



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

WELCOMING
STUDENTS
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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDE 2016-17



Vice-Chancellor's welcome

Congratulations on your offer of a place at the University of Birmingham. We are delighted that you are planning to join us.

We are delighted that you are considering coming to study at the University of Birmingham. These are exciting times for the University: we are undergoing one of the most exciting campus redevelopment schemes in our history, investing close to £500 million over five years. Our new strategy, 'Making important things happen', celebrates the University's pursuit of excellence, and builds upon its successes over the past five years, including being named *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* University of the Year 2013–14 and University of the Year for Graduate Employment 2016.

According to the 2016 Universitas 21 Ranking of National Higher Education Systems, the United Kingdom is home to one of the highest performing university systems in the world. The report places the UK second only to the United States for global research outputs, the quality of its best institutions, the impact of its research, and the production of an educated workforce that meets labour market needs. The University is recognised globally as a leader for higher education, delivering excellent teaching, and maintaining its reputation of being at the forefront of research. We also celebrate the international diversity of Birmingham and are confident that your student experience with us is going to be an outstanding one.

As an international student we know that your time at Birmingham will be exciting, challenging, academically rewarding, and enjoyable. You will play an important role in enriching and enhancing the experience for all our students and staff, helping to shape the University of Birmingham as a global campus.

This guide has been prepared to help you manage the process of planning and moving to the UK to start your studies. You will find



information on how to make a visa application, make arrangements to travel to the UK, and what to expect once you arrive here. We also have an exciting Welcome Week planned so please look for further information on Welcome International events on page 13. To help ease your transition into the University we have provided you with a wide range of information on topics such as registering with us and what our different services can offer you.

We wish you a safe journey and we look forward to meeting and welcoming you to the University of Birmingham.

Professor Sir David Eastwood
Vice-Chancellor

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Look for this symbol for details of things you need to do to help you get the best out of your time with us!



The International Students Advisory Service (ISAS)



ISAS provides support for international and EEA students. Our advisers can help you prepare to come to the UK and support you during your studies. Our service is free and available to prospective students and current students at the University of Birmingham.

This section will tell you about the support you can expect from ISAS. We are looking forward to meeting and getting to know you as a student at the University of Birmingham. Coming to live and study in another country is a huge decision for you and you may find that there are times when being in another culture is very exciting and enjoyable, but at times you may miss the things that are familiar to you. ISAS is here to help you with practical matters when things are going well and when they may not be. We want you to make ISAS your first point of contact for questions or to tell us about your concerns.

We can provide support to:

- Current students and their dependants
- Prospective students and students holding offers

Queries we can assist with

- Student visa applications (inside or outside the UK)
- Student dependant visa applications (inside or outside the UK)
- Immigration issues during your studies
- Entry Clearance Correction Scheme (ECCS)

- Living in the UK
- Financial and hardship issues
- General welfare advice

We give advice on the things you need to know about when coming to and living at the University and UK, including immigration, support for families, social activities during the year and living in the UK. We work closely with other University departments that teach or support international students to ensure you have the best experience possible.

We also include important information and alerts about visas, activities and other relevant issues to international students on our website www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/international.

We provide support to students needing to extend their visas to continue with their studies. We do this by checking visa supporting documents before a Confirmation for Acceptance of Studies (CAS) is assigned. Students should check the workshops section on our website for details of our document checking workshops.

Our services

- Email advice service via www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk
- Workshops on student visa extensions and cultural awareness
- Online guides about immigration, visas and other issues
- One-to-one appointments with trained advisors

International Students' Advisory Service

Website: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/international
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 8464

To make an online enquiry go to www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

Address: Student Services, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT



Immigration and visas

The University and your visa

The University holds a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) Sponsor licence which allows us to recruit and enrol international students. As a sponsor of Tier 4 students we have to meet UKVI legal requirements. The University must monitor your arrival, progress and attendance and must tell UKVI if you don't arrive and register at the start of your course, if you withdraw or take a leave of absence or if you fail to make your points of contact throughout the year.

For full information about your responsibilities as a University of Birmingham sponsored student and on the University's reporting responsibilities please read the Protecting your immigration status information within our web pages. intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/index.aspx

Common Travel Area

This information is applicable to those nationals who can access the Common Travel Area.

The United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland collectively form a common travel area (CTA). If you are person who has been examined for the purpose of immigration control at the point at which you entered the area you do not normally require leave to enter any other part of it and entry granted into the CTA is as a general visitor (eg, a tourist).

If you are

- ☐ Coming to the University of Birmingham for the purposes of study; and
- ☐ Flying to an airport/port of arrival in the Republic of Ireland and travelling into the United Kingdom to the University of Birmingham

YOU MUST apply for prior entry clearance before you leave your home country.

If you are a non-visa national who does not apply for your visa before you leave your home country, when you arrive in the Republic of Ireland and come through immigration control, the immigration officer will grant you entry as a tourist. An Irish immigration officer has no legal jurisdiction to grant any entry to the UK other than as a tourist so they will not be able to give you entry as a student to the UK. When you arrive at the University of Birmingham you will only have a CTA tourist visa as proof of arrival and will NOT be permitted to study. For a list of EEA countries please visit www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/EEA--Swiss-Students/Are-you-an-EEA-national.

What type of visa do I need?

Our website explains the types of visa you can apply for, the documents needed, how to apply and what to do if your application is refused. As UK immigration rules can change very quickly it is important to use the most up-to-date information when applying for a visa www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international.

Please note that students coming to the UK for six months or longer will be issued with a temporary (30-day) visa, and will need to collect a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) on arrival in the UK. Students should enter the University of Birmingham 'ACL' code when completing the visa application form to ensure their BRP card is delivered to the University campus. Please see www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/visas/biometricresidencepermits.aspx.

When can I make my visa application?

The earliest you can make a visa application is three months before your course starts. You should make your application as soon as you can and you should start planning your visa application now – for example, making sure money is in your bank account and getting your documents ready.

For immigration advice

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/visas

Make an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

When you contact us please provide as much information as possible about your situation and if you have a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement, please attach a scan of it with your online enquiry.



What should I do when I receive my visa?

- ✓ Check the 'valid from' date – this is the date from which you can travel to the UK
- ✓ Check the visa expiry date to make sure you have been given a visa for the correct length of time some students may be issued a 30-day visa and will need to collect a BRP card, on arrival in the UK
- ✓ If you are required to collect a BRP card on arrival you need to inform the University by completing an online form at [intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/visas/biometric-immigration-documents-\(brps\).aspx](http://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/visas/biometric-immigration-documents-(brps).aspx).

- ✓ Check all your details are correct, eg, name and date of birth
- ✓ If you have applied as a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa check that your visa does not 'prohibit' you from working
- ✓ If your visa states you must register with the police you are required by UK law to do this – please see page 13 for further details
- ✓ If any of the above appear incorrect, please make an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk.



What do I do if my visa is refused?

- ✓ Send us a scanned copy of your refusal letter and the document(s) which the Entry Clearance Officer has refused
- ✓ Make an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk and we will then advise whether you should ask for an Administrative Review or make a new application
- ✓ You have 28 days from the date the refusal notice is given to you to make an Administrative Review. An Administrative Review can only look at the evidence you submitted with your original application, it cannot consider any additional/new documents

Can I bring my family with me?

Information on applying for visas for family members is available on the ISAS website www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/dependants.

Already have a visa for a different institution?

If you already have a visa for another university in the UK you will not be able to use it for the University of Birmingham and will need to switch your visa using a CAS statement from Birmingham.

If you are making a visa application within the UK

If you are planning to make your visa application within the UK and have previously studied using a Student or Tier 4 (General) Student visa, the new programme should represent academic progress from your previous study. For further information please refer to our website intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/index.aspx.

Will I need any health checks as part of my visa application?

Please check with your nearest British Embassy/High Commission.

Information for Erasmus, International Exchange and Study Abroad students

The information in this section is a brief overview. If you have any further questions about this please contact the Study Abroad and Exchanges team.

Your departmental tutor

You will be assigned to a host department which will be named on your offer letter. Each department has an exchanges tutor who can assist with questions about modules in the department.

Accommodation application form and deadlines

Information about applying for accommodation is included in your offer letter. Please check with Accommodation Services for information about the deadline to apply for September 2016.

Not starting your course in September?

Look here for application deadlines:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/studyabroad/incoming-students.aspx

Am I guaranteed University accommodation?

International exchange students who apply on time are guaranteed University accommodation. Erasmus students are not guaranteed accommodation. Accommodation services can still help you find suitable accommodation. For further information – see page 8.

I am a Study Abroad programme student – am I guaranteed University accommodation?

Yes, if you are from outside of the EU. You must still apply for accommodation before the deadline. For further information see page 8.

Academic matters

Choosing your academic programme

- Your provisional choices of modules are made on your application form and finalised when you arrive
- Module choices are provisional and cannot always be guaranteed
- Dissertation modules are not normally available for Erasmus, International Exchange and Study Abroad students
- Erasmus and International Exchange students can take modules across the University but some subject restrictions apply (www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/studyabroad/incoming-students.aspx)

- For the full list of modules that are available to Erasmus, International Exchange and Study Abroad students please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/studyabroad/modules

- For advice on the differences between studying in your home country and in the UK please see the 'Studying at the University' section on page 14

Assessment and exams

Methods of study in the UK may be different from those in your own country. You will have several coursework assignments due at the same time at the end of each term and it is important that you plan your work schedule in advance. Speak to your school or department about assessment and examinations timetables. Our section 'Studying at the University' can be found on page 14.

If you are not staying for a full academic year, you must check with the module tutor as to what form of alternative assessment will be provided since you will miss the exams in May/June.

English assessment test

All Erasmus, International Exchange and Study Abroad students who are non-native speakers of English can take an English assessment test at the Birmingham International Academy (BIA) when they arrive in Birmingham. This test is to help you diagnose areas where your English needs some work and is NOT an exam.

Module registration form

When you arrive you will be given a module confirmation form to complete and return to the Study Abroad and Exchanges Office.

Do I have to pay tuition fees to the University?

Study Abroad students – Yes: the amount you have to pay is stated in your offer letter. For information on payment visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/pay-tuition/index.aspx

Erasmus and International Exchange students

– No: you are not required to pay tuition fees but you are responsible for meeting all other living costs.

Get involved

Be an ambassador

You can act as an ambassador for your home university involving helping at the Study Abroad Fair, giving presentations about your home university and advising University of Birmingham students about taking a year abroad.

Erasmus code

The Erasmus code for the University of Birmingham is: UK BIRMING02.

Study Abroad and Exchanges

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/studyabroad/incoming-students.aspx

Email: studyabroad@bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 7696

Fax: +44 (0)121 414 3850

Study Abroad and Exchanges,
International Relations, University of
Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham
B15 2TT

Birmingham International Academy (BIA)

BIA provides English language support for non-native speakers and is located in Priorsfield on the University campus.

Free English language support

If your first language is not English, BIA offers free individual sessions and term-time classes in academic writing, grammar, vocabulary, speaking and listening and exam skills to help you improve your academic English.

Are you an international student whose first language is not English? Do you want to develop your Academic English skills? If so, English for Academic Studies at the University of Birmingham offers e-English! First you should complete our online English Self-Assessment to diagnose your own strengths and areas for improvement on the BIA Insessional English for Academic Studies Canvas course.

Preseasonal courses

BIA also runs full-time preseasonal courses in academic English if you have not yet met the English language requirements attached to your offer, or if you wish to improve your English language and academic skills before your academic course starts.

Day trips

BIA organises a variety of popular day trips every term to places of cultural and historic interest such as Stonehenge, Bath, Oxford, York and Warwick Castle.

BIA

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bia

Email: presessional@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5697



Birmingham International Academy

(Foundation programme)

We are delighted to welcome students attending the foundation programme at the Birmingham International Academy (BIA).



This guide will provide you with lots of information about preparing to come to the UK, airport collection and what happens during Welcome Week, and if you have any questions contact the International Students Advisory Service (ISAS) by submitting an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk. For more information about the ISAS go to www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/international

Visas

All visa questions are dealt with by ISAS. You can contact them by submitting an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk. They will be happy to provide advice about new visas, visa renewal and visas for dependants (husbands/wives and children) of students.

What type of visa do I need to apply for?

If you are applying for your visa from a country outside the UK:

- You must apply for a visa using a Tier 4 (General) Student visa application form
- The form and guidance can be found at www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/apply

If you are already in the UK:

- You must apply for a visa using a Tier 4 (General) Student application form. For a form and guidance go to www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/apply

Can I have help with my visa application?

Yes. ISAS will be very happy to help answer any questions you have about how to fill in your visa form, the documents you need to send with your application or any other questions or concerns you might have. Contact ISAS on www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk.

What do I do about accommodation?

As a foundation programme student you will be able to choose your accommodation from the wide range available and you can select en suite facilities or share a bathroom. Apartments are self-catering, however there is a catered package available. If you are under the age of 18 then you will live in Mason where our international support officer is based. Mason is one of our newest residences on campus and has apartments of six bedrooms each, all with en suite facilities. Mason is located at The Vale, which is one of our largest student villages and is only a short walk away from the Birmingham International Academy. Once you have accepted our offer you can book your accommodation online at www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-academy/index.aspx.

What advice on finance is available?

We have included general advice on financial matters in the 'Finance' section on page 9 of this guide. However it is worth remembering when assessing how much you will need to cover living costs in the UK, that your tuition fee already includes an allowance to cover all your books and learning materials.

Where can I find detailed information about my course?

You can find information about the three foundation academic pathways on the BFA website www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-academy/pathways/index.aspx.

You can also find the answers to key academic questions at www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-academy/faqs/faqs.aspx

If you do not find the answers to your questions about the course on the foundation programme website, you can email questions to the Birmingham International Academy at foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Will I be met at the airport when I arrive in the UK?

An airport collection from Birmingham International Airport and London Heathrow Airport will run on Saturday 17 September and Sunday 18 September. Additional services will run from Birmingham International Airport on Friday 16 September and Monday 19 September. You will be able to book onto this from August 2016. We recommend that you use this service. You won't be on your own as you will be collected with international students from all around the world and it will give you an opportunity to meet and make new friends. For further information, please see page 11.

Why should I arrive for Welcome Week?

As a student on the foundation programme, you will play a full part in student life at the University. You will live and study alongside our undergraduate and postgraduate students, and be able to take advantage of our wide range of academic, sporting and cultural facilities. Welcome Week represents a very important start in getting to understand the University and you will meet and make friends with other students from the foundation programme. You will be given a full induction programme to help you settle into life at the University as a student. You can also take part in some other events with non-foundation programme students, which will give you the opportunity to begin to feel part of the whole University of Birmingham experience.

Birmingham International Academy

Website: birmingham.ac.uk/bia
Email: presessional@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)121 415 8492

Accommodation

University accommodation

You should have received an accommodation booklet, including information on University and private accommodation options. If you have accepted your offer, but not received an information booklet, please get in touch with the named contact on your offer letter. The University guarantees accommodation to new international students under certain conditions, which will be outlined in your booklet from the Admissions Office.



Ensure that you:

- ✓ Apply for University accommodation once you have an offer of a place at the University, and before the application deadline date shown in the information booklet
- ✓ If your visa is later refused, tell ISAS who will contact Accommodation Services
- ✓ Read the terms and conditions of the accommodation offer before accepting the offer
- ✓ Make the online pre-payment before the accommodation offer expiry date to secure your accommodation place OR
- ✓ Tell Accommodation Services if there will be a delay in sending the pre-payment before the deadline
- ✓ Apply for short-term accommodation if you are arriving on your own but intend to bring your family at a later date

Accommodation office

Find more information and view 360° tours of each of our room types at www.birmingham.ac.uk/accommodation

Email: living@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 8000
Fax: +44 (0)121 415 8501

Follow us on
Twitter [@livingatbham](https://twitter.com/livingatbham)
Facebook [/birminghamaccommodation](https://www.facebook.com/birminghamaccommodation)

Address: LIVING, Accommodation Services, Ground Floor, University Centre, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT



Further information

For students studying at the Shakespeare Institute	Accommodation Services can provide specific information for you. Please contact them for advice.
Accommodation for students with families	living@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Information on the private rented accommodation house hunting event organised by Accommodation Services	www.birmingham.ac.uk/accommodation
Studentpad – listings of private accommodation and other students looking for people to move in with	www.birminghamstudentpad.co.uk birminghamstudentpad@contacts.bham.ac.uk
Guild Lettings – our partner lettings service to help you find accommodation in the private sector	www.guildlettingsbirmingham.co.uk
Hotels and guest houses in Birmingham	Find hotels and guest houses online by entering 'hotels Birmingham' into a search engine



Finance

There are a number of services in the University that offer financial support and advice.

Funding, Graduation and Awards

The Student Funding Office provides information and advice about financial support available to students including scholarships for international students.

Tuition fees

The deadline for making payment of your tuition fee is 7 October 2016. You must either pay in full, apply for instalment payments via Direct Debit or provide your sponsor details when registering online. For more information on the payment methods available please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/student-fees.

Please note: non-payment of tuition fees may lead to you being excluded from the University. If you become excluded, this may have a serious effect on your visa and may mean you having to leave the UK.

Living costs

In addition to tuition fees, you will need to make provision for your living costs. The University offers a range of accommodation choices to suit your budget but there also a number of other essential expenses that you will need to be aware of. For further details please see www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/moneyadvice/living.aspx.

How much money should I bring with me to the UK?

There is no limit on the amount of money you are permitted to bring into the UK, but we advise you not to bring large amounts of cash. If your cash is lost or stolen, the University is not responsible for reimbursing you.



We would strongly urge you to take out travel insurance.

If you have been offered a room in self-catered University accommodation, we would recommend that you bring no more than £600

in cash or preferably travellers cheques. This will cover you for food, bedding and kitchen items for the first month, which you will need to provide yourself.

If you are depositing an international bank draft in a UK bank, you will not be able to draw any money against it for at least three working days after you have opened a bank account.

How do I budget for my time in the UK?

The UNIAID International Student Calculator helps you plan and manage your money for your studies in the UK. You can access the calculator at international.studentcalculator.org.uk/international/.

Other useful budgeting resources are:

- The British Council guide *Budget planning in the UK* at www.educationuk.org/Article/Budget-planning-in-the-UK
- Independent online currency converter: www.oanda.com/currency/converter

Applying for funding

Can I apply for financial assistance towards the cost of my tuition fee?

If you are an EEA national, you may be eligible to apply for UK government financial help towards your tuition costs. If you are a non-EU national, it is unlikely that you qualify for UK government financial help towards your tuition costs, except in certain circumstances. For an explanation of the conditions you need to meet to be eligible for public (UK government) funding for study (student support), you should read the information on the UKCISA website 'Student Support: applying in England' at www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Fees-and-Money/Government-Student-Support#layer-3942.

Other funding

For information about the different research councils and funding opportunities visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/postgraduate/dr-fees/research-council.aspx.

Student Fees

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/student-fees
Email: studentfees@bham.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 6074
Fax: +44 (0)121 414 4898

Funding, Graduation and Awards

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/finance/index.aspx
To make an online enquiry go to www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 7391
Fax: +44 (0)121 414 6637



Registration

Registering at the University

All students must register online before the start of their course. Instructions on how to register online will be emailed to you along with your username and password. Registration information will be emailed to you from the middle of July 2016.

Important information will be emailed to you so please ensure that the University is aware of your personal email address and that your spam filter is set to receive this correspondence. If your personal email address changes please submit an online enquiry at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk to give us your new details, including your student ID number and date of birth in all correspondence.

Once you receive your registration email please read the instructions carefully. If you have any queries, please telephone the Registration Helpline on +44 (0)121 414 9009 or send a message online to the Registration Team at www.registrationhelp.bham.ac.uk.

If you do not receive your registration email two weeks before you arrive do not worry; your University place is safe. Please contact the Registration Helpline for advice.

Amend: Should this read international marquee?

I would not know this information, could you please confirm.



What do I need to do to register?

- ✓ Submit a jpeg passport-style photograph so we can create your University Identity Card
- ✓ This photograph must be of you on your own with your face taking up around 60% of the image
- ✓ Your full face must be shown on the photograph and must not be covered by hair or a veil

University Identity Card (ID Card)

If you are arriving in September you will collect your University ID Card from the International Welcome Hub or the UK and EU Welcome Hub during Welcome Week. Opening times of the Welcome Hubs can be found at www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome.



To collect your ID card you will need:

- ✓ Your student ID number (written on your registration or offer letter)
- ✓ Your passport and current visa or Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). If you have been issued a BRP which you need to collect on arrival in the UK you must do so before you can collect your student ID card. If you are collecting your BRP card from campus, you will be emailed details of an appointment which is when you can come to collect your BRP card.

Proof of student status letters

After you collect your ID card you will be able to request proof registration letters, for example:

- ☐ For opening a bank account
- ☐ To prove you are a student at the University of Birmingham

What if I am not starting my course in September?

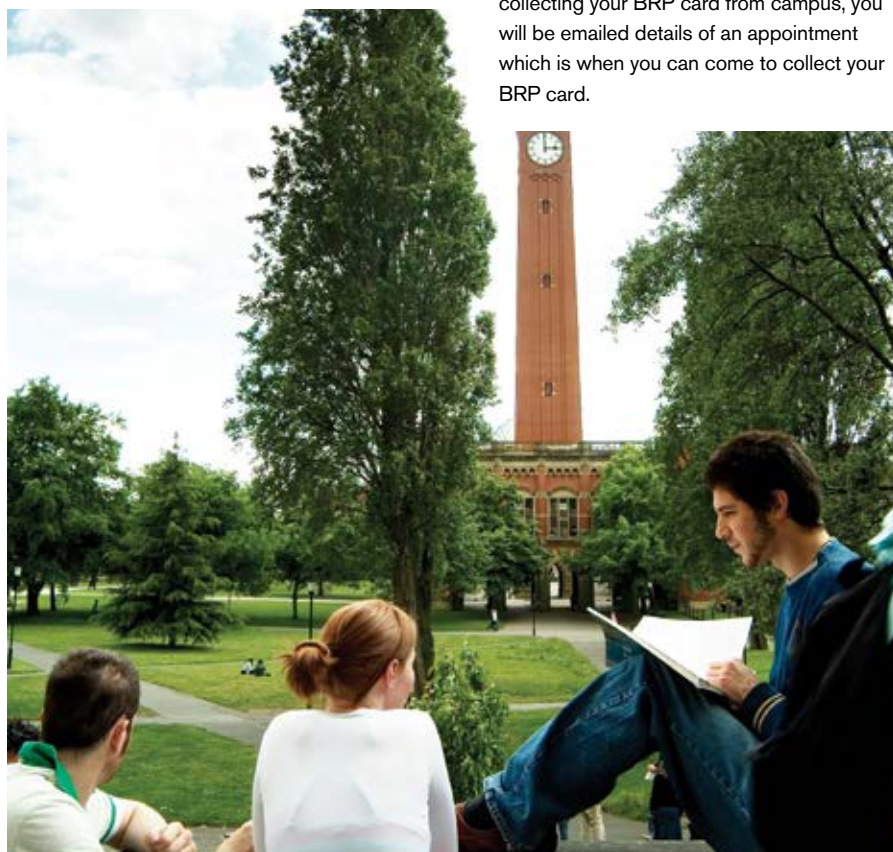
You will be sent a registration email containing your username and password. Please read the registration instructions and register online before you arrive. If you need assistance registering online, please contact us at www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk. Alternatively you will be able to ask any registration queries you have at the Aston Webb Student Hub when you arrive.

Student Information Team

Website and online enquiries:

www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

Address: Student Information Team,
Aston Webb Student Hub, University
of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham,
B15 2TT, UK



Arriving in the UK

What happens when I arrive at Airport Immigration Control in the UK?

If you travel to the UK, you will probably arrive at Heathrow or Birmingham airport. It is also possible to arrive by sea via one of the Channel Ports or by Eurostar. In each case you will go through UK Immigration Control. Please note that UK and the Republic of Ireland are part of a Common Travel Area, and there is no immigration control on arrival in the UK: this can cause a problem for non-visa nationals on short courses. Non-visa nationals should therefore not travel via the Republic of Ireland, or should apply for entry clearance before travelling.



- ✓ You need to show the following to the immigration officer:
 - Passport containing valid Entry Clearance Visa or Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
 - Completed landing card, including your full address. If you have not yet finalised your accommodation, you can use the University of Birmingham address which is: University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT.
- ✓ The immigration officer might ask to see evidence that you meet the requirements your visa ie, a copy of your CAS statement and bank statement or other financial documents to show that you have enough money for your fees and living costs for your studies.
- ✓ Check your passport when the immigration officer returns it to you, to see if they have made any changes to your conditions (for example, by adding a requirement for you to register with the police). If you are unsure why the immigration officer has changed your visa, contact ISAS.
- ✓ If there are any problems please ring ISAS immediately on 0121 414 8464 and ask to speak to an adviser. In evenings or at weekends you should ring University Security who will pass your call to a duty-advisor. Security can be contacted on: 0121 414 4444.
- ✓ Be prepared to speak English, as the immigration officer will speak to you and expect you to answer in English.

Declaring cash when you arrive in the UK

When you enter the UK you **MUST** declare the cash that you are carrying if this amounts to €10,000 or more (including cheques, travellers cheques and bankers drafts) to HM Revenue and Customs (the government tax



office). You will find the relevant forms to fill out at ports and airports. You will be responsible for financial penalties if you fail to declare the money or provide incomplete or incorrect information. The only exception to this requirement is if you are travelling to or from another EU country (you will not need to declare cash over €10,000).

Learn more on the HM Revenue and Customs website: www.hmrc.gov.uk

Airport Collection Service (Meet and Greet)

A free airport collection service is available for new international students who will be arriving at London Heathrow and Birmingham airports on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 September 2016. Additional services will also be running from Birmingham airports between Friday 16 September and Monday 19 September 2016. If you would like to use this service you will need to register in advance and we advise that you book early to guarantee your place. For collection times and to book a seat please

visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/travel.aspx.

Note: If you use the free airport collection service, there will be a limit on the amount of luggage you can bring on the coach. There will be a limit of one large item of luggage and two small items. For example, in addition to a suitcase you could bring a cabin-sized case and a handbag. If you have more than this, please make your own arrangements to get your extra belongings shipped to the UK.

When you visit our booking website you will find information about the 'Meet and Greet' team and how to identify them.

Travelling on your own to the University

If you plan to travel to the University independently it is advisable to carefully plan your journey in advance. For travel guidance please visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/travel.aspx.

Further information

Public transport information TraveLine	www.traveline.org.uk Tel: +44 (0)871 200 2233
National Express and Flightlink Coaches	www.nationalexpress.com
National Rail (train information)	www.nationalrail.co.uk Tel: 03457 484950 From outside the UK: +44 (0)207 278 5240
Eurostar	www.eurostar.com
TOA Taxis (Birmingham Black Cabs)	www.toataxis.net Tel: +44 (0)121 427 8888
Castle Cars (taxi company)	Tel: +44 (0)121 472 2222
Comcab Birmingham (taxi company)	Tel: +44 (0)121 226 6666
Birmingham Airport	www.birminghamairport.co.uk
Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports	www.heathrowairport.com www.gatwickairport.com www.standsteadairport.com
London Luton Airport	www.london-luton.co.uk
Manchester Airport	www.manaairport.co.uk
Air travel information	www.airwise.com

Travelling to the University Information www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/travel.aspx

Arriving in the UK

Continued

Can I advance mail and store my luggage?

The University cannot accept mail or store any luggage sent in advance. If you want to bring more belongings with you than you can take on your flight, we recommend that you have them shipped over when you have settled into your accommodation. Alternatively, some private companies can arrange for your luggage to be shipped in advance and stored until you arrive.



Delayed or lost luggage

Our students normally have no problems with lost luggage, but in very rare cases, luggage can sometimes be delayed or mislaid and not arrive with your flight. If, after waiting by the luggage carousel, your luggage does not arrive you should follow these steps:

- ✓ Do not leave the luggage collection area – you must first go to the helpdesk/luggage enquiries desk and tell the official there that your luggage has not arrived. If there is no one at the helpdesk/luggage enquiries desk, go to the customs desk for assistance. You will be asked for the following items, so have them ready:
 - Your ticket, showing your luggage receipts and flight details
 - A description of the missing luggage
 - Your address in the UK (if you have arranged accommodation in advance, like halls of residence) or the address of the University 24-hour security point (if you have not arranged accommodation in advance): Security Centre, Aston Webb Building, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT (Security Control Room tel: 0121 414 3000)

Once the airport official has taken all your details, they will explain the airline's procedures for dealing with lost luggage and will give you:

- A reference number (with possibly a form)
- A telephone number for you to call for any news, or a website address (the official may be able to find out where your luggage is at that time, or you may have to wait for news)
- Ask the official if they have a free emergency overnight kit, which will contain toiletries such as a toothbrush
- Do not leave immigration control without reporting your lost luggage otherwise you will not get any compensation
- Tell the University's 'Meet and Greet' Welcome Team that you have lost luggage

If you take medication on a daily basis you should carry important medication in your hand luggage but if it is in your lost luggage tell the Welcome Team/ISAS immediately upon arrival.



- ✓ Call the airline every 12 hours or check on their website – delayed luggage is normally delivered within 72 hours
- ✓ Check your luggage when it arrives for damaged or missing items – if there are any problems, notify the airline immediately, or you may not be eligible for compensation



Welcome Week 2016

During Welcome Week the University and the Guild of Students (your students' union) provide a range of activities that you can attend. These events are designed to help you become familiar with the University and its campus and the services that are available to you during your studies, and to help you make friends with other students.

Why should you attend Welcome Week?

- It will help you make new friends through social events
- You will be able to find out about the support services available to you on campus
- You can attend social events, talks and departmental welcome events to help you settle at the University of Birmingham
- You can take part in University tours to help you familiarise yourself with your new environment
- You can get information on travelling to the University and the city centre
- It will make settling into University accommodation easier
- You will be able to get help with University registration, opening bank accounts, registering with a doctor and dentist and registering with the police
- You can take part in International Day – a day for all new students of all nationalities

What is a Right to Study Check?

If you are a non-EEA national you will need a visa to come to the UK or stay in the UK. To complete your registration you must have a 'Right to Study Check' where we check your Visa.

You will either have:

- A vignette (visa sticker) in your passport which was placed there when your entry clearance visa was granted
- A stamp that was put in your passport when you arrived at the airport (this applies to non-visa nationals who are here for courses of less than six months)
- A biometric residence permit – this is a pink card that you will have been issued with when you extended your leave in the UK

The University is obliged to check that the visa you hold permits study in the UK and is appropriate for the course you want to study. You must bring your original documents to the Welcome Marquee in Chancellors Court (in front of R6 on your campus map) where these will be checked, after which you can go and get your ID card. If there are any problems there will be an adviser available to give you advice.

Registering with the police

Students of certain nationalities are required to register with the police and this is a legal requirement which will usually apply to any dependants who travel with them.



To find out if you need to register check your visa. You must register if your visa states:

- ✓ 'Register with UK police on arrival', or
- ✓ 'Register with the police within seven days'

You must do this within seven days of your arrival in the UK either at Welcome Week or at your local police station – ISAS will be able to advise you on this.

I am arriving in the UK during International Welcome Week and I am required to register with the police: what should I do?

We have invited West Midlands Police to come to campus to register students. Further details of the dates, locations and how to book will be available on our website at intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/visas/policeregistration.aspx.

I am returning to Birmingham or I have registered in another part of the UK – what should I do?

If you have already registered with the police and need to update your details, please visit our website at intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international/visas/policeregistration.aspx.

Collecting your BRP (Biometric Residence Permit)

On arrival to the UK, if you have chosen the University of Birmingham as your chosen Alternative Location Code (ACL) you will receive an email from the International Student Advisory Service (ISAS) on when and where to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) from. The ISAS team will give you details of the location, date and time of collection. When you arrive to collect your passport you will need to ensure you bring your original passport and the UK Visa & Immigration Decision Letter.

ISAS Welcome Events

You can also attend the International Welcome Reception and Afternoon Cream Tea events:

International Welcome Reception at Café Aroma, Staff House

Tuesday 20 September 2016
18:30–20:00

Register for this event at www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/events/international/international-welcome-reception1.aspx.

Afternoon Cream Teas at The Vale

□ Wednesday 21 September 2016
15:00–17:00

□ Friday 23 September 15:00–17:00
Book your ticket at www.tickettailor.com/all-tickets/3816/96a8/

International day

- Tuesday 20 September
- Time: 11:00am–16:00
- Location: Welcome Marquee, Chancellors Court

Further information

Planning and timetable You will be emailed important information over the summer before your arrival	www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome
Any questions?	Send an online enquiry at: www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

Studying at the University

Is study in the UK different from study in my own country?

You may find that methods of study in the UK are different from study that you have been used to. At the University we have an enquiry-based learning culture.

What is enquiry-based learning (EBL)?

EBL allows you to experience a range of teaching methods that aim to challenge and encourage you to have your own ideas.

This is achieved through:

- Reading and independent research
- Discussions and working with other students
- Self-motivation – you must have the dedication to study independently
- Setting yourself realistic goals
- Managing your time effectively and reflecting on what and how you learn

Will I be able to find help to do this?

Yes, your school will explain how EBL works in your studies. Some general aspects are:

- Being a student at university is about being independent – taking responsibility for your studies
- The lecturers are there to guide you and show you where to go, but it is up to you to do the research!
- You will be given a broad outline of what is required but you will be expected to bring to it your own perspective

What types of teaching methods can I expect?

- Lectures – academic staff share their knowledge with you but you are expected to do extra reading around your subject
- Analytical skills – you are expected to critically evaluate the information you receive in, for example, lectures
- Seminars – give you a very important opportunity to discuss and develop your ideas in small groups; an opportunity to talk and listen to the ideas of other students
- Tutorials – small groups or sometimes one-to-one sessions that allow you to reflect on your progress

If you would like support to help you adjust to our learning culture or to improve your learning skills, speak to your personal tutor or supervisor.

Your school will organise an induction so that you can meet your lecturers and other students. Details of the date and time of your academic induction will be sent to you.

What type of academic support can I expect from the University?

We expect you to enjoy your studies and perform well on your course but there may be times when you have some difficulties, eg, if you are ill and are not able to attend classes. There are a number of ways in which you can receive advice and support for any academic problems that you have during your studies, for example, essay writing, presentation skills, literature reviews and others.

Personal tutor and school senior tutor

You will be given a personal tutor who will meet with you regularly throughout your time at the University. The role of the personal tutor is to:

- Monitor your academic performance
- Help you with any difficulties that you may have
- Be your first point of contact for any academic problems that you have during your studies

Each School/Department at the University has a senior tutor who oversees the quality of the personal tutorials.

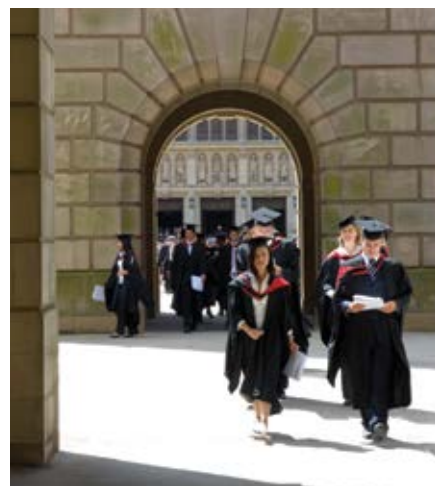
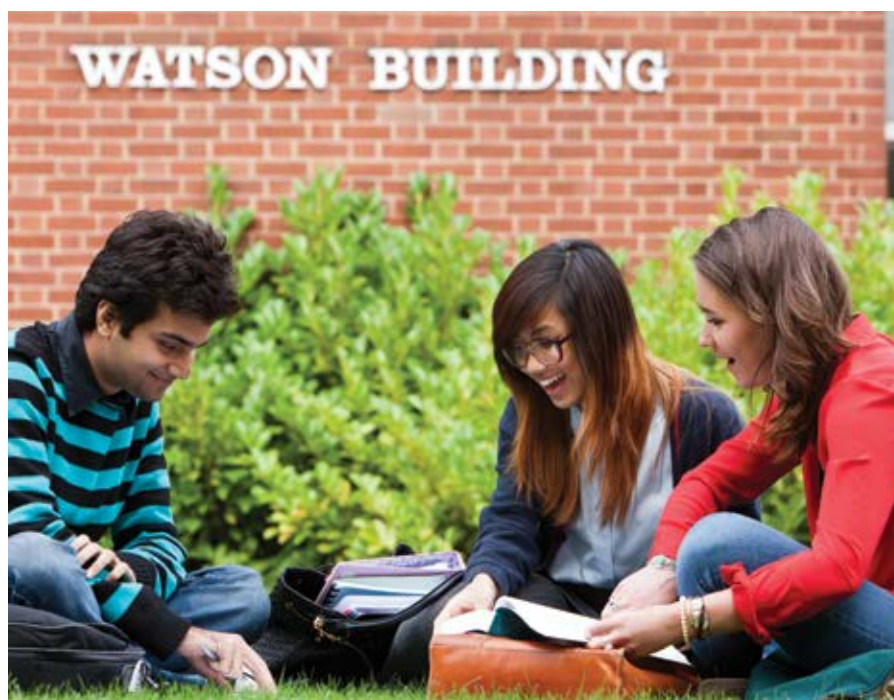
Welfare tutor

Each University School/Department has a welfare tutor for you to contact if they need help with any academic or welfare problems. You can speak to the welfare tutor in confidence and their role is to help you resolve your problem. Sometimes the welfare tutor may refer you to another University support service for more specialist help and advice. If you do not know who your personal tutor or your welfare tutor is you should contact your school at the University. For further information please visit the following link: intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/projects/support/welfare-tutors.aspx.

Can I find out more about study methods in the UK before I arrive?

Yes. Look at the following sites where you will find some useful information:

University study skills:
www.skills4uni.bham.ac.uk
 UKCISA:
www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Preparation-and-Arrival/Study-skills-for-success#layer-3697
 Prepare for success:
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk



IT Services

As a student at Birmingham you will have free access to the information technology facilities you will need to support your studies.

IT Services supports the University network and computing systems and provides:

- Access to IT.
- An IT account, details of which are on your registration email – keep this information safe as you will need it to start using ITS computing facilities when you arrive at the University.
- Password Manager – Register for the Password Manager service as soon as possible. Simply create a security profile which will allow you to get back up and running at any time of the day in the event of a forgotten password. Visit www.my.password.bham.ac.uk to create your profile now.
- Use of over 1,200 computers on campus, which can be found in nine dedicated locations – use your 'My.Computing' tab in www.my.bham.ac.uk.
- Connections for using your own laptop or PC
- Free software downloads for your PC or laptop mysoftware.bham.ac.uk
- Access to the internet from your University hall of residence through an external company, Ask4 – for more information visit prearrival.ask4.com/index.php?site=f4e16.
- Secure wireless access for your laptop across the whole of the Edgbaston main campus and at other sites – learn more at www.wireless.bham.ac.uk.
- Help and advice.



University portal (my.bham)

This is the place to find all the online information services that are appropriate to you. It provides:

- Your single point of access to a wide range of information and resources, including email and the eLibrary
- Your access to electronic information resources, the eLearning environment, WebCT for online course materials, online registration, past exam papers, exam timetables and results, campus news and much more

- You can download the free UoB student mobile app to see campus maps, your library account, PC availability, news, events and guides www.bham.ac.uk/mobile-app

IT Services

Website: www.it.bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 7171

Further information

IT Service Desk & Laptop Clinic

Both services are located in the Main Library and will support your IT needs during your studies with us.

The IT Service Desk website allows you to search for answers to your IT questions, and log any IT faults or requests you may have.

www.itservicedesk.bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 7171

The Laptop Clinic will diagnose and assist with any software related issues you may be experiencing.



Life at the University

The shock of a new environment can hit you whatever culture you come from and however experienced or well-travelled you are. There are a number of activities that you can get involved with that will help give you a common interest with other students, and help you settle into life at the University.

Get involved

At Birmingham, sport provides a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and make new friends. It's also a great way to stay healthy.

Website: www.sport.bham.ac.uk

Catering at the University of Birmingham

The University has a wide choice of catering services to enjoy across the campus with our own award-winning chefs creating freshly produced food.

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/community/university-campus/retail/index.aspx

Guild of Students

Every student at the University of Birmingham is automatically a member of the Guild of Students. As your students' union, the Guild of Students offers you lots of benefits, including support, advice, entertainment and training. To find out more about all of the amazing things we'll be doing together during your time at Birmingham, and to join student groups or buy tickets to events, visit or connect with us online.

Website: www.guildofstudents.com

Facebook: facebook.com/guildofstudents

Twitter: @guildofstudents

Instagram: uobguildofstudents

Support at the Guild

International Students' Officer

The international students' officer is responsible for raising issues facing international students within the University and encouraging the

participation of international students in the Guild. They are also responsible for liaising with international and cultural societies, and helping them to organise social events. To contact the international students' officer email: iso@guild.bham.ac.uk

International Students' Association

The International Students' Association is responsible for the representation, welfare and social needs of international students, and also co-ordinates various cultural events throughout the year.

Email: isa@guild.bham.ac.uk

Guild Advice

Guild Advice provides advice to students on immigration, academic issues, housing and money.

Website: www.guildofstudents.com/guildadvice/

Email: advice@guild.bham.ac.uk

Drop ins: Monday to Friday 12:00 to 2:00pm

Wednesday 2:00 to 4:00pm.

Student Mentor Scheme

The Student Mentor Scheme provides support and advice to students living in University accommodation. Student mentors are available during term time to support you with any financial, academic, shared living or personal challenges you may be facing. In addition to this support, welcome events and tours are available at the start of the year to help you meet other people, and settle into University life and your new surroundings.

Website: www.guildofstudents.com/studentmentors

Email: mentorwelfare@guild.bham.ac.uk

Telephone: 0121 415 8568

Student groups, societies and associations

There are over 170 student groups, societies and associations. So whether you want to meet new people, continue a hobby or skill, learn something new, or just get involved in student life, there is a group for everyone.

Website: www.guildofstudents.com

Jobs, Skills and Volunteering

Through our Jobs, Skills and Volunteering department, the Guild provides opportunities for you to find part time work to earn money while you study, volunteer to give something back to the community as well as CV writing and other skills workshops to help you to prepare for life beyond your degree.

Website: www.guildofstudents.com/jsv

Email: jobs@guild.bham.ac.uk

Call: 0121 251 2500

Twitter: @guild_jobs

Worklink

Worklink is the University's internal recruitment agency dedicated to connecting students with on-campus casual work. Since launching in 2012 Worklink has helped over 8000 University of Birmingham students find work on campus, providing them with increased financial freedom and enhanced employability skills.

Website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/worklink

Working while studying

If you want to work while at the University, you must make sure that any work does not breach the conditions of your visa, while taking care to maintain a balance between employment and studies. Please check your visa for working restrictions information.

Guild of Students

Website: www.guildofstudents.com

Job Zone

Website: www.guildofstudents.com/jobshop

Email: jobzone@guild.bham.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0)121 251 2500



Student support services

At the University of Birmingham there are a number of services you can go to should you need help, advice or guidance.

University Graduate School (UGS)

A significant proportion of postgraduate researchers are international students, who make a major and valued contribution to research here. UGS acts as a central resource point, giving postgraduate researchers access to a wealth of services to support them in their research and acting as a gateway to information for postgraduate researchers on funding, careers development, University regulations, and administrative processes, as well as academic and social opportunities for development. Comprehensive information can be found on its website.

University Graduate School

Website: www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/ugs
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 6376
Email: graduateschool@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Counselling and Wellbeing, Disability, Mental Health and Learning Support Services

The University offers a range of support services designed to help you get the most out of your time here.

The services include:

- Counselling and wellbeing
intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/counselling/index.aspx
- Disability, Learning Support and Mental Health
intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/disability/international.aspx

The University welcomes applications from disabled students and our Disability and Learning Support Services can help you get the maximum benefit from university life. We encourage you to tell us if you have a disability so that we can provide you with appropriate information and advice, and ensure that you have the best possible experience while you are with us.

We have a range of online self-help guides covering a wide range of issues which can affect your ability to study. www.selfhelpguides.ntw.nhs.uk/birmingham/

We offer a number of support groups, workshops and seminars throughout the academic year, focusing on issues which typically affect students and their ability to engage with their work and studies.

Topics included are:

- Anxiety Management and Confidence Building
- Dealing with Exam Anxiety
- Relaxation
- Procrastination (inability to make a decision or to take action)
- Learning Support Workshops

For further information on the support provided by the Counselling and Wellbeing Service please go to intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/counselling.

If you are unsure whether you can access our services, please see this web page for information on what 'disability' means in the UK www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/disability/international.aspx.

Counselling and Wellbeing, Disability, Mental Health and Learning Support Services

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5130

Student parents and carers

If you are bringing your children to the UK and need advice on childcare, social events or advice and representation please contact the Student Parents and Carers Association. Please note, if you have a dependant visa query you must contact the International Students Advisory Service.

Student Parents and Carers

Website: students.guild.bham.ac.uk/spc
Email: studentparent@guild.bham.ac.uk

Careers Network

The Careers Network provides you with valuable help and support in researching and choosing your graduate career. We can provide information and advice at any point during your time at Birmingham and up to two years after you graduate.



Careers Network

Website: Studenthelp.bham.ac.uk then select Careers Services tab
Email: careers@contacts.bham.ac.uk

University multi-faith chaplaincy

Drop in to chat with a chaplain, to meet with friends, or just for a cup of tea. Chaplains can give you pastoral support or a listening ear for your problems. We can put you in touch with chaplains from all the major religious traditions and also with a number of student-run faith and religious societies. Throughout the day, a large lounge and kitchen facilities are available for study, chat or the cheapest cup of tea or coffee on campus. The Chaplaincy also has a multi-faith quiet room as a space for prayer, meditation or just a moment's peace away from the pressures of University life. Students of all faiths and beliefs are welcome.

The Chaplaincy

Website: www.chaplaincy.bham.ac.uk
Email: chaplaincy@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Student support services

Continued



ISAS advice on health and wellbeing

The National Health Service (NHS)

The NHS is the UK's state health service. If your course is for six months or more and you have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge after six months or more, you will be entitled to NHS treatment on the same basis as UK residents. This means consulting with a doctor and treatment in a hospital will be free of charge. You may be required to pay for other services such as prescriptions for medicines. For more information please visit the UKCISA website at www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Living-in-the-UK/Health-and-healthcare/NHS-treatment-options.

Optical treatment

Eye tests in the UK are done by opticians. You will normally be charged for an eye test unless you are under 19 years old and in full-time study. For more information please visit the UKCISA website at www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Living-in-the-UK/Health-and-healthcare/NHS-treatment-options and University of Birmingham www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/health.aspx.

Registering with a doctor

It is important that you register with a doctor as soon as possible after arriving at university. In the UK, doctors who are your main point of contact for medical issues are referred to as GPs (general practitioners). If you are in need of non-urgent hospital treatment you must be referred by your GP, rather than visiting hospital yourself.

Due to its location close to campus many students choose to register with the University Medical Practice which is located on Pritchatts Road. In order to register please visit the practice, bringing with you your student visa and student ID card. For more information visit www.theump.co.uk.

Dental care

There is a charge for all dental treatment in the UK but it is less expensive to be treated through the NHS than as a private patient. Dentists will take a limited number of NHS patients and may be unable to take you, or will offer to put you on a waiting list. It may not be possible to find a dentist who can treat you through the NHS and you may have to pay for your dental treatment. To find a dentist in Birmingham you should use the NHS choices website to find services near you: www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx.

In order to avoid additional costs when you are in the UK, we would recommend that you have a dental check before you travel.

Medical emergencies

If you or someone you are with needs urgent medical assistance you must telephone 999. This number is free to call from all phones including mobiles. You will need to request an ambulance and be prepared to give details of where you are and what has happened. If you require emergency treatment but feel you are well enough to travel you can visit Accident and Emergency (A&E) at a hospital. The closest A&E to the University is located at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. You may feel that it is better to take a taxi. Emergency medical treatment is free even if you do not qualify for general NHS treatment.

Directions to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital can be found on the hospital's website at www.uhb.nhs.uk.

Sexual health

British attitudes to sex may be different from those in your own country. It is often accepted that people who are involved in a relationship may have sex together. Of course, the choice is a personal one. You are entirely free to live according to your personal standards and should not feel pressured to adopt those of your fellow students.

If you think you will be sexually active or just wish to find out more information, it is important that you find out about contraception in the UK.

You can get advice on this from your doctor or from a local family planning clinic (FPC). If you qualify for NHS treatment, you are entitled to free contraceptives and advice on birth control from the FPC. FPCs also provide free cervical smear and pregnancy tests. www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx

Travel insurance

It is essential that you take out travel insurance to cover your journey to the UK. This should cover delays, medical emergencies and the cost of replacing any belongings, ie, lost luggage. While you are living in the UK we strongly advise you to have insurance to cover the contents of your room/flat and belongings.

Cultural adjustment

Coming to live in another country can be at times very exciting and enjoyable and at other times it might not feel too good. This is normal. Everyone who lives in another country will find that they have days when they miss their own food, their families, their friends or their weather, and just generally do not feel so happy. You will go through stages when you will feel excited about the UK and the University and times when you will not. It is normal to have good days and bad days but it is important to know how to help yourself. Here are a few tips that may help you to cope with cultural adjustment:

- ☐ Keep in touch with home ie, Skype, telephone, writing a letter, fax, email
- ☐ Keep familiar things in your room such as photographs (or use as your screensaver)
- ☐ Talk to ISAS about where you can find food from your country – this can help you keep a healthy and balanced diet
- ☐ Join the University gym and take regular exercise – it can also be a good way of meeting people
- ☐ Make friends with other students – learn about other cultures
- ☐ If you want someone to talk to about how you are feeling you can make use of the University support services, where there will always be professional and experienced staff on hand
- ☐ If you are finding your studies a little difficult, talk to your personal tutor
- ☐ For some students their faith community will be very important – check with the Chaplaincy for more information
- ☐ The Guild of Students has lots of groups and societies where there will be opportunities to meet new people

For more information visit: www.ukcisa.org.uk/

Opening a UK bank account

Having a UK bank account is essential if you are studying in the UK for more than six months. You can find some branches of the main banks on the University campus. We advise that you compare the accounts of a few banks, and ask them what they can offer you before you make your choice.

When you arrive you can visit various banks and choose the one which you feel will be best for you.

There are many international banks in Birmingham city centre and if you have an account with them in your home country, you may find opening a UK account with them easier than with a bank that has no knowledge of you.



When choosing a bank account, ask:

- ✓ Will I have internet and telephone banking?
- ✓ Does it have standing order and direct debit facilities?

- ✓ What type of savings accounts do I have?
- ✓ Will I be required to maintain a minimum account balance or pay a monthly fee?
- ✓ Is there an overdraft facility?

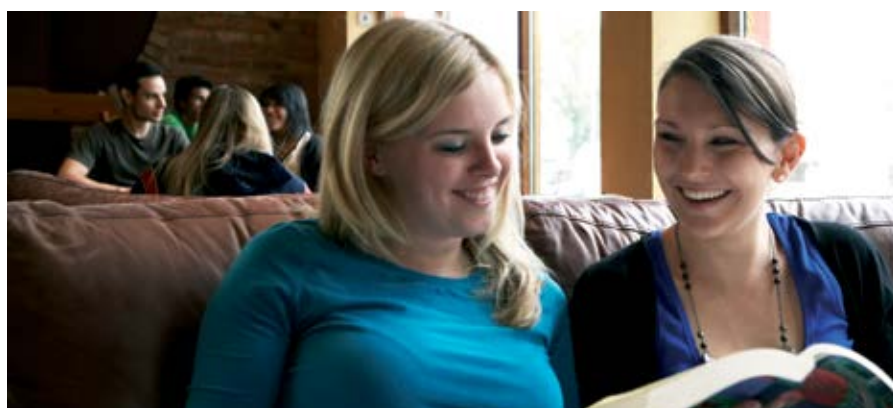
For information on opening a bank account, please see: www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Living-in-the-UK/Opening-a-bank-account.

Compare bank accounts:

www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/categories/comparison-tables

The banks listed below are not part of the University and the details given are for information purposes only and not as a recommendation from the University.

Bank	Address	Tel	Website
Allied Irish Bank	61 Temple Row, Birmingham B2 5LT	+44 (0)121 483 6900	www.aibgb.co.uk
Barclays Bank	15 Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2BH	+44 (0)8457 555 555	www.barclays.co.uk
Bank of China	33 Horse Fair, Birmingham B1 1DD	+44 (0)121 622 7002	www.bankofchina.com
Co-Operative Bank	118–120 Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 3BD	+44 (0)121 212 1900	www.co-operativebank.co.uk
Habib Bank	379 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 4JZ	+44 (0)121 773 1653	www.habibbankuk.com
Halifax	71 New Street, Birmingham B2 4DU	+44 (0)121 253 8672	www.halifax.co.uk
HSBC Bank	22–24 Colmore Row, Birmingham B3 2QD	+44 (0)8457 404 404	www.hsbc.co.uk
Bank of India	182 Soho Road, Birmingham B21 9LP	+44 (0)121 507 9940	www.bankofindia.com
Al Rayan Bank Plc	394 Coventry Road, Small Heath, Birmingham, B10 0UF	+44 (0)800 408 6417	www.alrayanbank.co.uk
NatWest Bank	134 New Street, Birmingham B2 4QZ	+44 (0)8453 019 481	www.natwest.com
Lloyds TSB	142 Edgbaston Park Rd, Birmingham, B15 2TY	+44 (0)845 300 0000	www.lloydstsb.com
Royal Bank of Scotland	144 New Street, Birmingham B2 4NY	+44 (0)121 643 4821	www.rbs.co.uk
Santander	On campus	+44 (0)8457 654 321	www.santander.co.uk
United National Bank	391–393 Stratford Road, Birmingham B11 4JZ	+44 (0)121 753 6000	www.unbankltd.com
Nationwide Birmingham	19 Bennett's Hill, Birmingham, B2 5QJ	+44 (0)800 554 0522	www.nationwide.co.uk



Living in the UK

As well as being the UK's second city, Birmingham is one of Europe's most exciting cities. Its rich heritage, modern commercial centre and cultural diversity make it a vibrant and exciting place to live and study. Living in the UK is about the things you need to do when you arrive and things you can do including shopping and visiting tourist sites during your studies.



What do I need to do?

Council Tax

As an international student you may have to pay Council Tax depending on what kind of accommodation you live in and who you live with. Council Tax pays for local services, such as refuse collection and the police. Some properties are 'exempt', which means no Council Tax is payable at all and there will be no bill. In most cases if the only people living in the property are full-time students on an undergraduate or taught postgraduate course, then there will be no charge for Council Tax.

To find out more about Council Tax, please see: www.gov.uk/council-tax/working-out-your-council-tax.

Electrical equipment

The British electricity supply works on 230 volts/50 cycles and most buildings have sockets which take a 13-amp square, three-pin plug. Please check that any electrical equipment you bring from home can be used on this voltage or can be converted. You should be able to purchase an adapter in the UK but please note that it is dangerous to overload sockets or circuits with too many adapters and you should never put a two-pin plug in a three-pin socket.

Television (TV) licence

- You are required by law to have a TV licence if you use a TV or any other device to receive or record television programmes – for example, a laptop, PC, mobile phone, digital box, DVD recorder or a TV set.
- The TV Licensing website has a section for students where you can find out if you need a TV licence and how to apply. Please visit www.tvlicensing.co.uk.



Keeping safe

It is important that you take responsibility for your own personal safety while you are living in the UK. Here are some tips to help keep you safe:

- ✓ Never walk home alone at night – stay with a group of friends or order a taxi
- ✓ Keep your money secure and out of sight
- ✓ Keep your bank cards safe and separate from any note of your pin numbers
- ✓ When you are not in your student accommodation keep your windows and doors closed and locked, even if you will only be out for a short time

You can contact University of Birmingham Security 24 hours a day if you need help. Their number is 0121 414 3000. In emergencies please ring 0121 414 4444. You should save this number to your phone in case you need to contact them in an emergency.

Learn more

www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/safetyandsecurity.aspx



Useful contacts

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office

Admissions enquiries for postgraduates

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5488
Fax: +44 (0)121 414 6378
Email: admissions@bham.ac.uk
www.marketing.bham.ac.uk/admissions

Admissions enquiries for undergraduates

Tel: +44 (0)121 415 8900
Fax: +44 (0)121 414 7159
Email: admissions@bham.ac.uk
www.marketing.bham.ac.uk/admissions

Birmingham International Academy (Foundation Programme)

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 9292
Email: foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk
www.birmingham.ac.uk/foundation

The British Council

Tel: +44 (0)161 957 7755
Fax: +44 (0)161 957 7762
www.britishcouncil.org/

The British Council Education UK

www.educationuk.org

Birmingham International Academy (BIA)

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5697
Email: presessional@contacts.bham.ac.uk
www.birmingham.ac.uk/bia

Equality and Diversity

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 3247
Email: d.j.tope@bham.ac.uk
www.equality.bham.ac.uk

Fee queries

www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

GP health services

www.nhs.uk

Graduate taught or lifelong learning and CPD:

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5490
Email: pgtrecords@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Independent online currency converter

www.oanda.com/currency/converter

International Relations

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 2894
Email: international@bham.ac.uk
www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/professional/external/international-relations.aspx

International Students Advisory Service

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 8464
Online enquiries: www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk
www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/student-services/international

IT Service Desk

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 7171
www.itservicedesk.bham.ac.uk

Library Services

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 5828
Email: library@bham.ac.uk
www.library.bham.ac.uk/index.shtml

The National Health Service (NHS)

www.nhs.uk

Research Student Administration team

Email: pgrstudentrecords@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Student Enquiry Services

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 3091
www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk

Student Fees

Payment method queries
Tel: +44 (0)121 414 6074
Fax: +44 (0)121 414 4898
Email: studentfees@bham.ac.uk

Travel West Midlands

www.nxbus.co.uk/west-midlands

UKCISA

Switchboard: +44 (0)207 288 4330
Fax: +44 (0)207 288 4360
Postal address: UKCISA,
9–17 St Albans Place,
London N1 0NX
www.ukcisa.org.uk

UK Visas & Immigration website

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration

University Graduate School

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 6376
Email: graduateschool@contacts.bham.ac.uk
www.graduateschool.bham.ac.uk

National Rail

www.nationalrail.co.uk/

Your first-week planner

During Welcome Week there are many events on offer. Use this planner in conjunction with the online timetable (www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome) to record your first week activities.

	AM	PM
Saturday 17 Sept	ISAS airport collection (see page 11)	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court
Sunday 18 Sept	ISAS airport collection (see page 11)	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court
Monday 19 Sept	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellors Court
Tuesday 20 Sept	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court International Day – Welcome Marquee, Chancellor's Court, 11:00–16:00	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court International Welcome Reception – Café Aroma, Staff House International Day - Welcome Marquee, Chancellor's Court, 11:00–16:00
Wednesday 21 Sept	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court Afternoon Cream Teas - Duck & Scholar, Shackleton, The Vale, 15:00–17:00 International Welcome Reception – Café Aroma, Staff House, 18:30–20:00
Thursday 22 Sept	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court
Friday 23 Sept	Right to study check and collect student ID card – Welcome Marquee in Chancellors Court	Afternoon Cream Teas – Duck & Scholar, Shackleton, The Vale, 15:00–17:00

Essential things to do during your first week

- ☐ Get your right to study check (essential for all visa holders)
- ☐ Attend the Vice-Chancellor's welcome

<input type="checkbox"/> Visit the International Help Desk (marquee, Chancellor's Court) to sign up for city and campus tours and for more information on international social events	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend school/department induction (Please note you should prioritise this event over other activities)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Collect ID card; for more information go to Welcome Marquee in Chancellor's Court My ID number is <input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Find out who my welfare and personal tutor is <input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Collect timetable from your school to find out location and venue of lecture rooms	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pay University fees Cashiers: <i>Map ref R5</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Take a tour of the Main Library and visit my subject library <i>Map ref R22</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit BIA staff in the welcome week marquee to find out about free English language support	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Welcome International information briefings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Welcome International social event(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visit fairs at the Guild of Students <i>Map ref O1</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Register with a GP	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open a bank account	
<input type="checkbox"/> Register with police (if stated on visa)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Take out accommodation contents insurance (Please note this is included in the fee for University student residences)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Find out where the Disability and Learning Support teams are, and discuss disclosure (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend University Graduate School Welcome activity	

Please check the Welcome website for details on when and where activities are taking place at www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome.

All events subject to change at short notice.

- All students
- PG students
- Students with disabilities

Student check list

The table below will tell you the documents you will need for tasks which you will do before and after coming to Birmingham. You should carry these documents in your hand luggage.

Documents	Visa application (entry clearance)	Visa application (leave to remain – already in the UK)	Immigration control	Open a bank account	Police registration	Activating University email account	Doctor/dentist registration	Families (schools etc)
Passport(s) *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Visa/Biometric residence permit (BRP) (if applicable)		✓	✓	✓	✓			
University student registration letter for police registration/banking/doctor/dentist				✓	✓			
CAS statement	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Proof of fees paid (if paid in advance)	✓	✓	✓					
Sponsorship/Scholarship letter	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Proof of sufficient money to support yourself and your family and evidence that you have enough money to pay your first year of fees (if you are not getting sponsorship/scholarship and haven't paid your fees yet)	✓	✓	✓					
Official translations of documents (if applicable) for visa purposes	✓	✓	✓					
Marriage and birth certificates (if travelling with your family)	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Proof of your address in your home country (ie, a letter from the University sent to you in your home country)				✓				
Password and email account details which should have been sent to you by email after registration						✓		
Proof of your UK address (tenancy agreement or utility bills)				✓	✓		✓	✓
Passport-sized photographs (professionally printed, not from a computer)	✓	✓			✓			
Cash fee of £34.00 (police registration)					✓			
UKVI visa Decision Letter (For collecting your BRP)		✓	✓					

The information in this grid is for guidance only and requirements may change.

* Passport-sized photographs for visa extension in the UK is different to the pictures you would have clicked in your home country for your entry clearance visa. ISAS team will help you with this during your visa extension process.

The Edgbaston campus

The Edgbaston campus is a self-contained site divided into five areas. Here we provide an overview of what you'll find in each – for more detailed maps go online to www.birmingham.ac.uk/contact/directions.

Red Zone

Central academic area, includes facilities for many of our departments including Law, Education, Earth Sciences, Physics and Mathematics; also houses the Main Library, shops, banks and the Munrow Sports Centre

Blue Zone

Home to the Medical School and associated research centres

Orange Zone

Student support services including the Guild of Students (students' union) and Chaplaincy

Yellow Zone

Facilities include Civil and Chemical Engineering, Chemistry, Sport and Exercise Sciences, Computer Science and some Health disciplines

Green Zone

Metallurgy and Materials laboratories and Electronic Engineering can be found here; also conference facilities and our botanic garden

