



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

A School Counsellor's Guide to studying in the UK



A Warm Welcome

“With various higher education studying opportunities around the world, we understand that having accurate and useful information on education systems and study options is essential to a School Counsellor. This one-stop guide has been designed to give you all of the information you need to guide your students on applying to and studying in the UK.

At the University of Birmingham we have over 5000 international students from more than 150 countries forming one of the largest international student communities in the UK. With over 500 undergraduate courses, we offer a range of study options to high school leavers who are considering studying at a highly ranked university in the UK.

By choosing the University of Birmingham your students will join a leading global university in a lively, multicultural city with our stunning leafy green estate also acknowledged as one of the UK's most beautiful university campuses. We offer your students an engaging learning experience as part of a distinct student experience and our graduates leave equipped with the skills and experience valued by global employers.

We welcome the opportunity to develop our relationships with School Counsellors throughout the world and look forward to working with you closely in the future. **”**

Mr Elijah James, Head of International Recruitment



Contents

Welcome	2	College of Life and Environmental Sciences	15
Why study in the UK?	3	College of Medical and dental Sciences	16
Types of programmes in the UK	4	College of Social Sciences	17
Teaching methods at UK universities	5	Birmingham Foundation Academy	18–19
Why do students choose the University of Birmingham?	6–8	Undergraduate Entry Requirements	20–21
UCAS application process	9–11	English for International Students Unit	22
The Common Application	12	Accommodation	23
College of Arts and Law	13	Student support	24
College of Engineering and Physical Sciences	14	Keep in touch	25
		Resources for you	26
		Contact us	27

Why study in the UK?

When advising your students about overseas study destinations, we understand the importance of highlighting the differences in education systems from around the world. We have outlined what we think makes higher education in the UK a distinctive student experience.

Benefits of studying in the UK

- The UK is a world leader in providing high class quality higher education, which is recognised by employers, universities and governments worldwide.
- Your students will receive quality teaching and academic excellence in an innovative and research rich setting.
- UK universities offer a diverse and multicultural experience representing nationalities and faiths from all over the world.
- Programmes in the UK are shorter and more intensive than many other countries. A Bachelor degree typically takes three years to complete. The shorter duration of study means that total tuition fees and accommodation fees are lower than many other countries.
- International students can usually work alongside and after their studies – students must follow the rules set by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).
- International students are encouraged to engage with others through student societies and activities including the National Union of Students (NUS). At Birmingham, we have over 230 active student groups and societies and 53 different sports clubs.
- International students receive dedicated support such as academic guidance and counselling to help them throughout their time in the UK.



Types of universities in the UK

There are a wide variety of universities in the UK which are typically categorised in the following groups:

Ancient

Universities that were founded in medieval times. Many have a college based system, such as Oxford and Cambridge

Redbrick/Civic

Universities founded in industrial cities during the Victorian era and include Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Newcastle, Manchester and Nottingham.

New/Post 1992

Universities founded more recently and former polytechnics that are now universities, such as Birmingham City University, Oxford Brookes, and De Montfort.

Specialist institutions

Institutions with a particular subject focus, for example, art and design, performing arts, catering, horticulture and agriculture

The Russell Group

Arguably the UK's Ivy League, the Russell Group represents 24 leading UK research intensive universities, which includes the University of Birmingham.

Find out more about the Russell group:
www.russellgroup.ac.uk

Types of programmes in the UK

There are a range of study options in the UK including:

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes are designed for academically able students from countries whose school or degree qualifications are not recognised in the UK for direct entry to an undergraduate or to a postgraduate degree programme.

Foundation options at the University of Birmingham

Upon successful completion of our Birmingham Foundation Academy integrated Foundation or Pre-Masters pathway programmes, students can progress on to a wide range of undergraduate programmes and a selection of our postgraduate programmes. Find out more here: www.birmingham.ac.uk/foundation-academy

English programmes

Many universities or language centres in the UK offer English language tuition in order to help students improve their English language ability to that required by higher education providers.

English programme study options at the University of Birmingham

The English for International Students Unit (EISU) run English Pre-sessional courses for students who need to improve their written and spoken English in preparation for academic study at the University of Birmingham. The unit also offers free, term time classes in academic English and free individual support to help students develop their ability to write academic essays. Find out more: www.birmingham.ac.uk/eisu

Joint Honours programmes

Some subjects can be combined, giving students the opportunity to study more than one discipline.

Joint Honours options at the University of Birmingham

We have a variety of subjects that can be combined at undergraduate level. Courses have an 80/40 or 50/50 ratio from 120 credits per academic year. Find out more: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/joint.aspx

Liberal Arts and Sciences

Typically a prestigious undergraduate degree for elite students.

Liberal Arts at the University of Birmingham

Our Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences was developed following requests from our international employer advisory group to create graduates with wide-ranging knowledge and skills in addition to in-depth expertise. Designed to give students the edge in the international graduate market. Find out more www.birmingham.ac.uk/las

Postgraduate Taught programmes

Typical Awards: Master of Arts (MA), Master of Science (MSc) and Master in Business Administration (MBA). These programmes are usually taken over a 12 month period which includes the completion of a project or dissertation.

Doctoral Research programmes

Example of award: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Doctoral research programmes typically last three to six years with individual study and the support of a research supervisor.

Undergraduate programmes

Typical awards: Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BSc), Bachelor of Education (BEd) and Bachelor of Engineering (BEng). A degree with honours is usually taken over three to five years, depending on the subject.

Undergraduate options at the University of Birmingham

We have a wide range of undergraduate programmes to your students. Find out more here: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses

Study Abroad

Universities in the UK may offer students the chance to study abroad during their degree at various locations and for different amounts of time.

Study Abroad options at the University of Birmingham

At the University of Birmingham we offer students the opportunity to spend time abroad on most of our degree programmes. Alternatively, students studying an undergraduate programme in their home country can also potentially spend time at Birmingham during their studies. www.birmingham.ac.uk/studyabroad

Teaching methods at UK universities

Universities use a variety of teaching methods in order to deliver each programme. At the University of Birmingham these include:

Lectures

Students listen to experts sharing their knowledge and discoveries through challenging and engaging methods. Academics will introduce key facts and ideas in their subject. There may be activities to complete during the session and follow-up work to complete later.

Seminars

In small groups led by academics students will be encouraged to present ideas and debate interpretations and opinions with other fellow students.

Tutorials

Students have the opportunity to discuss their own work and assignments with the tutor, usually in small groups.

Laboratory-based work

Students get practical experience and apply knowledge developed from lectures in a laboratory setting. Students learn to expertly analyse real-life problems that will equip them with practical and analytical skills valued by employers. This mainly applies to programmes in science, technology and engineering.

Workshops

Students engage in problem-solving sessions facilitated by academic staff; these sessions usually involve students working in groups.

Self-study

Students 'read around' the subject matter of lectures and find out more through their own independent study and teamwork with fellow students.

Peer-group learning

Students may be asked by a tutor to direct a lesson or prepare a presentation with fellow students. By interacting with the lesson material, students remember content more effectively.



Support

Students have access to comprehensive support systems that will assist and encourage them in their studies. They receive feedback on assignments to enable them to understand how they are progressing. All students have a personal tutor and a welfare tutor who can help with both academic and welfare problems.

Assessment

Assessment methods vary depending on each programme and may include a combination of coursework, examinations or oral presentations. Some programmes include laboratory tests, computer tests, abstracts and grant reports. Final year students will complete their own extended research project (dissertation).

Credit system

UK universities award credits per module typically 10 or 20 credits. A Bachelor degree with Honours is equivalent to 360 credits. Birmingham equivalencies to US and European (ECTS) credits:

10 credits = 3 US credits and 5 ECTS
20 credits = 5 US credits and 10 ECTS

Degree classification in the UK

All degrees awarded by UK universities are assessed against the same framework and the following result classifications:

First Class (1st) – Excellent
Upper Second Class (2:i) – Very Good
Lower Second Class (2:ii) – Good
Third Class (3rd) – Satisfactory



Why do students choose the University of Birmingham?

Birmingham was named University of the Year 2013–14 in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* Good University Guide in October 2013. Outstanding performance across the league tables and Birmingham's bold and sector-leading initiatives were recognised by this prestigious accolade.

Birmingham is part of the prestigious Russell Group of research-led universities and is consistently ranked among the top 20 universities in the UK. With a tradition of welcoming international students to campus for over 100 years, we now have one of the largest international student communities in the UK. Our alumni are based in over 190 countries, offering advice, mentoring and activities in those countries.

Birmingham has been challenging and developing great minds for more than a century. Characterised by a focus on innovation and research, the University has broken new ground, pushed forward the boundaries of knowledge and made an impact on people's lives.

We continue this tradition today and have ambitions for a future that will embed our work and recognition of the Birmingham name on the international stage.

At Birmingham we innovate and push the frontiers of understanding; we ask new research questions, we turn theory through experiment into practice – because that's what great universities do.



Birmingham provides an enriching environment for students to develop their academic and personal skills. Studying in the UK will offer new and exciting challenges where students are part of an academic elite, learning from world-leading experts.

A brief history

Founded in 1900, Birmingham represented a new model for higher education. Established by Royal Charter, Birmingham was England's first 'civic' or 'red brick' university, where students from all religions and backgrounds were accepted on an equal basis.

Birmingham has continued to be a university unafraid to do things a little differently, and in response to the challenges of the day. It was a founder member of the National Union of Students and the first university in the country to:

- be built on a campus model
- establish a faculty of commerce
- incorporate a medical school
- offer degrees in dentistry
- create a women's hall of residence
- have a purpose-built students' union building





We offer a stunning campus with everything students need on one site, with outstanding facilities and a welcoming environment for students and visitors.

With the latest classroom technologies, Birmingham offers an excellent learning experience. Outside of lectures the university campus has excellent facilities for students to meet up with classmates to debate, research and learn.

With access to world-leading academics, superb learning resources and our ground-breaking research facilities, students are supported in their studies every step of the way.



We have excellent transport links including easy reach of Birmingham International airport where flights link us to cities all over the world.

We are also the only university in mainland Britain with our own railway station on campus appropriately named 'University'.

World rankings

55 for post-qualification
employability in 2013
International Herald Tribune

62 in 2013
QS World University Rankings

153 in 2013
Times Higher Education (THE)

UK rankings

15 overall
in 2014
The Guardian

16 overall
in 2014
*The Times and The Sunday
Times Good University Guide*

17 overall
in 2014
*The Complete University Guide
(published in The Independent)*

The campus

Our stunning campus, combining traditional buildings and state-of-the-art facilities offers an inspiring backdrop to studying – a peaceful, thriving community on the doorstep of one of Europe's most dynamic and culturally diverse cities.

Sport, leisure and teaching facilities at Birmingham are among the best at any UK university. The beautiful green and leafy campus located just a few miles from the city centre and covering 250 acres is a great environment in which to live and study. It is also very safe with all buildings equipped with CCTV and a dedicated community police officer and security team based on site.

Across campus, students can enjoy culture, sport and beautiful scenery. The campus is here for every student to enjoy and experience whether their passion is art, music, antiquities or sciences, and all our students have the opportunity to use our unique facilities and collections during their studies.

Our Edgbaston campus offers the amenities of a small town, enabling our students to enjoy a bustling community on campus with many events and activities on offer. Our monthly farmers' market provides fresh produce and artisan products from local businesses and the Guild of Students offers many social nights and events in which to get involved.

The city of Birmingham

As the UK's second largest city, Birmingham is an exciting destination with a long cultural and intellectual heritage. Birmingham provides a warm welcome in one of the most diverse cities in Britain.

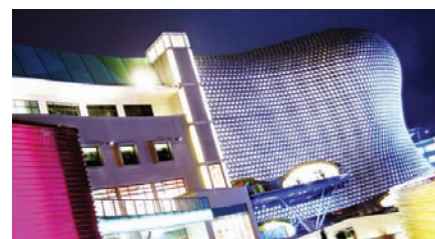


“The campus is so beautiful and it provides a superb environment for studying and living.”

Ruby, Money Banking and Finance
China

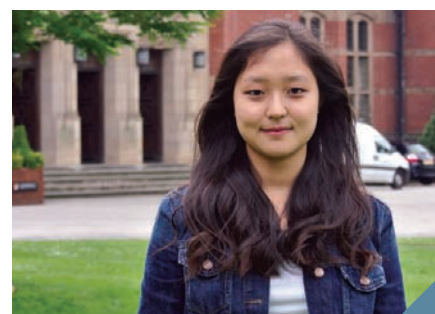


It is also Europe's youngest city, with people under 25 making up 40% of the population. Inventive and enterprising, Birmingham is home to 5800 creative businesses, including 40% of the UK's jewellery production.



Birmingham highlights at a glance:

- More than 200 restaurants serving cuisine from all over the world
- The Bullring, one of the largest shopping centres in Europe
- A range of music and theatre venues
- Numerous museums and art galleries
- A thriving independent arts scene
- Nearly 600 parks and public open spaces
- Over 650 places of worship for all faiths
- A range of sports facilities and venues



“The best thing about Birmingham is that it's a multi-cultural city so you get to associate and interact with people from all around the world.”

Hee Jin, Computer Science with
Business Management, South Korea



UCAS application process

UCAS stands for the 'Universities and Colleges Admissions Service' and is responsible for managing applications to higher education courses in the UK. It guides students, parents and advisers, through the entire higher education application process.



The application process

Applications to UK universities are made online through UCAS www.ucas.com. It is an easy online process and the website enables you and your students to research courses, to complete an application and to check the progress of an application.

Students can select a maximum of five courses/universities to apply to. UCAS then forwards applications to the universities for consideration. The decision from each university will be sent to the student through UCAS.

Once your students have received offers from their chosen universities, they will need to make

a 'firm choice' which is their first choice or preference. It should reflect the course they most want to study and the university they most want to go to.

Students can also make an 'insurance choice' which is a backup option in case the student does not achieve the grades required by their firm choice. Ideally this university will be asking for slightly lower grades than those required by the firm choice. Your students should take the firm and insurance choice options into consideration when choosing the five universities they want to apply to.

UCAS key dates

Applications should be made between 1 September (prior to the year the student wishes to commence their studies) and 30 June (in the year they wish to study). International students who have received decisions from their university choices before 8 May must reply to their offers by 5 June.

Students from the European Union need to apply by 15 January. It is advisable to apply early as the most popular programmes will fill up first. At Birmingham, we would encourage EU and non-EU students to apply by 15 January as equal consideration for admission is not guaranteed after this date.

Students who want to apply for Medicine or Dentistry at Birmingham need to apply by 15 October.

When applying through UCAS students must enter the relevant university UCAS code in order to be considered by those universities. The University of Birmingham's UCAS code number is: B32.



* Please note that we do not have international student places on our Dentistry programme.

Submitting an application through UCAS

When helping your students choose their five universities make sure that they are likely to meet the entry requirements of each university. The UCAS application is an easy online process with the following steps:

Step 1

Make an application online through the UCAS website (www.ucas.com) or request an application form.

Step 2

Complete the application form and choose up to five universities or programmes. Submit the application to UCAS. Cost of £25.

Step 3

UCAS send the application to each of the chosen universities. Each university will access the application based on academic merit and will decide whether to make an offer to the student. Offers from the universities will be sent to UCAS.

Step 4

UCAS will forward responses from the chosen universities to the student and ask them to decide which two offers, if any, the student would like to hold while they wait for their results. Students must respond to UCAS with their decisions and not the universities.

Step 5

If the student meets the condition of their offer the university will confirm the student's place. If they do not meet their conditions but the results are acceptable and places are still available, the university may still confirm the place.

Step 6

If a student does not have a place secured by July they should apply through the International Clearing Process.

What is the International Clearing Process?

Students may fail to secure a place at a UK university for one of the following reasons; they applied after 30 June, they did not want to accept any of their offers or they did not meet the conditions of their offers. In these situations students should apply through International Clearing to try to secure a place.

International Clearing will open in early July after the IB results have been released. Clearing and Adjustments for UK and European students will open in mid-August after the release of the A Level results in the UK. Birmingham will open places for a limited number of programmes and students will be able to apply for places available.

A list of available programmes, grade requirements and instructions will be published on our website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international-clearing. International students should send an email directly to clearingandadjustment@contacts.ac.uk with details of their results and what programme they would like to join. The application will be reviewed and an offer made to the student if suitable.



UCAS: the personal statement

Entrance to certain courses and universities is highly competitive and meeting entry requirements alone does not guarantee an offer of a place. The personal statement has a big impact in consideration.

The personal statement is an important part of the admissions process and is a student's opportunity to tell admissions tutors why they should offer them a place. Universities will vary in the skills and attributes that they are looking for but all will want to be persuaded that the student has a genuine academic interest in their chosen subject and have the motivation and enthusiasm required in order to succeed.

The personal statement must be relevant to the course(s) a student has applied for. At least 75% of the statement should be related to what they want to study and why they want to study that subject.

Students need to show what it is about their chosen subject that interests them so much that they have chosen it above everything else. Students should show their passion, enthusiasm and intellectual curiosity.

Admissions tutors look for evidence of genuine interest. For example:

- That they have read more widely than just the set texts at school
- If their chosen degree is related to a particular line of work that they have work experience in a relevant setting or can otherwise demonstrate that they understand what that profession involves
- That they have taken the trouble to find out what the programme they have applied for actually involves
- That they have an idea of what they want to do after they graduate (this is less important for degrees which are not vocational in nature, but can be useful for Admissions tutors)



When students write about their experiences or activities that are related to their chosen programme (eg. work experience, extra reading, drama or societies), they need to analyse how they benefitted from those activities and how this increased their knowledge or interest in the subject they are applying to study at university.

The remaining 25% of the statement should focus other achievements. Admissions tutors are interested to see if students have taken full advantage of the chances that have been available to them. For example, if they have:

- held positions of responsibility
- been in school or higher level sports teams
- taken part in school drama productions or debates
- helped to run school societies or clubs
- any community involvement
- had part-time employment

It is a good idea for your students to read through the entry profiles on the UCAS website for each of the courses they are applying to. These profiles provide entry requirements and indicate the skills and attributes required to do well on the course.

For further information and advice about applying to Birmingham go to www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/advice/applying which includes useful video clips on what we look for in the personal statement and how to showcase skills.

Academic tutor references

In addition to a student's academic record, Admissions tutors will also take into account the reference which forms part of the UCAS application. References are usually written by the school, possibly by a personal tutor, with input from subject tutors.

The reference will often cover the following areas:

- Honest assessment of the student's interest and ability to study a subject at university
- Discussion of an student's ability to undertake independent learning and think critically
- Predicted grades in qualifications still to be taken (predicted grades form the basis of the conditional offer, it is important that these are honest and realistic and reflect the minimum entry requirement for the programme)
- Achievements and awards in school and the wider community
- Explanation of anything unusual in an applicant's academic record

The Common Application

Birmingham is one of only six UK universities open to applications through the Common Application System.

If your students are currently studying in the USA or Canada they can only apply through the Common Application System to UK universities who are a registered member with the Common Application Organisation www.commonapp.org

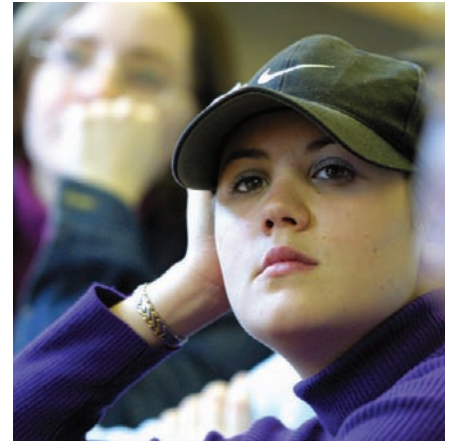
As a registered member with the Common Application, the University of Birmingham can accept applications through the Common Application System. However, if your students are able to apply through UCAS we would encourage them to do so. We strongly recommend that those students choosing to apply through the Common Application do so by 15 January to ensure equal consideration with the rest of our applicants. We may still potentially consider applications after this date in some subject areas.

Please note your students can only apply through the Common Application or UCAS but not through both systems.

We will not accept applications from countries other than the USA or Canada through the Common Application.

ACT

The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. The University of Birmingham is registered with ACT; therefore your students can provide evidence of their qualifications through this system if they wish: www.actstudent.org



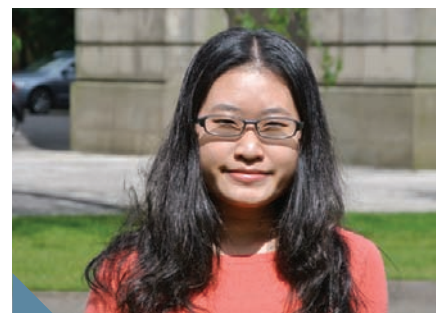
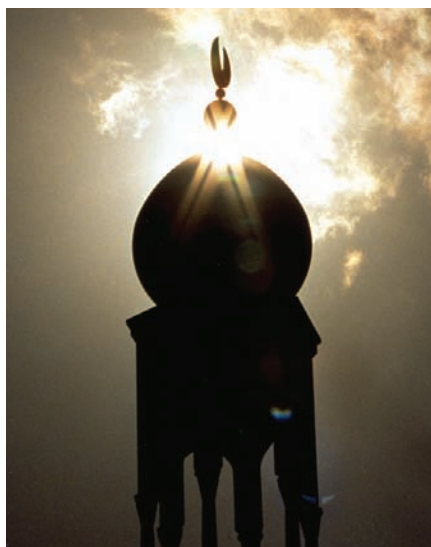
College of Arts and Law

Home to outstanding teachers, researchers and professionals who support students during their time at the University of Birmingham and beyond. Students will encounter challenging and inspiring educational experiences that will equip them with the skills they need for their future careers.

The College of Arts and Law offers programmes in the following areas:

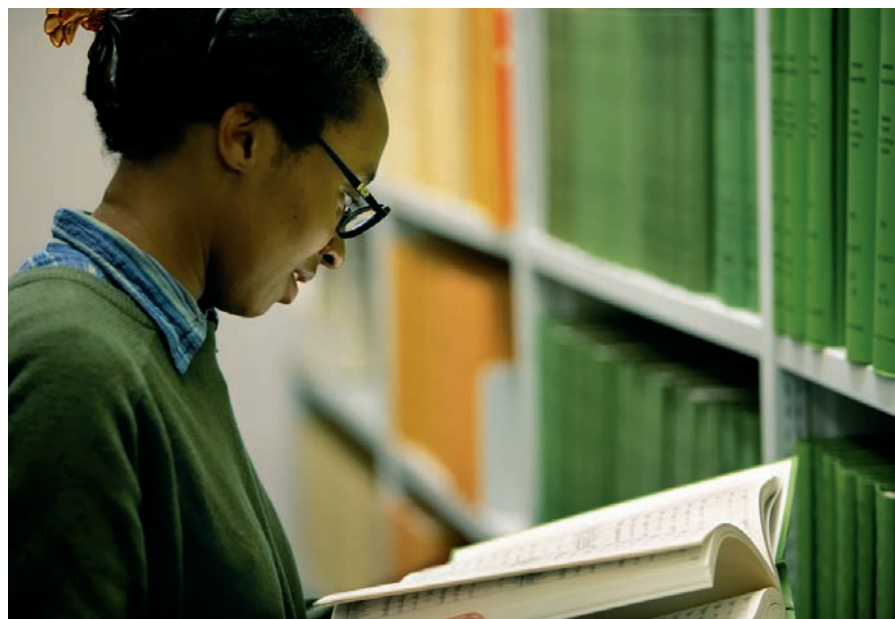
- American and Canadian studies
- Art History
- Drama
- English
- History and Cultures
- Law
- Modern Languages
- Music
- Philosophy
- Theology and Religion

Find out more about programmes in the College of Arts and Law by searching our course finder: www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate



‘Birmingham Law School is a renowned college. It has nurtured a lot of successful judges, for instance, Geoffrey Ma, Hong Kong’s Chief Justice. Also, the teaching and learning resources at the University are student-friendly; it is undoubtedly my greatest honour to have started my tertiary education here.’

Tiffany, Law, Hong Kong.



College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

The College of Engineering and Physical Sciences works across the frontiers of science and engineering in education, research and translating knowledge.

The College of Engineering and Physical Sciences offers access to learning and career development opportunities in the following areas:

- Chemistry
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electronic, Electrical and Systems Engineering
- Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering
- Metallurgy and Materials
- Physics and Astronomy

Find out more about programmes in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences by searching our course finder: www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate



“At Birmingham I found the course content the most interesting. At the open day I was attracted by the really exciting 2nd year Robot Project! At Applicant Visit Day, amazingly, lecturers and staff spent time to get to know me one-to-one unlike other universities. My passion for the subject and individuality as a student were recognised. The facilities and standards here are just on another level, really glad to be here!”

Hashu, Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering, UK

College of Life and Environmental Sciences

Dedicated to exploring and learning about the diversity and evolutionary challenges of life in all its forms, the College of Life and Environmental Sciences uses training, fieldwork and excellent facilities to enable students to learn generic and discipline-specific skills while studying exciting topics – ranging from ecology through to cancer research and forensic psychology.

The College of Life and Environmental Sciences offers programmes in the following areas:

- Biosciences
- Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Psychology
- Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation Sciences

Find out more about programmes in the College of Life and Environmental Sciences by searching our course finder:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate



“I chose to study at the University because of its reputation. The School of Psychology is one of the best psychology schools in the UK and I prefer to study in the campus-style environment. The programme itself attracted me the most, being able to learn from the experts in the field plus a wide exposure to different areas of psychology really helped me to develop my interest in psychology.”

Ku Nurul, Psychology
Malaysia



College of Medical and Dental Sciences

The College of Medical and Dental Sciences at the University of Birmingham is a major international centre for research and education in medicine, medical sciences, dentistry, nursing and pharmacy.

Bringing together healthcare-related research and education, the College consists of the following five schools: Cancer Sciences, Clinical and Experimental Medicine, Dentistry, Health and Population Sciences, and Immunity and Infection.

The principal base of the College lies immediately between the main campus of the University and the new Queen Elizabeth Hospital, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust.

The College provides an impressive portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate taught and research programmes. Programmes at all levels are delivered by some of the UK's most respected clinicians and health professionals, providing students with the best possible learning experience.

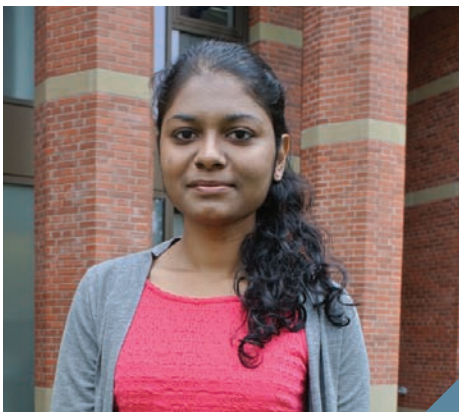
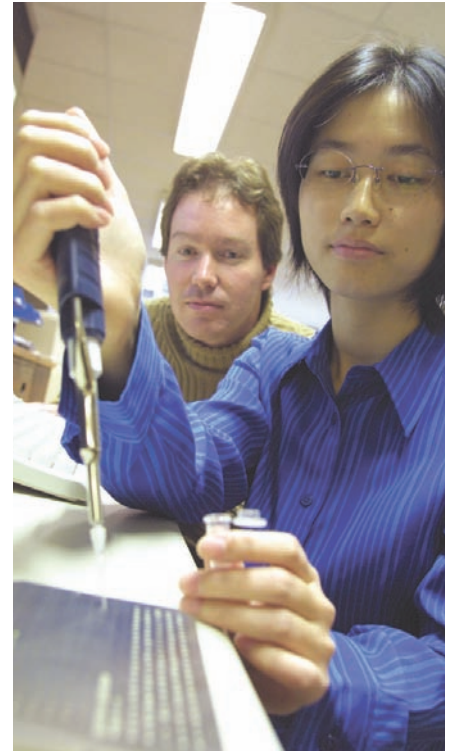
Students are encouraged to broaden their knowledge and experience by working across a wide range of organisations and experience the varied cultures and demographics of the West Midlands.

The College of Medical and Dental Sciences offers programmes in the following areas:

- Cancer Sciences
- Clinical and Experimental Medicine
- Dentistry
- Health and Population Sciences
- Immunity and Infection

Find out more about programmes in the College of Medical and Dental Sciences by searching our course finder:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate



“The University of Birmingham has good rankings within the UK and internationally. The Medical School is highly reputable and is involved in lots of research so academic-wise this was attractive. The multi-cultural city and international-friendly university meant that it would be easier to settle down and this was important because I’m going to spend a minimum of five years here and I wanted a comfortable second home.”

Divyaa, Medicine, Singapore

College of Social Sciences

Generating new knowledge about society and transforming this in ways that improve wellbeing, is central to all work in this research-led College of Social Sciences. It strives to champion new policies and practices, generate considerable investment and maintain relevance to the current world.

The College of Social Sciences provides access to high quality social science research and world leading academics in all areas of society. Research in the College makes a real difference and its teaching ensures the next generation of social scientists will continue to transform their knowledge into policies and practices for individuals, organisations and governments alike in the UK and internationally.

The College of Social Sciences offers programmes in the following areas:

- Business
- Education
- Government and Policy
- Social Policy

Find out more about programmes in the College of Social Sciences by searching our course finder: www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate



“I chose the University of Birmingham for its great reputation as a Russell Group University, the stunning campus and its wide selection of sports teams and societies. The quality of staff administration is really high and I felt looked after and safe even before leaving Singapore! Having a domestic airport and our own train station definitely made the move a much easier choice as well.”

Tania, Money Banking and Finance
Singapore



Birmingham Foundation Academy

Our Foundation programme combines the highest standards of one of Britain's leading global universities with a fully integrated student experience.



Aimed at students in 12-year education systems, the Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) provides an opportunity for highly motivated international learners with an excellent academic record and willingness to study hard to enter the university environment one year before the start of a UK undergraduate degree programme.

Foundation students are part of our global community, living and learning at the heart of our campus, and studying with world-leading academics. If students are highly motivated and have an excellent academic record, the Foundation Academy is their pathway to successful undergraduate study at Birmingham or other top UK universities.

The Birmingham Foundation Academy offers students a range of distinctive benefits:

- Students are taught entirely on the University's stunning campus
- Students study a range of academic modules, taught by respected Birmingham academics
- Students are fully integrated members of our student community, with access to all University facilities
- An International Support Officer lives on-site and is the first point of contact for all welfare concerns
- Our high-quality Academic English and Study Skills modules are accredited by the British Council
- More than 85% of our students from 2013 progressed to their chosen undergraduate degree

"I chose the University of Birmingham because of its strong reputation. My brother also studied in the UK and he strongly recommended me to study at Birmingham."

Bilguun, BFA student from Mongolia, now studying BA English and Creative Writing.



Students are taught in English and will mix with students from all over the world. They constantly improve their academic, linguistic and cultural skills, and by the end of the programme they will be fully prepared for life as an undergraduate student in the UK.



BIRMINGHAM FOUNDATION ACADEMY

Study pathways

When students apply to the BFA they choose an academic pathway and degree that they would like to progress to.

The academic pathways available are:

- Arts, Social Sciences, Business and Law Pathway
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Pathway
- Medical, Life and Geo Sciences Pathway

Upon successful completion of the appropriate pathway, students will be guaranteed progression to an extensive range of undergraduate programmes.

Further information about pathways and progression requirements can be found at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

Entry requirements

The BFA is suitable for students who have completed high school education to a high standard and would normally require a foundation year before being eligible for first-year undergraduate entry to universities in the UK.

Academic and English language requirements can be found at www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

If your students do not meet the English language requirements for the BFA, high quality preessional English programmes are available through the English for International Students Unit (EISU) see page 20 and our website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/eisu

How to apply

Students can apply directly for the BFA using the online application form at www.birmingham.ac.uk/foundation-academy/apply

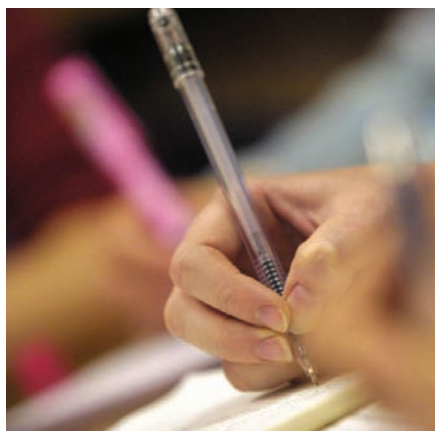


Learn more

For all enquiries about the Birmingham Foundation Academy please contact:
T: +44 (0)121 414 9292
E: foundation-academy@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Undergraduate entry requirements at the University of Birmingham

In order to be offered a place at the University of Birmingham students will need to meet the general entry requirements and any specific requirements of their chosen programme.



We welcome applications from international students and accept a wide number of qualifications including A Levels, the International and European Baccalaureate and many more country-specific qualifications.

A levels

Offers to A level students typically range from: A*AA – AAB. Some programme may require certain subjects to have been studied.

Offers to International and European Baccalaureates typically range from 34–38 points. Some programmes may require certain subjects at Higher level.

USA

Offers are typically made to students holding the US High School Diploma with Grade 3.0 or above and the following additional requirements:

- PLUS SAT 1 with a minimum of 1800 (at least 1900 for subjects where standard offer is AAB or higher) **OR** ACT Composite Score at 27 or above

- PLUS AP subjects (with a score of 4 equivalent to A-level B grade and a score of 5 equivalent to A-level A grade) **OR** 3 x SAT Subject Tests with a minimum score of 650 in each

India

Offers are typically made to students holding the Indian Standard XII with an overall score of 75%, or higher. Please see grade equivalencies:

- AAA = 85% ISC, CBSE, Maharashtra or 80% West Bengal or 90% other state boards
- AAB = 80% ISC, CBSE, Maharashtra or 75% West Bengal or 85% other state boards
- ABB/BBB = 75% ISC, CBSE, Maharashtra and West Bengal or 80% other state boards

Malaysia

Two or three year diplomas may be considered on a case-by-case basis with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Malaysian Matriculation programme may be considered with a minimum GPA of 3.0. UEC students with A-grade average may be considered for entry into Year 1 of Engineering and Science programmes and with B-grade average will be considered for the Birmingham Foundation Academy to study most programmes.

Singapore

Three x H2 subjects with grades to meet our A-level grade requirements. H1 subjects are not considered and H3 subjects may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Alternatively applicants may be considered with a Polytechnic Diploma with a GPA of 2.5 or above. Please see www.birmingham.ac.uk/singapore for more information on Polytechnic entry requirements.

Hong Kong

Offers are typically made to students who have successfully completed the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) with grades in the following ranges: 5*,5,5 – 5,4,4. Please see grade equivalencies:

- A*AA = 5*,5,5
- AAA = 5,5,5
- AAB = 5,5,4
- ABB = 5,4,4

We will accept English and Maths from core subjects but not Chinese or Liberal Studies. We can accept elective subjects.

Programmes requiring Mathematics will require both Compulsory (Core) and Extended ('M1', Calculus and Statistics) modules.



English language requirements

Students need to demonstrate a certain level of English in order to meet the demands of each programme. The level required will depend upon the programme chosen. An indication of entry requirements is given in the table opposite. Students will be required to show evidence when offered a place to study.

English language requirements for students who do not have English as their first language

Academic area	IELTS	Pearson Test of English (PTE)*
Undergraduate requirements		
Engineering and Science	6.0 overall, with no less than 5.5 in any band	PTE Academic 51 in all four skills
Business, Economics, Political Science, International Relations, Social Policy, Sociology, Education, History, English and Humanities subjects, Medical Science, Psychology, Sport and Exercise Science, Urban and Regional Studies	6.5 overall, with no less than 6.0 in any band	PTE Academic 59 in all four skills
Law, Nursing, Physiotherapy	7.0 overall, with no less than 6.5 in any band	PTE Academic 67 in all four skills
Medicine, Dentistry	7.0 overall, with no less than 7.0 in any band	PTE Academic 67 in all four skills

Alternative qualifications for undergraduate programmes	
Qualification	Minimum University requirement
University of Birmingham preessional English course	Pass (see www.birmingham.ac.uk/eisu for details)
GCSE English (or Edexcel IGCSE English)	Grade C or above
GCE O level English	Grade C or above
Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) IGCSE English (first language)	Grade C plus a minimum of C in all bands (or 2 in Speaking and Listening for syllabus 0500)
Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) IGCSE English (second language)	Grade C plus a minimum of C in Reading, Writing and Speaking (or 2 in Speaking for syllabus 0510) and A in Listening
International Baccalaureate English, Standard or Higher level, First or Second language	5 or above
HKDSE (Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education) English	Level 3 (with a minimum of 3 in each band) or above
India Standard XII (CBSE/CISCE/West Bengal)	75% or above
India Standard XII (other Indian state boards)	80% or above
Malaysian SPM 1119 (Cambridge O Level)	Grade C or above
ESOL Cambridge CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)	Grade C with a minimum of Borderline in all four skills
ESOL Cambridge CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English)	Grade C with a minimum of Borderline in all four skills

For the latest entry requirements please go to
www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/country

English for International Students Unit

The English for International Students Unit (EISU) provides English courses for international students preparing to study at the University of Birmingham, as well as support for students who are already here.

EISU has an excellent reputation for the quality of its courses and offers a friendly, welcoming and supportive study environment. All EISU staff have high academic qualifications and extensive teaching experience. The Unit is also a member of 'English UK' and is accredited by the British Council.

Pre-sessional English programmes are available before the start of the academic year for students who do not have the required level of English or who wish to improve their skills before they arrive. Visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/eisu for further information.

English support during studies

Once a student is enrolled on their undergraduate programme at the University of Birmingham, they can attend free open access English classes, self-assess their academic English, book individual language tutorials, get answers to language queries and download self-study materials.



Accommodation

At Birmingham we offer a fantastic range of accommodation, all of which provides a safe, secure and sociable start to the university experience.



We have three accommodation villages, each offering a safe and friendly place to live, just a short walk from the main campus. Each village has its own student community and social hub.

Students can also choose one of our Meal Plan rooms at the Vale Village, offering a flexible weekly budget that is tailored around their University schedule.

We guarantee accommodation to international students for their first year of academic study if they have firmly accepted their offer to study at Birmingham. They must also have submitted their online accommodation application by 31 May for EU students and 31 July for international students.

Students can apply for accommodation as soon as they have an offer of a place to study. Students need their student ID and an email address to apply. To find out more go to: www.birmingham.ac.uk/accommodation-apply

Living off-campus

Students may choose to live off campus in privately rented accommodation or one of our University-owned houses in the local area of Selly Oak. For more information on University-owned properties please visit our website www.birmingham.ac.uk/accommodation or email unimanagedaccom@contacts.bham.ac.uk

There is a range of private accommodation available for students with a dedicated website where they can search for properties www.birminghamstudentpad.co.uk If you have any queries please email birminghamstudentpad@contacts.bham.ac.uk



“It took no time to feel confident living in Birmingham, thanks to the support I was getting from my flatmates. The students I have met at the University of Birmingham are extremely friendly, welcoming and very helpful.”

Matraça, Psychology, Canada

Student support

Every international student receives a warm welcome when they arrive at the University of Birmingham. We make sure students get all the support they need in order to make the most of their student experience and to reach the very best of their potential.



Welcome to campus

At the start of term in September, our 'International Students Welcome' includes a special induction programme. We guide students through initial tasks, like applying for a bank account or registering with a doctor as well as encouraging them to attend the wide variety of social activities designed to help them meet new friends.

International Students Advisory Service (ISAS)

ISAS is a free, confidential advice and information service that is specially tailored to the needs of international students and their families. This includes advice on visas, employment, bringing family to the UK, possible sources of funding, academic and personal matters, and the practicalities of living in the UK.

The service also arranges activities and events which include exciting opportunities to learn all about life in the UK and at Birmingham.

Telephone: +44 (0)121 414 8464

Online queries: www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk
or visit www.as.bham.ac.uk/studentlife/international

Wellbeing

The Wellbeing Centre aims to enable students to get the most out of their time at university. We have a dedicated team of professional counsellors providing individual, group or online support.

The Advice and Representation Centre (ARC) at the Guild of Students offers free, confidential and impartial advice to all students on a range of issues including academic, finance, employment, immigration and housing.



Disability

Birmingham has a range of services available to support students with disabilities and learning difficulties throughout their studies. We recommend students tell us about their needs as soon as possible so that the Disability and Learning Support Service can implement any support required. All information that students provide is treated with the strictest of confidence.



Supporting faith

St Francis Hall, the chaplaincy on campus, is a place where students of all faiths can meet to worship, chat informally, speak to a chaplain for spiritual and religious advice or receive counselling. We have Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist chaplains. The Guild of Students also has a variety of faith-based groups. In addition to the facilities on campus, the city of Birmingham has places of worship and prayer rooms for many faiths and religions.

Careers

The Careers Network at Birmingham offers a wide range of services, including a dedicated International Careers Advisor Consultant and a team of International Student Ambassadors. The team supports students to ensure that they are fully prepared for work or further academic study in their home country or elsewhere.

Our Careers Network Service was awarded the National Union of Students and UKCISA Internationalisation Award for Best Careers Support for International Students 2014.

Keep in touch

The International Recruitment team at Birmingham provides a link between schools, their students and the University. We aim to raise awareness of higher education opportunities for international students, support them through the application process, as well as providing counsellors and teachers with useful information and resources.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with schools throughout the world and encourage you to get in touch with us so that we can work together to bring your students a wealth of information on studying in the UK and at Birmingham.

Visit us

You may want to plan a group visit to our campus and we are more than happy to help arrange your visit. Please email us at international@bham.ac.uk with suitable dates and we will be in touch to arrange this. Your visit can include campus tours and talks on applying to and studying at Birmingham.

Alternatively you may wish to bring a group to one of our open days, usually held in the summer and early autumn each year. You can find details about our next open day here www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/visit

Request a visit

We regularly travel overseas to take part in recruitment exhibitions and school visits. During visits we can provide informative and engaging activities such as presentations and guest lectures delivered by our academics. Take advantage of this possibility and let us know about your interest by contacting us with details of the proposed visit and we'll get in touch with you. Email us at international@bham.ac.uk

You can always find out more about our next trip near you by visiting www.birmingham.ac.uk/international

“The students enjoyed Doctor Kendall’s presentation. It was very informative and relevant to the work that the students have been doing in class.”

Blair Lockhart, Regents International School, Bangkok, Thailand.

“The lecture was a great success and we would certainly be very interested in welcoming more Birmingham academics for enrichment activities. Our students are always keen (as am I) to meet with universities of Birmingham’s calibre and reputation.”

Aidan Crowley
Careers and University
Guidance Counsellor
British International School
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Resources for you

Virtual tour

Our beautiful 250-acre campus is one of many reasons our students love studying at Birmingham. Share this with your students so that they can see more:

www.virtualtour.bham.ac.uk

VIRTUAL TOUR

Download a prospectus

Undergraduate or international prospectus:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/prospectus

Birmingham Foundation:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-academy/BFA-download-prospectus

University of Birmingham YouTube Channel

We have many useful and informative videos to share with your students including the following topics: how to apply, a day in the life of, courses, accommodation, campus life, the City of Birmingham and sports.

www.youtube.com/unibirmingham

E-learning

Tips4Uni is an interactive website which features useful resources on all aspects of the application process. Topics include university life, choosing a course and preparing an application. To find out more visit www.weblearn.bham.ac.uk/tips4uni

Join our mailing list

If you would like to receive our school counsellor newsletters please email us at **international@bham.ac.uk** to request that your contact details be added to the list.



Useful websites

University of Birmingham specific country entry requirements

www.birmingham.ac.uk/country

University of Birmingham International Summer School

www.birmingham.ac.uk/biss

British Council

www.britishcouncil.org

UCAS

www.uscas.com

UK Council for International Student Affairs

www.ukcisa.org.uk

UK Visas and Immigration

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



Contact us

International Student enquiries:

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 2894

Email: international@bham.ac.uk

Birmingham Foundation enquiries:

Tel: +44 (0)121 414 9292

Email: foundation-academy@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Overseas representatives

Birmingham has a network of overseas representatives who can provide information on studying at the University, as well as guidance on applications. For more information visit your country page at www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country

Stay in touch online

Visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international

 [@unibhamglobal](https://twitter.com/unibhamglobal)

 www.facebook.com/unibirmingham

 www.youtube.com/unibirmingham



Overseas offices and contacts

India Office

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1007 Mercantile House
15 Kasturba Gandhi Marg
New Delhi 110001
India
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Fax: +91 11 2370 6243

Guangzhou Centre

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