



Preparing for university

Hi,

My name is Christopher and I am a third culture kid (TCK) living in Southeast Asia. I've been living here for around 13 years and think of this country as my home. I think this has to do with my upbringing here from such a young age. (I was brought here when I was 3 months old.) The earliest memories that I remember take place here. I feel so connected with the culture and lifestyle here that I wouldn't be myself without it.

Although the UK is where I was born and where most of my heritage is, I don't recognize it as my 'home'. I've spent so much time living abroad that 'returning home' to the UK feels more like visiting a foreign country. And I don't think that's a bad thing. I'm pretty sure that if I spent most of my life in the UK, I wouldn't be as accepting of other cultures and ideas.



A typical day

I normally start my day by waking up around 8–9am. I then go downstairs and have some breakfast. Specific brands of cereal that are common in the UK are usually very hard to find, but you can find similar knock-off brands that taste close to the original. After making myself some breakfast I play video games and do some drawing. If the



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temperature is cool enough (25°C), I will go for a bike ride. Otherwise, I find other things to do.

When my family goes out for lunch, we usually go to a food court. The food is cheaper there than at a restaurant (around £1.50 a plate). After eating out we return home and I will either go and hang out with my friends or stay home. If we have been out to eat at lunchtime, we would usually have dinner at home. Then after eating, I play some more video games and then go to bed. Not all days look like this, but this is what a typical day would look like for me.

School days

On days when I have to go to school, I wake up at around 6am and then get to school at around 7am (school starts at 7:40). I play basketball with my friends, and most classes I have here are similar to ones in the US. Because our school follows the American system, we don't have GCSEs or A-levels. Instead, we have APs, which is about half an A-Level. I'm starting Grade 10 (Year 11) this August, in which I'll be taking my first APs.

After school finishes (2:35) I either go and hang out with my friends or stay home. On some days I stay for basketball practice or basketball matches. Once I get back home I do my homework and then mess around for the rest of the day.





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Being prepared

While living here is a lot of fun, it also comes with its downsides, my least favourite being the number of stares you get due to being a Westerner. However, after a while you get used to it.

For anyone who is thinking of moving to a new country, you need to be aware of and open to new things. And even though life may feel completely different, there are still some commonalities between what you consider to be 'home' and what you consider to be 'away'.

I often dream about what life will look like after education. And I'm looking forward to returning to the UK after I graduate. I already have an idea for what I want to do when I grow up (3D animation) and I'm excited to meet other digital artists in the UK. I've already started looking at universities and was lucky enough to attend a virtual open day in which I could ask the professors and students questions about what life is like there. For any young people in Wycliffe who are thinking about further education, I would seriously recommend you get in contact with universities, and, if you're able to, visit them whenever you're in the country.

Christopher

Preparing for university in the UK and applying for funding can be complicated and daunting. It's best to start thinking things through when your child is 14 years old or younger. Do contact the TCK and Family Care Coordinator for support.