Meal Plan

Meal Plan is a convenient way to 'eat with us' at The Vale Village and all across campus, giving you a flexible weekly budget for your meals that's tailored to your University schedule. It's a great way for you to socialise and helps to free up time for studying – you don't need to worry about food shopping, meal planning and cooking.

If you opt for Meal Plan, your Student ID card will be credited with a weekly amount of money to spend on your meals. The balance runs from Monday to Sunday and gets refreshed every Monday when you use your card through a till either in the Hub or on the main campus.

There's a great choice of restaurants and coffee shops, including: Infusion for a wide range of fresh and healthy food; The Melt for sandwiches, paninis, cakes and coffees; and lots of other outlets on the main campus. Our chefs have worked in the catering industry for many years and have a real passion to deliver the highest quality. The University's sustainability policy also means we aim to use British farmed goods and carefully selected suppliers.

And because Meal Plan is also accepted at every other University catering outlet, also see the **list of all catering outlets on campus (/community/university-campus/retail/food-and-drink-on-campus.aspx)** where you will also be able to spend your Meal Plan credit.

The Meal Plan card is not accepted at Costcutter and the University bars.

Frequently asked questions about Meal Plan are:

Why choose Meal Plan?

Meal Plan offers students an easy to use budgeting scheme; students have £50 to spend each week on food and non alcoholic beverages at any University catering outlet - and students are actually only charged £47.06 per week: we top up the amount available to spend as an incentive to take up Meal Plan.

The wide variety of catering outlets available at both The Hub and on Main Campus ensures that students have a wide choice in the both variety of food and the opening times; it is a very flexible way of choosing when and where to eat.

In addition, Meal Plan removes the need for:

- Planning your weekly meals
- Weekly shopping
- Commuting time and the cost of a bus or taxi fare to and from the supermarket
- Preparing and cooking meals.
- Clearing, cleaning and washing up after every meal

Meal Plan also has a range of meal deals and special offers for Meal Plan students only.

Meal Plan frees up valuable time for students to concentrate on their studies and social life. Dining with friends in the evening after a hard day studying is a great way to relax and it enables students from other residences and courses to mix and make new friends.

Adobe Flash Player or QuickTime is required for video playback. Get the latest Flash Player Get the latest version of QuickTime

How much do I have to spend on Meal Plan?

Meal Plan costs £47.06 per week - but your card is loaded with £50 to spend:

When does Meal Plan start and end?

Meal Plan starts on the Monday of Freshers Week, then runs throughout term for a total of 32 weeks* and then for 1 more week after the end of summer term.

2014 - 2015

- 22 September 2014 to 12 December 2014 (12 weeks)
- 12 January 2015 to 27 March 2015 (11 weeks)
- 27 April 2015 to 28 June 2015 (9 weeks)

2015 - 2016

- 20 September 2015 to 11 December 2015
- 11 January 2016 to 25 March 2016
- 25 April 2016 to 24 June 2016

* All meals must be taken during the applicable termly periods, as indicated above. No transfer to other mealtimes, venues or dates will be permitted.

How is Meal Plan paid for?

The cost of Meal Plan is included in the residence fees charged for student accommodation. The total residence fee including Meal Plan, will be clearly marked on the accommodation contract documentation.

When completing the Payment Form the options to pay residence fees are either by:

- One single payment by Debit or Credit Card, cheque or bank transfer (please note that there is a 1.2% administration charge to pay for Credit Card over the telephone) or
- Monthly or termly Direct Debit installments.

Please remember that the £50 Meal Plan budget is to spend from Monday to Sunday and students should budget their spending accordingly across each day.

How much does food on Meal Plan cost?

There is a wide variety of menus and price points, below are some examples:

- Tea and toast (2 slices) - £2.05
- 6 Item breakfast includes tea or coffee and toast - £3.70
- Jacket potato and beans - £1.80
- Chicken skewers in a wrap with salad and sauce - £3.20
- Evening meal at The Hub including vegetables and potatoes - £4.40

The meal plan does not provide set meals at set times - the traditional 3 meals a day - but is a flexible system allowing students to pick and choose when and where they eat, spending their budget to suit their lifestyle and lecture timetable.

What different diets can you cater for?

We can cater for all diets such as vegetarian, gluten free, halal, and kosher. If there is a specific diet that you need within InFusion in Shackleton Hub, just let a catering manager know when you arrive and they will help as much as possible. We can not cater for high allergen diets such as nut free, as all of our food is prepared in kitchens where these items are present and so we cannot 100% guarantee food is free from nuts.

How do you get Meal Plan when you arrive at the Vale?

Students' University ID cards hold Meal Plan money and will automatically be made "live" on the first day of meal plan.

Can money be added to the Meal Plan card?

The system does not currently have this facility; however, it is a service we hope to install in the very near future.

Can Meal Plan money be carried over into the next week?

If all or part of the weekly allowance is not spent by the end of each week this cannot be carried over as credit to the following week. With so many outlets available for meal plan cards, students find they are able to budget their meal plan money to fit into their week.

How do you find out how much Meal Plan credit you have left?

Current Meal Plan balances are accessible at any till by presenting the University ID Card to the card reader. The remaining balance for that week will be displayed on the customer information screen or related back by the till operator.

Can students opt out of Meal Plan during the year?

As the accommodation and Meal Plan packages are provided together, under the terms and conditions of the accommodation contract, they cannot be separated - therefore a student would be unable to stay in the same accommodation.

Can you lend your Meal Plan card to a friend?

You cannot loan out a University ID card, these cards contain a digital image and are for the owners use only. Students are strongly advised to keep their University ID card with them at all times.

Download a Meal Plan PDF here (/Documents/students/accommodation/Meal-Plan-at-the-University-of-Birmingham.pdf) .

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