Essential Information

International Learning Centre

Your First Day

You will spend your first day at the International Learning Centre located in Withington. During your first day, you will enroll onto your course, register and attend an individual induction session at the International Office (Monday-Friday) and meet the tutoring and International Office staff as well as your fellow students.

Enrolment

In order to become fully registered as an International Learning Centre student, you must complete the necessary form. Until this form is completed you will not be able to attend classes. All students must attend an induction session and at this time the enrolment process will be explained to you.

As part of your enrolment you will receive an International Learning Centre student identification card (student ID card). You must carry your student ID card with you at all times. This card will allow you to gain access to all International Learning Centre's and will provide proof of your student status.

Registration

Students taking an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) course will take an English language placement test. Once your English level has been determined, you will be registered onto your programme of study.

Your fees should be paid no later than your time of enrolment at the college. Failure to pay fees in full at this time may result in losing your place on your chosen course of study. The payment procedure will be explained to you in detail during induction day at the International Office.

There are a number of ways to pay your fees.

- Bank transfer
- Credit card
- Cash (in GBP sterling only)
- Cheque (in GBP sterling only)

The amount of fees that you have remaining to pay will be indicated on your acceptance letter.

Induction

An example schedule of International Learning Centre's induction day:

- Welcome greeting from the Director of the International Office
- English language assessment, if required
- Orientation talk
- Lunch
- Meet course tutor
- Complete enrolment and registration

Travelling To Manchester

By Air

Most students will fly to the UK and should try where possible to book a flight that lands at Manchester International Airport. If this isn't an option you can book an internal connecting flight from London to Manchester which can often be cheaper and easier than transferring by train or coach.

If you are intending to fly into Manchester then it is worth shopping around the airlines to see who has the cheapest deals. The general rule for air fares is the earlier you buy the ticket the cheaper it will be, so planning ahead can save you money.

It is also worth finding out if there is a travel agent that specialises in student travel as they may be able to give you a discount if you hold an **International Student Identity Card (ISIC)**.

By Coach

If you are arriving by coach to Manchester then you can book online at www.gobvcoach.com . We advise you to book well in advance to ensure a place on the coach. You can also get up to 33% off regular ticket prices if you purchase a "Student Discount Coach Ticket" available from airports or any National Express booking office. You will have to show your ISIC card before buying this ticket.

By Train

If you are arriving by train to Manchester then you should book your ticket in advance either by following the instructions on **www.nationalrail.co.uk** or telephoning: + 44 (0) 8457 484950. Booking in advance not only guarantees you a seat but you can often buy cheaper tickets. Be wary of purchasing tickets for a fixed train and time as this means that if your flight is delayed your ticket will not be valid. You can also obtain a 33% student discount on train journeys by buying a Young Persons Railcard. For this you will need to show your SIC card and give in a passport sized photograph.

Please note: We recommend that you buy an SIC card before you come to the UK in order to take full advantage of all the savings on offer. For further information check out **www.isiccard.com**

How To Get Prom Your Arrival Point To Your Accommodation

The International Office can arrange a free transfer to your accommodation on arrival if you complete and return the "Arrival Details" form that is sent with your acceptance letter. This form is also available on our website.

Please have with you the details of the Centre Representative that we allocate to meet you in case there are any problems, these details you should have received before arrival. If you have not received them before arrival then please contact the International Officer.

If you are expecting to be met by a friend or family member then please ensure that you have their contact number in case you are delayed or you cannot find them on arrival.

The airport, train station or coach station will have a helpdesk where you can get further information however please note that these are not usually open outside normal working hours.

Immigration Issues

If you have any problems with immigration on arrival then please contact the International Office on: 0161 448 8880. Remember that we are open Monday to Friday 10:00am to 7:00pm and on Saturday from 10:00am to 6:00pm so it is important that you bring all documents from the Centre with you in order to prevent any problems arising.

Useful Contacts

National Rail & Train Enquiries **www. Rail.co.uk**

National Express Coach Enquiries **www.gobycoach.com**

Eurolines European Coaches **www.eurolines.co.uk**

What To Bring

Documents

- Passport
- Travel tickets
- Letter of acceptance from International Learning Centre
- Address of accommodation in Manchester
- Any other documentation that you have from the Centre or that you presented to the Immigration Office when you obtained your visa.

Please note: Remember to carry these in your hand luggage as you will need to produce them on arrival.

Have photocopies made of all your important documents, including the key pages of your passport in case you lose them.

If you do not know how to write your home address in English you need to practice this before you arrive as you will need to write this on forms when you arrive.

Money

Do not have large amounts of cash on you when you arrive. You should bring money in the form of **Travellers Cheques** which are available from most banks. You can also transfer money to the UK once you have opened a bank account however opening the account can take a few weeks.

It is advisable that you bring with you a small amount of British money to cover your immediate arrival needs such as food, drink or transport costs. There are cash machines (ATMS) at the airport and train stations so you will be able to draw money out using certain credit and debit cards (you should check with your bank before departure if your card will work in the UK.) The airport and main train stations also have Foreign Exchange bureau where you will be able to get British money.

You can pay the remainder of your fees prior to your arrival by bank transfer or credit card. If you wish to pay on arrival you should bring travellers cheques, the remittance slip from any pre-arranged bank transfers or your credit card.

Clothes

Remember that Manchester is a large city and there are many clothes shops where you can buy what you need so don't pack everything you own.

Dress for students is generally casual with jeans, t-shirts and jumpers by far the most popular fashion. Temperatures vary throughout the year ranging from near freezing in winter to 25^{0}C in the summer. It's also a good idea to bring a waterproof jacket in case it rains.

At night Manchester comes alive with its numerous bars and nightclubs so you may wish to bring some smart, party clothes with you. Many of the bars and nightclubs have dress codes which means you will not be allowed in if you are wearing jeans, sportswear or training shoes.

Sports Equipment

Most sports centres will hire out equipment such as racquets and balls at a small charge, otherwise you will be able to buy them over here if you need the space for something else.

Electrical Equipment

You will be able to buy anything you need quite easily on arrival such as a hair dryer or kettle. Quite often you can share the cost of these items with other students if you are in Halls of Residence, or your homestay family may let you borrow them.

Please remember that British electrical sockets are not necessarily the same as at home so you may need an adaptor. Britain works on a three pin 230 Volt system and some equipment will not adapt so make sure before you carry it all the way over that it will work.

Medicines

If you are taking any medication then you should bring over a supply for immediate use and make sure you have the original box so that the doctor or pharmacist here can prescribe you the same or the equivalent (as it may be called something else in the UK). It is also worth getting a note from your doctor at home explaining the condition (preferably in English) so that you can explain things easily when you visit the doctor.

You should also make sure that you register immediately with a doctor in the UK and make the International Office aware of any medical conditions in case there is an emergency.

Household Items

Bedding (duvet, sheets, pillows), cutlery, plates and cooking utensils are unlikely to be provided unless you are living in homestay. It is worth remembering that if you are arriving late at night you may not have any bedding so you might want to bring a sleeping-bag with you. All other items you will be able to buy easily on arrival.

Personal Items

We always recommend that students to bring photos and personal items to help them feel at home here more easily. Don't bring photos in their frames as they are heavy and may break on the journey. You can buy frames when you are here from as little as 50 pence.

Sending Items over

You cannot send items over prior to your arrival. The International Office, Halls of Residence or your homestay family are not insured for this and do not have the required storage facilities to accept items before you arrive.

If you are having items sent to you once you arrive then make sure that your name and address is clearly labelled and that if it is items such as clothes, books and bed linen, it is labelled Student Items so that you do not have to pay import tax.

What not to bring

This may seem like common sense but do not bring meat or diary products into the UK as this will be confiscated on arrival. You will also find that Manchester is home to a wide variety of ethnic supermarkets supplying food from China, Vietnam, Turkey, India and Pakistan to name a few so you will be able to buy most of the food you like from home in Manchester.

Do not bring in to the UK any kind of knife, illegal drugs, firearms or offensive material (such as pornography) at best they will be confiscated and at the very worst you may be arrested.

If you are flying do not pack any sharp objects e.g. scissors, nail clippers or razors in your hand luggage. Put these into the bags that are to go into the hold of the aeroplane.

Insurance

We advise all students to take out insurance (pay an amount of money to an insurance company) to protect their possessions in the event of them being lost, damaged or stolen. In such an event, the student should submit a claim to the insurance company who will provide assistance in paying for the item to be repaired or replaced.

Please note - make sure you know what your insurance does and does not cover.

We advise that you take out insurance while in your home country to protect your personal belongings on your journey to the UK. You should maintain this insurance throughout your entire stay in the UK. You can get insurance while you are still in your home country with your local insurance company or you can contact a UK-based insurance company via the internet. You will receive further information about insurance at your induction.

Please note - if you do not have insurance when you begin your journey to the UK from your home country, airlines, trains and coach companies may not pay to replace your lost or delayed items.

Medical Insurance

We recommend that students intending to study in the UK for less than 8 months take out medical insurance because you will not receive free medical treatment from the NHS (National Health Service). You will have to pay to see a doctor or to have non-emergency treatment. However, if you have medical insurance, this will cover the cost of any treatment required should you become ill or have an accident.

If you choose not to take out medical insurance and you find that you need to receive treatment of any kind during your stay in the UK, it may cost you up to £1,000.

Students who study in the UK for more than 6 months are able to register with a doctor and receive free hospital treatment. You will be given details of how to register with a doctor. This should be done within the first month of your stay in the UK.

Please note - you will not be covered for any medical treatment required before you arrive in the UK (i.e. during your journey to the UK) or if you need to return to your home country in order to receive medical treatment.

Money Matters

Upon arrival at the International Learning Centre, you will receive information on how to open a UK bank account. You may also wish to refer to the section Money in the 'What to Bring With You' section.

Opening a UK Bank Account

For students planning to study in the UK for more than 6 months, we advise that you open a bank account to be used during your stay in the UK. This will allow you easy access to your money, you will not be charged for withdrawals and you can monitor your finances easily. You can open your account after you arrive in the UK or if you would like to open an account in an international bank such as HSBC, you may wish to open your account in your home country.

For students who intend to study in the UK for less than 6 months, we advise that you use your home bank as you may experience difficulties opening a bank account in the UK. Please confirm whether the cash card of your home bank will work in UK stores and ATMs, that you are able to and secure in using internet banking and also ascertain bank charges you may incur when accessing your bank account overseas.

Understanding British money

In Britain the main currency is pounds sterling (£).
One pound (£1) is made up 100 pence (p).

Coin denominations are 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2.

Notes are in the following denominations, £5, £10, £20 and £50. (Please be advised that £50 notes are not widely accepted and stores may have insufficient notes and coins to provide you with change).

You will need your passport as identification when cashing travellers cheques. Most stores do not accept travellers cheques so you should convert them to cash at a bank or exchange bureau. Remember

to write out the serial numbers on each of your travellers cheques and keep these numbers separately for security purposes should the cheques be lost or stolen.

How much money do I need?

Upon arrival in the UK, you will need some British money to cover your immediate needs such as food, drink or transport costs. For the first two weeks of your stay in the UK, you will also need access to at least £500 to cover any accommodation costs (rent or furnishings), transport costs to college, food etc. This may be in the form of travellers cheques or credit/debit cards. Please note that it can take a few weeks to set up a British bank account and process money transfers.

The British Council states that in 2004 it costs approximately £600 a month (including accommodation) to live in the UK. Please budget for this.

How do I budget?

Budgeting simply means to save money wherever possible and to buy the less expensive version of an item if possible.

- Research prices in several stores when purchasing an expensive item such as a computer, mobile phone or TV.
- Supermarket own brands such as Tesco and Asda are usually less expensive than well-known named brands.
- Only buy things that you will use, need and can afford.
- If you are in shared accommodation, consider sharing the cost of a kettle, toaster, hairdryer etc.

If you are struggling financially, do not ignore the problem. Many agencies are able to help so please contact the International Officer at the Centre for advice and guidance.

Working in the UK

Students who have entered the UK on a Student Visa are able to work during their stay. Students studying for less than a period of 6 months must ensure that they are processed as a student and not a visitor on arrival to the UK. Ask the immigration officer at the airport if you are not sure.

If the words **student** and **work** appear on your visa, you are able to work during your time in the UK. If you are still not sure if you are able to work, please bring your passport to the International Office and we can check it for you.

Please remember that you should not need to work to support yourself and that you can fund yourself without having to work. However, working can be a good way to meet people, improve your English and earn some extra income for travelling etc. Please remember that you are here to study and work should not interfere with this.

International students must adhere to the following rules. Failure to keep to these rule may result in deportation (being removed) from the UK:

You cannot work more than 20 hours a week during term-time (but you can work full-time during the holidays).

You must apply for a National Insurance number once you have a job.

The International Office will provide you with further information and tips on finding work when you arrive in the UK. Remember to bring a reference from any previous employers (written in English).