



Dear ,

Hello and welcome to your December edition of Your International News - a monthly update of all things we think you should know about on campus or in the city for International and EU students.

It's been a busy term and, like us, I'm sure you are looking forward to the Christmas break. There's lots to enjoy on and off campus until the end of term and things to do over the break if you are staying in Exeter. We're particularly looking forward to the annual **Christingle Celebration** with refreshments after in the Forum on Tuesday 12 December led by the Chaplaincy. Come and join them in the Forum from 12-4pm to make a Christingle with the celebration at 5pm. The Students' Guild are holding a **Winter Party** on Wednesday 13 December from 4-8pm too. Our website has a full list of [Guild and university events and service opening times](#).

There are also heaps of things to do in the city. Apart from the [Christmas market](#), one of my favourite is to attend [Lunchtime Carols](#) at the Cathedral. This is a free event and a great way to see the Cathedral in all its Christmassy splendour. Or why not go and see a pantomime. Pantomimes in the UK are family shows on traditional story themes but are very silly. Exeter Corn Exchange are showing [Sleeping Beauty](#) whilst the Northcote Theatre are showing [Dick Whittington](#). Why not give it a go?

Whether you are staying in the UK, going home, studying or getting out and about we are here to help you make the most of every opportunity.

Take care and we'll speak to you in the New Year,

Sue O'Hara, Sophie Meadows and Jimena Rubio Juncal
Transition and Integration



Join us to make [Christingles](#) and for a short [Christingle service](#)



[Exeter Christmas Market](#)



[Don't forget to book your tickets for the Christmas Day lunch](#)

Winter Break



Most facilities and services will be available as normal until Friday 22 December, and will re-open for normal business hours on Tuesday 2 January. Between these times there may be limited opening hours. Our [Christmas on Exeter Campus webpage](#) will have full details of specific opening times (from 15 December) as well as events now. Please check before trying to access services over the Winter break.

[Join us for lunch on Christmas Day](#)



Are you in Exeter on 25 December? Why not join our traditional Christmas Day Lunch in Lopes Dining Room arriving at 12.30pm for lunch at 1pm? We have kept tickets at £15.00 per adult for another year, £10.00 per child and must be booked before 12 noon, 18 December.

Arrival drink, 2 course lunch and small Christmas present are all included. All students, their families and staff are welcome.

We normally have more than 100 people at the lunch so it is a lovely atmosphere and a warm welcome is guaranteed. Tickets are limited so book early to avoid disappointment but please only book a ticket if you are going to come. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

If you have been awarded the University Hardship and Retention Fund, come from a widening participation background or are unable to buy a ticket due to a financial barrier please contact Communities@exeterguild.com who will be able to assist you in purchasing a ticket. They will aim to respond to your email within 1 working day. Please note that tickets are allocated on a first come, first served basis and are limited.

Celebrate Christmas through Christingles with the Chaplains



The University Chaplains will lead a [Christingle Celebration on Tuesday 12 December](#) in the Forum Street.

Join them to make a Christingle from 12 noon - 4pm and then at 5-5.45pm by the Christmas tree they will have a Christingle gathering including Christmas music, some Christmas readings and learn about the history and meaning of Christingle. We'll finish by singing some carols with the candles lit on our Christingles and finish off with free mulled wine/non-alcoholic cider and mince pies.

Everyone welcome.

A date for your diary



We will be celebrating Spring Festival and the Year of the Dragon on campus on Tuesday 13 February 2024. There will be stalls and food in the Forum from midday and fireworks at the rear of XFI at 6.45pm. It's going to be fabulous so put the date in your diary now!

We're looking for performers during the afternoon in the Forum. Do you play an instrument or are part of a society that could perform dance or martial arts? Get in touch! s.ohara@exeter.ac.uk

Intercultural Cafe and Connections Cafe

WELCOME TO
INTERCULTURAL



Intercultural Cafe will be running as usual until Friday 15 December and then we'll meet once a week over the Christmas break:

- Wednesday 20 December, 2.30-4, Forum Kitchen
- Wednesday 3 January, 2.30-4, Forum Kitchen
- Wednesday 10 January, 2.30-4, Isca Eats

We'll start back properly on Wednesday 17 January at St Lukes and Isca Eats.

It's great to see so many people at cafe but please do try to come as early as you can to ease the drinks queue (!) and bring your unicond with you. Please remember we can only accommodate up to 100 people and we will stop giving refreshments vouchers out after the first 30 minutes of the session.

University Carol Services and Chapel Choir performances



Our annual [University of Exeter Carol Services](#) will be held on Wednesday 6 December at St. Luke's Chapel at 6pm, and Mary Harris Chapel on Thursday 14 and Friday 15 December starting at 7pm.

These are beautiful candlelit carol services, featuring Christmas readings, carols and festive choral works performed by the University of Exeter Chapel Choir are free to attend and will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies.



Could you help new students settle into life at Exeter?

We are looking for more mentors for our International Student Mentoring Programme (Global Chums) for new students starting in January 2024.

[Click here to apply](#) or come and see Zainab, our Global Chums Co-ordinator, in the Forum on Tuesday 5 and Tuesday 12 December from 10.30-4pm to find out more and sign up in person.

International Student Day Competition Winner!



In honour of International Students' Day on 17 November, we organised a creative contest for international students to express their experience as such through photos, drawings, poems, and other written pieces. The winner, Zhang Han, was recently awarded his prize for his beautiful photo titled What is lonely. Feel free to [check his winning entry on the University website](#), and to stop by the INTO building to have a look at the 51 submissions displayed in the pin boards of the first floor.

Friends International Christmas events



Around Christmas time, it is traditional for churches to hold 'carol services' where there are songs and readings which tell the story of the birth of Jesus. Many British people attend these, even if they do not usually attend church. Friends International - a Christian charity - are taking international students to two carol services this year.

- Sunday 10 December, we will be taking students to the carol service at St Leonard's Church. If you would like to join us, we will meet outside John Lewis at 5.30pm and walk together.
- Monday 11 December, we will be taking students to the ECU carol service which is held in St James' Stadium. If you would like to join us, we will meet first at Belmont Chapel on Wester Way at 6.30pm, and then walk to the stadium together.

If you have any questions, please contact helen.morrissey@friendsinternational.uk

Global Leaders Experience Programme Applications

A new Gamifying Local Heritage programme is now open to applications. This programme is a perfect opportunity to learn about local heritage and get involved in your community.

- Attend masterclasses and specialist lectures from industry experts
- Immerse yourself in diverse cultures and heritage
- Work collaboratively across global and interdisciplinary teams

[Applications now open](#) and close at midnight on 15 December.

Information for students at St Lukes campus

Christmas Cracker student party!

Join us for our St Luke's Christmas cracker student party at Cross Keys! Expect food, drinks, games, music, and surprises throughout the night. [Click here for your free ticket](#)

St Luke's Advent Calendar photo competition

We are running a Christmas [@stlukes_exeter](#) Instagram photo competition for students of St

Luke's from 1 December to 22 December with a prize given away every day!
Dig out your photos and keep an eye on St Luke's Instagram for more information!

Follow our St Luke's social media channels

Be part of our St Luke's community and find out about our upcoming events and activities!
Follow our [Eventbrite page](#) for all upcoming student events and our Instagram page [@stlukes_exeter](#) for the latest campus updates. It's the place to go for everything related to St Luke's.

Intercultural Cafe

It's been great to meet so many students at Intercultural Cafe at St Lukes. Our last cafe in CrossKeys will be on Wednesday 13 December and we'll be back on 17 January for our new term of activities.

Please contact the Student Experience Team HLSSStudentExperience@group.exeter.ac.uk if you have any feedback, questions or queries, we'd love to hear from you!

Winter Weather getting you down?



Feeling tired and overwhelmed approaching the end of term? Take a new online course designed to help you feel happier straight away!

10 Things You Can Do To Feel Happier Straight Away is just one of the many courses on offer through [Living Life to the Full](#), a free online Cognitive Behaviour Therapy based platform that aims to support students to tackle the things impacting on their day to day life. A wide range of courses are available in a range of languages including English, traditional Chinese, Urdu, Arabic, Portuguese, Punjabi and French and can be accessed for free and confidentially.

Be a part of new International Neurodivergent Students Research Project Focus Group

As part of our commitment to supporting International Neurodivergent students, the University of Exeter is leading a research project to understand and improve disclosure of disability.

This project aims to better understand the barriers and challenges faced by international students accessing support services for Wellbeing & Accessibility, as well as identifying ways in which Universities could better support you. We welcome and encourage all international students to attend a focus group, where you will have the opportunity to co-create and provide feedback on the pilot questions of our survey. We are keen to have as many diverse voices taking part as possible and your responses will help us shape this project.

How to get involved:

To take part in the focus group on Wednesday 6th December, [please sign up here](#) or via our

virtual poster.

Please note the session will take place in Forum Exploration Lab 2, Streatham C and will be hybrid on Teams for those unable to attend in person.

If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to contact Rachel (R.Griffiths@exeter.ac.uk) or Vrinda (V.Nayak@exeter.ac.uk).

Getting to grips with English in your time



If you are thinking that you want to improve your communication skills, writing, English language or more then take a peak at the new [Guided Independent Learning](#) pages written by the fabulous Emma Sweeney and Peter O'Rourke from the Insessional English Team. You can catch up on their blog, look at courses available and book a 1:1 appointment.

International Student Experience Survey



Your Students' Guild is undertaking research on the International Student Experience, and would love to hear about your experiences. From how you've found settling in, to your experiences with the Guild and feeling represented, to what you think of adapting to life in the UK, we want to hear it all!

If you complete the survey, you will be in with the chance of winning:

- 5 x £50 Takeaway voucher for you and your friends
- 10 x Cinema tickets and popcorn for two

[Click here to complete the survey](#)

Assignment stress? Study Zone is here to help



Thinking about your assignment, or looking for support with your studies? [English Language Skills Development](#) (Insessional) and [Study Zone](#) offer a range of guidance on study and writing skills.

Check out their blog series for helpful advice, including [7 super things that can make your](#)

[essays better](#) and [top tips for effective group work and seminar discussion](#).

For online resources and more information about how Insessional and Study Zone can support you, visit [Guided Independent Learning](#) and [Study Zone Digital](#).

Festive Day Trip Tip!



And finally... Now that we're entering December, Christmas markets are starting to pop up everywhere. So, if you are looking for a short trip to embrace this time of the year, consider hopping on a train to Totnes any Tuesday evening before Christmas day. For under £9 for transport, you'll get to experience the bubbly energy at its local market full of artisan stalls, from which to choose the most original gifts, like handmade toys, chilli chocolate, mosaic art, pet accessories, and much more. All while accompanied by the sweet sound of carols sung live by local schools and community choirs.

And, since there are no festivities without food, you'd get to choose from a variety of street food vendors, selling cakes, chocolate, wraps, curry, nachos, churros, etc.

Don't miss the chance to bath in Totnes' Christmas spirit! Feel free to check [their website](#) for more information. Totnes is a great place to visit at any time of year so add it to your bucket list now!