

FAQs by parents and guardians

Here are a number of frequently asked questions by parents and guardians.

What do students write on their UCAS forms to guarantee a place?

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You can't guarantee success, but here are a few tips to pass on:

- State clearly why you want to study a subject, with direct reference to the course applied for, and how your personal skills are relevant to the subject
- Include details of work experience and courses that show evidence of motivation and commitment
- Remember you are applying for an academic course. More than 50% of the statement should relate to the proposed course of study

Will my son/daughter find a job at the end of their course?

Around 96% of Birmingham graduates are either employed, engaged in further study or travelling six months after leaving the University. We are proud that our graduates pursue excellent careers across all sectors.

[Careers guidance \(/undergraduate/careers/index.aspx\)](#)

What if the accommodation is fully booked?

The Fresher's Guarantee Scheme ensures that first-year students who make Birmingham their firm choice and satisfy all the criteria are guaranteed a room. With so many rooms available we can, in most cases, find all first-year students accommodation. Help and advice is available through the Housing Services office.

[Accommodation at Birmingham \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/index.aspx)

How easy is it to keep in touch?

We provide many opportunities for students to keep in touch with their loved ones. There are numerous public telephones, both in the halls of residence and on campus. With 20,000 internet access points across the University, email is also easy.

Can the student loan be paid back in one go and does it attract interest?

Yes, it can be paid off either by installment or as a lump sum, when the graduate starts work. Interest is paid on the loan at the rate of inflation.

[Government Student Finance website \(http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/index.htm\)](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/index.htm)

How much money do students spend in a week?

Obviously it depends on individual lifestyle choices, but as a rough figure we recommend allowing £250 a week for accommodation, travel, meals and social activities, based on a 42-week academic year.

How safe is Birmingham?

Birmingham is comparable with most large cities or towns, but the University benefits from having an open, largely self-contained campus with 24-hour security. CCTV coverage is available both at residences and around campus and we also have our own Community Police Officer and local office based in University Centre. Our students have few problems if they take sensible precautions to protect their property and personal safety. Don't forget that residence fees include personal possessions insurance cover.

Are there medical facilities on campus?

There are a number of medical practices that have students on their patient lists near the University and its residences. We strongly recommend that students register with a local doctor and dentist while studying here. The NHS website can help you find medical practices and dentists. Select either 'GP' or 'dentist' using your accommodation postcode or alternatively, use the University's (B15 2TT).

[NHS website \(http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/pages/servicesearch.aspx\)](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/pages/servicesearch.aspx)

What happens if my son/daughter misses their A level grades?

When the results come out in August the University considers all results against offers made. Those students who have missed their offer should contact us to find out whether or not their place can be confirmed. Some will be accepted, others may be offered alternatives. Students who have achieved their offers do not need to call.

Is it a disadvantage for students to take a gap year?

Not at all, although it is worth checking with your admissions tutor as some courses may vary. Many students benefit immensely from a constructively-used gap year, but students should inform us at application stage if they are intending to defer entry.

If you have any questions that are not covered here please email parents@contacts.bham.ac.uk (<mailto:parents@contacts.bham.ac.uk>) or call us on +44 (0)121 414 3344.

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