Welcome to your new home
A guide for students preparing to join us at Cardiff University International Study Centre

cardiff.ac.uk/isc
Welcome to your new home

Cardiff is a fantastic place to live and study. This friendly and welcoming city will be your new exciting home away from home, a place where you will create new memories that you’ll treasure for life.

We want to help you settle into your new home quickly and easily, so that you can concentrate on your studies and start enjoying student life in Cardiff. This one-stop guide provides all of the important information you need to prepare for travelling to the UK as well as living and studying at Cardiff University International Study Centre (ISC).

For up-to-date information before your arrival, visit: cardiff.ac.uk/isc

Useful websites:
cardiff.ac.uk/isc
ukcisa.org.uk
educationuk.org/global/main/living-and-studying
gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas

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Before you join us, there are five things you need to do first.

1 Apply for your visa
To study in the UK, most non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals require a visa. The most common study visas are Tier 4 and the Short-term student visas. Our Admissions Centre will advise and issue the relevant documents based on the type of visa you will be applying for.

Tier 4 visa
For a Tier 4 visa you will need a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) number which will be issued to you by our Admissions Centre. You can only apply for your Tier 4 visa once you have received your CAS number and the application must be made no more than three months before your course start date.

Step 1: Our Admissions Centre will issue a CAS preview by email usually within three months of the course start date, provided you:
1. Have met all academic, English language and other conditions in your offer letter
2. Have completed, signed and returned your Acceptance and Indemnity Form to the Admissions Centre
3. Are up-to-date with your payments as stated in your offer letter and payment plan.

Step 2: Carefully check all the details on the CAS preview and return the signed CAS Declaration document. Once we have received your CAS Declaration, we will issue you with your CAS statement that will include your CAS number.

Step 3: Before you submit your Tier 4 visa application make sure you understand and meet all the requirements to avoid a visa refusal.

Before you apply, make sure you have:
✓ sufficient funds in an acceptable account maintained for at least 28 consecutive days
✓ paid the Immigration Health Surcharge for NHS health care treatment

As part of your visa application you may be asked to attend a visa interview either face to face, by video conference or on the telephone. You may be asked questions about the reasons for studying in the UK, why you have chosen to study at your chosen destination and why you will study your chosen course. You should know about your chosen study destination and course and how it relates to your overall career plans as well as how you intend to fund your studies in the UK. You must answer all questions truthfully and accurately.

Short-term study visa
For the Short-term study visa, you will be issued a visa letter that will outline all the necessary details about your course (duration, fees etc.).

As part of the application you will need to submit:
✓ Evidence that you can financially support yourself during your studies e.g. bank statements for the last 6 months
✓ Proof of the course you intend to study
✓ You may also need to submit additional supporting documents depending on your circumstances.

For both types of visa, depending on the country you live in, you may need to have a tuberculosis (TB) test before you apply.

Please visit: gov.uk/tb-test-visa/overview for more information
You can read the full visa guidance at: gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas

2 Book your accommodation
During your time at the International Study Centre you can choose to apply for on-campus accommodation or arrange your own private accommodation.

If you have requested accommodation on your application form, our Central Student Support Team will contact you directly regarding the options available. Ensure that you have provided your contact details to avoid any delay in processing your request.

You may prefer to arrange your own accommodation. Make sure that you have secured your accommodation before arriving in the UK and let us know where you will be staying to ensure that there are no difficulties on arrival.

Email: CardiffISC.CSS@studygroup.com

3 Book your travel
Once you receive your visa, you can book your travel. You should arrive ready for the first day of term to get a good start to your studies. If you have booked your accommodation with us, it will usually be available two days prior to the start of term.

You should book any flights home after the official end of term date, which can be found in your offer letter.

Please see page 7 for your suggested arrival airport.

4 Complete our pre-arrival form
At around one month before term starts, we will email you with a link to an online form. You will need to complete this with your travel information - so we know when to expect you - and your visa details. If you would like us to arrange your taxi from the airport, please let us know by ticking the box on the form.

5 Ensure you are insured
In our experience, it is essential that international students have the protection of personal insurance for the duration of their time in the UK.

When you applied to the International Study Centre, you will have had the option of taking insurance cover with StudyCare Insurance Plus. This insurance policy covers loss of personal possessions as well as providing health and medical insurance. If you have not taken this option, please make sure you have secured your own policy.

For full information on StudyCare Insurance Plus, visit: studygroup.com/land/studycare
What to bring with you to the UK

You’ll need to pack some important items, such as your passport and visa, in your hand luggage for easy access, while other non-essential items can be packed away in your suitcase.

Things to pack in your hand luggage
- Passport and visa
- UKVI decision letter
- Your offer letter
- Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement
- IELTS certificate or other original Secure English Language Test result
- Evidence of funding for your tuition fees and living costs, including sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- Accommodation documents, including your signed tenancy agreement
- Four passport-sized photographs
- Any insurance documents
- Medical certificates including vaccination records
- Essential toiletries and medications (please check with your airline what’s permitted)
- If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian details
- Enough money to live on in the first few weeks. We advise using traveller’s cheques and not bringing large amounts of cash.

Things to pack in your suitcase
Cardiff has a variety of shops so you’ll be able to buy everything you need to live comfortably. Many of the personal items you wish to bring with you, such as clothes, accessories and books can go in your suitcase.

We recommend that you bring:
- Comfortable clothing such as trainers, jeans, t-shirts, jumpers and a warm coat. The dress code at the International Study Centre is informal.
- Study supplies e.g. pens and paper notepads – these may be less expensive in your country.
- Laptop computer and charger – you can set English as the main language choice. This will help you to improve your English and assist you with everyday aspects of your life in the UK.
- Mobile phone and charger
- At least one travel adaptor plug – 240v with a three-pin plug (like the one pictured opposite).

Your accommodation may provide a bedding and catering pack. You will be able to pre-book this when you apply for your accommodation.

If you have booked private accommodation, you will need to check what is supplied.
Arriving in the UK

Travelling to a new country can be a little overwhelming. To make it easier for you, we’ve outlined the process below so that you know exactly what to expect when you arrive.

At Border Control

If you are from outside the European Union (EU), when you reach border control, please enter through the Non-EU entrance. Be prepared for an immigration interview with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) staff. You must be able to answer some questions in English and have a basic conversation without the assistance of an interpreter – failure to do so may result in you being denied access to the UK, at which point you will have to return home. The UK border control can be very busy, so don’t be surprised if you have to wait in a queue.

After collecting your luggage and making your way through customs, you will reach the Arrivals Hall.

Welcome to the UK!

Top Tip

Make sure you have original, paper copies of all your documents, not in digital formats on smart phones, tablets or other electronic devices. Keep them in your hand luggage in case you need to show them at the UK border.

For up-to-date information visit: gov.uk/uk-border-control
Getting to Cardiff University ISC

Depending on where you are flying from, you will have different options of UK airports to choose from. We suggest the following:

Heathrow Airport
Most international students travelling to Cardiff University travel to Heathrow Airport, which is approximately two and a half hours from Cardiff.

Bristol International Airport
Bristol Airport is an option if you are travelling from mainland Europe, it is 50 miles from Cardiff and will take just over one hour.

Cardiff International Airport
You can travel to Cardiff Airport if you fly with KLM airlines via Amsterdam Schipol Airport. Cardiff Airport is the closest international airport to Cardiff University.

Please do not pay the taxi driver as your fare will be added to your account. You will be met by the taxi driver in the Arrivals Hall. The driver will be holding a sign with your name on it. If you are heading directly to your accommodation booked with our Central Student Support Team, the taxi driver will take you to collect your keys – they will have been informed where you will be staying, but it is a good idea for you to have the details to hand.

Check your room confirmation for details of where and when to collect your keys, particularly if you are arriving late at night or early in the morning when residence receptions may not be open. If you are arriving when the reception is not open, check your room confirmation for out of hours key collection information.

If you are staying in private accommodation, provided you have given us the address in advance, the driver should have this information.

What if my plans change?
If you have booked a taxi transfer but your arrival date changes or you decide to arrange your own taxi transfer, you will need to let us know as soon as possible. We will require two business days’ notice to be able to change or cancel your booking.

Please email: CardiffISC.CSS@studygroup.com

Making your own way
Cardiff Central train station has direct trains to London which take under two hours.

By train: visit nationalrail.co.uk

Top Tip

Don’t forget to email or phone your parent or guardian to let them know you have arrived.
Your Induction Programme

On your first, exciting day with us it is important that you arrive on time. During your induction you will have a complete introduction to the UK, the University, and the International Study Centre.

It’s vital that you arrive on time so that you don’t miss out on meeting your new classmates and enjoying all of the great social activities that have been planned for you. Activities include a tour of the University campus to help you discover your new home.

We will work with you in your first week to find out about your academic levels and how we can best support you in your studies.

What to bring with you on your first day
Please bring the following documents, so that we can register you on the course:
✓ Evidence of your Secure English Language Test
✓ Passport
✓ UKVI Visa Decision Letter
✓ Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
✓ If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian’s details
✓ Evidence of eligibility to study (non Tier 4 students)

During your Induction Programme you will learn about:
• Opening a bank account
If you bring a banker’s draft in pounds sterling with you (payable to yourself) or arrange for it to be sent, you can open a bank account once you have registered for your course.

In order to open a bank account you will need:
✓ a passport
✓ proof you are a student – we will issue you with a letter
✓ proof of a UK address
✓ proof of your current immigration status

• Obtaining your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) – Tier 4 students only.
You must collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival or before the 30 day vignette expires, whichever is later. Staff at the International Study Centre will be able to advise how to collect your BRP and from where it needs to be collected as well as assist you and make all necessary arrangements for the collection process.

If you are a Tier 4 student, you are entitled to work during your pathway programme at the International Study Centre.

What is the Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)?
The BRP holds your details (name, date and place of birth) as well as your photo and fingerprints. It shows your immigration status and entitlements while you remain in the UK. BRPs are issued to foreign nationals from outside the EEA who are granted leave to enter the UK for more than six months.

Advice on settling in
1. Say hello to your new neighbours.
Living in a student residence is a great way to make new, life-long friends. Other students around you will be feeling the same as you. Talking to each other will really help you settle in. Why not take the first step by introducing yourself?

2. Join in! There will be events planned at the International Study Centre as well as plenty of clubs and societies to join.

3. Don’t forget to set your morning alarm on your first day – you’ll need plenty of time to get ready.

We want you to feel at home as quickly as possible. If you have any worries, you can always approach any of our friendly staff and they will be very happy to help.

Please note the main purpose of the Tier 4 visa route is for students to come to the UK to study. Where a student is permitted to work, the intention is that this should be an opportunity to gain work experience in their field of study.

Any errors on your Tier 4 Visa (vignette and BRP) must be corrected. Please contact a member of staff at the International Study Centre should you have any queries and they will be able to assist you.

• Your chosen programme
Get your all-important timetable and find out what you need to achieve to progress to the University.

• Registering with the University
Once you have completed your registration you will be given your Cardiff University student card. This will give you access to University buildings and facilities such as gyms and libraries.

You will also be have access to the University’s network, email and e-learning platform.

• Registering with health services and the police (if required)
Cathays Park Campus
- Aberconway Building 30
- Architecture 6
- Biosciences 1, 2
- Business School 30
- Bute Building 6
- Careers and Employability 11
- Chaplaincy 10
- Chemistry 1
- Computer Science and Informatics 21
- Cardiff University Brain Research Imaging Centre (CUBRIC) 33
- Day Care Centre 16
- Den House 19
- Earth and Ocean Sciences 1, 22
- Eastgate House 22
- Engineering 21
- English, Communication and Philosophy 27
- Eye Clinic 31
- Friary House 20
- Geography and Planning 7
- Glamorgan Building 7
- Global Opportunities Centre 11
- Hadyn Ellis Building 32
- Health Centre 13
- Healthcare Sciences 22
- History, Archaeology and Religion 27
- International Office 20
- John Percival Building 27
- Journalism, Media and Culture 35
- Julian Hodge Building 29
- Law 4
- Main Building 1
- Mathematics 18
- McHenate House 23
- Modern Languages 8
- Music 24
- Optometry and Visual Sciences 31
- Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences 5
- Physics and Astronomy 21
- Politics and International Relations 4
- Psychology 3
- Queen’s Building 21
- Redwood Building 5
- Registry 23
- Security Centre 2
- Sir Martin Evans Building 2
- Social Sciences 7
- Southgate House 34
- Sports 34
- Student Recruitment 20
- Student Support Centre 11
- Students’ Union 14
- Tower Building 3
- Trevithick Building 21
- Welsh 27

Heath Park Campus
- Cardigan House 84
- Cochane Building 83
- Dental School/Hospital 76
- Healthcare Sciences 79
- IV Lounge 81
- Medicine 78
- Neuadd Meironnydd 81
- Michael Griffith Education Centre 80
- Nursing and Midwifery 79
- Sports and Social Club 91
- T Dowell Sant Building 79

Residences
- Aberconway Hall 58
- Aberdare Hall 60
- Carthew Court 57
- Colum Hall 59
- Gordon Hall 64
- Hodge Hall 61
- Liberty House 50
- Roy Jenkins Hall 56
- Senghenydd Court 63
- Senghenydd Hall 62
- Talybont Court 55
- Talybont Gate 52
- Talybont North 53
- Talybont South 54
- University Hall 51

Directions
For door-to-door directions to Cardiff, go to: www.cardiff.ac.uk/directions

Satnav Postcodes
Cathays Park Campus – Main Building: CF10 3AT
Heath Park Campus – CF14 4XN
Your checklist

As soon as possible

- Have you paid the required fees for your tuition, accommodation and insurance (if applicable)?
- Have you booked your accommodation?
- Have you checked your passport is valid for at least six months from your course start date?
- Have you applied for and received your visa?

Up to one month before you depart

- Have you booked your flights (if required)?
- Have you completed your pre-arrival form (sent by email) with your flight information?
- Have you organised money to bring with you?
- Have you received confirmation of your room allocation?

- Have you made a copy of your passport and other essential documents?
- Have you obtained four passport-sized photos?

What to bring with you on your first day

Please bring the following documents, so that we can register you on the course:

- Passport
- UKVI Visa Decision letter
- Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian’s details
- Evidence of your Secure English Language Test

Get involved!

Why not join our social network

facebook.com/CardiffUniversityISC

Introduce yourself to your new classmates by uploading a selfie #OurCardiff

We can’t wait to welcome you.

Cardiff University International Study Centre is run by Study Group in collaboration with Cardiff University.

For more information visit: studygroup.com