

## **Wales – Fact Sheet for Lakehead University Placements**

### ***Flights***

-The flight from Toronto to Cardiff Wales is 11+ hours (with 1 or more stops). There are multiple airlines that fly into Wales.

### ***Visas***

-A visa is not required for visiting Wales, assuming you are staying for less than 6 months. You must present a valid passport upon entering, and you may be asked to show your return ticket, proof of sufficient funds for your trip, and proof of lodging.

### ***Language***

-English and Welsh are the two official languages of Wales. Approximately 20% of Wales natives speak both languages, and most will willingly speak English when speaking with a non-Welsh person.

-The Cardiff accent is also known as Cardiff English. There are other variations in Welsh accents throughout the country.

-It is considered fairly easy to understand Welsh English as it tends to be very well-articulated (with emphasis on each syllable and a lengthening of vowels). The resulting intonation is quite musical!

### ***Currency***

-The official currency of the UK is the pound sterling, known as the pound (£, GBP). Each pound is divided into 100 pence (100p = £1). 1 pound = \$1.69 Canadian.

-ATMs are widely available throughout the UK.

-Credit cards and debit cards can be used widely.

## ***Food***

- While there are many dishes that can be considered Welsh due to their ingredients and/or history, dishes such as *cawl*, *Welsh rarebit*, *laverbread*, *Welsh cakes*, *bara brith* (speckled bread), *cockles* (clams), and the *Glamorgan sausage* are all regarded as traditional forms of Welsh food.
- A full Welsh breakfast is a hearty meal, and includes fruit, cereal eggs, bacon, sausage, mushrooms and tomatoes.
- The national brewery of Wales produces “Brains” beer – with many variations.
- Ice cream is very popular throughout Wales.
- There are vegan and vegetarian options, and restaurants available.
- Note: A service charge of 10-15% may be included in the prices stated in a menu but is more likely added on to the bill. This is technically an optional charge, although it is customary to tip 10% or more.

## ***Water***

The tap water is safe to drink and meets European water quality standards. The majority of people in Wales drink tap water, although some do not like the taste and drink bottled water instead.

## ***Vaccines***

-The World Health Organization recommends the following vaccinations for the United Kingdom: hepatitis A, hepatitis B, rabies, meningitis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), chickenpox, shingles, pneumonia and influenza.

## ***Travel Advisories***

- Visit <https://travel.gc.ca/destinations/united-kingdom> for latest notifications.
- Currently, there is a Level 2 travel advisory, recommending that visitors exercise a high degree of caution when visiting due to threat of terrorism.

## ***General Information about Wales and Travel Tips***

- Wales is 4 hours ahead of Ontario.

-In Wales the streets are narrow and parking is very scarce; consequently, people park on the road and drivers are forced to drive around cars (and into oncoming traffic). Further, roads in Wales are often under construction. Be patient when driving and expect some delays.

-Wales once had a lot of mining, so there are many ghost towns and former mining towns throughout the country. Further, many of the villages shut down early in Wales (with the exception of the pubs).

-Although places appear to be quite close together when you look at a map, roads are narrow and windy. Give yourself sufficient time to get from one place to another.

-There is endless scenery (an old adage in Wales is that there is more sheep than people) and a beautiful coastal landscape, along with many mountains and hills.

-In the cities (e.g., Cardiff), sports matches, like rugby and football, are common, and can get rowdy!

-Come prepared to charge your devices: bring an adaptor for the 3-pin UK outlets. The voltage is around 230V in the UK.

-For other tips about Wales, visit <https://wonderfulwanderings.com/wales-holidays-guide/>

### ***Cellphones and Wi-Fi***

-It is recommended to purchase a new SIM card, or to use an app that allows you to talk and text over Wi-Fi. Apps such as WhatsApp and TextNow that allow you to text/call over Wi-Fi are alternatives to buying a new sim card.

### ***Temperatures and Weather in March/April/May***

-The climate in Wales is generally mild and temperate, with some rainfall throughout the year.

-The average temperature in March is 6°C, in April 8°C, and in May 11°C. Overnight temperatures are generally very cool.

-Expect rainfall approximately 12-15 days per month (varies by region), and some wind. The rain is more of a mist than a downpour.

## ***Travel and Tourism***

Wales has much to offer in terms of activities, hiking, climbing, beaches, railways, and spectacular coastlines. The history is incredible: you can visit the oldest rocks in the world, over 400 castles, and a village from the Iron Age! For more ideas, see <https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-guide/wales>

Further information to prepare students for placements and travel in Wales, including a packing list, will be organized through information sessions.