

‘Not better or worse but different’.

**To what extent does this sum up your year in a
British boarding school?**

Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography, Art, Music, PE, Serbian Language and Literature, English, French, Latin, Philosophy, Constitution, Astronomy, ICT and Religious Studies; you would think that this is the list of all the subjects that exist over all in Serbia, but, the fact of the matter is that, these are all the subjects that are taught at my old course, natural and maths course of the Grammar school in Smederevo. Not only that, there are many other subjects taught to students attending different courses.

It becomes clear then what a surprise it was to be asked to choose just four subjects to study at my new school in the UK. Four! My friends were ecstatic. What a delight, not only will I live in England, but I will also study only four subjects. Brilliant! And not just that, I could even choose these four subjects, which would mean the ones I like the most, or at least the ones I'm good at which would mean that I would get the best results as well. Everybody kept telling me that I would relax and enjoy what was in my mind a holiday in England.

It was surprisingly easy to choose the four subjects, so I opted for: Maths, Physics, Chemistry and History; subjects that I like and that are also highly regarded when applying to universities. Now, all I needed to do was to wait for that fateful date (31st August) and the adventure could begin.

After the first couple of days in Cambridge, and an unfortunate event that involved me, a punt and the river Cam, it was time to see my new school, Kelly College. Tavistock, Devon, South of England, everything was green, small river canals, chocolate box houses, farms, towns – an almost idyllic picture. Mum used to joke that from the pictures she had seen, it looked like a scene from *Midsummer Murders*, only without the murder and crime bit, obviously. I have already seen everything about my school on the Internet, but seeing it live was all the more imposing and fantastic.

I quickly found out that my class will consist of about a dozen other pupils, which is a big difference in comparison to Serbia, where we had about 30 people in one classroom. The other difference is that we don't change classes between periods, you are always with the same pupils in the same classrooms and the teachers would come to you, but here it seemed like I stepped through the looking glass and everything was upside-down. I also had two teachers for every subject, depending on the topic, and not just one, like back home. However, the main difference is that, now, I live in a boarding house and have a roommate, and that there are a certain set of rules that I have to adhere to. The pre-planned week, actually enabled me to better organise myself for the free time that I have and to fully enjoy the out of school activities that I am a part of. In Serbia I used to do aikido and jujutsu, but here I play football, basketball and fives; I am involved with charity organisations and still have time for some revision.

Since, I'm an only child it is only natural that my parents miss me, so almost every evening I call them on Skype to tell them about my day. Sometimes, I feel like Rajesh on the TV show *The Big*

Bang Theory, who can sometimes be seen on Skype to his parents, who are constantly trying to find him a wife; especially when my own parents ask me what's new with raised eyebrows.

All in all, the past year has been truly remarkable. Homesickness did occur once or twice, it was inevitable really, but I managed to overcome and enjoy my time at Kelly College. Not only that, I also visited London, Bristol, Bath, Oxford, Torquay, I've seen the town where Agatha Christie lived, Blenheim Palace where Churchill was born and the famous Stonehenge. I am fortunate in the way that Kelly College offered me a second year, so I could finish my studies here.

As much as Kelly and my previous school are different, teachers are always willing to help no matter where you are or where you come from, and my experiences here have also taught me that there are not many differences between teenagers, no matter from which part of the world they come from.

Ognjen Lukacevic (Serbia)
Kelly College