



VIRTUTE ET LABORE

**St Margaret's School**  
**Student Exchange Testimonial**  
**Erica Rankin and Lydia Binder, exchange to Aberdeen, Scotland**

The Scotland Exchange proved to be a life-changing experience for us and we feel we have grown substantially as people because of it. Admittedly before going to Scotland we were all a little bit hesitant about being away from our families, especially for Christmas and New Year. However, we were all very excited about the adventure of travelling to Aberdeen for five weeks to experience another lifestyle and culture compared to what we were accustomed to at home in Australia.

Upon landing at the airport in Aberdeen we were greeted by an icy cold that literally seeped into the plane's cabin. We had all mentally prepared ourselves for the cold before arriving; however, experiencing single digit temperatures was quite a change for us as Melbourne's climate rarely reaches such low temperatures.

We all found we had been matched perfectly with our exchange partners from St Margaret's School for Girls. It was exciting meeting all the girls at the airport, after months of emails and messages. All the families were very welcoming and did a great job making us all feel comfortable and at home. We all settled in to our new homes and it was not long until we were out seeing the sights and going to school.

Over the five weeks in Aberdeen we were fortunate enough to visit many cities and landmarks. We visited; cities like Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness, and many towns like St Andrews, Crieff and Aviemore. Highlights included going ice skating in Aberdeen and shopping, activities that were enjoyed in most places. A personal favourite was staying in St Andrews; the town was gorgeous, and the university was stunning. Another was horse riding in the highlands through snow in Aviemore. Some of us were also lucky to spend a few days in London; which was an amazing opportunity and many photos were taken.

We have to admit we weren't looking forward to going to school during our Australian holidays. However, we thoroughly enjoyed our time at St Margaret's School for Girls in Aberdeen. Going to school was a great opportunity as it allowed us to see what it would be like to be a Scottish school student. Everyone was extremely welcoming and friendly, and we managed to make many new friends. A highlight of the school day was being able to sign out to explore and buy food. This was fantastic as we do not have that option at home.

We have loved doing the Aberdeen Exchange and highly recommend it. We have become more independent, learned to adapt to new situations, made new friends and had many unforgettable experiences. The time flew by unbelievably fast in Scotland. We are sure the time the Scottish girls spend with us in Australia will be equally as enjoyable.

We encourage everyone to apply for an exchange program as they are a once in a lifetime opportunity that will change your life.