

# COLLECTIVE

STORIES  
FROM YORK  
2024



UNIVERSITY  
*of York*



university



green campuses



expert faculties



welcoming colleges



award-winning schools, centres and departments



courses to choose from

**=10<sup>th</sup>**

for research quality

out of 155 UK universities in the *Times Higher Education's* ranking of the latest Research Excellence Framework results (2021)

**94%**

in work or further study within 15 months of graduating

Latest HESA Graduate Outcomes Survey (2019/20, UK graduates)

**=7<sup>th</sup>**

in the UK

**=26<sup>th</sup>**

in the world for sustainability

QS World University Rankings (2024)

**15<sup>th</sup>**

*The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide (2024)*

**=17<sup>th</sup>**

*Complete University Guide (2024)*

**19<sup>th</sup>**

*Guardian University Guide (2024)*



Shortlisted University of the Year

Times Higher Education Awards (2023) and *The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide (2024)*

**6<sup>th</sup>**

in the UK for gender equality

*Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (2022)*



3 gold  
4 silver  
14 bronze

Athena Swan awards, recognising our commitment to gender equality in higher education

# STORIES FROM YORK

## A new course. A new city. A new life.

Starting university can feel like the beginning of a new chapter. Maybe it's your first visit to York. Maybe it's your first time in the UK. Maybe you're coming back to a place you know well. You'll meet new people, make new friends and share unforgettable experiences.

Every journey is unique and each student has a different story to tell. Covering every

aspect of life here would be impossible. Instead we've asked just some of our students to share their perspectives on university life, from studying to sports and societies.

We hope these stories give you a sense of the people, the community, the spirit of our university. And perhaps inspire you to write your next chapter at York.

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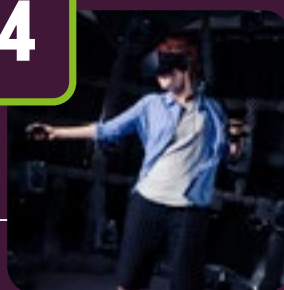
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# FINDING POWER

Power can take many forms. It's something we hear about all the time: the power to do good; the power to bring change; the power to improve lives.

For many, it's what university life is all about.

## The big mission

At York, we talk a lot about 'public good', and how our students and staff have used their time here to feed into something bigger. It's there, baked into our history. It's there in our future, embedded into our strategy. The people of York show examples of public good everywhere, in our city and beyond, with our students so often at the forefront. It's what defines us, and is a constant source of pride.

Let's talk about it.

## A closer look

"I'm from London, born in Canada and a proud Nigerian, so I'm culturally rounded to say the least. I'm a big believer in sharing my experience, speaking up,

making sure those around me are being seen."

Phoebe, alongside pursuing a career in medicine, performing music, playing rugby and producing radio shows, also finds the time to be an active member of York's Student Expert Panel.

The panel is a collaborative group co-run by the University and the Students' Union. It brings together students from diverse backgrounds to act as advisors, especially in relation to inclusivity.

They make sure that real lived experiences and diverse student views are heard when new ideas and projects are being created. They push York to go further and be bolder in its ambition.

The panel trades perspectives and shares experiences,

**"PUBLIC GOOD, TO ME, MEANS A PLACE THAT SUPPORTS STUDENTS, EQUIPS THEM TO IMPACT THEIR WORLD AND GENERATION - BUT ALSO ACKNOWLEDGES THAT WE'RE FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, CULTURES, RACES."**

Phoebe  
MB BS Medicine



York's Student Expert Panel

making sure all voices are equal. It gives students power, and a sturdy platform to shape the shared values of the University community.

"Safety for people to ask questions, to learn without judgement or shame, is so important and necessary," explains Phoebe. She encourages members to think, "Actually, I may not be from where you're from, but I can still understand what you've been through. And even if we don't agree, we can still coexist."

## Why it matters

'Now more than ever.' Another phrase we see everywhere, and it's not hard to see why. It's often easy to feel discouraged by the state of the world, and at the hostility and division that get in the

way of solving our shared crises. The chance to discuss diverse views with kindness, the safety that Phoebe describes, is essential. Any effort to encourage inclusivity, and push for the fairest world possible, is something to celebrate.

We celebrated Phoebe's commitment to the cause at our recent Inclusive Impact Awards, hers being just one of the inspirational stories of support that York writes every day. The event looked back at work done so far, forward to the work left to do, and asked how we can all take our kindness further.

Every year, the York community grows, and so does our potential for good. Every new student joining us brings with them new perspectives to share,

new ideas to show, new opportunities to find power, and to shape whatever lies ahead. As Phoebe herself says, "Now's the time to make it bigger, better, in newer ways."



Phoebe receives her Inclusive Impact Award

Explore stories of York's public good: [york.ac.uk/strategy-stories](http://york.ac.uk/strategy-stories)





# BRIGHT IDEAS

Led by the University, York Festival of Ideas is built on a passionate belief in the power of ideas to transform lives. For over a decade, the Festival has brought people together to educate, entertain and inspire.

Each year, world-class speakers come together, in the city and online. With dozens of free events, including talks, exhibitions, music, films, guided walks, family-friendly activities and more, York Festival of Ideas offers something for everyone to enjoy.

Discover more about our annual Festival of Ideas at [yorkfestivalofideas.com](http://yorkfestivalofideas.com)

Watch some of the great talks from our 2023 event:



**Michael Morpurgo**  
Author, poet and playwright

"I've been involved for years now with the wonderful York Festival of Ideas. Right from the start I knew it was special, unique even! An extraordinary variety of events and all done with a wonderful spirit of openness. I didn't realise to begin with that the Festival was open to all, that coming to see or hear or watch did not depend on being able to afford it.

Everyone comes because they want to be there, they are interested and ready to learn. I love that! I keep coming back because that spirit of openness endures. And because I love York and the University, and the Minster too!"



**"AN EXTRAORDINARY VARIETY OF EVENTS AND ALL DONE WITH A WONDERFUL SPIRIT OF OPENNESS."**

**"YORK IS ONE OF MY ALL-TIME FAVOURITE CITIES, SO I WAS DELIGHTED TO BE INVITED BACK."**



**Tracy Borman**  
Author, historian and broadcaster

"York is one of my all-time favourite cities, so I was delighted to be invited back to the Festival of Ideas. I have taken part in the Festival before, and every single time it has been a wonderful experience. It is always brilliantly organised and promoted, and this year's was particularly special because it involved so many University of York students as volunteers.

The audience profile was much broader than at many history events, and included a high number of students and younger people, many of whom were aspiring historians, so I hope it provided them with some inspiration for their future careers."



# WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

**In James College, overlooking the lake, you might stumble upon Scoop. The Student Co-operative society, Scoop for short, aims to make food more affordable – and better for the planet.**

## York's Student Co-operative

Scoop was founded over a decade ago, and has since become a staple for sustainable shopping on campus. It's ideal for those looking to purchase ethically sourced, local goods at wholesale prices. It is also a fantastic way to manage your budget and reduce food waste, as most products are sold unpackaged, so you can take exactly as much as you need.

"The shop is open to everyone – staff, students and members of the public," says Darla, the society's chair. "If you become a member then you get 10% off our produce too," which can lead to some pretty amazing savings.

"The majority of the products we stock are vegan, which are typically more sustainable than animal products. They're also very accessible – almost everyone can eat vegan food," Darla tells us, as she discusses the impact of food consumption on society and the planet. Reducing the distance food travels from farm to plate is a key way to help: "We source many of our products locally, like our unique veg boxes from the Organic Pantry in Tadcaster."

As well as food, you can pick

up handmade goods, spices, soaps and much more from the shop.

## Sustainability is for everyone

The Scoop team firmly believes that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, can live more sustainably. "Zero-waste shops can be quite expensive, which is a shame," says Darla. "We sell all of our stuff at wholesale prices, and people are like, 'Wow, it's so cheap!'"

A current focus for the team is expanding access to ethical shopping. "We are hoping to put in a path that goes up to the shop window, to make it easier for wheelchair users to reach us," says Darla.

## One vision

Scoop is supported by the University and the Students' Union. It's just one part of York's drive for sustainability, with an ambitious goal to become carbon-neutral by 2030. Staff, students and the community are helping to embed sustainable thinking at all levels, from solar panels installed on campus, to a reusable cup scheme which has saved over 1 million single-use cups from landfill.

"In terms of universities in the UK," says Darla, "York's on the right track."



**Find out more about sustainability at York:**  
[york.ac.uk/sustainability](https://york.ac.uk/sustainability)



**Explore hundreds of student societies:**  
[york.ac.uk/societies](https://york.ac.uk/societies)



# GIANT DREAMS FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION





**After reading an article by a York academic, Rokeebat was inspired to develop her knowledge. Quality education is a gift she wants to pass on to others.**

**This is her story.**



### Where it all began

Rokeebat grew up with her four siblings in southwest Nigeria. Sometimes known as the Giant of Africa, Nigeria is the continent's largest country by population.

She describes Nigeria as "a beautifully diverse country rich in culture, and endowed with some of the most intelligent people who wake up every day to be the best version of themselves, despite limited resources."

She explains, "While I've been very lucky, there are lots of children out of school. Some students sit on the floor to study, and many schools don't have access to water. Nigeria also has one of the highest rates of unemployed graduates, due partly to the large number of courses which don't align with the needs of industry." This is something she wants to change.

On completing her undergraduate degree, Rokeebat wanted a deeper,

more advanced experience to help her achieve her goals. She realised she needed to gain a global perspective: "It was time to go international!"

### A happy accident

Sifting through university websites, Rokeebat stumbled across a paper titled: 'How much does degree choice matter?' by Dr Jack Britton from York's Department of Economics and Related Studies. She explains, "With graduate unemployment so high in Africa, I found this paper extremely relatable. I was truly inspired and had a real desire to learn under Jack's guidance."

Rokeebat applied to the MSc Economics and managed to secure York's 'Be Exceptional' scholarship. She says, "For me, it was worth more than the money, it was a validation of my dreams. If I am viewed worthy of this scholarship, then I must be doing something right."

**"I'D ALREADY GOT EVERYTHING I COULD OUT OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AT HOME. IT WAS TIME TO GO INTERNATIONAL."**

Rokeebat  
MSc Economics



### Learning from the best

Rokeebat is now happily settled into life at York and delighted to have Jack supervising her project. "It's been amazing," she smiles. "The teaching at York is inclusive, intellectually intense and modern. The lecturers are great teachers, diligent and welcoming."

Jack says, "I thoroughly enjoy teaching students like Rokeebat who have incredible drive and passion for learning. My course aims to equip them with the tools and skills they need to make a real difference in people's lives. I'm sure Rokeebat and her peers will go on to achieve great things."

### Next steps

When asked about her future plans, she laughs: "I just want to survive this week!"

"Ultimately I want to return to academia because I like learning and teaching. If I can help improve education in Nigeria, I'd like to do that. Maybe start a non-profit school, be on the Board of Education, or start an NGO to support students.

"I'm also considering setting up an empowerment series to share my educational experiences. I want to let people know that education gives you the luxury of choice."

**Find out more about life as an international student at York:**  
[york.ac.uk/international](http://york.ac.uk/international)



**Discover more about our curiosity-driven, action-oriented research:**  
[york.ac.uk/research](http://york.ac.uk/research)



**Explore scholarships, studentships and bursaries to help fund your studies:**  
[york.ac.uk/funding](http://york.ac.uk/funding)







# CREATIVE LICENCE

Whether you're working on an academic project, developing an original idea, or just having fun with emerging technology, York's makerspaces offer opportunities to drop in and get creative. With 3D printers and scanners, high-end PCs, cameras, podcast studios and more, the only limit is your imagination!

Discover more chances to get creative at [york.ac.uk/creativity](http://york.ac.uk/creativity)



## Jasmina BSc Interactive Media

"While interning in the Creativity Lab, I used a software called Unity to create a 3D tour of the facilities on offer. I had learned about Unity on my course, but using it in a real-life context was really valuable. It was nice to build up my skills in a low-pressure environment with lots of creative freedom.

My course is unique in that there are many different routes you can take career-wise. My main interest is in creative writing and

storytelling. Through working with the team, I've been able to discover how my writing can be applied in a modern context. They have helped me to explore technologies that are making an impact on entertainment and screen industries.

There's a real emphasis on inclusivity – it's a space for everyone and anyone! My course has quite a small cohort, so it has been a nice opportunity to get to know new people around York."



**"THERE'S A REAL EMPHASIS ON INCLUSIVITY – IT'S A SPACE FOR EVERYONE AND ANYONE."**

**"THEY ARE HELPING ME TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION!"**



## Dushyant MSc Digital Archaeology

"For one of my assessments I decided to produce a virtual reality (VR) exhibition, based on archaeological finds in my department's collection. I had a vague idea of what I wanted to achieve, but the Creativity Lab team really helped to solidify my plans. I didn't have much experience with VR, but they guided me through the software and processes I needed to use.

One of the best things about the Lab is interacting with people from different

backgrounds who all bring varying perspectives. It started with me just wanting to see what the gadgets were. Now, it's helping with my networking - I'm getting to know people from all sorts of industries.

I am currently working on my final dissertation project with the team, exploring unique and interesting ways of teaching people about archaeology. They are helping me to push the boundaries of science communication!"



# FINDING SANCTUARY

**Nazia and Mamoon left Afghanistan in the aftermath of the fall of Kabul in 2021. As asylum seekers, they had no access to UK student finance. Through York's Equal Access Scholarships they have been supported to study for a better future.**

Discover what it means to be a **University of Sanctuary**:  
[york.ac.uk/sanctuary](http://york.ac.uk/sanctuary)



Find out more about **finance and funding**:  
[york.ac.uk/funding](http://york.ac.uk/funding)



## Mamoon PhD Politics

"Afghanistan is a country in constant turmoil. Despite this, my parents' primary goal was to get me and my brothers to school. We wanted to get over poverty, stand on our own feet, and be self-reliant. The only way to accomplish this was through education. 'Your education is a treasure,' my father constantly remarked. 'It's a never-ending wealth.'

As an adult, working for the Afghan government, I was still keen to continue my studies. In addition to my challenging job, I began an online Masters degree in public administration and international development with the University of York.

I had always wanted to experience student life on campus. In 2014 I was awarded a Chevening Scholarship to pursue a second Masters degree at York, this time in international relations.

Returning to Afghanistan after my MA, I felt empowered to help rehabilitate and develop my country. I joined CARE International, leading a job creation programme that served over 3,500 people in four provinces. By early 2021, we had expanded into three more provinces.

Then, after 20 years of fighting, Afghanistan surrendered to the Taliban. Chaos, fear and worry were prevalent throughout the country, particularly in the capital. Over 150,000 people

were evacuated from Kabul in ten days. However, thousands of others were left behind. My family and I were among those who didn't get out. I felt absolutely confused and hopeless.

Then I received a message from the University of York's Graduate Research School, offering information and assistance to safely depart Afghanistan. We drove to Pakistan passing through many Taliban checkpoints. After several weeks' journey, we arrived safely in York.

I'm now in the second year of my PhD, and the experience has been incredible. My supervisors are subject experts and provide me with amazing assistance. The entire Department of Politics and International Relations is fantastic, collaborative and kind. I've had fresh opportunities to conduct research, network and develop new skills. I consider it a privilege to attend seminars, workshops and conferences.

Studying at York has been more than just finishing a degree. I hope that my PhD will allow me to investigate the problems and discover the opportunities of governance in post-war countries. Knowledge, it is true, is power."

**Read Mamoon's full story at [york.ac.uk/finding-sanctuary](http://york.ac.uk/finding-sanctuary)**

## Nazia LLM International Human Rights Law and Practice

"I was born in Pakistan, as a refugee. From my childhood, I didn't have access to many basic human rights. We were living with cousins, and I wasn't allowed to go to school.

My father was a journalist, and supportive of women's rights, but he was away a lot, covering the war in Afghanistan. When we moved back to Kabul, he stood with me and fought against cultural norms to get me an education.

In 2016, I was studying law at the American University of Afghanistan when it was attacked. I lost my teacher and fellow students in front of my eyes. I got severely injured and didn't know if I would survive. Fortunately, I was given another chance.

The attack confirmed my belief in the right to education. Nobody should be attacked or killed just because they are studying. I had to take a stand. My mother wasn't happy that I was going back to the same university, but if I gave up, it would be like they won and I lost.

I graduated in 2019, and worked at the State Ministry for Parliamentary Affairs and then with the UN. I was part of the young and educated generation of Afghanistan. We wanted to build our country. We wanted to learn. I applied to study at York.

Not long after, the

government collapsed. When the Taliban took over, their main target was women. Every day, they would announce new decrees that would restrict women's rights. Leaving my home was the only option left for me.

I received a call from York, offering me an Equal Access Scholarship. It was like magic that changed and still is changing my life. At the time when I had lost everything, every hope, I was given another chance to get out. Everyone was so supportive. I was shocked when I would see people's generosity, people's kindness towards me.

Now I'm working as a case worker for the British Red Cross. My job involves helping Ukrainian refugees settle in to the UK: registering with the doctor, accessing accommodation, applying for English courses.

I'm planning to do a PhD, researching human rights violations committed in Afghanistan. There are cases not prosecuted, not investigated, and the perpetrators living life with impunity.

I'm not the only girl who has had her rights taken from her, and not the only one to find a voice, a strength to fight back. Every woman can."

**Find out more about support available at [york.ac.uk/funding](http://york.ac.uk/funding)**



# ECONOMIES OF SCALE

Indonesia has the world's fourth largest population. As a policymaker, I need to assess evidence to decide how best to tackle the complex needs of a growing economy.

By studying at York, I've given myself the best chance to learn how.

**Rafili**  
MA Public Administration and Public Policy

Discover resources for shaping your career:  
[york.ac.uk/futures](https://york.ac.uk/futures)



## Change is on the horizon

"After working as a government official in Indonesia for almost a decade, I saw the need for change. Financial decisions were being based on political ideology – we need a more evidence-based approach. As we're living in an era of cutting-edge technology, there are no excuses for not using the data at our fingertips.

Indonesia is the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world, so it needs to develop expertise in both conventional and Islamic finance. The UK is a global economic centre with a high standard of education, home to many leading voices in the Islamic finance industry.

## Next stop: UK

I had offers from six UK universities, but the course at York offered the best opportunities to enhance my knowledge of evidence-based public policy. It's also one of the safest city-based universities in the UK, which was ideal as I wanted to be somewhere my family could join me.

My department is a supportive community. When I was sorting out visas, the staff put in a lot of effort to make sure that I had everything I needed. I can ask my tutors for assistance at any time – they are just an email away.

The standard of writing is much higher in the UK compared to Indonesia, so academic skills sessions are invaluable to me. When I go back to Indonesia, I'll be drafting policies that need close attention to detail, so the ability that I've developed will be essential.

## A vision for the future

My experience at York has been life-changing. Studying here has changed my behaviour, attitude and beliefs about my career. I've realised that preparation is key – not only in academic work, but also in life. Having a plan has helped me stay on the right track and push myself to make sure I achieve my goals.

I now have a clear vision for my career. First, I plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the economic and financial policies that were in place during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. I'll also create a taskforce to push forward data-driven policy making. In five to ten years, I want to be Head of Division in my ministry. I'll focus on using demographic data to make sure that we create the right policies, in the right places, for the right people.

My long-term goal is to become Indonesia's Coordinating Minister of Economic Affairs. I want to engage in international economic policy making and propel my country onto the world stage. The knowledge and experience I gain at York will help me play my part."



**"I NOW HAVE A CLEAR VISION FOR MY CAREER."**



# READY, STEADY... THESIS!



Laura Wiggins



Alice Wilson

**Each year, PhD students compete in presenting their research to a non-specialist audience.**

**The catch?  
The clock is ticking...**

**“IT HELPED ME TO LASER-FOCUS ON THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE OF MY RESEARCH.”**

Watch the Three Minute Thesis final at [york.ac.uk/3mt](https://york.ac.uk/3mt)



Condensing three years of research into a three-minute presentation might be the hardest thing a doctoral candidate does. The aim of the game is to educate and inspire an audience while showing the impact of your research to a panel of judges. It all comes down to a nail-biting final, with the winner going on to represent York in the national Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.

So, why do it? Laura Wiggins, York’s 2022 winner, explains:

“As a biologist, my days usually involve long experiments or lots of data analysis. Putting it all into a three-minute presentation helped me to see the value of my research project and its real-world applications. It all equates to some really neat results and an exciting story to tell.”

Laura’s project used machine learning and time-lapse imaging to track cancer cell behaviour. She used her findings to develop an app, CellPhe, which can detect cancerous cells that survive chemotherapy.

“It was great training on how to communicate complex findings to people with no scientific background. It has been a massive help when

preparing presentations for mixed audiences, and it’s a really desirable skill for employers too!”

Runner-up Alice Wilson’s sociological research looked at 33 women who designed and built tiny houses. With affordable housing in short supply, she revealed how these sustainable homes changed their lives. Alice says, “Competing in 3MT helped me to laser-focus on the single most important message of my research.”

Both Alice and Laura are now in the final stages of their doctorates. Laura has recently started a post-doctoral position at the University of Sheffield, analysing DNA-protein interactions. Alice works as a freelance journalist and author. She’s developing a specialism in AI, to which she hopes to bring a “little bit of diversity, as a queer woman with a load of opinions”.

Three Minute Thesis challenges postgraduate researchers to distil complex ideas into simple, accessible presentations. It’s an opportunity to showcase their work, and build their skills and networks. As Laura and Alice’s successes show, the benefits of participating extend far beyond the final bell.

# THE MODERN MEDIEVAL ROMANCE

A professional-turned-printmaker returns to education to pursue a lifelong love of words.

Michael Smith in Thin Ice Press, the Department of English and Related Literature's in-house printing studio.



“My passion is in the words themselves. Somebody, sometime, many years ago, wrote these words down, and now they’re talking to us again. My desire is to prise them out of their hole and make them come alive.”

These particular words are spoken by Michael Smith, an English with Creative Writing PhD student, who has just completed a two-year, part-time MA in Medieval Literatures and Languages.

A former undergraduate History student at the University of York in the 1980s, Michael is one of a growing number of people returning to higher education to find out more about a subject they feel passionate about.

“I think what surprised me with the MA was how supportive my fellow students were. Many of them were about the age of my kids. A few of my MA cohort are still friends. I thought I was going to be the old guy in the corner that no

one would talk to, but I found that just not to be the case. It was really encouraging.”

Michael had already completed a mammoth, three-year task of translating a Middle English romance, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, from scratch, so he could use quotes from it in a set of handmade greetings cards he was producing. This led to his first published book, illustrated with his own linocuts. He enjoyed the process so much he went on to produce a second book, *King Arthur’s Death*, a translation of the 14th-century *Alliterative Morte Arthure*.

Seeking to add academic rigour to his work, he asked for advice from Dr Nicola McDonald in York’s Department of English and Related Literature. She suggested he complete an MA before moving on to a PhD.

“I didn’t really know what I was going to get out of it, to be honest, or how I was going

# “SOMEBODY, SOMETIME, MANY YEARS AGO, WROTE THESE WORDS DOWN AND NOW THEY’RE TALKING TO US AGAIN.”

**Michael Smith**  
PhD English with Creative Writing



to do, having been so long out of formal education but, after two years, part time, I emerged with a distinction!”

He’s now working on his PhD, once again translating a medieval text, but this time with the additional element of performance. He is trying to understand how a modern audience perceives the medieval world through an alliterative rhyming stanzaic romance. At the end of his PhD he will have produced a book, script, academic work and performance, as well as illustrations using Thin Ice Press, the Department of English and Related Literature’s in-house printing studio.

“Part of my driving force is making these old romances intelligible to modern audiences, because they carry messages which are still hugely relevant,” he says.

“They also shine a light on the development of the English language over time. I was reading the romance *William of Palerne* recently, and the phrase ‘as dead as a doornail’ leapt out of the ancient text. I thought, ‘Wow! This is 600 years old but here is a phrase we still use today.’”

Michael chose to come back to York for a number of reasons: familiarity, a feeling of unfinished business, but above all the combination of academic rigour, creativity and medieval resources at the University which he feels is second to none.

“I wanted something that was true to me, but had the standards I was looking for. I love stepping out of the station and seeing the city walls in front of me. Coming back to York, I just feel at home.”

Find out about postgraduate study:  
[york.ac.uk/postgraduate](http://york.ac.uk/postgraduate)



Discover more about Thin Ice Press:  
[thinicepress.org](http://thinicepress.org)



# WHERE THE WILD ROSES GROW

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**RUN BY THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK STUDENTS' UNION, THE ROSES TOURNAMENT HAS A LONG HISTORY. STARTING LIFE AS A BOAT RACE, TODAY THE CONTEST FEATURES SOME 50 SPORTS, FROM AMERICAN FOOTBALL TO UNDERWATER HOCKEY.**



Roses are a pretty big deal in the North. In the 1400s, the white rose of the House of York and the red rose of the House of Lancaster fought for control of the English throne. Over five hundred years later, the rivalry lives on in Europe’s largest inter-university sports tournament.



### The road to Roses

“I don’t look like a conventional athlete. When you think of an athlete I’m not what comes to mind. I’m an international student. I’m a person of colour. I’m part of the LGBTQ community. I’m tall. I’m big. It doesn’t matter here as long as you have skill.”

Tanisha is the York Sport Union President, an elected officer of the University of York Students’ Union (YUSU). She looks after the University’s dozens of sports clubs, and aims to make sport accessible to everyone.

### This sporting life

Rewind a few years, and you’d find Tanisha’s passion for sport running just as high. “I’ve played basketball since I was eight years old. Everyone in India plays cricket. But I never got to play at a

professional level because women aren’t encouraged to participate. The whole reason I wanted to study in the UK was for sport.

“The first time I looked at York I fell in love with it. There was so much support from the teammates, the coaches, the Students’ Union. When I arrived I was stressed about joining the University Cricket Team – I had only ever played on the streets. But the club here is incredible. I have never felt so accepted.”

### The final hurdle

The barriers to participation that Tanisha faced inspired her to run for office. “I had to move out of my own country, move thousands of miles from home, to become something in sports. I don’t want other people to go through that.



# “THE ROSES TOURNAMENT BRINGS OUR WHOLE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.”

Tanisha, York Sport Union President  
BSc Psychology



“As Sports President I have the opportunity to change a lot of lives and make a lot of lives better. Sport is a community; being part of that community is a privilege and an honour. No gender, background, age, disabilities, sexual orientation, physique, physical or mental barriers should hold you back.”

This was the platform on which Tanisha was elected. “For nearly three years I dreamed of this job. It was overwhelming to have so much support.”

### Rise to the challenge

This year Tanisha will lead York’s Roses campaign against Lancaster, who’ll be fighting to retain the Carter James Trophy. “The amount of effort our teams are willing to put into the tournament is

incredible. It takes consistent training throughout the year.”

Roses couldn’t exist without the hundreds of student volunteers who support the tournament. “It brings our whole community together. It really touches my heart to see so many students cheering their friends on and supporting the University. It doesn’t matter if you’re involved in sport or not, it doesn’t matter if you’re a student or a staff member, friends or family. Everyone cares about Roses.”

Find out more about sport at York:  
[york.ac.uk/sport](http://york.ac.uk/sport)  
[york.ac.uk/roses](http://york.ac.uk/roses)



“ALL TRADITIONS HAVE TO BEGIN SOMETIME AND FOR THE UNIVERSITIES OF YORK AND LANCASTER, SATURDAY IS A HISTORIC OCCASION.”

The Yorkshire Post, 13 May 1965



# A WEEK OF FOOD AND DRINK IN YORK



**Sam**  
BA Theatre: Writing,  
Directing and Performance

One of my favourite things about studying and living in York is how many cool restaurants and cafes there are all over the city and University.

To help give you an idea of the range here, I've spent a week eating out at some of my favourites. In truth though, I've barely scratched the surface. Between the cosy cafes, indie gems and bustling food courts, there's so much to sink your teeth into!

Discover more about living in York:  
[york.ac.uk/student-life](http://york.ac.uk/student-life)



## MONDAY

There are so many cafes in York that are great to work and study in. I try to go to a new one as often as I can. Today I'm in FortyFive Vinyl Café which is, as you might have guessed, also a record store. There's a really nice atmosphere and I manage to get a lot of work done. During my well-deserved breaks I browse the shelves. I have one of their famous cheese toasties and I can definitely recommend!

## TUESDAY

I'm on campus on Tuesdays, so I go to The Link for lunch. It's a cafe in the Science Park that's run by the Uni. They serve all sorts, from broths to bao buns. Usually I go for a jackfruit bao, but today I treat myself to one of their sweet bubble waffles! They also serve Starbucks, so I pair it with an iced latte.



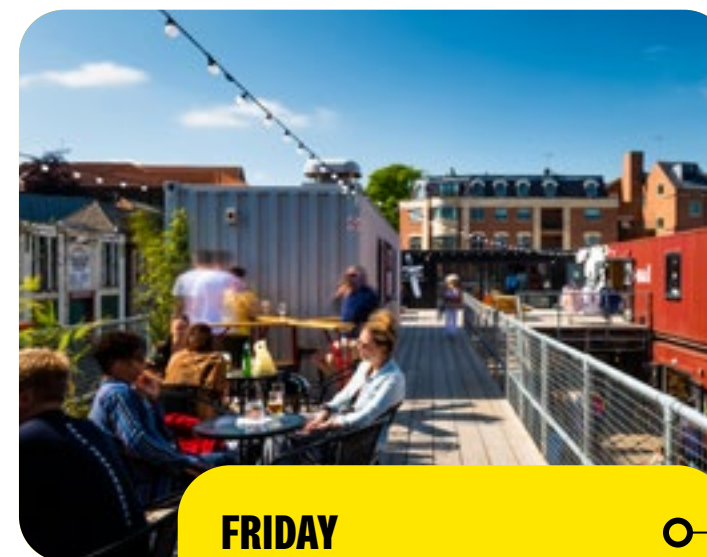
## WEDNESDAY

I've been looking forward to today: a friend and I are off to York's cat cafe, The Cat's Whiskers. They have so many cats and they're all adorable! I've made friends with Luna – one of the youngest kittens. Most of their cats are rescues too, so it's wonderful to see them settled in such a lovely home. Combining the cats with coffee and cakes makes it the perfect afternoon.



## THURSDAY

This feels like a takeaway day. My housemate and I go in together on an order for Döner Summer. They're a 100% -vegan kebab restaurant in town, and also do burgers and loaded fries. I get one of their fake chicken burgers with garlic tater tots – delicious, but a lot of food! Enough to save some for later...



## FRIDAY

Friday's a big one. I start by meeting friends for brunch at Brew and Brownie by the Museum Gardens. It's a student favourite and it's obvious why. Their breakfast options are delicious. I go for the American pancake stack with maple syrup, streaky bacon and blueberries. After brunch we split up to do some bits in town and meet again at SPARK for dinner. SPARK is a collection of shipping containers that have been upcycled into a huge food court. They have all sorts there, so everyone can get what they want. I order a vegan No Meat 'Nduja from Rad Pizza, but my friends both get chicken souvlaki from SASA, which specialises in Greek street food. A perfect way to spend the day!

**“THERE'S SO MUCH TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO!”**



# FINDING PEOPLE

What's it like to settle into the York community? We sat with three of our students to get their take on the magic of friendship.

Katrina, MSci Psychology | James, BA International Relations | Kabeer, BSc Physics

## What was your experience of arriving at York?

**Kabeer:** Moving in is surreal. One moment you're with your parents, in a car, with all your stuff, then you're surrounded by everyone you're going to spend the next year with. A new stage of life. At York, 2nd- and 3rd-Year students help you move in, make sure you don't get lost, help you make friends, attend events if needed. It really makes you feel welcome.

**James:** You usually go for your first trip into the city together, so it's not as daunting. I'd stress that there were people who didn't want to do that initially. One of our housemates didn't come to say hi until about week six. Now they live with us in our 2nd-Year house. I think, for them, it was nice to have us to talk to if they wanted to.

**Katrina:** Yeah, I came as an international student, so I arrived a day earlier than everyone else. We also had a weekly college meal, so we put time aside especially to go together as a bonding experience.

**“WE HAD EVENTS TO GET US INVOLVED, GET US TALKING. IT'S A CASUAL ATMOSPHERE, LIKE AN EXTENDED FAMILY.”**

## On that point, any top tips for food – cooking, shopping?

**James:** Oh, I can't cook at all. Starting uni can be overwhelming, so to have some meals cooked for you is really helpful. I remember our first meal, sitting with the whole block. That got me talking to more people than just my flat. If you go for catered accommodation, that's the benefit. Just don't get chips every day, like I did.

**Katrina:** An advantage of being self-catered is getting to see the dishes your flatmates are cooking.

**Kabeer:** True. You have such a variety of people who you're living with. I think in our flat, we had like six countries and cuisines. Seeing what people cooked definitely widened my ability.

**James:** We have an Italian housemate who makes pizza from scratch. It's fantastic. We made her try Greggs pizza once, and she hated it. We had a weekend tradition where one person would cook a meal for the flat, so we got to try different food each weekend.

**Kabeer:** I made my favourite, paneer, which was nice to share. It meant we were fed at weekends, so one less thing to worry about. It allowed us to celebrate the things people were good at. Even James, with his limits.

**James:** Even me.

## Let's talk sports and societies, then. How have they helped you branch out?

**Katrina:** Shout-out to Floorball. It's not a well-known sport, but big in parts of Europe and Asia. I didn't think I'd get into sports at uni – I was never sporty – but I got hooked, and now I'm part of that community. Other than that, there are plenty of unexpected societies – Sock Appreciation Society was one I wanted to try, but they stopped this year. That was sad.

**James:** My favourite would be Hong Kong Society, who've been really welcoming. I've applied for a summer abroad this year, so I'll be going there soon. It's comforting to have had a kickstart of what to expect. I'd say, 'Do a Kabeer': Join as many sports and societies as you can – you can filter it down later. Check the uni website for what's on offer. If they're not your thing, that's fine, but it's good to have different areas of interest to explore.

**Kabeer:** I've just finished as president of our College's tennis club, working with my committee to bring together events. Formals. Parties. Competitions in Durham, and Lancaster for the college varsity. We get to travel the country.

York's collegiate system lets us split popular sports into uni- and college-level clubs, so people who aren't ultra-competitive can play in a more casual setting. It's really allowed people to grow.

I'm on the committee for the Circus and Magic Society too. I tried to teach one of my housemates to unicycle, but that went disastrously.

**James:** We left them to it.

**Katrina:** Nothing broke. It's fine.

## And on the academic side – have you found yourself geeking out with those you've got to know?

**Kabeer:** Definitely. It's a big advantage, being able to talk to academics about their research, to learn what's ongoing at the leading edge of research. I want to do a Masters, possibly a PhD, and talking to them about how I can build on what they've done is really what I feed off.

I'm working for the surface and astrophysical sciences research group, with two academics and two students, trying to confirm how nuclear fusion occurs in superhot stars. It's made me one of the top 18 experts in this field, in the world. That's something you can do when you go to uni – specialise in so niche an area that you become the source of authority. You feel you're making a real difference.

Find the full interview – ducks, dreams, dinners and more at: [york.ac.uk/chips-every-day](https://york.ac.uk/chips-every-day)



# MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

Picture it: the long summer after exams is over, and at last you've arrived at university. You weren't really sure this day would come. Around you is your new room. A blank canvas. A clean slate. You might be tempted to collapse on the unmade bed and have a nap. The thought of unpacking, and organising yourself in this not-yet familiar space is far from your mind. Luckily, our students are here to help with some realistic inspo and advice.



## Bec's room Anne Lister College

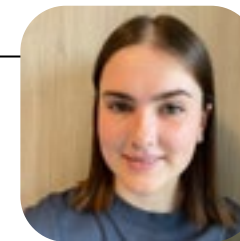
"It sounds trivial, but lighting can make a huge difference to the atmosphere in your room. I brought a small bedside lamp when I first moved in, then I got some fairy lights – together they create such a cosy feeling."



## Bec's top tip for feeling at home

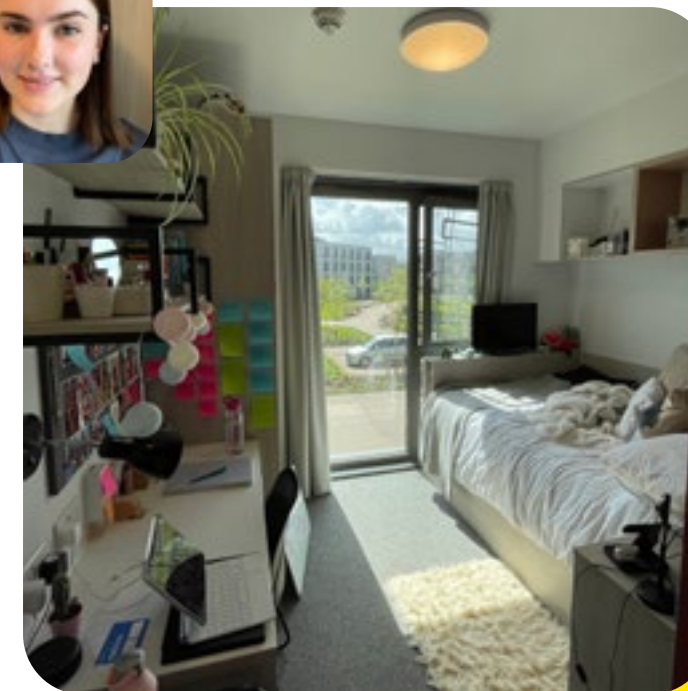
"Definitely bring some familiar things from home. I've filled the shelves with my favourite books, and put cushions on the bed to make my room cosier. Remember to not completely empty your room at home either though, you still want it to feel like it's yours when you go to visit."

Find out more about accommodation and colleges at [york.ac.uk/accommodation](http://york.ac.uk/accommodation)



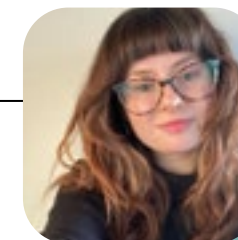
## Issy's room Anne Lister College

"I absolutely love how personal my room is to me. I decorated it in my favourite colours, with cushions and blankets from home to make it super cosy. I love looking at the pinboard above my desk, covered with photos of my friends and family."



## Issy's top tip for a homely room

"Bring plenty of decorative things, ideally from home – not only is it cheaper, but it can really help with homesickness. For me, this meant loads of pillows to make my bed extra comfy, a scented reed diffuser to make my room smell like home, and some fairy lights for soft lighting."



## Zara's room Alcuin College

"I love how my room is filled with things that remind me of all the good times I've had so far! Little things I've bought or found, presents from old and new friends, things I've made, and photographs from this year."



## Zara's top tip for making your room your own

"Try to make your room your own: pin up photos of loved ones, bring some homey bedding, bring all your different bits and bobs from your room back at home, bring your plant babies! You'll probably be surprised at just how quickly you find yourself settling into university life, and your room will swiftly start to feel like your own space."

# CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Students travel to the UK from all over the world. Over 150 countries are represented in York's diverse and inclusive campus community. No matter how far you've come, there's lots going on to make you feel at home.



**Navin**  
M Biol Genetics

"Coming to York from India to study genetics has brought me nearly 5,000 miles from home. This is how I've kept in touch with my culture."

## Faith and international societies

There are loads of societies at York celebrating world cultures and religions. I've interacted with the Hindu, British Asian, and Tamil and Mallu Societies. They offer communities full of amazing people who come together for fun, support and celebration. I've particularly enjoyed showing off my moves at the Bollywood nights!

## Comfort food

Food is a really important part of Indian culture. When I'm missing home comforts, York can provide. It has loads of great restaurants, but also a variety of international supermarkets. My favourite is Makkah International which is only a 10-minute walk from Campus West. They have a wide selection of authentic ingredients and spices, so I can always create a taste of home.

## Connected communities

York has a diverse international community so it's really easy to meet people in the same situation, or from the same country, as you. Everyone is really welcoming and it's so easy to make friends. Once I got to campus, I soon started bumping into people from different parts of India. The Indian community here is like a family, and we mix with others from all over the world."

Watch Navin's vlog on celebrating Indian culture in York:  
[york.ac.uk/indian-culture](http://york.ac.uk/indian-culture)



**Tianyu**  
MA Stained Glass Conservation and Heritage Management

"Though this is my seventh year in the UK, being away from home in China can still make me feel sentimental."

## Staying in touch

Thankfully, York is a historic and charming place, so I have successfully convinced my family to come and visit me a few times. Chatting and having video calls with my parents and younger brother is part of my weekly routine. We still share our daily stories, even though we are thousands of miles apart.

## Delightful experiences

One of the questions that I asked my interviewer (now my supervisor) was 'Are we going to be studying in King's Manor?' Studying in one of York's most attractive buildings - home to the Department of Archaeology and the Centre for Medieval Studies - has made my university life like a fairy tale. The ancient buildings are full of hidden surprises: I never get bored of pointing out the alleged 'smallest window in York' when people visit.

## Celebrating the Lunar New Year

It was a happy surprise to see the city decorated with oriental elements during the Spring Festival. Lanterns were hanging on the trees; Coney Street was decorated with a Chinese mythical creature that plays an important role in the tale of the New Year - the dragon. I used my film camera to capture this festive season and share the memories with my family and friends."

Find out more about life as an international student at York:  
[york.ac.uk/international](http://york.ac.uk/international)



# A NIGHT OUT IN YORK



**Hannah**  
Graduate Ambassador  
BSc Biology

Something I loved about studying at York was how varied the nightlife was. There are all sorts of pubs, cocktail bars and clubs, as well as some cool activities to get involved in if you don't want to drink.

The best way to give you an idea of what a night out in York is like is to bring you along with me!

Find out more about life in York:  
[york.ac.uk/city](http://york.ac.uk/city)



**18:30**

We kick off the night on campus, grabbing some food at The Courtyard, one of the bars run by the University of York Students' Union (YUSU). They do all sorts, from small bites that are ideal between lectures, to completely customisable pizzas and burgers. I go for the nachos, but we steer clear of drinks, to keep us focused and sharp for our next activity. We jump on the bus to the city centre. It runs regularly until the early hours of the morning, so it's always easy to get into town and back.



**20:00**

We're booked in for an escape room at Can You Escape. Their sessions run into the evening and they offer a student discount, which is always a major plus. We choose the medium-difficulty room, but despite taking it very seriously (some might say I'm too competitive) we only barely manage to get out!

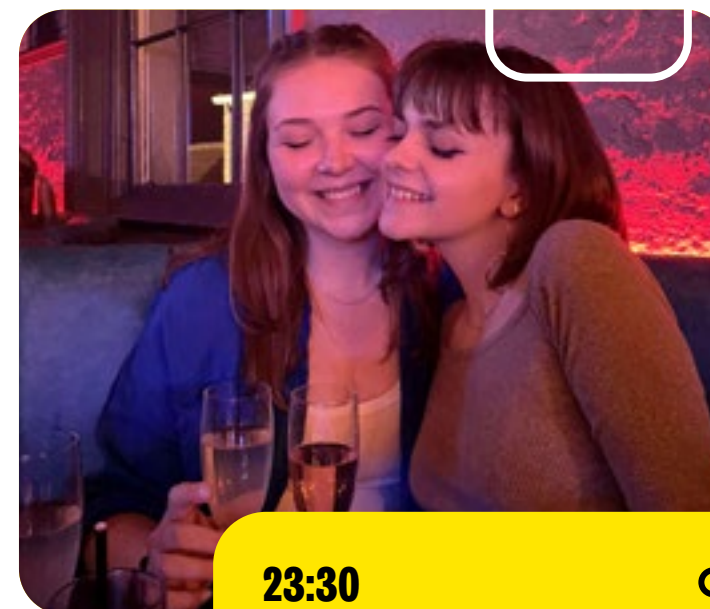
**21:15**

Next we head to some bars, starting just around the corner at House of the Trembling Madness. Don't be alarmed by the name, it's actually a really chill place to get a drink. They have all sorts of beers and ales to try, over three floors of a medieval townhouse, dating back to the 12th century. Afterwards we go to Valhalla, a Viking-themed bar near the Shambles, with live music on the top floor. We drink mead from a horn for the full Viking experience!



**22:00**

We make our way to Evil Eye for cocktails. They have the biggest menu I think I've ever seen! As well as traditional options, they also have all manner of innovative cocktails and a huge range of alcohol-free mocktails. We get here early enough to grab one of the bohemian bed seats upstairs, and lounge around chatting over our drinks.



**23:30**

After staying at Evil Eye for a while, we were ready to hit the clubs. Lots of clubs in York run student nights, and since tonight's Friday night, we head for Club Salvation's tropical-themed 'Koh Samui'. We dance to some R&B and hip-hop classics and relax on the moonlit rooftop terrace. We're there for the rest of the night before dragging ourselves out to get the late bus home.

York was recently named one of the best places for a night out in the UK, and it's also one of the safest. I don't feel worried walking by myself at night. I love going out in York because there's so much to do that every night can be different. Come and try it out yourself!

# DISCOVER LIFE AT YORK

We've covered just some of the amazing stories that our staff and students are part of. Take a step towards your next chapter.

## Our courses

Search through our degrees and find the course that's right for you. UCAS: Y50.

- [york.ac.uk/undergraduate](http://york.ac.uk/undergraduate)
- [york.ac.uk/pg-taught](http://york.ac.uk/pg-taught)
- [york.ac.uk/pg-research](http://york.ac.uk/pg-research)
- [york.ac.uk/distance-learning](http://york.ac.uk/distance-learning)

Get a taste of our teaching on a short free online course.

- [york.ac.uk/moocs](http://york.ac.uk/moocs)

## International community

Become a part of our diverse community of over 20,000 students from more than 150 countries.

- [york.ac.uk/international](http://york.ac.uk/international)

## Get to know us

Whether on campus or online, take the chance to learn more about the University and picture yourself as a student here.

- [york.ac.uk/visit](http://york.ac.uk/visit)
- [york.ac.uk/virtual-visit](http://york.ac.uk/virtual-visit)

## Accommodation

Explore our accommodation and colleges, and find your home from home.

- [york.ac.uk/accommodation](http://york.ac.uk/accommodation)
- [york.ac.uk/college-life](http://york.ac.uk/college-life)

## York life

Discover hundreds of things to do and a beautiful city to explore.

- [york.ac.uk/student-life](http://york.ac.uk/student-life)
- [york.ac.uk/city](http://york.ac.uk/city)

## Meet current students

Find out what it's really like to live and study in York from the people who know best.

- [blogs.york.ac.uk](http://blogs.york.ac.uk)
- [york.ac.uk/chat](http://york.ac.uk/chat)

## Connect with us

Get the latest news and updates, and a glimpse into life at York.

- [@uniofyork](https://www.instagram.com/uniofyork)
- [UoYstudentvlogs](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0YstUdVtVgls)
- [universityofyork](https://www.facebook.com/universityofyork)

## Getting here

### Air

There are international airports at Manchester and Leeds Bradford. York is under two hours by rail from London, so Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports are also within easy reach.

### Rail

York is on the main line between London King's Cross and Edinburgh, so trains are fast and frequent. There are also direct services from York to other major cities including Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds and Manchester.

### Car

Take the outer ring road (A64 on the south and east sides of the city, A1237 round the north and west) to the junction with the Hull/Bridlington roads (A1079/A166). From this junction, the route to the University is signposted. All public car parks on campus have reserved bays for Blue Badge holders.

### Taxi

A journey by taxi from York railway station to the University takes around 10 to 20 minutes.

### Bus

There are regular buses between the University, the city centre and York railway station.

### Bikes and scooters

You can cycle or scoot to the University from York railway station in around 15 minutes, or 20 minutes on a riverside route along cycle paths and quiet roads. Bicycles, e-bikes and e-scooters are available for hire at locations across the city and the University campus.

### Coach

You can reach York by coach from many destinations around the country. National Express buses stop at York railway station.

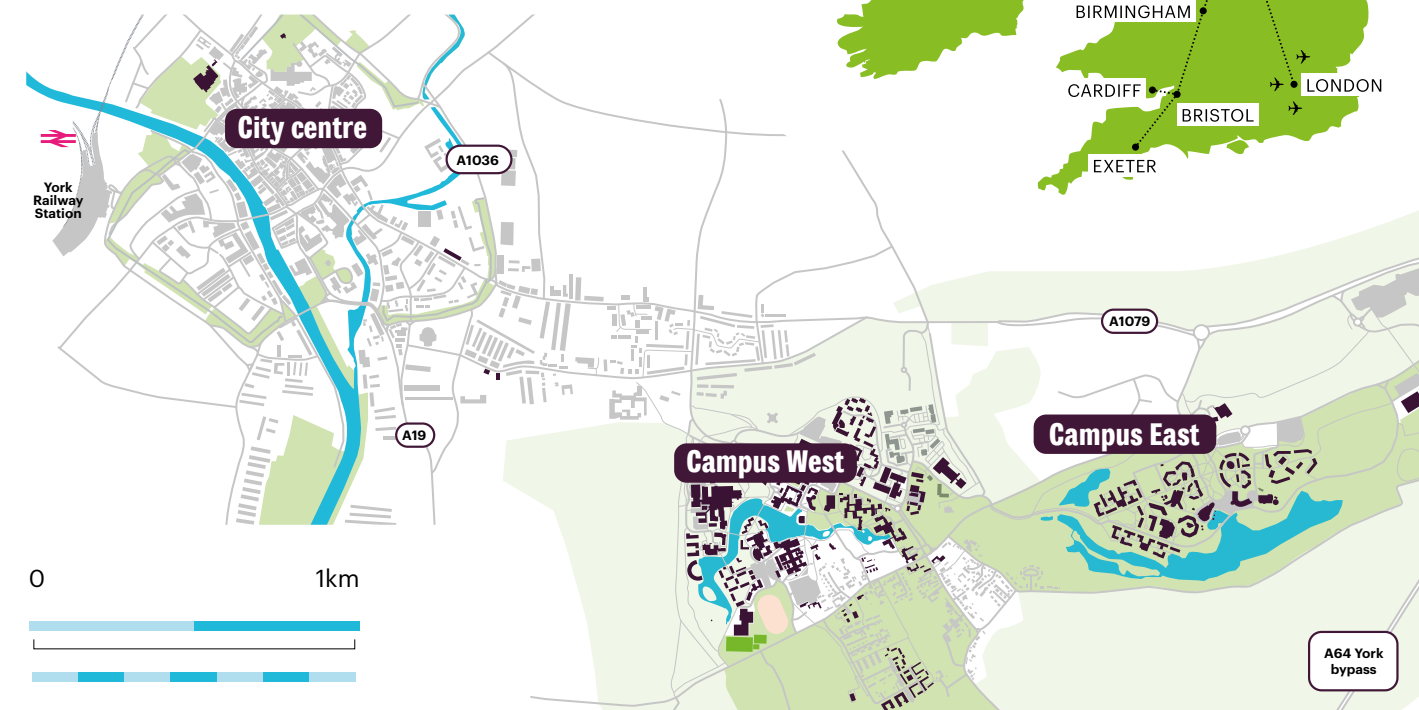
## Travel times

From York to other major cities by rail

- 🚆 London 2hrs
- 🚆 Leeds 40 mins
- 🚆 Edinburgh 2hrs 30 mins
- 🚆 Manchester 1hr 45 mins
- 🚆 Birmingham 2hrs 30 mins

From the city centre to the University (Campus West)

- 🚗 By car/taxi 10–20 mins
- 🚌 By bus 15–30 mins
- 🚲 By bike 12–15 mins
- 🚶 On foot 25–30 mins



### ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS

This publication is issued for the general guidance of prospective students and does not form part of any contract. Our ordinances and regulations, which are binding for all students, can be found on our website. Information correct at time of going to print: September 2023.

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### Marketing, Recruitment, Admissions and Outreach

+44 (0)1904 324000  
[ug-admissions@york.ac.uk](mailto:ug-admissions@york.ac.uk) | [pg-admissions@york.ac.uk](mailto:pg-admissions@york.ac.uk)  
[international@york.ac.uk](mailto:international@york.ac.uk)  
[york.ac.uk/study](http://york.ac.uk/study)  
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