

Incoming students



Birmingham is delighted to welcome a large number of students from all over the world who have chosen Birmingham as their study abroad or exchange destination.

It is possible to study abroad at Birmingham via several routes.

- The Erasmus Exchange Programme - for European students studying at one of our partner institutions.
- The International Exchange Programme - for International students studying at one of our partner institutions.
- The Study Abroad Programme - our fee paying programme for students who don't come on an exchange programme.

Prospective Students

[Open all sections](#)

Exchange students usually have to go through a selection process at their home university before submitting an application to Birmingham.

Application deadlines

- International Exchange: 30 April
- Erasmus Exchange: 30 April
- For January entry: 1 November

We aim to make an offer within 4 weeks of receipt of the application.

The [study abroad and exchanges application form \(https://bham.moveon4.com/form/5315ece10f9d305c63000002/eng\)](https://bham.moveon4.com/form/5315ece10f9d305c63000002/eng) is now available online. For students who wish to register on the Erasmus Exchange Programme or International Exchange Programme you can only apply once you have been nominated by your home university. For further information about the Study Abroad and Exchange programmes which we offer you can view our incoming [brochure \(/Documents/international/Students/Studyabroad/9126-Study-abroad-incoming-brochure.pdf\)](#) in pdf format (PDF - 1.13 MB).

Birmingham Study Abroad Programme

The Birmingham fee paying study abroad programme has a long-standing reputation for attracting high quality students from across the world, particularly from the United States and Asia.

We offer the Study Abroad Programme both with and without English. Details of both programmes including entry requirements, fees, start dates and application procedures can be found below.

Essential information

Start date: September or January

Entry requirements

To attend the Study Abroad programme you must meet the following requirements:

- Native speaker of English or English Language qualification equivalent to IELTS 6.5 (7.0 for Law)
- Completed at least one year of university study
- Achieved a grade point average of at least 3.0
- Demonstrate a particular interest or background in subject of choice

Fees for 2015/16

International Study Abroad Programme

Sep 2015 - Jun 2016 : £12,000

Sep 2015 - Dec 2015 : £6,750

Jan 2016 - Jun 2016 : £6,750

EU Study Abroad Programme:

Sep 2015 - Jun 2016: £9,000

Sep 2015 - Dec 2015: £4,500

How to apply

Our online application is now available. When applying, you will need to upload the following supporting documentation:

- One academic reference;
- A copy of an official transcript showing the courses taken and grades;
- A copy of your passport/ID photo page;
- Evidence of English Language (if applicable).

If you have any queries regarding your application please email the [Study Abroad Team \(mailto:studyabroad@bham.ac.uk\)](mailto:studyabroad@bham.ac.uk).

The Study Abroad Programme with English

If you do not meet the English language requirements for entry to the study abroad or exchange programmes it is possible to attend a pre-sessional English course first.

These courses are run by our [English for International Students Unit \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/eisu/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/eisu/index.aspx) (EISU) and you can find out the details, costs, and application process for those courses online.

The English for Academic Purposes Pre-sessional course is for international students who have a conditional offer to study at the University but who do not currently meet the English language requirements. The course is tailored to your level of English and allows you to meet the English language requirement for your programme without retaking IELTS.

You will need to complete the application for our Study Abroad programme and then apply separately for the pre-sessional English course directly with the EISU. The prices are the same as the Study Abroad Programme without English but you will have to pay an additional cost of the EISU course directly to them. The fees for the EISU courses are listed on their Details page.

Please note that unfortunately we cannot offer fee discounts for students who leave the programme in the middle of a University of Birmingham teaching term.

English Language Requirement

All study abroad and exchange students who are non-native speakers of English must provide us with proof of English language ability. We always need a scan of any official results by email.

The English qualifications below are what we can accept:

- IELTS 6.5 with not less than 6.0 in any one component.
- TOEFL iBT 88 overall with no less than 21 in Reading, 20 in Listening, 22 in Speaking and 21 in Writing.
- A mark of 10 or more in English on the German Abitur.
- A mark of 14 or more in English on the French Baccalauréat.
- A level 2 or higher in the Certificat de Compétences en Langues de l'Enseignement Supérieur (CLES).
- A mark of 2 or more in English (written and oral) on the Austrian Matura/Reifeprüfung.
- A mark of VG or better in English on the Swedish Fullständigt Slutbetyg från Gymnasieskolan/ Slutbetyg från Komvux/ Avgångsbetyg.
- A mark of 5 or more in English on the Swiss Certificat de Maturité Fédérale / Maturitätszeugnis/ Attestato Di Maturità.
- A mark of 5 or more in English on the Norwegian Vitnemål fra den Videregående Skole.
- A mark of 8 or higher on the Dutch Voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs (vwo).
- A mark of 5 or more in English on the Finnish Ylioppilastutkinto/ Studentexamen.
- A mark of 7.5/75% or more in English on the Belgian Getuigschrift Van Hoger Secundair Onderwijs/Certificat d'Enseignement Secondaire Supérieur/ Abschlusszeugnis der Oberstufe des Sekundarunterrichts.
- A mark of 5 or more on the International Baccalaureate English, Standard or Higher Level, First or Second Language.

An official statement from your home university saying that your entire degree is taught only in English from start to end and no other language. NB this does not include students who are doing a degree in, for example, English and French where only part of the programme is taught in English. This is because this exemption is intended for students who are at English-medium universities. For example, a student from China who is doing a degree in the United States.

A Pass from a University of Birmingham pre-sessional English course. If students do not have the required level of English or would like to improve their English before the start of the academic year, they can take one of our pre-sessional English language courses. These are courses students must pay for, and they have to be taken here at Birmingham before commencing the year or term abroad studies.

What we cannot accept:

- A letter from the home university saying that a student's standard of English is good enough, without a certificate of proof.
- University of Cambridge ESOL test results.
- DAAD (German Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst) results.
- BULATS (The Business Language Testing Service) results.
- TOEIC
- Any other test results other than the acceptable ones listed in the first list."

Accepted Students

Once you have been made an offer of a place you will receive an offer letter. All of the information that you require prior to your arrival at the University will be sent to you electronically or it will be available on-line. You can also visit the [Welcome pages \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/index.aspx) on the University's website which contain useful information for students starting at Birmingham.

All students who have had an offer will be sent full details of the orientation events by email. It is important that you check your emails regularly, as some of our events will be tailored individually for you.

Academic Information

Level of modules

Modules are numbered according to a University of Birmingham scheme which is not equivalent to the numbering schemes in American or other universities and colleges. In choosing modules, you should be guided by the year of study in which the modules are offered to British degree students, rather than the module number. Bear in mind that most bachelors degrees in the UK are of three years' duration. In general, second and third year courses will qualify as upper division. First year courses should be regarded as lower division.

If you have queries about the suitability of a particular modules or level of modules, the Study Abroad and Exchanges Office will be happy to give advice.

Availability of courses

The [online module page \(/undergraduate/studyabroad/modules-new.aspx\)](#) on our website, lists the modules which the University regularly provides. Most of the modules listed are available every year as they form a permanent part of particular undergraduate degree programmes. Some modules may be unavailable in a given year for various reasons, such as those affecting staff - leave of absence, resignation, or new appointments. Up to date information is available from the Study Abroad and Exchanges Office. If we have to withdraw a module for which you have applied, we will suggest alternatives to you. If the availability of a particular module is essential to your plans, please enquire specifically about its availability when you apply.

Pre-requisites

Many modules can be taken by all students but in some cases we require evidence of previous study of the subject or of a related subject. The pre-requisites are referred to in the module descriptions in the on-line catalogue. If you are in doubt about your eligibility for a module for which there are pre-requisites, please include brief details of your previous study when you apply. If a department considers that you are not eligible for enrolment for a module, they will suggest alternatives for which you would be eligible.

The academic year at Birmingham

The academic year is divided into three terms as follows:

- Autumn Term: September to December (11 weeks of teaching plus a welcome week)
- Spring Term: January to March (11 weeks)
- Summer Term: April to June (8 weeks)

Full details of dates of terms can be found [here \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/termdates.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/termdates.aspx). There is no teaching in the Summer Term; it is used for revision and examinations. The exam period begins in early May and ends in the first week of June. Although term extends until the middle of June, students are permitted to leave as soon as their exams are completed. This means that some students may be finished by the middle of May. It is understood that some students must return home for summer jobs, or summer sessions at their home universities but other students prefer to remain until the end of term as there are many social events on campus such as the Summer Ball. Students also use the campus as a convenient base for travelling around the UK or Europe. Please note that students electing to leave early will remain responsible for accommodation charges until the end of the term.

Teaching methods

The methods used in teaching vary; some modules are taught by lectures and tutorials, others by seminars alone and others involve laboratory or practical work. Seminars are normally groups of no more than 20 students. The period of each individual session is usually one hour though some modules have 90-minute or two-hour classes. A typical humanities or social sciences module would consist each week of a one hour lecture to the whole group which would then divide into sections of 15 to 20 students, each of which would have a one hour tutorial during the same week. Students are required to undertake a significant quantity of independent study in addition to time in class.

Methods of assessment

The various methods used by departments in the University to assess work include essays, examinations, individual and group presentations, on-line tasks, seminar, class, or discussion papers and laboratory reports.

Part-year students

Study Abroad students are assessed in the same way as degree students on each module. However, there are certain modifications for part-year students (that is, students who leave in December or who arrive in January).

All the examinations at Birmingham are held in May/June—even for modules which are taught wholly in the Autumn Term. This means that students leaving in December will need to undertake some additional assessment in place of the examination. In some cases, this takes the form of a special examination in the last week of term but in other cases there will be an additional essay, or an essay that is longer than normal.

Students arriving in January sit examinations at the usual time but of course where students have joined full-year modules part way through, they will sit shorter examinations that do not include material from the Autumn Term.

Credits and grades

Students must take a full credit load. This means that students who are at Birmingham for the full year must take 120 Birmingham credits. Students at Birmingham for part of the year must take 60 Birmingham credits.

The number of modules required to obtain that number of credits varies because different modules carry a different number of credits. Remember that if a module is worth, for example, 20 credits and it is a full-year module, a part-year student taking only half of the module will receive only 10 credits.

Please note, students who are registered for the Spring/Summer Terms or for the full year do not have the option of absenting themselves from exams for fewer credits. In terms of ECTS credits, a full year at Birmingham is worth 60 ECTS. Part of a year will be worth 30 ECTS.

Transfer of credits and grades

In January (for December leavers) and July, marks are ratified by an Examination Board. After the Board, a transcript of results will automatically be sent to each student and also to each student's home university.

Of course, policy on the transfer of credits and grades is a matter for each student's home institution, but the following table is a guide to the translation of marks.

American Letter Grade University of Birmingham numerical mark UK Honours Class

A+	70+	I
A	65-69	II.i
A-	60-64	II.i
B+	58-59	II.ii
B	55-57	II.ii
B-	53-54	II.ii
C+	50-52	II.ii
C	45-49	III
C-	41-44	III
D	40	III
F	0-39	Fail

Immigration and Visas

You MUST obtain a Tier 4 visa before attempting to enter the UK if your period of study is for more than six months. Even if your period of study is for less than six months you may still wish to obtain a Tier 4 visa. This is because students who enter the UK on student visitor visas are not permitted to work or volunteer and are not permitted to extend their stay in the UK under any circumstances.

Please note that biometric data is now required for Tier 4 visa applications. Please visit the [GOV.UK \(https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/study-visas\)](https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/study-visas) website for more information. Please also visit the University's page on [Immigration and visas \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/visas/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/visas/index.aspx).

If you do not obtain a Tier 4 visa then you will enter the UK on a Short-Term Student Visa (formerly known as a student visitor visa). Students from some countries are able to simply arrive in the UK with the appropriate documents. Students from other countries must apply in advance even for a Short-Term Student Visa.

You will receive an offer letter providing proof of your place at the University which you will be asked to show to the Immigration Officer at your point of entry if you enter as a student visitor without prior entry clearance (and which you may be asked to show even if you have applied for a visa in advance). Please keep the offer letter in your hand luggage to provide at the Immigration Desk before you reach Baggage Reclaim.

Health Insurance

The University has a health centre on campus. You should register with this service on your arrival. If you will be in the UK for more than six months you will be able to use the Health Services in the same way as anyone permanently resident in the UK. However, pre-existing medical conditions requiring long-term medication or hospital treatment may not be covered. Repatriation is definitely not covered. It is therefore essential to take out health insurance before you arrive.

If your course lasts less than six months you will be treated as a private patient and will have to pay to see a doctor. The charges for this are very high and will be considerably higher if you need medication or hospital treatment. Dental and optical treatment must also be paid for, as is the case for those permanently resident. It is therefore very important that you take out insurance cover before you travel.

Money

It is wise to bring about £90 in British sterling for incidental expenses on the way to the University, although you can change money at the airport. (The exchange rates at airports tend to be unfavourable, so you will generally be better off obtaining currency in advance from your bank.) Credit cards can be used for the purchase of rail tickets. Traveller's cheques are also useful to have as a standby though please note that unlike in the USA, traveller's cheques cannot be used to make payments at retail outlets (even if they are in pounds sterling). The cheques must be changed for cash at banks.

Travel Information

Birmingham has an international airport and if possible you should try to fly to Birmingham. There are direct flights from many European cities and also from Newark and Dubai amongst other places. United Airlines offer daily flights from Newark to Birmingham. If you are coming from Asia, Australia or New Zealand, you may wish to consider flying with Emirates. For any other country you may find changing in Paris or Amsterdam is likely to be more convenient than flying to one of the London airports. From Birmingham International Airport, it is possible to take a train to the centre of Birmingham (it takes less than ten minutes). Change trains at Birmingham New Street station and take a train directly to campus (that part of the journey takes approximately seven minutes). However, if you have a large amount of luggage you may prefer to take a taxi.

For students arriving on 20 or 21 September only, an airport collection service is available for new international students who will be arriving at London Heathrow and Birmingham International. Further information will be posted shortly on our pages [Travelling to the University \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/travel.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/travel.aspx).

Please note that if you use the free airport collection service you can only bring one large piece of luggage and one large item of hand luggage per student. If you have more than this, please make your own arrangements to get your extra belongings shipped to the UK.

If you are arriving by train on to campus, please note that the University's train station isn't very close to University accommodation. We would recommend that you take a taxi from Birmingham New Street to your accommodation.

Module information for International Exchange and Study Abroad students

The University of Birmingham has made a strategic decision to open almost all of its undergraduate programmes to incoming study abroad and exchange students. This means that students coming to Birmingham will now have access to one of the widest ranges of courses available at any UK institution. Providing you meet the pre-requisite entry requirements, you'll be able to select courses across disciplines to develop an academic programme that is suitable for your level, interests and subject requirements.



Visit our [online module page \(/undergraduate/studyabroad/modules-new.aspx\)](#) to access the complete range of modules on offer in each semester. When choosing the level, Certificate denotes first year undergraduate, Intermediate denotes second year undergraduate and Honours level denotes third year undergraduate.



Incoming students are not permitted to take foundation level modules because those are sub-degree and are for students who are not yet sufficiently advanced to take university courses.

With regard to Music modules, the Solo Performance module is only available to students who are taking music as a major. If you are not taking Music as a major but have a high level of proficiency, then a fee will be payable (currently £550 per term).

It is not possible to take modules at both the Shakespeare Institute and main campus because they are in different cities. Please note the Shakespeare Institute teaches postgraduate students only.

Modules in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences are not available to exchange and study abroad students.

Special information for Erasmus students (from Europe)

Erasmus students should note that the exchange agreements that Birmingham has negotiated with their home institutions are based on department-to-department links, and for this reason module restrictions apply.



For administrative reasons, if you are attending Birmingham through a languages exchange, your 'host department' will be one of the foreign language departments. You will, however, in principle, be eligible to register for modules in the group of Departments within the College of Arts and Law, subject to normal restrictions such as academic suitability and space availability on modules. It will usually not be possible for students on languages exchanges to take courses in the **College of Social Science** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/socsci/index.aspx>) or the **Business School** (<http://www.business.bham.ac.uk/>) unless a specific arrangement has been negotiated with your home institution. Students will be allowed to take a maximum of 20 credits in the Business School if you are coming to Birmingham on agreements that are not Business or Economics.

Erasmus students that wish to study Law must come for the full year and register on the Certificate in English Law and follow the prescribed curriculum for the Certificate. Law students outside of the Erasmus programme have part-year options, and are not permitted to register on the Certificate.

If you are an Erasmus student in other subject areas you must choose the majority of your modules from the department or School with which your home university has established an exchange. In exceptional circumstances, you may be allowed to select one or two modules outside the exchange department in order to fulfil the requirements of your home institution. For example, if you are coming to the University through a Physics exchange we would expect that your major subject is Physics at your home institution and that you will study the majority of your modules in the **School of Physics and Astronomy** (<http://www.ph.bham.ac.uk/>) during your time at Birmingham.

The University does offer a wide selection of what we call 'modules outside the main discipline' (MOMD) which will enable students to enrol for a limited number of modules outside the main area of the exchange agreement. A 'module fair' is usually held at the start of the academic year to enable students to find out about these options.

Accommodation

The University guarantees accommodation for international exchange students. We also set aside a specific allocation of rooms for Erasmus students, so there is a good chance that you will be able to secure a room on campus if you apply before the deadline. However, we unfortunately cannot guarantee accommodation for Erasmus students.



The deadline for campus accommodation is 31st July 2013, accommodation is allocated on a first-come first-served basis. If Accommodation Services cannot find a place for you on campus, they will help you find a place in reasonably priced accommodation, very local to the University.

A House Hunting Event is run by Accommodation Services every year to help students find somewhere to live, off campus but still very close to the University. The event runs from 14th September, further information will appear on the Accommodation Services website in July.

More information on the different accommodation options available at the University can be found on the [undergraduate accommodation](#) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/index.aspx>) pages of the website. For enquiries regarding accommodation please contact **Accommodation Services** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/Contactus.aspx>). Students must apply to Accommodation Services direct, the Study Abroad and Exchanges Office do NOT allocate accommodation.

Please note students can **only** apply for accommodation once they have received their formal study abroad offer letter which has the University of Birmingham student ID number. Students cannot apply for accommodation without their student ID number.

Arrival at the University

Accommodation Services normally have staff available 24 hours a day. Once your accommodation has been confirmed you will be sent a booklet with further information. If you are arriving outside of normal hours you will need to email Accommodation Services advising them of your time of arrival so that a member of staff is available to give you your keys.

Orientation

In mid-September each year and in January, the Study Abroad and Exchanges Office run an orientation programme specifically for students on study abroad schemes. In September there is also a full programme of events known as Welcome Week aimed at introducing all new students to life at Birmingham. Further details about Welcome Week can be found on the [Information for new students](#) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/welcome/international/index.aspx>) page.

January Arrivals

- Arrival day: 8 January 2015
- Orientation day: Friday 9 January 2015, 13:00 - 15:00
Lecture Theatre A, Watson Building. Labelled on the [campus map](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/university/edgbaston-campus-map.pdf) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/university/edgbaston-campus-map.pdf>) as R15 in the red zone
- Classes begin: 12 January 2015

Module enrolment

Your academic tutors at Birmingham will arrange for your pre-registration for modules where possible on the basis of your choices as indicated on your application form (excluding Erasmus students who will not be pre-registered). However, some modules may have been full or not running, or you may have timetable clashes or other reasons to change your module choices. Thus there is always a considerable amount of changing of modules at the beginning of term after students have had the opportunity to discuss their needs with academic staff. The procedure for changing modules will be explained during orientation.

Special information for students from Brazil

The University of Birmingham is delighted to be one of the UK institutions selected to participate in the **Science without Borders** (Ciencia sem Fronteiras) scheme.

The Brazilian government is providing funding for both undergraduate and PhD students in certain subject areas to spend 12 months in the UK as part of their degree at a Brazilian university. Students will spend 9 months studying in the UK followed by a 3 month laboratory placement. There is also funding for Brazilian students to undertake an entire PhD in the UK.

Please visit our **Science without Borders page** (</International/students/finance/scholarships/Science-without-Borders.aspx>) to find out more

Transcripts

All incoming exchange students will automatically receive a transcript once their assessments have been completed and the final marks released by their department.

In order for us to produce an official transcript of the modules you studied and the marks you received during your time at the University of Birmingham, it is important that you complete a transcript request form confirming the modules that you have attended and that you expect to receive a mark for. Without this information we will be unable to verify that your transcript is an accurate record of your studies here, which may lead to errors in the reporting of marks to your home institution.

An original transcript will automatically be sent to both your home University and the home address that we have for you on record. For students completing their exchange in the Summer, we aim to send the transcripts out by the end of July. For students who are only attending the Autumn term (semester 1), we aim to send the transcripts out in February.

If you need further copies of your transcript you should order them from our **online shop** (<http://shop.bham.ac.uk/browse/searchresults.asp>).

You can find out more information about **transcripts** (<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentsservices/enquiries/transcripts.aspx>) and a copy of the transcript request form by clicking on the link.

Useful links

Accommodation (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/accommodation/index.aspx>)

The Guild of Students (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/birmingham/guild.aspx>)

Multi-faith Chaplaincy (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/support/faith.aspx>)

Student support (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/support/index.aspx>)

University of Birmingham Sport (<http://www.sport.bham.ac.uk/default.aspx>)

English for International Students Unit (EISU) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/eisu/index.aspx>)

Term dates (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/termdates.aspx>)

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