



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 6,800 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



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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 such as Birmingham.

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

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 Pathways 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

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 Birmingham International Academy delivers English Presessional 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/International/foundation-pathways/academic-english-and-skills/index.aspx

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

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 years but may occasionally be completed in 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 further explore 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

UK degree classification equivalences to the US GPA scale may vary but the following general equivalences are recognised at Birmingham:
UK First Class = US 3.6/4 GPA in the UK
Upper Second Class = US 3.2/4
UK Lower Second Class = US 2.8/4

Why do students choose the University of Birmingham?

The University of Birmingham was awarded a Gold rating in the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), demonstrating our continued commitment to the education and future of Birmingham students

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 safe and 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 Airport where flights link us to cities all over the world.

Birmingham students benefit from the best of both worlds, an exciting cosmopolitan city, just a short journey from the picturesque English countryside.

Located in the heart of the country, Birmingham is the perfectly situated for students to explore the rest of the UK. Less than two hours on the train from London, it’s easy for University of Birmingham students to take a trip. There’s plenty to do in and around Birmingham,

including botanical gardens, museums for all tastes or venture a little further to visit the historic home of William Shakespeare in Stratford-upon-Avon, or the breathtaking Warwick Castle.

Birmingham has everything you could desire from a capital city, with all the benefits of the glorious English countryside on its doorstep.

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

Following the University’s outstanding performance in the QAA (Quality Assurance Association) Higher Education Review, the University of Birmingham was awarded a Gold rating in the 2016/17 Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) acknowledging that ‘all student outcomes were outstanding’. At Birmingham, students benefit from learning in a research-rich environment, taught by world-leading experts whose teaching will be based in their own research. Our students find out about brand new research as it happens, far before it appears in textbooks.

Find out more about what TEF means for students at Birmingham:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/TEF



World rankings
TOP 150 in Shanghai Rankings 2017

84 in 2017
QS World University Rankings

130 in 2017
Times Higher Education (THE)

UK rankings
13 overall in 2017
The Guardian

16 overall in 2017
The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide

16 overall in 2018
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 yet thriving community on the doorstep of one of Europe’s most dynamic and culturally diverse cities. Our Edgbaston campus is a safe and welcoming place to live and study, with 24-hour security services and a range of support facilities.

Sport, leisure and teaching facilities in Birmingham are among the best in the UK. Our 250-acre campus is located just a few miles from the city centre and has recently undergone over £100 million in development, including a brand new library and a state-of-the-art sports and fitness centre with Birmingham’s first 50m swimming pool.

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, antiques or sciences. 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 friendly, welcoming 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 campus is breathtakingly beautiful and the facilities are excellent.”

Varghese, Business Management, India

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.

It is also Europe’s youngest city, with people under 25 making up 40% of the population. Inventive and enterprising, Birmingham is home to 5,800 creative businesses, including 40% of the UK’s jewellery production.



The University has recently announced the launch of the new campus in Dubai, becoming the first global top 100 and Russell Group university to establish a campus in Dubai and its rapidly developing international educational hub.

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.



UCAS key dates

Applications should be made between the beginning of 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 all UK Medicine or Dentistry programmes 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.



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 to apply to (students typically apply to one or two courses per university). 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.

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. For 2017 entry, the application fee was £13 for a single choice, or £24 for more than one choice. This fee may be subject to change in future years.

Step 3
UCAS sends the application to each of the chosen universities. Each university will assess 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 International Baccalaureate 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/undergraduate/clearing-adjustment/international/index.aspx

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 big impact on the outcome of an application.

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
- For degrees closely related to a specific career path, admissions tutors will look for work experience in a relevant setting or a demonstrable understanding of what the profession involves
- That the student is knowledgeable about the programme they have applied for and what it 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 opportunities 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
- 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/undergraduate/courses/apply/how-to-apply-for-ug-courses.aspx 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 a 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.

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:

- African Studies
- American and Canadian studies
- Archaeology
- Art History
- Classics
- Drama and Theatre Arts
- English (Literature/Language and Applied Linguistics)
- History and Art History
- 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



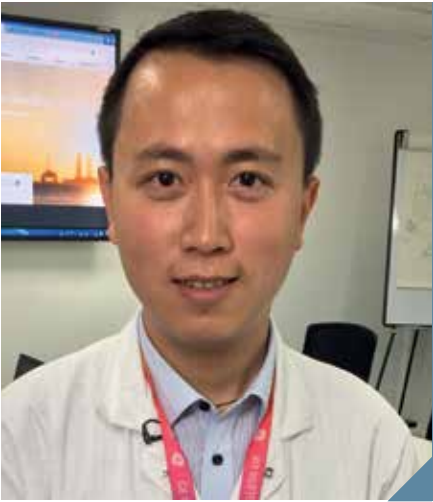
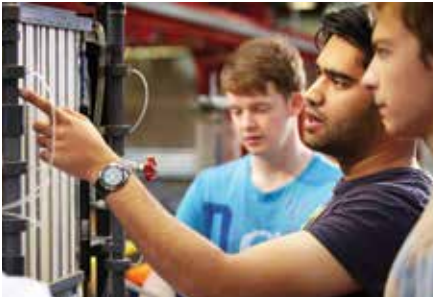
College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

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
- Nuclear Engineering
- 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



“Birmingham is at the heart of where the industrial revolution started and the education quality is some of the best in the UK. It is a truly international university which gives you the opportunity to mix with students from all over the world. The support I have received here along with the professionalism and the facilities have transformed my life. Engineering is a universal language and the widely recognised engineering qualifications here are important for starting your career. Thanks to my degree I now work as an Advanced Manufacturing Engineer.”

Edward Yi He, Electronic and Electrical Engineering, China

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 general but also 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
- Earth Sciences (Geology)
- Environmental Sciences
- Geography and Urban Planning
- Psychology (including Neuroscience)
- 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 Schools, Institutes and Departments: Applied Health Research, Biomedical Science, Cancer and Genomics, Cardiovascular Sciences, Clinical Sciences, Dentistry, Immunology and Immunotherapy, Inflammation and Ageing, Medicine, Metabolism and Systems Research, Microbiology and Infection, Nursing, and Pharmacy.

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.

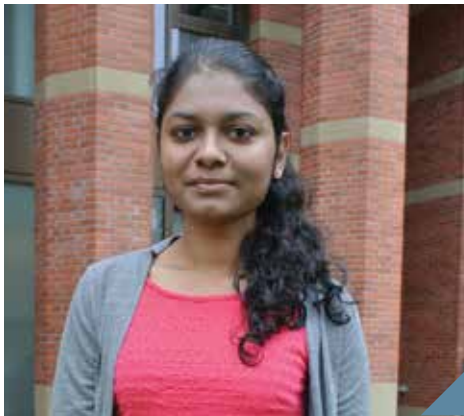
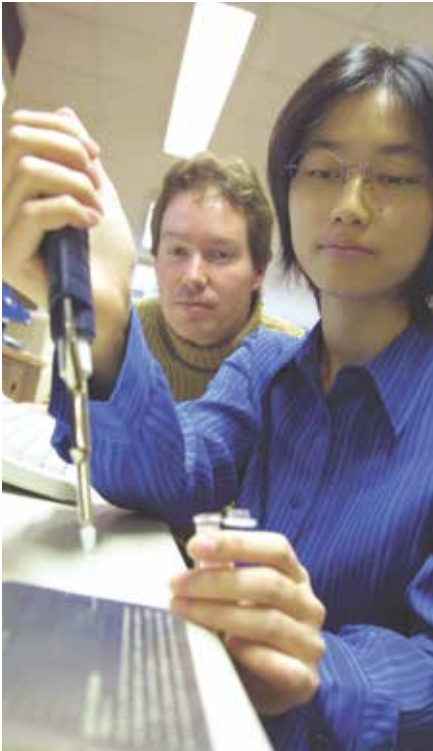
The College provides an impressive portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate taught and research programmes. Programmes at all levels are delivered by some of the UK's most respected clinicians and health professionals, providing students with the best possible learning experience.

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:

- Biomedical Materials and Science
- Dentistry
- Medicine and Surgery
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Public Health

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

The College of Social Sciences brings together over 360 academics and 264 professional staff across a range of disciplines and interdisciplinary fields. The College’s work impacts all areas of society grounded in the key disciplines of business, economics, education, government and society, and social policy.

The College of Social Sciences provides access to high-quality social science research and world-leading academics. 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:

- Accounting and Finance
- Business Management
- Criminology
- Economics (also with Maths and Statistics)
- Education
- Health Management and Leadership
- International Relations
- Money, Banking and Finance
- Political Science and Economy
- Social Policy
- Social Work
- Sociology

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 Pathways

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 Pathways provide 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 is their pathway to successful undergraduate study at Birmingham or other top UK universities.

The Birmingham Foundation Pathways offer 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 86% of our students from 2016 progressed to their chosen undergraduate degree

“I found the experience at Birmingham enlightening. The environment is liberal and accepting, and you can’t help but absorb those qualities.”

Abdulaziz Al Khalid, Foundation student from Saudi Arabia who progressed onto BEng Chemical Engineering



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.



Study pathways

When students apply to the Foundation Pathways 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
- Social Sciences, Business and Law Pathway (January entry only)

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/foundation

Entry requirements

The Foundation Pathways are suitable for both students who need a Year 13 equivalent or who have attained lower grades/qualifications than those required for direct entry into our Bachelors degree programmes.

Academic and English language requirements can be found at www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-pathways/entry-requirements/index.aspx

If your students do not meet the English language requirements for the Foundation Pathways, high quality preessional English programmes are available through the Birmingham International Academy, see page 20 and our website: www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-pathways/academic-english-and-skills/presessional-english-programmes.aspx

How to apply

Students can apply directly for the Foundation Pathways using the online application form at www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/foundation-pathways/how-to-apply/index.aspx



BIRMINGHAM FOUNDATION PATHWAYS



Learn more
For all enquiries about the Birmingham Foundation Pathways please contact:
T: +44 (0)121 414 9292
E: foundation@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, International and European Baccalaureate

Offers to A level students typically range from: A*AA – AAB. Some programmes 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

Students must hold a High School Diploma with an overall GPA score of 3.0 or above:

- Plus SAT 1 with a minimum of 1800 (at least 1900 for subjects where standard offer is AAB or higher)
- New redesigned (2016) SAT score minimum 1290 (minimum 1350 where standard offer is AAB or higher);
- **OR** ACT Composite Score of 27 or above;

- Plus 3 AP subjects (minimum of 2 UCAS AP Programme Group A subjects required) with a score of 4 – 5 depending upon chosen course requirements;
- **OR** 3 SAT Subject Tests (SAT II) with a minimum score of 650 in each
- **OR** a combination of AP Subjects (UCAS Group A subjects only) and SAT Subject Tests equalling 3 subjects in total.

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 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

We provide English courses for international students preparing to study at the University of Birmingham as well as support for students who are already here.

The Preessional English courses have an excellent reputation for quality and offer a friendly, welcoming and supportive study environment. All of our staff have high academic qualifications and extensive teaching experience. The Centre is also a member of ‘English UK’ and is accredited by the British Council.

Preessional 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/International/foundation-pathways/academic-english-and-skills/preessional-english-programmes.aspx 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.”
Matraca, 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

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 University of the Year for Graduate Employment in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2015–16* and Birmingham is the UK’s number one university for securing a graduate-level job

Scholarships and funding opportunities

Choosing to study in the UK is rewarding but does involve significant investment. To reward outstanding achievement and to help ensure that fears about finance do not constrain prospective international students from considering study in the UK, the University of Birmingham is pleased to offer a number of prestigious international scholarships.

Financial support for undergraduate EU students

Until such time that a new financial statement is released by the government, students from the European Union (EU) can apply for financial help towards tuition fees.

For the most up-to-date information please visit: www.gov.uk/student-finance/eu-students

Subject-specific scholarships

We also have various subject-based scholarships on offer. To search for undergraduate funding opportunities go to: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx

Birmingham USA Scholarship Programme, USA Federal Aid and private loans

In partnership with the US Alumni Foundation, the University is pleased to offer two scholarships worth £7,500 for undergraduate study. The University is approved to offer the Federal Direct Loan Programme and also certifies US loans via private lenders.

Other scholarship awards

We work in partnership with a number of organisations and scholarship bodies to offer scholarships to talented applicants who meet specific criteria.

Visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/finance/scholarships/index.aspx

Other sources of funding

For other sources of funding, we would advise that your students contact the following:

- The British Council, Embassy or High Commission in your home country
- The Ministry or Department of Education in your home country
- Students from Canada and the United States can visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/finance/loans/index.aspx for information on loan

For further information and to apply for all scholarships visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/internationalscholarships



“Being awarded the UG Hong Kong Outstanding Achievement Scholarship from the University of Birmingham has given me the opportunity to meet amazing students and staff. It’s really helped me to build my social network.”

Jacqueline Yeung, BSc Physiotherapy



Keep in touch

The International Recruitment team at Birmingham provides a link between schools, their students and the University. The team seeks to raise awareness of higher education opportunities for international students, supporting 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 across 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

Foundation Pathways:
www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/foundation-pathways/index.aspx

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.skills4uni.bham.ac.uk

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/International/students/country/index.aspx

University of Birmingham International Summer School
www.birmingham.ac.uk/biss

British Council
www.britishcouncil.org

UCAS
www.ucas.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@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/index.aspx

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
University of Birmingham India Office
1007 Mercantile House
15 Kasturba Gandhi Marg
New Delhi 110001
India
Tel: +91 11 2370 6237/38
Fax: +91 11 2370 6243

Guangzhou Centre
University of Birmingham
Guangzhou Centre
Yinglong Plaza
Room 714, No.76, Fuli Yinglong
Huangpu Avenue West
Tianhe District
Guangzhou
China
510623
Tel: +86 20 3888 0707

Shanghai
Mingya Zong
Tel: +86 21 31 007900 ext 220
Email: china@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Nigeria
John Ojeogwu
Nigeria Country Officer
UKEAS Nigeria
2nd Floor, 6 Adeola Odeku Street
Victoria Island, Lagos
Tel: +234 815 8868617
Email: birmingham@ukeas.com.ng



Write to us
University of Birmingham
International Recruitment
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
United Kingdom



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Edgbaston, Birmingham,
B15 2TT, United Kingdom
www.birmingham.ac.uk

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