

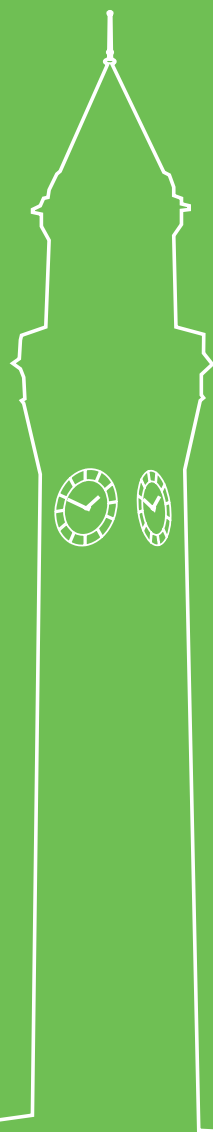


UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# CAMPUS TOUR BOOKLET

'I loved the campus –  
the atmosphere was  
brilliant and I could really  
see myself fitting in here.'

*Campus Visitor*



# Welcome

Welcome to the University of Birmingham! This guide provides information about the University and its facilities to help you conduct your own 'self-guided' tour around the campus. A map of the campus is on the inside back cover and the following pages provide information about the sights you will see on your tour. We hope you enjoy your visit to the University of Birmingham and you learn something new on your tour of our campus.



# The University

The University of Birmingham has a long history of academic excellence and innovation and we are proud to have been the first civic university, where students from all religions and backgrounds were accepted on an equal basis. Our spirit of innovation continues today with groundbreaking research in areas ranging from cancer studies to gravitational waves. Our students receive a first-class academic experience, which has been recognised through the Teaching Excellence Framework, which awarded the University Gold. As well as receiving excellent teaching quality, the experience at Birmingham also equips students for life beyond the University. The University is consistently targeted by the top graduate employers who want to and recruit our students for their programmes.

Today you will see some of the attractions of our campus, however, we'd also encourage you to explore the city centre where there are great social and recreational opportunities for students. The University, with its own railway station, is only two stops and eight minutes from the city centre. Birmingham has an illustrious history of industry and invention, and continues to attract significant business investment today. The city centre has had over £9 billion spent on regeneration over the past few years and is home to a variety of cultural and leisure activities from the Bullring, one of Europe's largest shopping centres, to the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, a world-class exhibition space. The attraction of the city is such that around 48% of our graduates choose to stay in Birmingham after they have completed their studies.

Within the University, our student community of over 33,000 students is composed of representatives from over 150 different countries. We are also a founder member of Universitas 21, a network of research-intensive universities conducting research projects around the world.

We hope you have an enjoyable day here at the University of Birmingham and that you benefit from your campus tour. For further information about our open days, other events, the courses and opportunities we have on offer, visit our website [www.birmingham.ac.uk](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk)



Birmingham Council House



The Mailbox, Birmingham



# Campus tour: an introduction

The University is a safe, friendly environment with a mix of sculptures, striking architecture, and a range of facilities and amenities for students, staff and visitors. Measuring over 12 acres, the Green Heart opens up the centre of campus providing a unique space for performances, socialising and studying.

We suggest you start the tour at the Aston Webb Building. On the following pages there are some highlights of our campus. Each description matches the building numbers shown on the map on the inside back cover. The tour will take you around the campus in a circular direction terminating at University railway station.

As you walk through the campus, there are various sculptures running from the East Gate, where you can see the 1722 statue of King George I by Van Nost, through to the West Gate, where Sir Eduardo Paolozzi's *Faraday* stands. You can also see *Ancestor I* by Barbara Hepworth in University Square and William Bloye's *Mermaid* in the Guild courtyard.



At the entrance to the Aston Webb Building (RG) there are nine figures from the worlds of art, philosophy, science and industry



Computer Science building and Sir Eduardo Paolozzi's *Faraday* statue (Y9)



William Bloye's *Mermaid* fountain – The Guild (01)



*Ancestor I* by Barbara Hepworth



## 1 The start of your tour: the Aston Webb Building (R6) and the clock tower

Built in 1900, the iconic red-brick **Aston Webb Building** was one of the first buildings on this site. Opened in 1909 by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, it was designed by Sir Aston Webb who also designed the Imperial College of Science, the eastern façade of Buckingham Palace and the Cromwell Road frontage of the Victoria and Albert Museum. In World War One, the building was used as a hospital and the plaques in the foyer commemorate University members who lost their lives during that war. Directly behind the reception is the Great Hall. The stained glass windows in the Great Hall represent the various academic disciplines taught at the University.

The Aston Webb Building is the start and end of the University experience for students, where registration and graduation are held. The University's finance offices are located in this building, as well as the office of the Vice-Chancellor and one academic department, Earth Sciences. Down the corridor on your right as you face the Great Hall, is the Lapworth Museum of Geology, one of the UK's best geological collections, with a range of innovative and interactive exhibits. The corridor on your left will lead you to the Student Hub, which brings all of our student support services together in one place including the Careers Network, Student Funding, Counselling, Wellbeing, Disability, Mental Health and Learning Support. The advisors will go above and beyond to answer any questions or queries a student has throughout their time at University.

Outside the Aston Webb Building situated in Chancellor's Court is the **clock tower**. This is one of the tallest buildings in Birmingham and nicknamed 'Old Joe' after Joseph Chamberlain, the University's first Chancellor. The tower is nearly 100 metres high – the tallest freestanding clock tower in Europe – and is based on the Mangia Tower in Siena, Italy. It is widely recognised as the inspiration for J R R Tolkien's 'all seeing eye' in the *Lord of the Rings* series and more recently inspired the animation film *Monster's University* (Pixar). The largest bell weighs six tons and students have a superstition that if you walk under the tower when the clock chimes, you will fail your degree!

Looking directly across Chancellor's Court, you see the red-brick **Law Building (R1)** and the architecturally distinctive **Muirhead Tower (R21)** rising up behind it. Following the Aston Webb Building round to your right, you will arrive at **The Bramall** music building (R12).



'Old Joe' clock tower



Aston Webb Reception (R6)

## 2 The Bramall (R12)

Moving on from the historic Aston Webb Building, 100 years after it was opened, The Bramall was constructed and opened in 2012 to complete Joseph Chamberlain's original architectural vision to create a semi-circle of red-brick buildings. It is the home of our Department of Music with state-of-the-art teaching, research, performance and rehearsal facilities appropriate to its reputation. This facility benefits everyone involved in the University's music department while also being open for use by communities across the region, broadening the University's impact beyond the students who study here.

The 450-seat auditorium, designed by the renowned acoustician Nicholas Edwards, is a flexible space, suitable for performances from solo voice and early music, to a full symphony orchestra. When not used for music, it is a high-profile location for drama and dance performance, and for lectures. The next part of your journey around campus will take you to our Sports & Fitness Centre. Take the steps at the right-hand side of The Bramall down towards Ring Road South. Cross over the Ring Road and you will see University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness. To avoid the steps, walk towards University Road East and turn right at the end of this road onto the Ring Road and follow it to the bottom of the hill.



The Bramall





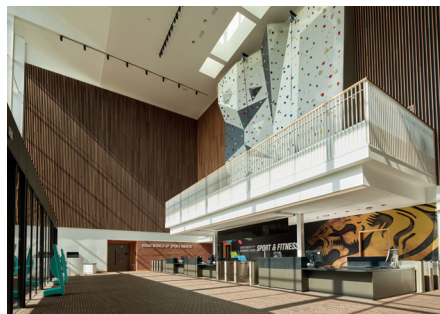
### 3 University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness (O7)

Sport & Fitness is the University of Birmingham's state-of-the-art sports centre. The facility is home to Birmingham's only 50-metre, Olympic-length swimming pool, a gym with over 200 stations, a climbing wall, an arena sports hall and six glass-backed squash courts. Birmingham has a proud sporting history. Every year, we have students who compete for the University at the top end of the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) league nationally and internationally. We even have a few students and graduates who have competed in the Olympics. We have also been lucky enough to be selected to host the Squash and Hockey competitions for the upcoming Commonwealth Games which Birmingham is hosting in 2022. We offer a range of scholarships and bursaries to support the most talented athletes financially, physically and mentally, in addition to providing access to a High Performance Centre. However, we also provide sporting opportunities for complete beginners to take up a new sport, to play casually and keep fit. Students can choose from a range of Sport & Fitness membership packages as well as a flexible exercise class programme.

Adjacent to Sport & Fitness, you can see the Bournbrook sports pitches. Many of our competitive sports teams train and play fixtures here, but they can also be booked by students for recreational sport. You can find the next stop by walking along the Ring Road towards East Gate, and you will find **the Guild of Students (O2)**.



University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness



### 4 The Guild of Students (O1)

The Guild of Students is the students' union, run by students, for students. It represents and involves all the University's students, from undergraduate and postgraduate, to home and international. It provides services such as Job Skills and Volunteering, which helps students to find volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs during term-time and the holiday's. There is also Worklink, which helps students find temporary jobs on campus and the Guild Advice Service, which offers impartial and confidential advice, information and representation on a range of issues from housing to wellbeing. Both of these services exist as another level of support offered to students alongside the Aston Webb Student Hub. The Guild also supports the diverse student-led clubs and societies of which there are over 250 to choose from! In addition, The Guild manages a number of student-led communications platforms: campus TV and radio stations and *Redbrick*, the student newspaper. The Guild also organises large-scale annual social events such as Welcome Week to help new students settle in, the Vale Fireworks in November, and to Graduation Ball in June. There are also weekly club and sports nights in the students' union bar.

The University's multi-faith chaplaincy **St Francis Hall (O2)**, is located next to the Guild, offering an inclusive space for prayer, meditation, relaxation and worship.

Another place to see is **Winterbourne House and Garden (G12)**, which can be found further down the main road (walking along Edgbaston Park Road with King Edward's School on your right). This heritage attraction is set within seven acres of beautiful and tranquil botanic gardens with over 6,000 plant species from around the world. There is an admission charge although students are eligible for free entry. Alternatively, you could visit the **Barber Institute of Fine Arts (R14)** just over the road from **the Guild**, where admission is free. It is one of the world's finest small art galleries, containing works from the 13th to the 20th centuries from Monet to Degas and offering another peaceful escape on campus for students. The Barber Institute also hosts music events and lectures and family events throughout the year.

On leaving the Guild, for the next stop head back towards the main campus, by following the road towards University Square. This route will take you past the Barber Institute on your right-hand side, later passing between **the School of Mathematics in the Watson Building (R15)** on your right and **the Physics Department in the Poynting Building (R13)** on your left.



The Guild



Barber Institute

## 5 Library (R30)

As you cross University Square, you will see the striking gold building that is the Main Library. This building opened in 2016 and is one of six University-owned libraries across the campus and region, with others based in departments such as the Barnes Library in the Medical School, or off campus such as at the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon. The Main Library facility is open 24/7 during term time and offers robust Wi-Fi, a power point at every desk and there is a help desk should any issues arise.

There are more than 2 million books in the Main Library, as well as half a million electronic books and 50,000 electronic journals. Specialist subject advisers provide advice to students on finding and making effective use of the information and resources. There is also the Academic Skills Centre located in the Library, which offers support to students across the academic disciplines from mathematical technique to academic writing, in addition to the support available to students within their departments.

The area around the Library and the University Square has been transformed into the 'Green Heart', restoring the campus to its original design by Sir Aston Webb at the start of the 20th century with a large green open space. From here you can see across to **the Arts Building (R16)** and can again see **the Muirhead Tower (R21)** rising above campus. Directly next door to the library you can find **University Centre (R23)**.



Main Library

## 6 University Centre (R23)

University Centre houses a broad range of general amenities accessible to students. There is a bank, supermarket, hair salon, printing services and an optician. There are also numerous places to eat and drink (all serving Fairtrade beverages), as well as somewhere to get your phone fixed and stock up on stationery and access to Royal Mail services.

Living, the University's accommodation service, is also located in University Centre. They allocate University accommodation to students and can provide information about local private sector landlords, and can also help with checking rental contracts. If you have any questions about accommodation at Birmingham, this is the best place to visit to get information about the different types of accommodation available, costs and how to apply.

On leaving University Centre, turn right and cross the Ring Road. Walk up the hill to the **Murray Learning Centre (R28)**. Before this, on your right you will pass the **Collaborative Teaching Laboratory (R31)**. This facility brings together practical teaching activities across a broad range of science and engineering disciplines. This new purpose-built facility incorporates a wet lab, dry lab and e-lab and along with the newly opened engineering lab in the **School of Engineering Building (Y3)**, enables us to revolutionise the way STEM subjects are taught at the University.



University Centre (R23)





## 7 Murray Learning Centre (R28)

The Murray Learning Centre offers facilities to help students with independent study: computer clusters, printers and scanners. From here you can see the University railway station from which there are regular services into the city centre (Birmingham New Street station), a journey of only eight minutes. This station offers access to the rest of the country and the journey to London is around one-and-a-half hours. You can also see the **Medical School (B1)**, which is across the main road from University station. The Medical School is a major international centre for education and research in medicine and medical sciences.

Your tour ends at this point, but if you wish to see some of our student accommodation, the **Vale Village** residences are about a 25-minute walk from where you are on the main campus. To walk to the Vale, head to East Gate, and walk along Edgbaston Park Road in a northerly direction (the top-right-hand corner of the map). You will come to 'The Vale' on your left, where some of our student residences are located in landscaped parkland overlooking a lake. To view an example of standard student accommodation, you can visit the show flat in Shackleton Hall. The key to the show flat can be obtained from reception at Shackleton. You will be asked to sign this out and return it to reception when you have finished. Shackleton also contains numerous social facilities for the students living on this site including a dining hall (Infusion), a coffee shop (The Melt) and a bar (Duck and Scholar).



Shackleton Hall



Medical School (B1)



Murray Learning Centre (R28)

## Information about accommodation

Students can choose from a wide range of different room types at Birmingham, depending on their preferences, including single-study bedrooms with shared or en-suite facilities up to private studio flats. Students who prefer to cook for themselves can opt for a self-catered flat with a communal living room and kitchen. However, catered rooms are also available with a flexible meal plan system, allowing students to eat when and where they want across campus. There are three student villages owned by the University: The Vale, Selly Oak Village and Prichatt's Park. Each accommodation has its own Residents' Association to organise social events and Student Mentors are on hand to help in any way they can. For those interested in environmentally friendly living or living in an international community, students can apply to live in our Green or Global Communities.

All our student accommodation allows students to enjoy their independence, while keeping them at the heart of University life. We offer safe surroundings, providing plenty of opportunities to socialise or find private space when needed. All of our study bedrooms give unlimited access to the internet through a cable connection and wirelessly. Student security is of great importance to us: all University accommodation has CCTV and our Security Centre is open 24 hours a day to provide help and assistance if it's needed. The reception at the Vale is also accessible 24 hours a day to help students with any problems that occur in their accommodation.

The University guarantees all first-year undergraduate students a room in University accommodation or a nominated bedspace in partner accommodation provided they make Birmingham their firm choice of university, meet the conditions of their offer and apply before the deadline.

### Accommodation for students with disabilities

For students with disabilities, specially adapted rooms in halls of residence are available. Contact our Living team for more information on 0121 414 8000.

### Living at home

Not all students choose to move into University accommodation. Living at home and commuting to University is a good option for some, especially for those who live locally. At Birmingham, we do our best to ensure the student experience is no different for these students. All students have access to the same academic, social and sporting facilities. The Guild of Students also runs a Home Commuter Students' Association with a dedicated Commuter Students' Officer, ensuring those who wish to live at home are represented and have access to the same opportunities.

## Edgbaston campus map

### Private accommodation

For students who wish to live in private accommodation, we provide a range of help and support. Living has produced a House Hunting Guide to help advise students, and both Living and Guild Lettings provide online search engines of available properties. The landlords of the properties advertised on these sites are accredited by the Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme to ensure standards of provision and maintenance are met.

### Events and activities at the University of Birmingham

The University has a great number of activities that occur on campus, many of which are open to the general public or students and parents interested in looking at the University. The major events for prospective students are the annual open days which take place in June, September and October; and for students who have already applied, the Offer-Holder Visit Days running from January to March, offer insight into life at Birmingham. Details of all these events can be found on our website at [www.birmingham.ac.uk](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk). You can also order a prospectus from the website and watch a virtual tour of the campus and accommodation if you wish to revisit the tour you have taken today!

### Other useful information

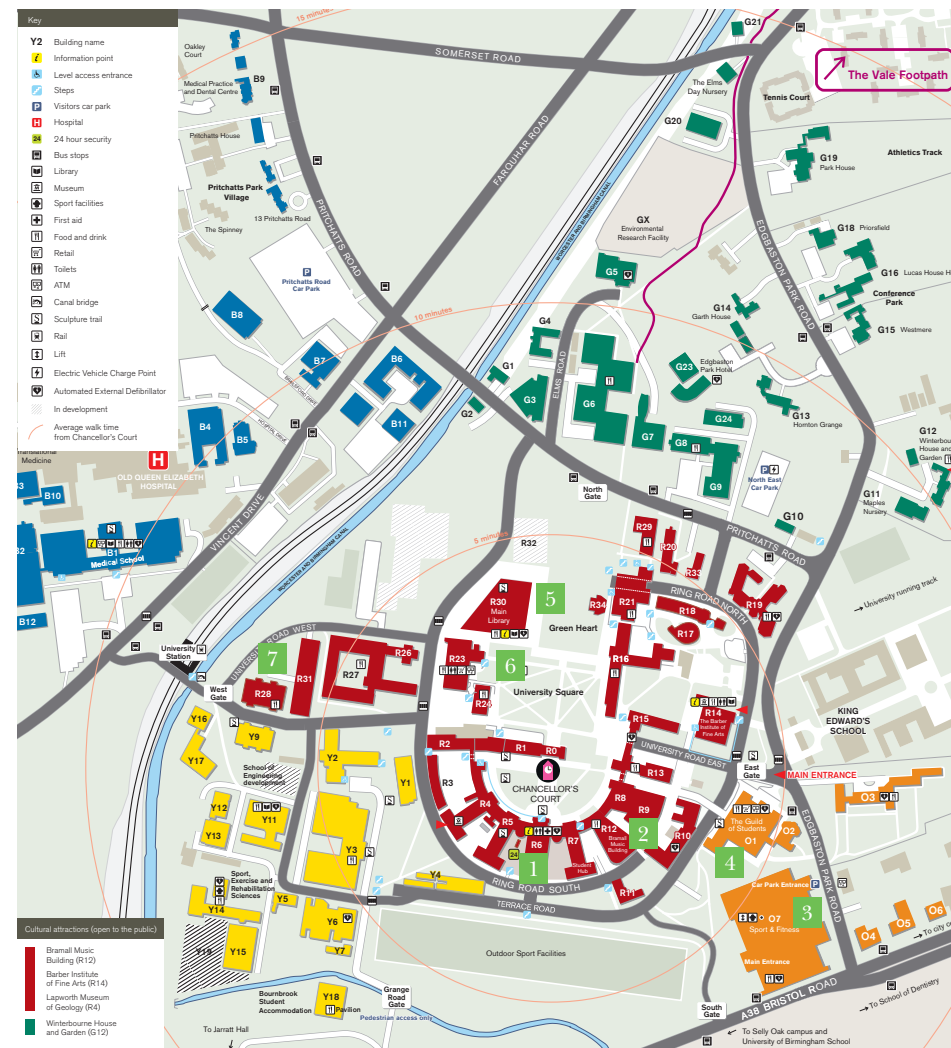
You can find video footage of students and academics talking about life at the University on our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/unibirmingham](http://www.youtube.com/unibirmingham)

This includes 'a day in the life' student subject videos, academics talking about their pioneering research and admissions tutors presentations from Open Day and discussing what they look for in the personal statement.

Thank you for taking the time to look around Birmingham and we hope you've gained something from the day. Please do contact the University if you have any queries and enjoy the rest of your visit to Birmingham.

Text for this publication has been compiled by the Student Recruitment Team.

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Designed and printed by

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