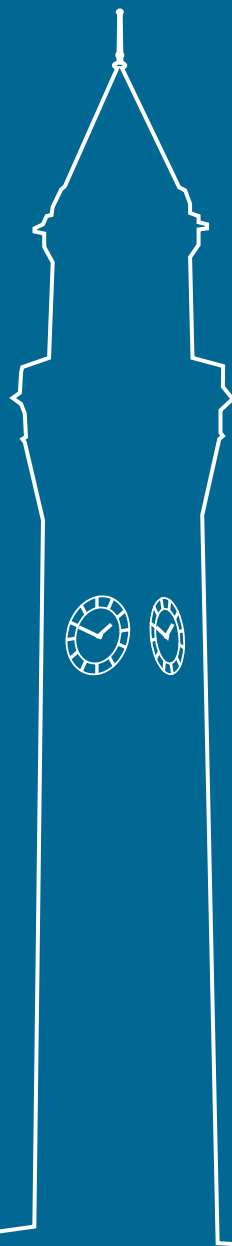




UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

# WELCOME TO BIRMINGHAM

YOUR POSTGRADUATE  
CAMPUS TOUR GUIDE



# WELCOME

Welcome to the University of Birmingham. This guide has been produced to provide information about the University and its facilities for prospective postgraduate students who wish to conduct their own 'self-guided' tour around the University campus. A map of the campus is provided on the inside back cover and the following pages provide information about the sights you will see on your tour.



# THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Birmingham has a long history of academic excellence and innovation. We were 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 with us during their studies, as well as becoming equipped for life beyond university.

Today you will see some of the attractions of our campus, and you may also decide to visit the city centre of which we are rightly proud. The city offers great social and recreational opportunities for students. The University, with its own campus 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 the Bullring, one of Europe's largest shopping centres. The attraction of the city is such that around 40% of our graduates choose to stay in Birmingham after they have completed their studies.

Our postgraduate community is composed of representatives from all over the world. 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. Information about our postgraduate open days and other events can be found on our website.



Birmingham Council House



The Mailbox, Birmingham

## CAMPUS TOUR: AN INTRODUCTION

The University is a safe, friendly environment with an impressive mixture of sculptures, striking Victorian and modern buildings, and a range of facilities for students, staff and visitors. Lawns, mature trees and pedestrian walkways contribute to a peaceful atmosphere where students can study outside in groups or enjoy refreshments from the cafés around the campus.

We suggest you start the tour at the Aston Webb Building. We have provided information on the following pages about some of the highlights of our campus with each description matching 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, you will notice various sculptures which form part of our Sculpture Trail, 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.



Entrance to Aston Webb Building (R6), featuring a frieze of nine figures from the worlds of art, philosophy, science and industry





Collaborative Teaching Laboratory (R31)



Mermaid fountain – The Guild (01)



Our university crest from the original library (now found in the Green Heart) next to the new main library (R22)

## 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 and was 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, Admiralty Arch on the Mall and the Cromwell Road frontage of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The Aston Webb Building was used as a hospital in the First World War and the plaques in the foyer commemorate University members who lost their lives during that war. Behind 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 as this is where registration and graduation are held. If you take the corridor on your right as you face the Great Hall, you will find the Lapworth Museum of Geology, one of the UK's most outstanding geological collections, with state-of-the-art galleries and a range of innovative and interactive exhibits. If you take the corridor on your left you will be able to see the Student Hub, which brings all of our student support services together in one place including Careers Network, Student Funding, Counselling, Wellbeing, Disability, Mental Health and Learning Support.

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, our first Chancellor. The tower is just under 100 metres high – the tallest freestanding clock tower in Europe – and is based on the Mangia Tower in Siena, Italy. It is said the tower was the inspiration for J R R Tolkien's 'all seeing eye' in the *Lord of the Rings* series. The largest bell weighs six tons and superstition says if you walk under the tower when the clock chimes, you will fail your degree!

Looking 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)

## THE BRAMALL (R12)

One hundred years after the Aston Webb Building opened, the Bramall was constructed and opened in 2012 to finally complete Joseph Chamberlain's original architectural vision to create a semi-circle of red brick buildings. It is the home of our outstanding Department of Music with state-of-the-art teaching, research, performance and rehearsal facilities appropriate to its reputation. This facility benefits everyone involved in both the University's elite and inclusive music-making and performance as well as being open for use by communities across the region.

The 450-seat auditorium is the most flexible performance space at a UK university – 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 prestigious lectures. Take the steps at the side of the Bramall down towards Ring Road South. Cross over the Ring Road and you will see University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness. Alternatively to avoid the steps, walk towards University Road East and turn right at the end of this road onto the Ring Road.



The Bramall



# UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

## SPORT AND FITNESS (07)

Sport & Fitness is the University of Birmingham's state-of-the-art, £55 million sports development. The facility is home to Birmingham's only 50-metre length swimming pool, a gym with over 200 stations and a climbing wall, as well as an arena sports hall and six glass-backed squash courts. Birmingham has a proud inclusive sporting history. We have students who compete for the University at the top end of the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) league and nationally and internationally while also providing sporting opportunities for complete beginners to take up new sports and to play casually and keep fit. 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. 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. Walk along the Ring Road towards East Gate, and you will find **the Guild of Students (02)**.



University of Birmingham Sport & Fitness





## 4 THE GUILD OF STUDENTS (01)

The Guild of Students is the students' union, run by students for students. It represents and involves all students, undergraduate and postgraduate, home and international, across the University. It provides services such as Job Skills and Volunteering, which helps students to find volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs locally during term-time and vacation work, and Worklink, which helps students find temporary jobs on campus. The Guild Advice Service offers impartial and confidential advice, information and representation on a range of issues. The Guild also supports the student-led clubs and societies, covering diverse interests and activities such as ballroom dancing, the 'Buddy a Granny' volunteer group and the Purple Mermaid Circus Skills Society. In addition, The Guild manages the student-run campus TV and radio station and *Redbrick*, the student newspaper.

The Guild also organises large-scale annual social events such as Welcome Week to help new students settle in, Vale Fireworks in November and the Postgraduate Ball, in addition to weekly club nights and sports nights.

The University's multi-faith chaplaincy **St Francis Hall (O2)**, is located next to the Guild.

**Winterbourne House and Garden (G12)** can be found further down the main road (walking along Edgbaston Park Road with King Edward's School on your right). This unique 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. Alternatively, you could visit the **Barber Institute of Fine Arts (R14)** just over the road from **the Guild**. Admission is free of charge and it is one of the world's finest small art galleries, containing works from the 13th to the 20th centuries. The Barber Institute also hosts music events and lectures and family events throughout the year.

On leaving the Guild, 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.

'It goes without saying that extra-curricular activities are an invaluable asset; not only in terms of career prospects but also as a means of personal development. The University organises and offers various opportunities for students to get involved with, which have been beneficial and informative to me on many different levels.'

Kyros Hadjisergis, LLM International Law: Crime, Justice and Human Rights



The Guild

## GREEN HEART (R22)

Measuring over 12 acres, the Green Heart opens up the centre of campus for students, staff and the local community to enjoy. It provides a unique space for performances, socialising, meeting and studying, while opening up views across the whole campus, as envisaged in the 1920s. The space also enhances the setting of those buildings which border the Green Heart, including the new library which opened in September 2016. It opens up new pedestrian and cycle routes, allowing students, staff and visitors to the campus to travel safely and with ease. Throughout the design process, the project team have also sought to create a sustainable, natural and environmentally friendly landscape; both for people and wildlife. Furthermore, the space features WiFi coverage, digital information totems, and a Pavegen walkway which will generate data and off-grid electricity for USB charging points in benches on the site. In addition, step free access across campus is now much improved and paving has been specifically designed with tapping points for white stick users. From here you can see across to the **Arts Building (R16)** and can again see the **Muirhead Tower (R21)** rising above campus.

On the opposite side, you can see our new **Teaching and Learning Building (R22)** which opened in January 2020. A hub for education, the facility provides a state-of-the-art teaching and social study space to support the modern learning experience at Birmingham. It consists of: A 500 seater lecture theatre, a 250 seater interactive lecture theatre, 10 seminar rooms for 30 students at a time, learning spaces for hundreds of students (which will include areas for individual study, collaborative group work and creative break-out sessions), and a café.



Outdoor Study Space in the Green Heart



The Richard Deacon Lecture in the Teaching and Learning Building

## LIBRARY (R30)

As you head back south along the Green Heart, you will see the striking gold building that is the Main Library. This £50 million building opened in 2016 and is one of six 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. The Main Library facility is open 24/7 during term time and offers robust Wi-Fi and a power point at every desk. There are over 1,800 study spaces across a variety of settings - from the busy café to silent study rooms, and quiet spaces in between.

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.

The Academic Skills Centre located in the Library offers support to students with mathematics and statistics, academic writing and other general academic skills.

Next to the library you can find **University Centre (R23)**.



## UNIVERSITY CENTRE (R23)

University Centre houses a bank, shops, a supermarket, hair salon and an optician. There are also places to eat and drink (all serving Fairtrade beverages) within the centre, as well as somewhere to get your phone fixed and stock up on stationery.

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 walk towards the Ring Road. On the opposite side of the road to your right is the **Geography department (R26)** and **Biosciences department (R27)**. Now turn right onto University Road West and head towards the **School of Engineering**.



University Centre (R23)



## SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING BUILDING

February 2021 marked the successful completion of the new £46.5M School of Engineering building at the University of Birmingham. The state-of-the-art 12,000 sqm facility spans across five floors and features a double-height atrium.

The unique development brings together many of the engineering disciplines from across the University whilst providing opportunities for successful collaboration between academia and industry. The facility's contemporary and flexible design will also enable greater collaborative working between academics, researchers, students and staff.

With a focus on enhancing student experience, the new School of Engineering building will encourage undergraduate and postgraduate students to contribute to cutting-edge research and develop a strong connection to the engineering industry.

Our new home for Engineering includes:

- Open plan spaces and cellular facilities
- A dedicated Student Support Hub
- A new 179-capacity Design Centre
- 50-seat electronics and electrical focused project spaces
- 20 flexi-bays specifically designed for staff and student interactions
- Three 50-seat seminar rooms
- Expanded computer labs
- 160 drop-in study spaces
- A full-size set of railway points, the University's pantograph test rig and a test track for our scaled hydrogen-powered train

Next, continue along University Road West towards the **Murray Learning Centre (R28)**.

## 9 MURRAY LEARNING CENTRE (R28)

The Murray Learning Centre has facilities to help students with independent study plus 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 approximately eight minutes. From here there is 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.



Medical School (B1)



Murray Learning Centre (R28)

## 10 WESTMERE HOUSE (G15)

Your tour ends at this point, but if you are considering a research degree you may also wish to visit **Westmere House**, the postgraduate researcher hub at the University of Birmingham. You can find Westmere by heading to East Gate, and then walking along the Edgbaston Park Road in a northerly direction (G15 on the campus map).

Westmere House provides a place for postgraduate researchers to meet, connect and work and provides the venue for our monthly inductions that welcome postgraduate researchers to the University at times other than the traditional start of the academic year.

The Westmere Hub provides a supportive and friendly environment for workshops, conferences, training, networking and social events that are specifically tailored to postgraduate researchers and which are delivered by key services from across the University. In addition to the University Graduate School, these services include Library Services, the Careers Network and the Birmingham International Academy.

The University Graduate School (UGS) values and encourages postgraduate researcher-led personal and professional development and engagement activities including cultural celebrations, the annual Research Poster Conference and Images of Research and Study competitions as well as the Masters Consultancy Challenge and Postgraduate Enterprise School which offer you the opportunity to work in interdisciplinary teams, competing to provide innovative solutions to a real business problem.. The UGS also welcomes all postgraduate researchers to book space within Westmere to organise their own events.



The Seminar Room

'I feel really lucky to be doing my PhD at Birmingham as the community and mental health support has been excellent.

There are so many things to get involved in from weekly PhD Chats to academic journal teams to academic reading groups – it truly feels limitless at times!

Lucy, Doctoral Researcher  
in English Literature



If you wish, you can continue northerly along the Edgbaston Park Road to the Vale Village residences (at the top right-hand corner of the campus map) to see an example of our student accommodation. 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).



# INFORMATION ABOUT ACCOMMODATION

## Information about accommodation

We know that finding that right place to live during your time studying at Birmingham is extremely important. Our residences will allow you to enjoy your time with us in safe, welcoming and sociable surroundings.

We offer dedicated postgraduate studios and apartments in both the Pritchatts Park and Vale villages, as well as a range of en-suite and shared bathroom residences across a number of locations.

It is important to note that students who currently live in the UK are not guaranteed a room in our postgraduate accommodation although you can still apply. The Postgraduate Guarantee Scheme guarantees a place in university or partner accommodation to all first year postgraduate international and non-UK students providing you have applied before the deadline of the scheme. You can find out more information about this on our website.

## 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 by emailing [living@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:living@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

## Living at home

For students that choose not to move into University accommodation, living at home and commuting to University is a good option especially for students who live locally. It doesn't mean the student experience should be any different from that of students living in halls of residence. All students have access to the same academic, social and sporting facilities.



## INFORMATION ABOUT ACCOMMODATION (CONTINUED)

### **Private accommodation**

For students who wish to live in private accommodation during their postgraduate degree, we provide a range of help and support. Rent Right is a joint initiative between the University and the Guild of Students to empower our students to make the best housing decisions during their time at Birmingham. They have produced guides to help you make the transition into the private housing sector as easy as possible. The University has also established the Lettings Membership Scheme (LMS), aiming to bring together landlords, letting agents, and students. Students are encouraged to rent homes through LMS registered landlords and lettings agents.

### **Events and activities at the University of Birmingham**

The University has a wide range 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 postgraduate open days which take place in November and March. Details of these and our other events can be found on our website at [birmingham.ac.uk/pgvisit](http://birmingham.ac.uk/pgvisit)

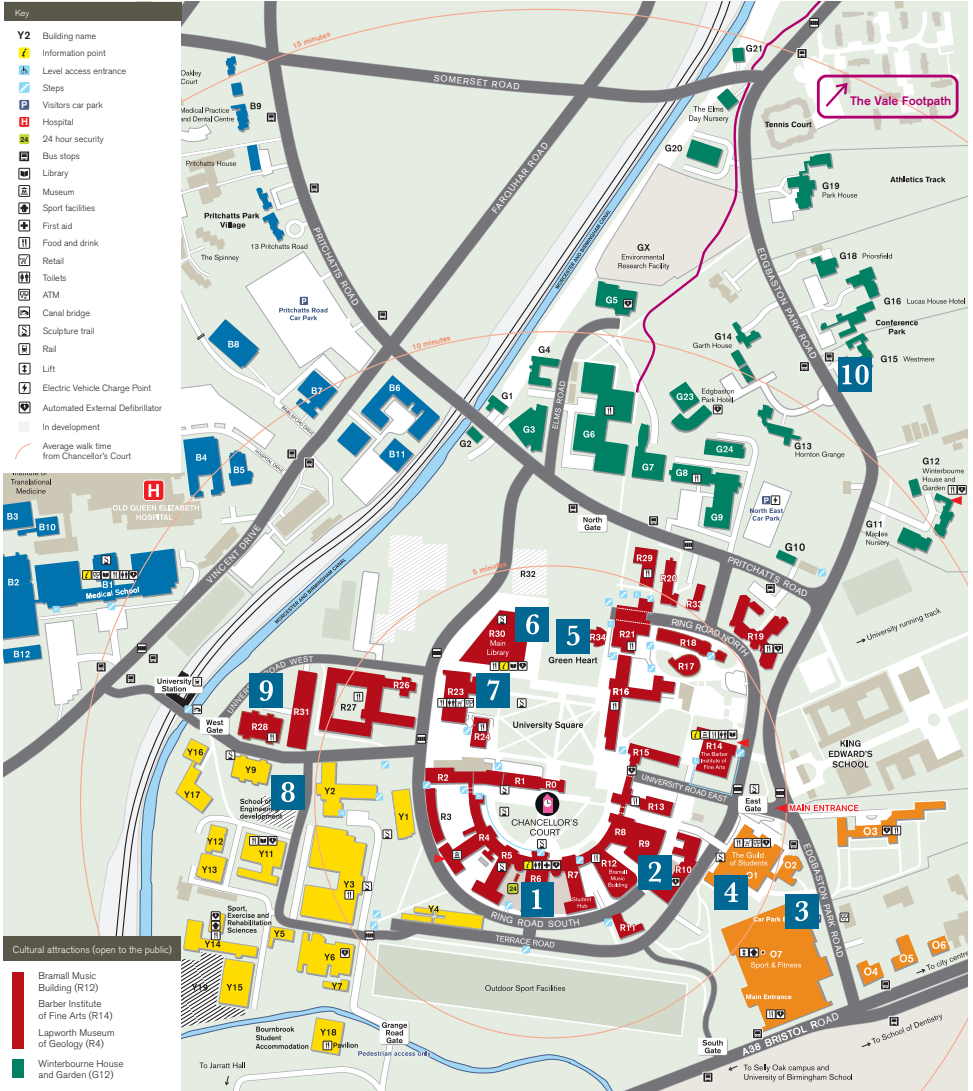
We also hold regular online chat events, where you can ask academics and members of staff questions about factors such as funding, accommodation, and course content. You can also ask our current students questions via our 'Ask Us' platform, and read about the postgraduate student experience in their blog entries. To find out more visit [pg.bham.ac.uk](http://pg.bham.ac.uk)

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

If you have any questions about postgraduate study at the University of Birmingham, please feel free to contact us on [pg@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:pg@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

University of Birmingham  
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# EDGBASTON CAMPUS MAP





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