

Birmingham Foundation Academy

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1. The application process

How do I apply for the Birmingham Foundation Academy programme?

You can apply directly to the Birmingham Foundation Academy at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-apply. You will need to:

- Detail your academic qualifications so far or predicted grades in the examinations you are currently studying for
- you will need to write a short personal statement explaining your motivation for applying,
- Choose the Pathway and undergraduate degree you want to study upon completion.

Once you have submitted your application form you will receive an instant acknowledgement which will provide you with your University ID number which you must quote in all correspondence. You will then be sent a further acknowledgement email confirming receipt of your application.

If you are unable to apply online, or have any trouble using the online application form please contact us on:

Telephone: +44 121 414 9292

Email: foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk

When is the deadline for applications?

The last date for application for September 2015 entry is Friday 7 August 2015.

The last date for application for January 2016 entry is Saturday 7 November 2015

Do you need to see the original certificates for my qualifications?

You do not need to send original or certified copies of your academic qualifications unless you receive an offer from us. The conditions of your offer will make it very clear what documents are required. We do not normally need original or certified copies of English proficiency certificates (IELTS/Pearson) as we are able to verify these results online.

Can I send certified copies?

Yes, in order to meet the conditions of an offer you can send in certified copies of your academic documents – these would normally need to be certified by your school, college or institution.

Where do I send my certificates to?

When you receive an offer and we request your academic certificates, please send them by post to:

Admissions Office
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT
United Kingdom

We do not normally need original or certified copies of English proficiency certificates (IELTS/Pearson) as we are able to verify these results online. However, if you wish to send your English language results by email, please use the email address:
foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk

What is the difference between the one-year and the four-year programmes?

If your application is successful you may receive an offer of a place for one of the following programmes:

- A Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (four-year programme). This will include your one-year Foundation Academy Programme.
- The Birmingham Foundation Academy Programme (one-year programme). If you complete your one-year programme and meet the published progression criteria you will be guaranteed a place on one of our three- or four-year undergraduate degree programmes

The **one-year programme** is classified as a course below degree level and therefore we are able to accept a slightly lower English language level for the entry requirement.

If you wish to progress to the following undergraduate degrees you can only take the one-year programme:

- BA Education (including Education with Sociology & History)
- BSc Sport, Physical Education and Coaching Science
- MPharm Pharmacy
- BSc Physiotherapy
- BSc Biomedical Materials Science

This is because these programmes require additional conditions to be met during the foundation year.

Successful applicants will be issued with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies to cover a one-year programme. If you successfully complete your Birmingham Foundation Academy year and progress to a degree programme, you can apply for an extension of your Leave to Remain in the UK.

The **four-year programme** is classified as a degree-level programme and therefore, in order to comply with UKBA regulations, you must have an IELTS score of at least 5.5 (with 5.5 in each band) or equivalent.

Successful applicants will be issued with a CAS to cover a four-year programme.

There is no difference in the course content, range of modules, progression routes or progression requirements between the one-year and the four-year programmes for the same pathway. In both cases you are guaranteed a place on one of the University's undergraduate programmes providing you achieve satisfactory grades in the first year. Certain degree programmes will require that you achieve a specific grade in specified BFA modules in order to progress, and for a small number of programmes you will need to pass an interview, workshop or audition stage. These requirements are the same whether you are taking a one-year or a four-year programme.

All undergraduate programmes that you may progress to from each BFA pathway, and their progression requirements (including whether you would be required to pass an interview, workshop or audition stage) are listed at:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

Can I progress to the University's four-year degree programmes with a year in industry or year abroad?

Yes, it is possible to progress to a four-year degree programme, such as the MEng or MSci (integrated Masters) or programmes with a year in industry or year abroad, after the Foundation Academy year, making your total time at Birmingham five years. In such cases Birmingham Foundation Academy students holding an offer for a Bachelors degree with integrated foundation year (four-year programme) will be able to apply for a one-year extension of their Tier 4 (General) student visa in their final year. Birmingham Foundation Academy students holding an offer for a one-year programme will be able to apply for a four-year extension of their Tier 4 (General) student visa after their initial Foundation Academy year.

I have applied for the BFA. What happens next?

Providing you meet the entry requirements and depending on your English language competence, we aim to reach a decision on complete applications within approximately five working days for a normal application (working days are normally Monday to Friday). If we require any further information from you we will write to you by email. Please note: Your application will be considered to be complete only when we have received copies of all relevant supporting documents.

Your offer may be conditional upon passing the examination you are currently studying for or improving your English language level before you start the Foundation Academy programme. Your offer letter will make it clear what the conditions of your offer are and how to fulfil them. Once you have satisfied any conditions of your offer, the University will issue you with an unconditional offer. When you have accepted this, you will receive a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) for either the one-year or the four-year Foundation Academy programme.

How do I apply for a student visa for the UK?

Your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) proves that you have been accepted on to a full-time course, and will be required when you apply for your Tier 4 (General) student visa to study in the UK. You can use your CAS number to apply for your visa in the three months before the start of your programme.

Once you have been issued with your CAS, the University's International Students Advisory Service (ISAS) will contact you to offer support with the visa application process.

If your offer is conditional because you need to improve your English language level, and you apply for the Birmingham Foundation Academy Pre-sessional English programme in order to do this, the University will issue a CAS for the duration of your pre-sessional programme. Once you have successfully completed this, you will be issued a new CAS for the one-year or four-year Birmingham Foundation Academy programme and will be able to apply to extend your student visa. (For more information, please see the [Birmingham Foundation Academy Pre-sessional English programme](#) section below.)

You can find more information about the process of applying for a student visa at www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/visas/student.aspx You can also check the requirements for entry to the UK with the British Council offices, British Embassy or British High Commission in your country or you can go to the UK Border Agency website www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Can I defer my offer?

Yes you can request a deferral on your offer; to do this please get in touch with the named Admissions contact within your offer letter. Deferral requests must be made in writing (either by post or by email). Please note that offer holders are only allowed to defer once.

Why was my application unsuccessful?

All programmes at Birmingham are very competitive and only applicants who meet the minimum entry requirements will receive the offer of a place. If your application is unsuccessful it is normally because your qualifications do not meet these requirements. For a list of the full entry requirements, please visit: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

Students at Birmingham Foundation Academy must be at least 16 years old so if you will be under this age at the start of the BFA programme, your application will not be successful. We value all applications and thank you for your interest in the Birmingham Foundation Academy.

My passport is out of date, what should I do?

If you are an International student you must have a valid passport for travel and for your visa. If you have applied and are waiting for a new one, you should send in a scanned copy of your new passport as soon as possible to foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk. You have until the 28th August or 7th November to send your passport copy, depending on whether you have applied for a January or September programme. If you don't think you will be able to send it in by the 28th August or 7th November 2015, please e-mail to notify us at foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk

I don't have a parental consent form/what is a parental consent form?

If you are under the age of 18, the University needs your parents or your guardian to fill in a form. It was sent to you in your offer e-mail. You should look back at that e-mail and see if you can find it. If not, please e-mail foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk and ask for another copy.

2. Entry requirements: is this programme right for me?

What are the academic entry requirements for the Birmingham Foundation Academy?

You can find the entry requirements specific to your country and qualification at www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

If your qualification is not listed here, then please contact us via email at foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk or telephone +44 121 414 9292. We will be happy to advise you as to whether your qualification is accepted for entry to the Birmingham Foundation Academy and if so, what grades you require.

What English language requirements will I need?

All your teaching will take place in English so you will need to demonstrate that you have a good standard of written and spoken English before you start your Foundation Academy programme. To do this you must have reached a specified level in a recognised English language proficiency test. The level you will need depends on the pathway you wish to take and whether you register for the one-year or the four-year programme. If you have taken IELTS or the Pearson Test of English (Academic) you can find the required level for your chosen pathway under 'English language entry requirements' at www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

Do you accept IGCSEs?

IGCSEs, and other qualification that are at the same level as GCSEs in the UK education system, on their own are not considered sufficient for Entry to the BFA. We would normally expect qualifications to be broadly equivalent to the UK AS-Level qualification. IGCSEs would be considered if offered together with additional qualifications.

Do you accept AS levels?

AS Levels may be acceptable on a case by case basis. If you are studying for AS Levels we would *strongly* urge you to continue your studies to A Level as this will provide you with more options for higher education study. If you choose to study to AS Level only and apply for the Birmingham Foundation Academy you will be asked to provide information as to why you did not

continue your studies through to A Level and this information will be taken in to account when assessing your application.

Do you accept A levels?

If you possess UK A levels you will not normally be considered eligible for the foundation. However, we do accept good A Levels for students who wish to take the BFA as an adjustment year. In this case, you would be required to have at least an ABB profile, to include Mathematics for the Engineering and Physical Sciences pathway.

We may also consider applicants with a combination of A Levels and other international qualifications.

Do you accept International Baccalaureate Diploma or A Level Equivalencies?

If you possess high school leaving qualifications equivalent to UK A levels you will not normally be considered eligible for the foundation.

However, we do accept these qualifications for students who want to take the BFA as an adjustment year. For an adjustment year, we require at least 28 points overall, to include 5 in Mathematics Higher Level for the Engineering and Physical Sciences pathway

Do you accept International Baccalaureate Certificate?

We do not accept this qualification on its own.

Do you accept the Certificate of Advanced English (CAE)?

Yes, this would be acceptable if you have achieved at Grade A and the certificate is no older than two years at the time of admission.

You can find the other English language entry requirements specific to your intended pathway at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

I have studied in English at my school. Do I still need to take an English language test?

We will only accept English from countries where English is the primary language. Please refer to the country-specific requirements listed at www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements This list indicates where an additional English test is **not** required.

Can I still join the Foundation Academy programme if I don't meet the minimum English language requirements?

You must meet the minimum English language requirements before joining the Foundation Academy programme.

If you do not meet the English language requirements at the time you apply, we may make you an offer that is conditional upon you meeting these requirements.

To enable you to do this, you can attend a specific Foundation Academy English preessional programme that takes place before the start of your first term. This programme can be 6, 10, 11, 15, 20 or 31 weeks in duration, depending on your current English language level. Successful completion of this programme will allow you to progress to the Birmingham Foundation Academy without retaking another English language test.

Please note: The tuition fees for the BFA Preessional English programme are not part of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package.

For more information please see the [Birmingham Foundation Academy Preessional English programme](#) section below.

Is the Birmingham Foundation Academy right for me?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) is suitable for you if you have completed your high school education to a high standard and you would normally require a foundation year before being eligible for first-year undergraduate entry to universities in the UK.

The BFA is not suitable for you if:

- You would not normally require a foundation year but have not achieved the grades normally acceptable for direct entry to University of Birmingham undergraduate degree programmes.
- You hold a degree (either a Bachelor degree, Masters degree or Research degree). Your qualifications may be suitable for other programmes. Please visit [Course Finder](#) for details of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes which are available.

I am a UK student; is the Birmingham Foundation Academy suitable for me?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) is primarily aimed at students whose education system is not directly comparable to that of the UK. This means that, even if you have completed your high school education to a high standard, you would still normally require a foundation or a bridging year before being eligible for first-year undergraduate entry to universities in the UK.

The BFA is not suitable for you if you have been educated in the UK, and would not therefore normally require a foundation or bridging year, but you have not achieved the grades normally acceptable for entry to the University of Birmingham.

The BFA is not recommended for you if English is your first language, as you will still need to take modules in Academic English and Study Skills as a compulsory part of your programme.

I am an EU student; is the Birmingham Foundation Academy suitable for me?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) is suitable for you if you have completed your high school education to a high standard and you would normally require a foundation year before being eligible for first-year undergraduate entry to universities in the UK. Most education systems in the EU are similar to that of the UK and you would not normally require a foundation year before starting an undergraduate degree programme. However, if you meet our stated entry requirements for the BFA, you are welcome to apply.

You can also choose to join the BFA if you meet the stated entry requirements for direct entry to University of Birmingham undergraduate degree programmes but you would like to take a foundation year in order to improve your academic English and study skills and familiarise yourself with the UK.

If English is your first language, the BFA is not recommended for you, as you will still need to take modules in Academic English and Study Skills as part of your pathway. However, if you are a high-level English language speaker, with an IELTS score of 8 overall (or equivalent) you can replace the Academic English and Study Skills modules with Advanced Academic Skills module – this 20 credit module will enable you to extend your academic and communication skills intensively and to use your language flexibly for a wide range of academic purposes.

Entry requirements for the BFA can be found at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

The cost of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package for Home Students (EU) in 2015–2016 is £9,000

This includes:

- One year's tuition fees
- Books and all classroom equipment

- Full access to all campus facilities and University services

Please note:

- Accommodation fees are not included in the BFA package
- If you have received a BFA offer for a Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (four-year programme) only, you are eligible to apply for financial support with the Student Loans Company. For further information please see: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx . Unfortunately you are not eligible to apply with the BFA one year offer only

I am a mature student; is the Birmingham Foundation Academy suitable for me?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy has specific entry requirements based on the education system that you have followed and the level you have attained. English language entry requirements also apply. If you meet the specified entry requirements, you are welcome to apply.

Entry requirements for the BFA can be found at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements

Can I just apply for direct entry to an undergraduate programme?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy is primarily aimed at students whose education system is not directly comparable to that of the UK. This means that, even if they have completed their high school education to a high standard, they would still normally require a foundation or a bridging year before being eligible for first year undergraduate entry to universities in the UK.

If the education system you have studied in and the qualification you have achieved are normally accepted for direct entry to UK undergraduate programmes and you meet the entry requirements for the University of Birmingham, then you are welcome to apply directly for an undergraduate programme via the UCAS system. However, if you meet the undergraduate requirements but would like to take a foundation year in order to improve your academic English and study skills and familiarise yourself with the UK, you can still choose to join the BFA.

Please note:

- You can check if your qualification is accepted for direct entry to our undergraduate programmes at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/country/index.aspx
- Entry requirements for A levels and the International Baccalaureate are listed within each undergraduate programme entry in our Course finder at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/index.aspx
- English language requirements for our undergraduate programmes can be found at www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/requirements/requirements-ug/international/index.aspx
- Applications for direct entry to undergraduate programmes can be made through www.ucas.com
- You can find a range of entry requirements for the BFA for international education systems and qualifications online at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-requirements
- Applications for the BFA are made directly to the University, via the BFA homepage at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-apply

Is there a minimum age for the Birmingham Foundation Academy?

Yes, for the 2015-16 academic year, you must be **aged 16 or over** by the start of the BFA academic year (21 September 2015). This date is fixed whether you have a September or a January start date.

Please note: You can be under 16 years at the time of application.

3. Scholarships

Are there any awards, scholarships, grants or bursaries for the Birmingham Foundation Academy?

The University of Birmingham is offering Scholarships for academic excellence for the top five achieving students in the 2015 - 2016 Birmingham Foundation Academy Year. Successful students will receive £5,000 per year for each year of their undergraduate studies, following the Foundation Academy year. There is no need to apply, BFA students will be automatically assessed for the scholarship at the end of their Foundation Academy year, based on criteria set by the Academic Director of the BFA.

There are some Terms and Conditions, which you can see on the BFA website at:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/foundation-academy/essential-information/index.aspx

Please also note:

- Home/EU student will be eligible to apply for financial support with the Student Loans Company, if you have received a BFA offer for a Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (four-year programme) only, For further information please see: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx Unfortunately you are not eligible to apply with the BFA one year offer only
- Unfortunately, international students are not eligible to apply for any funding (either for tuition fees or maintenance) from the Student Loans Company
- Once you progress to your undergraduate degree there may be awards, scholarships, grants or bursaries that you can apply for, including loans from the Student Loans Company (for home/EU students only)

For more information on undergraduate awards, scholarships, grants and bursaries, see:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/fees/undergraduate/funding/index.aspx

4. About the Birmingham Foundation Academy

What is the Birmingham Foundation Academy?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy (BFA) is a specially structured programme for students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. It is an opportunity for highly motivated learners with an excellent academic record and the willingness to study hard to enter the university environment one year before the start of the undergraduate degree programme.

At the end of the Birmingham Foundation Academy year, you are guaranteed a place on an undergraduate degree course at the University of Birmingham, provided you have achieved satisfactory grades. Two-thirds of your Foundation Academy programme consists of academic modules in the subject area you want to study at undergraduate level. The remaining third consists of English language and study skills that will prepare you for learning at degree level in the UK.

What is different about the BFA?

The BFA is different from many other university foundation programmes. A key difference is that you are taught by the University's own academics, many of whom are global experts carrying out world-leading research. This gives you a distinct advantage by ensuring that your programme reflects the very latest emerging theories and ideas. All teaching takes place on the University's main campus and you are a full member of our student community with access to all the same facilities and services that undergraduate and postgraduate students here enjoy.

At the same time you will be fully supported by the University of Birmingham in your adjustment to UK student life.

How much does it cost?

International Students

The cost of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package for international students in 2015–2016 is £13,500.

This includes:

- One year's tuition fees
- Books and all classroom equipment
- Full access to all campus facilities and University services

Please note:

- Accommodation fees are not included in the BFA package
- The Student Loans Company will not provide loans or grants for the BFA package for International students.

Home Students (UK and EU)

The cost of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package for Home Students (UK and EU) in 2015–2016 is £9,000

This includes:

- One year's tuition fees
- Books and all classroom equipment
- Full access to all campus facilities and University services

Please note:

- Accommodation fees are not included in the BFA package
- If you have received a BFA offer for a Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (four-year programme) only, you are eligible to apply for financial support with the Student Loans Company. For further information please see: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx unfortunately you are not eligible to apply with the BFA one year offer only

How do I pay my fees?

The University offers the flexibility of paying your tuition or accommodation fees in full at the start of the year or in installments, either on a monthly or a termly basis. You can also pay using our Western Union Bank Transfer platform, ensuring your payment arrives in full and on time.

When you unconditionally accept your offer for the Birmingham Foundation Academy, you will receive an email with information about registration and instructions on what you are required to do. The registration process will require you to complete various pieces of information and part of the information required is about payments; there is a page called 'Funding' which contains all of the options available to you. You can also see details of the payment options at [Paying tuition fees - University of Birmingham](#)

Please email our Student Funding Office on studentfees@bham.ac.uk if you have any queries about the payment options available.

Please note: if you are in arrears with the payment of fees the University reserves its rights to take enforcement action for non-payment.

Do EU students pay the same tuition fees?

The cost of the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package for Home Students (UK and EU) in 2015–2016 is £9,000.00

This includes:

- One year's tuition fees
- Books and all classroom equipment
- Full access to all campus facilities and University services

Please note:

- Accommodation fees are not included in the BFA package
- If you have received a BFA offer for a Bachelor's Degree with Integrated Foundation Year (four-year programme) only, you are eligible to apply for financial support with the Student Loans Company. For further information please see: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees/loans.aspx Unfortunately you are not eligible to apply with the BFA one year offer only

Where will I live?

As a Birmingham Foundation Academy student your accommodation is guaranteed, as long as you apply and accept your offer before the deadline dates. You have a wide range of accommodation to choose from in the University's three student villages: Vale Village, Pritchatts Park Village, and Selly Oak Village; all of which are a short walk from the Foundation Academy hub and English language centre, and your academic departments.

Accommodation consists of flats offering your own study bedroom and kitchen/lounge facilities usually shared between four and six other students. There is a choice of either sharing bathroom facilities or en-suite accommodation. The University also has a range of studio apartments where you have exclusive use of kitchen and bathroom facilities. All bedrooms are fully furnished and offer both a cabled and wireless internet connection. (More details can be found in the [Your accommodation](#) section below.)

A catered package is available to students who live at the Vale Village. Adapted rooms are available for wheelchair users and for students with hearing and sight impairment (Please contact us if you require specially adapted accommodation.)

Further information about each village, including virtual tours of bedrooms and kitchens, is available at www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/halls/index.aspx

Can I choose to live somewhere else?

The University offers a special level of support for students under the age of 18. This is made possible by housing them together in Mason, one of the University's newest residences, on the Vale Village. This accommodation is located close to the Customer Service Manager; ensuring support is always close by. Therefore, for all students who are under the age of 18 at the start of the course, accommodation in Mason is compulsory unless you have a local relative or designated guardian with whom you wish to live and this arrangement is agreed before you arrive in Birmingham.

If you will be over the age of 18 at the start of the course, University accommodation is highly recommended; however, you can also choose to live off site, in private accommodation.

Do I have to take the catered package?

No, the catered package is an optional extra for students who live at the Vale Village only. This gives you a flexible weekly budget for your meals that you can spend in University catering outlets. Food is provided during term times:

- 20 September 2015 to 11 December 2015
- 11 January 2016 to 25 March 2016
- 25 April 2016 to 24 June 2016

You can take your meals and snacks at any of the catering outlets, including newly redeveloped café, restaurant and bar outlets at the Hub on the Vale Village, as well as 17 other cafés and snack bars across the campus. Most dietary requirements can be catered for.

Many students find that having a catered package helps to free up time for studying, and can benefit them socially, but it is entirely your choice as to whether you take this option. You can find out more about the catered package at

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/mealplan.aspx

Is there an Open Day?

Yes, we have many opportunities for you to visit throughout the year and would encourage you to try and visit on one of our open days, where you can view the facilities, take in the atmosphere and speak to current students and staff.

To book for any of our events and for further information, please visit:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-visit

If this is not possible, you can visit at any time and we will be happy to organise a schedule for you.

If you plan to visit the University independently or for any of our events, please do contact the Birmingham Foundation Academy **at least one week** in advance, so that we can help you to make the most of your day.

What are the learning facilities like?

We use the latest learning technologies and our teaching rooms are well equipped. Most have touch-screen digital whiteboards and all have Wi-Fi. The University's Main Library is one of the UK's largest academic libraries, with access to over 2.7 million books and periodicals. A further eight libraries and resource centres offer specialist materials for every subject studied at Birmingham. Wherever you are on campus, you will be able to log on to the student portal. This is your personalised gateway to the digital campus, connecting you to email, news, online communities and the e-library, which gives you access to over 16,000 periodicals, databases, websites and other resources.

How will I be taught?

As a Foundation Academy student you will experience a variety of teaching methods. These will include lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, laboratory work and peer group learning, depending on the academic pathway you follow. You will be learning in a supportive environment, and will be encouraged to think, discuss and engage critically with your subject area. Classes are small and focused on individual needs. You will have a tutor, who will give help and advice on study-related issues and help you to monitor and reflect on your progress.

Is the BFA internationally recognised?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy is an academically rigorous programme which is delivered and awarded by the University of Birmingham (an internationally recognised institution). In line with all other UK universities, the University of Birmingham awards its own qualifications and students, who leave the University after completing the Birmingham Foundation Academy programme, but who have not completed an undergraduate degree, will receive a certificate for completion of their foundation programme.

However, the acceptability of the BFA for entry to another institution is solely at their discretion and you should seek advice from the institution that you hope to enter – we can only guarantee progression to University of Birmingham programmes (if the necessary requirements are met).

How will studying at Birmingham help me to compete in the global market?

The University of Birmingham enjoys an excellent reputation worldwide and has one of the largest global student communities in the UK, with over 4,000 international students from more than 150 countries. We have longstanding links with universities throughout the world, including membership of Universitas 21, the prestigious consortium of global universities in 16 countries. Once you progress to an undergraduate degree here, this network of global partnerships will offer you exciting international opportunities, such as work experience placements and annual summer schools that attract the best students from across the world.

Do I have to stay at the University of Birmingham to do my undergraduate degree?

Whether you have been made an offer for the one-year or the four-year programme, you are not tied to Birmingham for your undergraduate studies, and if you wish to progress to another university, we will offer advice. However, we believe that the quality of your experience here and the supportive environment we provide will ensure that you feel at home here and will want to stay with us.

5. Our January programme**Is there a January intake?**

The Birmingham Foundation Academy does have a January intake. The start date is proposed as 7 January 2016, to include induction.

What are the term dates?

The Term dates for January programme, 2016 are as follows:

- Spring term: 11 January to 25 March 2016
- Summer term: 25 April to 24 June 2016

When should I arrive?

The start date is proposed as 7 January 2016, to include induction. Teaching will commence on 11 January 2016.

You will be able to check into your accommodation from 3 January 2016, and with the help of your Customer Service Manager, will be able to familiarise yourself with your surroundings.

When is the deadline for applications?

The deadline date for applications is Saturday **7 November 2015**.

How will I extend my visa for an undergraduate degree?

Students on a Tier 4 one-year visa studying the January programme will be able to apply for the extension of their visa for their undergraduate programme in the normal way.

(More details about how to apply for a visa can be found in the [application](#) process above)

Is my accommodation guaranteed?

You are guaranteed a place in University accommodation; it will be arranged for all January applicants, provided you have applied by **Monday 30 November 2015**.

You will also need to make a pre-payment of £550 when you accept your offer of accommodation in full at the start of the year, or in instalments. You can pay for your accommodation using our Western Union Bank Transfer platform, ensuring your payment arrives in full and on time.

(More details about how to apply for accommodation can be found in '[Your accommodation](#)' below)

What if I apply for my accommodation after 30 November 2015?

You should still apply for accommodation as soon possible. Whilst we cannot guarantee you accommodation at this stage, we are usually able to accommodate you. If we are unable to allocate you to University accommodation, you will receive support, advice and direction towards alternative suitable accommodation.

Are there any preessional English courses I can study before the January programme?

If you require additional English language tuition, you will be able to apply for a specific Foundation Academy Preessional English programme that takes place before the start of your first term.

There will be an 11-week and a 6-week pre-session programme prior to the January BFA programme.

Please see the dates and prices for the programmes below:

- 11 week course: 28 September -11 December 2015
- 6 week course: 2 November -11 December 2015

These are at an additional cost to the Birmingham Foundation Academy programme.

(More details about [Preessional English](#) programme can be found below)

6. Our September programme

Is there a September intake?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy does have a September intake. The start date is 21 September 2015, to include induction. Teaching will commence on 28 September 2015.

What are the term dates?

The Term dates for September programme, 2015–2016 are as follows:

- Autumn term: 28 September to 11 December 2015
- Spring term: 11 January to 25 March 2016
- Summer term: 25 April to 17 June 2016

When should I arrive?

The BFA term begins on 21 September 2015; however, you should arrive at the University during arrivals weekend (19–20 September). You will be able to check into your accommodation during this weekend, and, with the help of your Customer Service Manager, will be able to familiarise yourself with your surroundings.

In the week of 21 September you will be invited to attend the University's 'Welcome International' and Registration. During this time we will guide you through the process of registering with the University and other necessary administrative tasks, as well as arranging social activities for you to ensure that you can meet people and make friends right from the very start. (More details about 'Welcome International' and Registration activities can be found in the [Student support](#) section below).

When is the deadline for applications?

The last date for application for 2015 entry is **Friday 7 August 2015**.

Is my accommodation guaranteed?

You are guaranteed a place in University accommodation provided that you have applied for your accommodation by **31 July 2015** and have confirmed you are coming to Birmingham by **1 September 2015**.

You will also need to make a pre-payment of £550 when you accept your offer of accommodation in full at the start of the year, or in instalments. You can pay for your accommodation using our Western Union Bank Transfer platform, ensuring your payment arrives in full and on time.

(More details about how to apply for accommodation can be found in ['Your accommodation'](#) below)

What if I apply for my accommodation after 31 July?

You should still apply for accommodation as soon as possible. Whilst we cannot guarantee you accommodation at this stage, we are usually able to accommodate you. If we are unable to allocate you to University accommodation, you will receive support, advice and direction towards alternative suitable accommodation.

Are there any preessional English courses I can study before the September programme?

If you require additional English language tuition, you will be able to apply for a specific Foundation Academy Preessional English programme that takes place before the start of your first term. This programme will typically be from 6 to 20 weeks in duration, depending upon your current English language level.

You may need a longer Preessional English programme, depending upon your current English language level. If this is the case, we offer longer courses of 31 weeks or 42 weeks. Upon successful completion of the programme, you can transfer to the Foundation Academy without needing to take another English language test.

Course length	Dates	Course fees
42-week	29 September 2014 – 18 September 2015	£11,760
31-week	12 January 2015 – 18 September 2015	£8,680
20-week	27 April – 18 September 2015	£5,600
15-week	1 June – 18 September 2015	£4,200
10-week	13 July – 18 September 2015	£2,800
6-week	10 August – 18 September 2015	£1,680

7. Your academic pathways

What are the academic pathways?

As a Birmingham Foundation Academy student you will follow one of three pathways that lead to undergraduate degrees in particular schools within the University. The three pathways are:

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

You can see the degrees to which each pathway leads at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

Each pathway consists of 120 credits in:

- An 80-credit suite of subject-specific modules taught in our colleges by Birmingham academics. These academic modules make up two-thirds of your programme. The modules you will take will depend upon your intended undergraduate degree and are subject to availability and timetabling.
- 40 credits of Academic English and Study Skills modules or you can study the Advanced Academic Skills module (20 credits) if you are a high-level speaker of English. These modules are delivered by the University's English for International Students Unit (see the [English language and study skills](#) section below for more details).

Upon successful completion of the appropriate pathway, you will be guaranteed progression to an extensive range of our undergraduate programmes in Arts and Law, Engineering and Physical Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences, Medical Sciences or Social Sciences. Academic and English language progression requirements apply for each programme. For a small number of programmes, you will need to pass an interview, workshop or audition stage as part of the progression process. Please look at the individual pathway pages via www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways for more information on academic modules and progression requirements for your intended degree.

Can I progress to any undergraduate degree offered by the University?

You can progress to an extensive range of our undergraduate degree programmes upon successful completion of your Foundation Academy pathway. These programmes can be seen in the pathway progression tables at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

The Birmingham Foundation Academy does not offer progression to degrees in Nursing, Medicine and Surgery, or Dental Surgery.

For Nursing or Medicine and Surgery you would need to apply through UCAS for direct undergraduate entry. Further information on entry requirements for undergraduate programmes can be found at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/courses/undergraduate/index.aspx

Unfortunately, the University does not offer international places on the undergraduate degree in Dental Surgery.

Are there any conditions to my progression?

Upon successful completion of the appropriate pathway, you will be guaranteed progression to an extensive range of our undergraduate programmes in Arts and Law, Engineering and Physical Sciences, Life and Environmental Sciences, Medical Sciences or Social Sciences.

You are guaranteed a place on programmes, providing you achieve satisfactory grades in your Foundation Academy year. Academic and English language progression requirements apply for each programme. You will normally be required to achieve 55–65% overall in your Foundation Academy programme, depending on the degree programme you intend to progress to.

In order to progress to certain degree programmes, you will be required to achieve a specific grade in certain BFA modules. For a small number of programmes, you will also need to pass an interview, workshop or audition stage as part of the progression process. This will be detailed in the pathway progression table at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

Can I progress to the degree in Medicine and Surgery or Nursing?

The Birmingham Foundation Academy does not offer progression to the degree in Medicine and Surgery or Nursing. You would need to apply through UCAS for direct undergraduate entry. The University of Birmingham accepts A levels, the International Baccalaureate or the American high school system for entry to the degree in Medicine and Surgery. You can check the entry requirements at:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/undergraduate/med/medicine.aspx
www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/med/nursing.aspx

Can I progress to the degree in Dentistry?

Unfortunately, the University does not offer international places on the undergraduate degree in Dental Surgery.

All undergraduate programmes that you may progress to from the BFA, and their progression requirements, are listed at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

What are the compulsory modules?

For some undergraduate degrees there will be some academic modules that you must take in your Foundation programme. If you do not take the compulsory modules for a particular undergraduate programme you will not be able to progress to that programme after your Foundation Academy year. An Academic and English and Study Skills module is compulsory for every undergraduate degree programme.

The compulsory and optional modules for each undergraduate degree that you can progress to can be seen under each pathway section at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/bfa-pathways

When do I choose my academic pathway and the degree I want to progress to?

When you apply to the Birmingham Foundation Academy you will be asked to choose the pathway you would like to enter and the undergraduate degree that you intend to progress to. When you receive and accept your offer to study on the programme, you will be advised about your module choices.

Can I change my chosen undergraduate degree from the one I selected when I accepted my offer?

You will not be tied to your choice of undergraduate degree; however it is important that you make the right module choices. This is because some undergraduate programmes will have modules that are compulsory in your Foundation Academy programme and you will be required to achieve a specified grade in order to progress to that course. If you have not taken the compulsory modules for a particular undergraduate programme you will not be able to progress to that programme after your Foundation Academy year. You must therefore check the module requirements for the undergraduate programme you wish to progress to before making your module choices.

If you would like to change your choice of undergraduate degree before you start the BFA, please email the Admissions contact named in your offer letter. If you decide that you want to change

your choice of undergraduate degree after you have started the BFA programme, you would need to discuss this with your tutor.

Can I change to a different pathway?

In certain circumstances it is possible to change your academic pathway, although you would need to discuss this with your tutor.

How many students have completed their BFA year and progressed onto a degree?

The first and second cohort of students completed their BFA year in June 2013 and 2014. Counting all students who started the course in September 2013 and 2014, over 80% reached the progression threshold for their chosen undergraduate degree and chose to continue their studies at University of Birmingham.

8. Birmingham Foundation Academy Preessional English programme

My offer is conditional upon my English language. What can I do?

If your offer is conditional on improving your English language level, you have a couple of options. You can either take an English language test to fulfil the condition in your offer, or you could attend the BFA Preessional English programmes.

What is the BFA Preessional English programme?

This programme which takes place before the start of your first term will help you improve your level of English, and successful completion allows you to progress to the Birmingham Foundation Academy without retaking another English language test. It's also a great way of preparing for student life at the University.

You will benefit from a high level of support, with an average of 19 hours of classes per week and regular tutorials. The programme is taught by our specialist English for International Students Unit (EISU), which provides language and study skills programmes for all international students at the University. All its teachers have extensive experience in teaching English for Academic Purposes.

A varied social programme is also included to help you make friends and feel at home in Birmingham.

A recent British Council accreditation review has rated the standard of English language teaching at the University of Birmingham as being outstanding, placing us as one of the best providers of English language teaching in the HE sector.

What will this programme enable me to do?

The Preessional programme will enable you to:

- develop your confidence and fluency in English in a relatively short time
- You will have plenty of opportunities to practise speaking, both for academic purposes and for social communication and life at University
- A high level of support with an average of 19 hours of classes per week, which will include grammar, listening, reading and writing skills
- Weekly individual tutorials
- Successful completion allows progression to the Birmingham Foundation Academy without retaking IELTS

How do I apply?

To apply for the Preessional course please apply online at:

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/eisu/preessional/bfa-preessional.aspx>

What is the deadline for applications?

The deadline for applications is **four weeks** before the start date of the course that you wish to apply for.

If you are applying after the deadline, it is very important that you check you are able to get a visa in time to be present on the first day of the course and also check the availability of flights. We regret that students are unable to start the course late.

What are the entry requirements?

You must have an offer for a place at the Birmingham Foundation Academy.

The entry requirements for the Preessional English programme will depend upon the Birmingham Foundation Academy pathway for which you have an offer. If you have an offer letter from the BFA, it will tell you the English language test score needed. You can see a full list of entry requirements at: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/eisu/preessional/english-bfa-length.aspx>

How long is the programme?

The length of course you should attend depends on your present level of English and the English language requirement given in your offer letter. You can find out which Preessional programme is right for you at: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/eisu/preessional/english-bfa-length.aspx>

How much does it cost and when does it start?

There are BFA preessional English programmes available for entry to both September 2015 and January 2016. The dates and prices for the BFA Preessional English programmes are:

SEPTEMBER

Course length	Dates	Course fees
42-week	29 September 2014 – 18 September 2015	£11,760
31-week	12 January 2015 – 18 September 2015	£8,680
20-week	27 April – 18 September 2015	£5,600
15-week	1 June – 18 September 2015	£4,200
10-week	13 July – 18 September 2015	£2,800
6-week	10 August – 18 September 2015	£1,680

JANUARY

11-week	28 September – 11 December 2015	£2,800
6-week	2 November – 11 December 2015	£1,680

Is accommodation provided for the Preessional programme?

During your Preessional course you will be guaranteed accommodation within walking distance of the University campus in safe, welcoming and sociable surroundings.

Further information about the accommodation available, including virtual tours please click here: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/advice/guide/accommodation/halls/index.aspx

Please apply for your accommodation online at:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/advice/guide/accommodation/apply.aspx

For any further information please contact an Accommodation Consultant at living@contacts.bham.ac.uk

How do I find out more about the Preessional programme?

If you have any questions about the Preessional course, including the length of course that you should attend, please contact:

Name: Esther Reeves

Email: e.h.reeves@bham.ac.uk

Telephone: +44(0)121 415 8492

9. English language and study skills

What English language and study skills modules will I take?

You must take an English language and study skills module as part of your pathway. Most students will take Academic English and Study Skills or Advanced Academic English and Study Skills. The modules will introduce you to academic English for undergraduate study and also to the development of specific language and skills related to your pathway:

- **Academic English and Study Skills**

This module will equip you with the English required for academic study at undergraduate level. It will help you to acquire key academic vocabulary and to master key academic grammatical structures. The module will also help you to develop the necessary skills for reading academic texts and writing academic assignments. It will enable you to perform successfully across all modules of the Foundation Academy programme, as well as preparing you for study in your future undergraduate programme.

- **Advanced Academic English and Study Skills**

This module will further prepare you for the academic demands of your future undergraduate programme, where you will be expected to employ an efficient and effective learning style. It will enable you to deepen your understanding of how texts are constructed and it will also help you to develop your critical thinking skills. Through class discussions, debates and individual presentations, you will also improve your fluency and command of the English language.

I already have good English language skills – do I still need to take these modules?

If you are a native or near-native English language speaker with an IELTS score of 8.0 overall or above (or equivalent) you can replace the Academic English and Study Skills modules with **Advanced Academic Skills**

- **Advanced Academic Skills**

You will develop advanced academic skills for undergraduate study in a range of disciplines. The emphasis will be on advanced literacy incorporating critical thinking and analytical skills such as the development and evaluation of academic argument and the synthesis of various sources of information. Students will have the opportunity to develop excellent communication skills for higher level studies

This 20 credit module will enable you to extend your academic and communication skills intensively and to use your language flexibly for a wide range of academic purposes.

This is subject to prior agreement. Please contact us if you think this applies to you.

Where are these modules taught?

English language and study skills modules will be taught partly in lecture and seminar rooms across campus but mostly in the Foundation Academy Hub and English Language Centre based in Priorsfield. This is a dedicated study, social and welfare centre for Foundation Academy students, based in a beautiful historic manor house on the Edgbaston campus.

What is the teaching and learning style?

You will be learning in a supportive environment in small classes that are focused on individual needs. One-to-one tutorials are also available if you need them. These modules are taught by our specialist English for International Students Unit (EISU), which provides language and study skills programmes for all international students at the University. All its teachers have extensive experience in teaching English for Academic Purposes.

10. Your accommodation

Where will I live?

As a Birmingham Foundation Academy student you accommodation is guaranteed. You have a wide range of accommodation to choose from in the University's three student villages: The Vale Village, Pritchatts Park Village, and Selly Oak Village, all of which are a short walk from the Foundation Academy Hub and English Language Centre: Priorsfield and your academic departments.

University accommodation consists of flats offering your own study bedroom and kitchen/lounge facilities usually shared between four and six other students. There is a choice of either sharing bathroom facilities or en-suite accommodation. The University also has a range of studio apartments where you have exclusive use of kitchen and bathroom facilities. All bedrooms are fully furnished and offer both a cabled and wireless internet connection.

A Customer Service Manager, living on site, will be on hand to help you with any welfare issues you may come across, and ensure you have no difficulties in your day-to-day life here.

To find out more about the Foundation Academy accommodation go to:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/foundation-academy/accommodation

Further information about each village, including virtual tours of bedrooms and kitchens, is available: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/halls/index.aspx

What is the cost of the accommodation?

The cost of accommodation varies depending on the type of accommodation you choose (42-week contract):

- for a single study bedroom with shared kitchen and bathroom start from £3,487
- En-suite accommodation from £5,385
- Studio apartments from £9,160

If you would like to take up a catered package, fees start from £4,866 for accommodation with shared facilities and £7,240 for en suite accommodation. (This is based on 2013 prices and may increase for 2015–16)

For further information please visit:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/halls/index.aspx

Please note: Accommodation fees are not included in the Birmingham Foundation Academy Package.

What is provided in my accommodation?

The benefits of University accommodation include:

- Staff available 24 hours a day throughout the year
- A Customer Services Manager lives on site in Mason and provides social and personal support
- Fully heated accommodation inclusive of all heating, hot water and electricity bills

- Basic personal contents insurance
- 20 Mbps Cabled and wireless internet connection including access to an internet television service (IPTV)
- Fully furnished room
- Internet upgrade packages are available also

A fully catered package is available. Adapted rooms are also available for wheelchair users and for students with hearing and sight impairment. (Please contact us if you require specially adapted accommodation.)

What do I need to do to confirm my accommodation and pay for it?

Once you have received an offer of a place to study here, you will need to apply for your accommodation online. You will need your student ID and an email address to apply. Please apply at: www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/Apply-for-accommodation

Please note: *There is no application fee and no obligation to come to Birmingham at this stage*

LIVING, the University's Accommodation Service, will then send you an offer of accommodation once you have met all of the conditions of your offer and become unconditional. The offer of accommodation will contain instructions on how to accept your accommodation and how to set up payments.

Do I have to live in University accommodation?

- If you will be **under** the age of 18 at the start of the course, accommodation in Mason is compulsory; however if you would prefer to live with a local relative or designated guardian, this is possible, by prior agreement
- If you will be **over** the age of 18 at the start of the course, University accommodation is highly recommended; however, you can also choose to live off site, in private accommodation, this is possible, by prior agreement.

Further information on our accommodation is available at:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/accommodation/halls/index.aspx

What is the Customer Services Manager?

The University offers a special level for you as a Foundation Academy student. The Customer Service Manager, who lives on site in University accommodation, is there to provide advice and guidance which means there is always someone available for you if you need support.

They will also arrange a variety of activities to help you familiarise yourself with campus buildings, facilities and services, shopping areas, places of interest, and local transport networks, and will arrange social gatherings.

Who do I contact if I have questions about student accommodation?

If you have accepted your offer and need to contact LIVING, the University's Accommodation Service, please use the contact details below:

Phone: +44 121 414 8000 from Monday–Friday between 9–5pm

Email: living@contacts.bham.ac.uk

You will need to provide your name and student identification number when you contact them.

Post: LIVING
Accommodation Services

Ground Floor, University Centre
The University Of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT

11. Student support

Can the University help me with immigration issues?

Yes, we have a specialised International Students Advisory Service (ISAS) that provides immigration advice and services on behalf of the University. Its advisors are experienced in a wide range of immigration and visa issues, and their services are regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC).

ISAS will contact you to offer help with the visa application process as soon as you have been accepted on to the Foundation Academy programme and have received your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). They can also help you with extending your visa from within the UK, correcting your visa (if necessary), obtaining immigration permission for friends or relatives to visit you in the UK during your course or to attend your graduation, and many other immigration-related issues.

For more information on immigration issues, please go to:

www.birmingham.ac.uk/international/students/visas/index.aspx

Can I work whilst studying?

If you come to the UK on a Tier 4 (General) student visa, your visa will state whether you are able to work in the UK. For further information on working in the UK on a Tier 4 student visa, go to:

www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Study-work--more/Working-during-your-studies/

If you are under 18 and would like to work in the UK, the rules are the same (it will state on your visa the hours you are able to work); however please note that the national minimum wage will be lower than for people over 18.

Will I get help with settling in to the University and adjusting to life in Birmingham?

We have many successful years of welcoming international students to Birmingham and we fully understand the needs of someone coming to study in the UK for the first time. Our Welcome activities will ensure that you have all the help you need to settle in and feel at home here as quickly as possible. This starts before you arrive at the University, with a free collection service from whichever airport you are arriving at.

When you arrive, a Welcome team of senior students will be on hand to answer any questions you may have and offer you the benefit of their experiences. Together with other Foundation Academy students, you will be guided through the process of registering with the University and other necessary administrative tasks such as opening a bank account here and registering with the police (where necessary). Suitable social activities will be arranged for you to ensure that you can meet people and make friends right from the start.

I have a disability – what support can the University provide for me?

We welcome students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties. Our Disability and Learning Support Service can provide a wide range of support services for you. These include individual student consultations, assistive technology and guidance on how to use it, specialist equipment loans and provision of non-medical helpers.

Adapted rooms are available in your residence (Mason) for wheelchair users and for students with hearing and sight impairment. Please contact us if you require specially adapted accommodation.

See www.as.bham.ac.uk/studentlife/disability for more information about the services we can offer for students who have a disability. Or www.birmingham.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/disability/index.aspx

Is there somewhere on campus where I can observe my faith and receive spiritual support?

Yes. St Francis Hall, the University chaplaincy, is a place where students of all faiths can meet for worship, seek advice or counselling from a chaplain, or obtain information on places of worship in the local area. Chaplains, who are ministers or religious representatives, are available every weekday during term time. There are over 20 chaplains from different faiths at the University. The chaplaincy is also home to a wide range of student-led faith-based groups and societies which organise their own events and social activities. For further information please see <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices/chaplaincy/index.aspx>

Can I get careers advice during my time at the Birmingham Foundation Academy?

The University's Careers and Employability Centre offers a range of services that will help you identify and work towards your career goals from the day you arrive at Birmingham. This includes a dedicated careers advice and guidance service delivered by experienced and professionally qualified staff. Throughout your time at the University we are committed to helping you improve your employability and develop the skills that are valued by employers. For further information please see: <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/index.aspx>

12. Registration

I have accepted my offer for the BFA. How do I register with the University?

You can register with the University online in advance or in person when you arrive. We recommend that you register online in advance, as this will save you time in your first week at Birmingham.

- **Online registration**

To register online you will need your University username and password. You will receive your username, password and programme title by email when your application status becomes 'Unconditionally Accepted'. This email will be sent to your personal email address. Please check your 'Spam' folder to ensure that any safeguards you may have will not block this message.

If you are an international student you will need to have your passport and visa checked upon arrival and will then be provided with a student identification card.

- **Registration upon arrival**

If you do not register online in advance, you will be able to register on arrival. Details will be sent to you nearer to the start of term.

13. Student life

Can I get involved in volunteering or join student groups?

Of course! Volunteering is a great way to improve your chances of finding a job when you graduate, and at Birmingham we offer over 200 volunteering opportunities, which are open to all our students. These range from conserving the local environment to fundraising for national or international charities. Our Guild of Students (Birmingham's students' union) also hosts over 170 student groups and societies where you can socialise and meet new friends. There are groups based around almost every activity and interest you can think of, as well as international societies bringing together students from specific countries.

For further information please see here: www.guildofstudents.com/main-menu/student-groups-volunteering/student-groups-home and www.guildofstudents.com/volunteering

What is it like to study on the Birmingham campus?

Our Edgbaston campus offers a safe, friendly environment, a picturesque setting and all the amenities of a small town. These include a wide range of shops, cafés, banks, a travel agent, a post office, a regular farmers' market, medical and dental surgeries, sports facilities and a train station.

The campus provides an inspiring location for academic study, with its historic red brick architecture set on a spacious green parkland site. Many students consider the campus setting to be one of the University's greatest assets.

There are also many cultural attractions on our campus that are free for all our students to enjoy, including an award-winning art gallery, a geological museum and a botanic garden. We are continually developing and improving the campus facilities. In September 2012 the new Bramall Music Auditorium opened as the latest addition to our campus. This multi-million pound development provides a 450-seat auditorium for music, opera, drama and prestigious lectures, as well as state-of-the-art rehearsal rooms and recording facilities.

Other developments currently in progress include a new sports centre, which will feature a 50-metre swimming pool, and a new library development which will provide outstanding facilities for a new generation of students and researchers, as well as an open access cultural hub for the University and the city.

What opportunities are there for sport and exercise?

Birmingham is one of the UK's leading sporting universities and is currently placed third in the BUCS (British Universities and Colleges Sport) sports league. Our students can choose from 50 different sports in which to play and compete.

Our global reputation for sport was confirmed in summer 2012 when the world-beating Jamaican track and field team, including Olympic champion sprinters Usain Bolt and Yohan Blake, chose the University as the base for their pre-Olympic training camp.

We are currently building a major new Sports Centre for the University and the wider community. The £55 million centre will have a wide range of facilities, including Birmingham's only 50m swimming pool. The centre will open its doors in early 2016.

However, sport is not just for elite athletes at Birmingham. Our Active Lifestyle programme offers fitness, dance and exercise classes to suit all abilities and fitness levels. There are more than 80 classes a week in activities ranging from boxercise and studio cycling to martial arts, salsa and yoga.

As a BFA student you have access to all our sporting facilities and expertise on the same basis as all other students here.

14. The city of Birmingham

What is the city of Birmingham like?

Birmingham is England's second city, and is a European centre for retail, commerce and culture. It offers entertainment for all tastes, including leading theatres, music venues, art galleries and museums. It is also home to one of Europe's largest city centre shopping malls, Bullring, which has over 160 shops including Selfridges, Abercrombie and Fitch, Apple and Top Shop.

The city's newest cultural attraction, opened in September 2013, is the state-of-the-art [Library of Birmingham](#), one of the largest and most modern libraries in the world.

It's a truly cosmopolitan city whose residents come from many diverse countries and cultural backgrounds. This is reflected in its restaurants, shops and cultural activities. Wherever you are from, you should have no problem finding food from your home country in the city's restaurants, its Asian or European supermarkets or its large fruit, vegetable, fish and meat markets.

The city is at the centre of England and at the hub of its transport network. London is only one and a half hours away by train. Birmingham Airport, just 25 minutes by taxi from the Edgbaston campus, offers direct flights to the USA, North Africa, Dubai, and European destinations with connections worldwide via Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Istanbul.

For further information about the city of Birmingham visit: <http://visitbirmingham.com>

15. Further information

How can I find out more about Birmingham Foundation Academy?

If you have any further questions about Birmingham Foundation Academy, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at foundation@contacts.bham.ac.uk or telephone: +44 121 414 9292.

The University also has a network of overseas representatives who can provide further information on studying at Birmingham Foundation Academy. Many offer a visa counselling service. You can find contact details of your nearest representative on our country pages <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/country/index.aspx> :