Congrats on choosing to study abroad in the United Kingdom! In addition to any cultural and social considerations you may have to make before and during your time abroad, you should consider how you want your actions to affect the ecosystems and communities that you will be a part of. This guide will walk you through ways to consciously and sustainably study abroad in the United Kingdom, including your options to shop locally, ride public transit, and give back to the communities you will be staying in.
LONDON

Public Transportation

London has some of the best public transportation in the world, and one of the best ways to get around the city is by taking The Tube (the subway). The Tube has 11 lines and over 250 stations, so it is really the best way to get around. London also has a well connected bus system, and trains can be taken from London to Paris quicker than a plane or car can (and cheaper).

Food Options

South Kensington market has fresh food and produce, and Marylebone Farmer’s Market is known for its locally sourced and locally made produce and products. Similarly Pimlico Road & Chelsea Farmers’ Markets have local produce and foods. All this being said, London has ample healthy and locally sourced food options all in close reach to your program.

Volunteering

Be aware that unless you are a UK national, or have a visa type that allows for unpaid work, you likely do not have legal authorization to volunteer in the UK. Check with your host institution for clarification and/or opportunities.

Recycling and Thrifting

London has great recycling, and your residence hall will have recycling containers and sorting. Check out this website to see information on what you can and cannot recycle in London. London also has many second hand thrift stores and second hand furniture stores as well.
GLASGOW

Public Transportation

Glasgow has excellent public transportation, with a subway, bus, and train system. The subway is the easiest to get around Glasgow, and connects all parts of the city. Buses are available for transport to specific parts of the city, or to the airport. The rail system around the city is well connected, and can connect passengers all over the UK, and in Scotland.

Food Options

Glasgow has multiple farmers and local markets to buy fresh produce and local products. The farmers market in Partick on the West End has fresh foods and produce for a reasonable price. The Glasgow City Markets website has more specific information here. Glasgow also has a strong sustainable restaurant industry, with locally and ethically sourced products. For a complete list, visit this link at Slow Foods Glasgow.

Volunteering

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Recycling and Thrifting

Glasgow has public recycling points around the city, however the accommodations and housing you will receive through your program will provide recycling for you. Glasgow has multiple second hand stores if you are looking for a second hand bike, furniture, kitchen appliances etc. There are also ample thrift stores for second hand clothes and other items.
Being that York is a smaller city, it does not have a subway or tram system, but it does have a very well connected bus system (times and maps can be found here). York also has plenty of protected bicycle lanes, and cycling is one of the most popular ways to get around York. York has a train station which can take you to Scotland, Wales, London, and beyond into mainland Europe via the Chunnel.

York has multiple markets which sell local goods and produce. One of the largest is Shambles market in the city center, where you can buy a wide range of products. York also has a farmers market on the last Friday of the month (it is also considered one of the best in the UK). Supermarkets in York also have local produce and locally sourced products.

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Recycling in York is easy and accessible. Your housing at U of Y will provide recycling for you, however there are also public recycling centers around the city. York has plenty of second hand and thrift stores, most of which are located in the city center, though some are in the southeast of York closer to the University.
While Bangor is a medium sized town, it is well connected to other parts of the UK and Ireland. Ferries can take you to Dublin, and the national rail system in the UK connects Bangor to London, Manchester, Liverpool etc. Within Bangor, there is a bus system which connects the town together. More information about the bus system can be found here.

Bangor has a local market which is held every Friday and has locally sourced produce and foods, as well as goods and products made and sold by local Welsh businesses. As Bangor is a smaller town, there are not as many markets as other locations in the UK. This being said, Bangor is a university town, and has sustainable, and local grocery stores and restaurants. Look out for the ‘Made in Britain’ sticker on products in grocery stores.

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Recycling will be provided through your housing accommodation at BU, and there are multiple recycling centers across town, as well as at the university itself. There are multiple second hand stores, with some specializing specifically in furniture, if you need any additional furniture. There are also many thrift stores in Bangor, both in the city center and outside of it.
Oxford has a bus system which connects the city together, and is centered around the main bus terminal on George Street. Oxford is well connected to the rest of the UK, and it is very easy to travel to London, or any other city via train. There is also a 24 hour bus service to London, and traveling to London Heathrow, and Gatwick Airports can be done through a bus service called The Airline.

Headington Market is held every Saturday and has many locally sourced produce and locally made products. There is also the South Oxford Farmer’s market which is held every Sunday. Oxford has plenty of sustainable restaurant options and grocery stores, most of which are located in the city center.

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Recycling will be provided through your housing accommodation at Oxford, and there are multiple recycling centers across town, as well as plenty within the university itself. There are multiple second hand stores, some of which have student discounts and low prices. Oxford has several thrift stores, with many located close to the university.