important. And I think that was quite big for me because I still live at home.

But that still had quite a big impact on my friendships that I have here and even coming into uni, but also you mentioned Facebook as well. So before we started there was a group chat made with everyone in our course which I think made coming in on the first day so much easier and just cause you know like oh, I remember that person's name and that's them over there or and kind of made you settle in a little bit more which was nice.

Millie:

Yeah, yeah.

Shannon:

I think it's definitely really important as well. I get this a lot from like parents and stuff on campus tours as they ask like, Oh my kid isn't moving into halls, are they still going to get the university experience, of like going out with friends and things like that just as they want to live at home as, like, absolutely, like, just because you're not living in halls? Exactly. Yeah it's all about what you make it. You make friends through your course or through societies, through friends of friends who live in halls like you, were saying like you don't have to live in halls if you don't want to. But I do think it is a fantastic experience for if you've never lived alone before.

Millie:

it's great, but as well it's important to note that it's not necessary to have lol the university experience. And like you said, you made friends with people from halls and I know so many people who commute, but I'm really good friends with them and it's not the main part of uni. It's like it's completely what you make it. But yeah, like you say it's a great experience. If that's for you. But for me it wasn't even an option to not because I live in Brighton. It was obviously easier for you.

It's that. Yeah, it's it is expensive as well. And it's like if it makes sense for you to commute, then do it like it doesn't. It's if or even if you just know that you're gonna have a better time staying at home. Do that like, it's just do what you what feels right but yeah, you can totally have the same experience.

Erin:

Like. Absolutely, yeah. There's some things like don't get me wrong. I was jealous sometimes. I was like I wanna move out. And I really want to like live that sort of independent life. But then I was like, OK, well I need to do something about that and actually go out with people that live in halls and stuff and sort of get a little kind of taster of what that's like. So if you want something, you just have to go for it and actually put the effort into sort of...

Shannon:

Draw up that pros and cons list. Yeah, I'll never say no to a pros and cons list if there if it is for you. If you want to live with people that you don't know. And obviously it depends on things like location and finances and things like that. But yeah, it's it can be a great decision for you or it can be a great decision to stay at home. It's whatever works for you. But it is genuinely, uni is what you make of it and who you'll meet people outside of halls too? Yeah, yeah, either way.

Millie:

Yeah. So, Shannon, now that you're studying in Edinburgh, what do you enjoy about that?

Shannon:

In terms of the city, I love that there's always something to do. There's always a coffee shop to go to, always a new coffee shop to try. There's always events going on in the city. I love that there's just something to do all the time. I can never get bored here, which I think is what I really enjoy about.

In terms of studying in Edinburgh, I love that we have 3 campuses. Umm. I use all three of their libraries. Like I said, I live close to the Sighthill campus so I'll use their library a lot of the time, but then I have classes at Craiglockhart and Merchiston so I can study there too. I like that like I can change up my study space so much. I like that, this sounds really silly but

that there's so much public transport here, like I can go anywhere so cheaply. I can travel like over to Glasgow or wherever. I think the thing with Edinburgh is there's just so much to do in so many places to go to. Yeah, you'll never get bored here. What about you Erin?

Erin:

I really love it actually, but I having grown up just outside of Edinburgh, I just, to me, Edinburgh. Edinburgh wasn't that exciting. Yeah, but actually since I've started uni I've seen such a different side to it that I've never seen before. So even being on the Merchiston campus, Merchiston was not a place I ever would come to. Cause it was just not it's not in the city centre. So I just never thought about it, but there's actually so many coffee shops and little restaurants that I've found out that even my family have lived here their whole life have never heard of, so it was really fun actually just finding new places, and I've actually learned a lot from people that have moved here.

Which I think is really interesting because you'd think, oh, I've been here forever. I'd know everything but no it's actually people that have moved here and they are going out there and finding different places. You never kind of gone to before, which is really interesting.

Millie:

Mine was like kind of the opposite, in the sense that Edinburgh to me was like Oh my God. Edinburgh That's so cool. Yeah. So living here now it's just a dream, but. And it's exactly how I pictured it to be. And even things like. Yeah, like you say, like, coffee shops. I did this. I started this thing recently where every weekend I try a new coffee shop and it's so fun. (*Erin: Oh I love that*). It's like so many different ones and there's like, you know, you can go to Old Town, you can go to a new town.

The city itself is just amazing. Like, I feel like I haven't even discovered, like 1/4 of the city at all. Yeah, I'm just. Yeah. I mean it's it's a great experience living in Edinburgh. And if you're into going out as well, the nightlife for me is really good.

Well, so much to do always and even things like the fringe, obviously that's not in term time, but Edinburgh itself like things that the the way that they do that is is amazing.

Erin:

Yeah, yeah, I know some people that come back for uni early just come to the Fringe, cause it is that moment which is really important.

Millie:

Yeah. And also, like you say, there's it's so easy to get to Glasgow, for example, I have some friends there and I go there quite a lot. And you know, there's also. There's those always those gigs there as well. So yeah, you're always there's always something to do. But being a student specifically feels like the right thing.

Erin:

And I think finding like those coffee shops that are good to study in as well.

Millie:

Just romanticising the whole thing honestly.

Erin:

Yeah that's important.

Shannon:

I'm cannot get work done with. If I haven't bought silly little sweet treat.

Millie & Erin:

Yeah. Yeah.

Shannon:

Yeah, exactly like treat yourself.

Millie: - got to here will finish Monday

So 2 rounds of the episode, we're going to give our top tips to get ready for Uni life so. What would you guys say is your number one advice for starting uni?

Shannon:

Just to keep an open mind about everything, like you might have come from high school and been a very specific type of person who had been interested in very specific subjects or societies. That thing when you come to university, you know, no one. Which can be scary, but also such an amazing chance to have a completely clean slate.

So you can try out new sports or societies if you never tried before, you can choose your modules and maybe study something that you've never tried before. You'll meet people that you probably wouldn't have crossed paths with. So I think just keeping an open mind and taking on any opportunity that you can is so good, even if it's something you like, you try out a society and you're like, no, that's not for me.

You've tried it. And you can say that you've given it a go, and even though you might not enjoy it, you might have met someone that you end up being really good friends with. Yeah. And so.

Yeah, I think just keeping an open mind.

Millie:

I think that's really important. Yeah, uni is something that you've never done. You've never been in a situation like that before. And you also, with people like people, everyone's different, you know, you meet people that you might not get along with, but just appreciating that everyone is going to be different and just keeping that and trying things you never try, it's uni, like it's a great time to.

Erin:

Yeah. And it's an experience. It's just like in sort of 10 years, you'll probably laugh about situation you've been.

Millie:

And wish you did more if you didn't you know? It's like, yeah.

Erin:

Exactly. I think mine is kind of similar is just like I know it is scary, but don't be as scared because everyone is in the same boat. So on that first day you might be terrified.

But as soon as you speak to someone they're you realise oh, they're just as nervous as me.

Shannon:

Yeah, everyone in your class is in the same year as you. Like you're. You're all there for your first day. You're all having that class for the first time. You're all exploring the campus for the first time. Like none of you know where you're going.

Erin:

You are going to get lost.

Shannon:

You are gonna get lost! I mean, yeah, I think it's just really important to kind of learn that everyone's in the same boat. And just because you don't know something or you don't know where to go, doesn't mean you're stupid, like.

Millie:

Yeah, totally. Yeah.

Erin:

There's always someone around to help. I think it that was my one kind of fear was that. Oh, I'm just going to get lost and no one's going to help me. So there's people everywhere, like anyone from anywhere will help you if you ask them.

Shannon:

Like even if you ask another student, they're not going to mind showing you where campus is.

Erin:

Yeah, they've been there before.

Shannon:

Yeah. If anything, they're like, oh, I helped a wee fresher. That's cute.

Millie:

OK, for me there's so many things, but the home thing like for me travelling so far. I mean it was like I was worried that I was going to miss home more. To be fair, I haven't actually. But I think it's because I've sort of trained myself to think like I go home sort of like.

I'd go home at Christmas and then summer, but knowing that it's all gonna be the same when you go home. Yeah. So people who are travelling far it's it's daunting. And and I know some friends who are like, you know, they get homesick quite a lot. And that's like totally normal. And it's it's a big thing. But just to know that everything is still waiting for your home when you do go home and it's not going to change and it's like people are all on their own paths in life. Your friends are doing things you know.

And you can always go home when you want to and but also knowing that you don't have to constantly go home to to feel OK about being away because it's all going to be there when you get back, you know, it's going to be there your like siblings, your friends are still gonna be there.

It's like for me, it's like having two separate. It's actually quite exciting because it's when I go home, like for summer, that's a whole different thing. I'm with my friends from home. We do, yeah. And then come back here and I'm studying in Edinburgh. I think it's just like, important to embrace both sides of that. You know, it's all still going to be there for you.

When you, when you go back.

Shannon:

Think the joy of it as well is like. Technology like I am in surgery and I still FaceTime my mum every week.

Like if you if I feel a bit homesick or something like that. I know I can call my mum. Yeah. Or like I can call my friends and be like, hey, what you up to today? Like stuff like that. Like, especially if you're travelling far. *(Mille & Shannon: Yeah. Yeah)*. Yeah It's gonna be the same when you come back, but if you... that's the joys of those days.

Millie:

What to do is organise a trip home, if that's what you need to.

Erin:

Noone's gonna shame you for it.

Millie:

Not at all.

Shannon:

I think that is just like all our advice. It seems just like we're all kind of agreement. Just take that leap to do something like, I think right now probably if there's any listeners that are looking into everything, it seems like such a big thing. And it is obviously an important decision. Everything but. In a year or two, it just won't be even be on your mind. But yeah, I just. I did that. That's fine. It's not that big of a deal, yeah.

Erin:

Yeah, and it's a chance to feel really proud of yourself that you've done it.

Millie:

Yeah, totally. It's it's a great thing yeah.

Shannon:

So another question is what one item do you think every new university student needs?

Erin:

Ohh that's a good one.

Millie:

I'm going to say. This is kind of, well, it's kind of a cliché, but a mattress Topper, honestly, for if you are staying in hall . I just gotta say it like I have the best sleep of my life compared to home at uni because my mattress Topper is so good. Side point, but it genuinely like has

changed my sleep.

Shannon:

I was gonna say something really random as well but you get them. I've seen them at like Primark and stuff. Like that, like over the door hooks.

Millie: Oh, my God, yeah.

Shannon:

OK. Because like your halls will come with, like, one hook to hang up your towel and you will not realise how many jackets you've taken or scarves or whatever.

And they'll all, like, sit in a pile at least minded. And they're like, Oh my God, I need to hang these up. But I have no room in.

My wardrobe. Yeah, get the over the door hooks.

Millie:

Yeah, that's a really good one.

Erin:

Yeah. And that's helpful because you need a clean space to study. So if everything's a mess. You can't have that. You need a good sleep. If you're gonna study, so it's important.

Millie:

Yeah, also another thing is for me it was really important to like if you are staying in halls or just away from home.

Just make your room so nice. I think that's so like to to have someone that you want to go back to. Like fairy lights. Like lamps. Like the the lighting in halls is really harsh and it's not that inviting, but just fairy lights or like things from home that just makes your room like yours. For me that was really good.

Shannon:

Yeah, have some posters put up some like things on your walls like halls walls could be just very bare and a bit like sad. So yeah, yeah. Spruce it up, make it bright and colourful.

Erin:

Yeah, that's my favourite thing. I remember in firstly like going to visit all my friends and halls and I just loved their rooms because they all had like every they all had their little bit of personality in their rooms, which was really nice.

Shannon:

Yeah. Oh, I love that.

Erin:

So they're different. Nice.

Millie:

What about you Erin, what would you say?

Erin:

My one? I really struggled to think about this but all you actually need the terms in terms of coming into uni is paper and pen. Honestly, is you don't need a fancy laptop or anything. Obviously it depends on your course. Everything's here that you actually need. If you need a computer or anything, there's tonnes in the library or anything like that. So literally just paper and pen.

00:27:22 Millie:

That's a really good point actually. I forgot my laptop when I came up. Forgot it at home.

Shannon:

Noooooo.

Millie:

I mean it's the worst laptop in the world, I've got it now, but it's. Yeah, I wish I didn't even bring it up, it's so bad, but you can rent laptops at the uni so you can bring them back with you. You can have them for two weeks and that's actually like was a.

00:27:39 Millie:

Really important thing for me because I wouldn't have been able to do my work without that.

You don't need to invest in Macbooks and really expensive things. So like you said, literally pen and paper like that's all you need. And I don't even in lectures I use pen and paper and it's it's great. But yeah, you don't need the fancy equipment and so.

Shannon:

Yeah, I think it's a really great thing that Napier does is they do rent out the laptops.

Like no matter if maybe your own laptop's broken or you've left it however many miles away, you can borrow one. Or if you're not in a financial position to purchase a laptop, that's absolutely fine. That's yeah, that's the one thing I love about Napier is they want everyone to succeed no matter what financial background you're coming from, yeah.

Shannon:

Because really, I think it's so important.

Erin:

Yeah. And I think also just another one is a calendar. Or even a digital, even if it's on your phone. Or use the outlook calendar that you get with your uni e-mail just to keep your life organised so you know when your classes are. You know if you've got like any clubs on that day or whatever, just keep you organised so then you know you're going to actually turn up to class on time.

Millie:

Yeah, it can be overwhelming with the amount of stuff you have to do, but yeah calendar is a really good one.

Shannon:

100 percent, 100%

Millie:

Yeah, absolutely. In one place, yeah.

Shannon:

Anyone who works in the student ambassador bit knows I am such a busy person. I attend everything. So my calendar is like colour coordinated. I need to know where I am every second of the day because I always just have so much going on. Yeah, yeah.

Get yourself a cute set of highlighters if you need to or, like, use a digital calendar.

Millie:

Yeah, I went to town the other day and I got a really cute little organiser. It was like came with a little pen and it just. Yeah, and like meal planner and stuff as well. And I was like that.

Shannon:

Oh, I love. I love a meal planner. That's that's a really good tip. If you are moving out for the first time, you will not realise how much food costs. It's things like like cheese. I don't know realise how expensive cheese was. Mental... so yeah.

Erin:

Yeah, a lot of friends, you know, have unique sort of eating plans that they have and meal plans because that was one thing they struggled with at the start was what would they eat and every day would they would eat the same thing. Yeah. So definitely look into that.

Millie:

Yeah. So finally, what would you guys say was your sort of highlights for the first year?

Shannon:

My first year was when we founded Book Club, which is now I'm the Society president. But that first year was when it was founded and I was on the committee that first year. It's always such a lovely memory for me. I was part of like, the events team for that.

I'll always promote Book Club about everything at Napier. But yeah, I think just being part of that founding group was so lovely because that's where I've met so many of my university friends. I've probably never would have met. Another highlight, honestly, just moving to Edinburgh and being so independent because like when I lived in Aberdeen, all my family were like maybe 1/2 an hour drive away. They weren't far away and so.

Even though I was living on my own, I didn't truly feel independent because I knew I could just pop back home if anything, like if I needed anything. So coming to Edinburgh and being like right, this is it. Like I got to do everything for myself. It was so exciting and and daunting. Absolutely daunting.

But I think just being able to get into that routine and doing things myself for the first time and like going out to coffee shops on my own to study and like romanticising your study and it's so important. But yeah, I think those are definite highlights for me. And then looking back and like, oh, I was so young and like I was so nervous. But it's such a nice thing to look back on.

Erin:

Yeah I think I'm quite similar, but I think making friends was the one big thing. I just in my head I was like, I'm not going to make friends cause. Yeah..

Millie:

You always think that and you always will.

Erin:

And you always will. Yeah, everyone has friends because you you always find someone that you sort of like navigate towards, even if they're not in your course, you will meet someone through something and whether it is through the book club or or something like that so that I think I was really happy about that after first year. I was like, oh, I've actually, like sort of made a little like, yeah, maybe a little community within, like, my own little life of just.

Yeah. Yeah. Having other people around me, which is really nice fun.

Millie:

I think for me. I mean, it wasn't long ago to be fair, but freshers week was so fun. That's that's something you should just embrace. If yeah, if that's your thing. But even like, it doesn't mean going out every night there. So there were so many events you could do there was. Like puppy Yoga, there was like... .

Shannon:

I went to puppy yoga I love that

Millie:

And they did like a showing of Mamma Mia at the three sisters, and outside. It was so nice. And just so many events. It doesn't have to be just going out. Also, going out was fun but.

Yeah, just all the little events and just the excitement. Honestly of like starting uni. It was scary, but once you were there, like actually this was it, this was fine. Like all those nerves you had before going. It was like, oh, no, I'm here now and it's OK. And I'm gonna make friends and. There's so many things I can be part of. And it was just such an exciting experience and just having fun.

And I think that's the main thing of all of it is. Like not to let it get you down. University is going to probably be the most likely the best years of your life and it's a fun thing, and I think just embracing being open to things and being open to change, but and meeting new people. But just it's so exciting. Yeah. Just to like realise the fact that you've you should be so proud of yourself for making it that far and also it's a really exciting thing.

Erin:

Yeah, because the first year is kind of the the scariest and especially socially, it's kind of that, that scary moment, but. Yeah. Once you get through 1st year you're, you're done.

Shannon:

Yeah. Yeah. Like, I think the thing I was thinking about earlier was like looking back to when I started high school, when you're, like 12 years old and you're in that exact same position as you are when you start first year at uni.

You don't know where you're going. You might have classes you've never tried before and you don't know if you're gonna make friends. You felt that at like, 12 years old, starting school and it's just that same again, but you ended up getting through high school, making friends, finding subjects you enjoyed, figuring out where to go. It's exactly the same.

Millie:

And most of the time you find yourself looking back like I wish I could go back to that time. And you're just you're living in it now. So just embrace it.

Erin & Shannon:

Yeah, exactly.

[Outro] Millie:

So thank you very much everyone for tuning in and thank you to Shannon for joining today's discussion. We hope you've enjoyed this series of the Find Your Uni podcast, and that you've had some useful advice and tips along the way.

We wish you all the best of luck with finding your uniq wherever that may be, and if you do choose Edinburgh Napier. See you on campus in September.