

STUDY UK GUIDE

THE BEST POSSIBLE



STUDY
 **UK**

 **BRITISH
COUNCIL**

GREAT
BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND


WHY STUDY IN THE UK?

A UK education enables students to become the most confident, most promising, most prepared version of themselves as they set about entering the world of work.

Our students learn in a supportive environment at their institutions, benefitting from teaching methods that encourage independent thought.

The combination of rich cultural experiences that are unique to the UK and outstanding academic standards makes the UK the best choice for international students. Read on to find out more.

Excellent standards of education

**The UK's academic reputation
is world-renowned.**

UK universities have featured strongly in world rankings ever since they began. According to the 2019 Times Higher Education World Rankings, the UK is home to three of the world's top ten universities, including the top two.

This high quality can be found right across the country, with 29 of the world's top 200 universities found here in the UK.

38 per cent of Nobel Laureates who studied abroad did so in the UK (British Council, 2015).

The UK's 169 universities (or 679 higher education institutions) are all held to strict standards by the government, so you know you are getting the best teaching, support and resources available.



Teaching that will inspire you

The UK is known for producing successful, versatile graduates and one of the reasons for this is our use of innovative teaching methods.

The UK has a long history of pioneering approaches to teaching that expand and build on the traditional, so students get the most from their studies – and themselves.

One of these innovative techniques is problem-based learning, in which you are asked to solve real-life problems, just like those you will face in your future career. This kind of learning is often combined with field trips and experiences that place you in simulated or real-world settings. Through these techniques you will learn how to apply theory to practice and to collaborate with others, often under time pressure. This will accelerate your learning and give you a significant edge over the competition when you graduate.

Preparing for a successful career

A UK education opens doors, wherever you go in the world. For graduates keen to make an impression on new employers, there's nowhere better to develop the skills that will make you stand out as you start your career, and help you rise to your potential in the years to come.

UK graduates are among the most employable in the world (QS Graduate Employability Ranking). The UK is also among the top countries for university-industry collaboration, meaning you can access practical work-placements designed to help you hit the ground running in the real world.

Access world-leading research

The UK is a global powerhouse of science and research. With so many universities at the cutting edge of global discoveries and emerging technology, our students graduate with insights and experience that are in high demand around the world.

The UK is ranked second in the world for science and research, with 54 per cent of our output considered world-leading. That's more than the US, Canada, Germany, Japan and Brazil. Despite representing just 0.9 per cent of the global population, the UK produces 15.2 per cent of the world's most highly cited research (Elsevier and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2016).

Short, flexible courses and diverse subject offerings

It's not just our world-recognised universities that make us a top choice with international students. Courses in the UK are tailor-made to support you in getting the most from your studies as quickly as possible. There are more than 50,000 courses for you to choose from – no matter what you're passionate about, the UK is a fantastic place to pursue your interest.

In the UK, flexibility is built into the majority of our courses. Many universities allow you to choose from different subject 'modules', so you can build a course programme that suits you, specialising as you go for a perfectly tailored experience.

Postgraduate courses in the UK are shorter than those in the US and Australia, with many MBAs taking just one year. This means you can get better value for money and can begin applying your knowledge in the real world a lot sooner.



Competitive fees and living costs

The UK is an affordable study destination.

Knowing what kinds of costs you can expect will help you to plan your finances.

The cost of living varies, according to where in the UK you decide to study. London and other big cities are more expensive than other areas. The institution where you choose to study will be able to advise you on more detailed local costs of living and where to shop locally.

A range of scholarships and financial support options are also available so you should check what sources might be available to you.

Search for your course

UCAS lists more than 50,000 undergraduate courses with over 395 providers in the UK, which you can search for here: digital.ucas.com/search

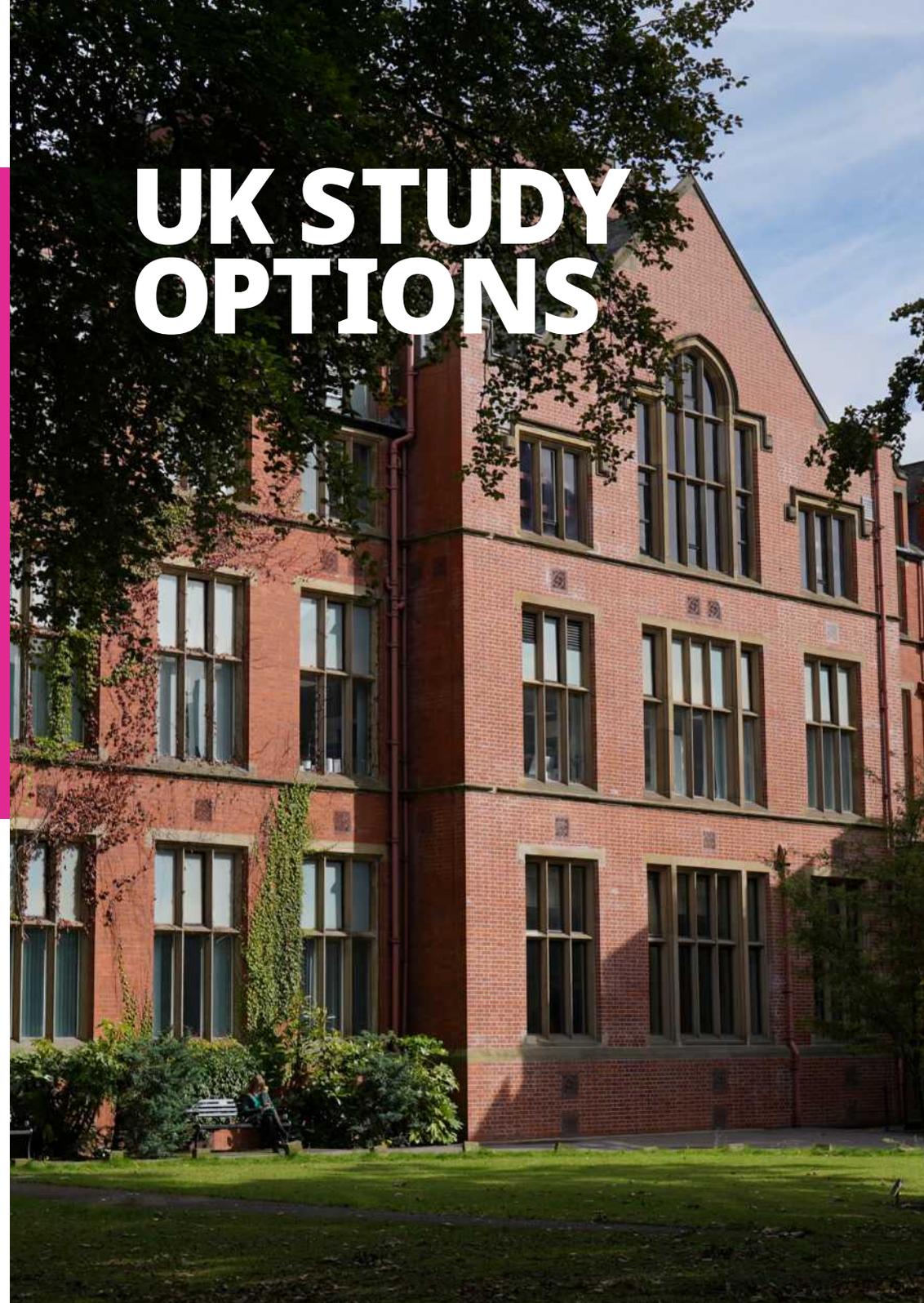
Their subject guides also give you a flavour of the courses you could study at undergraduate level, what they involve, and how to enroll:

www.ucas.com/ucas/subject-guide-list?scheme=undergraduate

You can also use the University finder on the Study UK website to search for a course:

study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/university

UK STUDY OPTIONS



Whether you are looking for undergraduate degrees, postgraduate degrees, English courses or other study options, we can help you find the right course for you.

Undergraduate study

For international undergraduates looking to kick-start their career, the UK offers far more than just a world-class education. With a wide range of learning experiences around every corner, you will graduate with the confidence, skills and knowledge to shape your future.

Search for your course

Visit the Prospects website for comprehensive post-graduate course searches with details on master's degrees, MBA courses, PhD study, post-graduate diplomas and certificates, law qualifications and teacher training:
www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses

UK undergraduate course types include:

- Bachelor's or undergraduate degrees: BA (Bachelor of Arts), BSc (Bachelor of Science), BEd (Bachelor of Education) and BEng (Bachelor of Engineering). Full-time bachelor's degrees normally take three years to complete (four in some cases). Part-time options are also available at some universities and colleges.
- Shorter courses: Foundation Degree, Diploma of Higher Education, Higher National Diploma, and Certificate of Higher Education.

Postgraduate study

When it comes to producing exceptional postgraduates, the UK has a global reputation. From progressive teaching techniques to the best research in the world, it's easy to see why thousands of international postgraduates choose to accelerate their learning and careers in the UK every year.

UK postgraduate course types include:

- Master's degrees: MA (Master of Arts), MSc (Master of Science), subject-specific qualifications, including MEng (Master of Engineering), MFA (Master of Fine Arts), LLM (Master of Laws), MArch (Master of Architecture), and MPhil (Master of Philosophy), which are research-led and usually designed for students to progress to a PhD. A full-time master's degree normally takes one year (taught master's) or two years (research master's) to complete. Part-time options are also available at some universities.
- MBA courses
- PhDs or doctorates
- Postgraduate diplomas and qualifications: Usually shorter than a master's and do not involve a thesis or dissertation.
- Professional and vocational qualifications: Most awards involve practical training.



As well as undergraduate and postgraduate study, the UK offers many other opportunities to international students:

- **Further education:** This refers to education after secondary school that is not an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. Further education institutions in the UK provide technical and professional education and training to people over the age of 16. Qualifications and training include A-Levels, apprenticeships, traineeships, vocational qualifications and entry level training.
- **Foundation pathway courses:** These are designed for international students to improve their English skills and develop the confidence to start undergraduate or postgraduate study. They provide the opportunity to adjust to the UK's culture and get used to university teaching.

- **English language courses:** As the home of the English language and with a reputation for academic excellence, the UK is the perfect destination to learn English.
- **Boarding schools:** A boarding school is a residential school where pupils live and study during the school year. There are approximately 500 boarding schools across the UK.

Transnational education

Did you know you can gain a UK higher education qualification in your own country? There are various transnational education (TNE) options for you to choose from, including online courses, articulation pathways and joint degrees. Contact your local British Council office for more information.

To find out more about course information and other UK study options, visit:

[study-uk.britishcouncil.org/
options/find-course](https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/options/find-course)

HOW TO APPLY



Undergraduate study

Most undergraduate applications are made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). To apply through UCAS*, you need to go to www.UCAS.com and register your details in their application system. You can apply for up to five courses through UCAS and you will be contacted by them with any offers from your chosen universities or colleges.

Application deadlines

October

For courses at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, or for most courses in medicine, veterinary medicine, science, dentistry and at Conservatoires.

15 January

For most undergraduate courses

30 June

Late deadline for most undergraduate courses.

Applications received after this deadline will automatically go into “clearing”, so you will not be guaranteed your first choice.

While you will be able to apply after the January deadline right up until 30 June, it is better to apply early.

With more than 160 universities and colleges, and many more courses and study options on offer, you can make your UK education as unique as you are. Use the University Finder to find the information you need: study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find-university

*Please note there is a small administration fee to pay for UCAS applications.

Your qualifications

You can check the equivalence of your country's qualifications with those in the UK by contacting the National Recognition Information Centre for the UK:

www.naric.org.uk/naric

Personal Statement

You will be required to provide a personal statement as part of your application to study at a university in the UK. This document is an opportunity for you to explain why you would like to study your chosen subject and what skills and experience you have that make you well suited to this field.

Top tips

The course description on the university website will explain the qualities, skills and experience it requires. Be sure to mention how you match these in your personal statement.

Talk about why you are applying for this course. Mention which aspects interest you in particular and how the course will support you with your future ambitions.

As well as articulating why you are academically suited to this course, include any extra-curricular activities you are involved in and previous work experience, if you have any.

Additional documents

You may be required to send the university proof of your examination results in the form of certificates or transcripts.

Whilst UCAS can send some results, including the International Baccalaureate, for most international qualifications you will need to send proof to the university yourself.

Check with the university for their policy on receiving proof of results.

For more advice on writing a personal statement, visit: www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/how-write-ucas-undergraduate-personal-statement

For more information about applying for undergraduate courses in the UK, visit: study-uk.britishcouncil.org/options/apply/undergraduate

Postgraduate study

Many UK universities handle their own postgraduate applications and you can often apply directly through their websites. Check the course information for instructions on entry requirements and how to apply.

Many postgraduate courses do not have a fixed application deadline. However, it is always best to apply early to make sure you have the best chance of being accepted – from six months to a year before your course begins.

For more information about applying for postgraduate courses in the UK, visit:

study-uk.britishcouncil.org/options/apply/postgraduate and

www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/masters-degrees/applying-for-a-masters-degree

What to include in your application?

personal statement – do note that this will be different in nature to an undergraduate application personal statement. For advice, visit

www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/masters-degrees/personal-statements-for-postgraduate-applications

- academic transcripts
- two or more references
- CV
- English language test results
- portfolio, if required
- research proposal, if required

COSTS



Studying in the UK is good value for money and exchange rate fluctuations have made the UK even better value for many international students. UK master's degrees can also be completed in one year, meaning lower living costs and faster entry into employment.

Use the UKCISA international student budget calculator to help you plan your budget: international.studentcalculator.org

Course fees

Fees for UK courses vary, depending on:

- whether you are from the European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA), or another country;
- where in the UK you are studying (there are different rules for England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales);
- your study level.

Note that fees for students from outside the EU are decided at an institutional level, so you will need to check with the university or college you wish to attend.

Scholarships and financial support

There are hundreds of scholarships, bursaries and grant schemes on offer for students who need extra support to pay for their UK course. Many institutions offer their own scholarships and bursaries – check the university's website for more information.



Global scholarships

You can apply for any of the following scholarships, provided they are appropriate for your course.

- **Chevening Award:**
Postgraduate scholarships from the UK government aimed at students with potential as future leaders:
www.chevening.org
- **Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan:**
Postgraduate scholarships for nationals of Commonwealth countries, funded by the UK government and intended to support individuals who will subsequently make a contribution to the development of their home country:
cscuk.dfid.gov.uk/apply

Country-specific scholarships and funding

There are many different scholarships available, some of which depend on where you are from.

For more information please visit: study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships

Discounts

The National Union of Students card (cards.nusextra.co.uk) and the International Student Identity Card (www.isic.org/get-your-card) offer great student discounts in many shops, restaurants and businesses. Have a look to see if you could save money with one of these cards.



STUDENT VISAS

Please refer to www.gov.uk/visas-immigration for the latest visa application information.

If you are 16 or over and want to study at higher education level, you will need to apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa.

How to apply for a student visa

Check

- The following documents are usually required, though this will vary depending on your country:
- A confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) reference number from your university or college.
- Evidence you can pay for your course and living costs.
- Original educational certificates.

Apply

- Apply, pay and book your visa appointment online.
- Submit your application at the Visa Application Centre (VAC) along with your supporting documents.
- Your fingerprints will be taken at the VAC and you may need to sit a video interview.

How long will it take to get my visa?

UK Visas and Immigration aims to process student visas within 15 working days. You are recommended to prepare and apply for your visa well in advance. You can make an application up to three months before you intend to travel.

If you need a visa quickly, you can pay for the Priority Service.



LIFE IN THE UK

A great student experience

Studying in the UK will give you experiences you will remember for life. There will be an endless number of ways for you to enjoy yourself, learn new things and make friends from all over the world.

Accommodation

Most universities and colleges have their own accommodation office and this should be the first place you go to ask about accommodation. Most institutions provide accommodation for international students in a hall of residence (either full-board or self-catering) or a self-catering shared house or flat. Space is usually limited, so applications for such accommodation should be made as soon as you have been accepted on your course and certainly before the required deadline.

Private accommodation

The accommodation office at your institution may be able to help with this, too. The office may keep lists of private accommodation available in the area, and some offices may even help you arrange a booking.

The most usual type of private accommodation is a room in a house with shared facilities. Renting a furnished house or a flat is likely to be expensive, especially in city centres, and quite difficult to find. A good way of making this affordable is to share with other students. If you do this, make sure you agree beforehand on how you will share costs.

Food

Food is near the top of the list of things you might miss when away from home. But food can be one of the best parts of living in the UK.

In most cities and towns you will find a selection of supermarkets with plenty of choice for students on different budgets. An increasing number of supermarkets offer international food products.

The average weekly food shop for one costs around £25.

Living in catered halls at university usually means that breakfast and dinner are provided for you from Monday to Friday. It makes life a lot easier having meals ready and made for you when you need them and it can be a sociable time.

It is also important while at university to build a positive relationship with food and cooking. You can make cooking

interesting in a number of different ways. Why not try making something that you have never made before? The beauty of living and studying amongst people from all backgrounds and cultures are the different cuisines that everyone will cook. Why not ask your flatmates for a few tips and learn to make a few quick and easy dishes from a different culture?



Experience UK culture

On campus, the students' union usually organises all kinds of social functions and there will be many clubs and societies that you can join.

If you are interested in arts and culture, you will find the UK packed with museums, theatres and other cultural attractions just waiting to be discovered.

The restaurant scene in the UK is thriving, and increasingly diverse. Pubs are also popular social destinations for many university and college students in the UK. You don't have to drink alcohol to go to a pub – you will find lots of non-alcoholic drinks on offer, and many pubs also have food and entertainment such as karaoke, football match screenings, or pub quizzes (weekly events where you compete as a team).

Some of the world's largest music venues and events are in the UK, such as the O2 Arena in London and the world-famous Glastonbury Festival, but many world-renowned artists and bands also play at UK universities and colleges, and small bars and cafés often host live music and dancing.

Almost every town will have a cinema with films from around the world. Hollywood releases will be easy to find, but major cities also have cinemas specialising in foreign and independent films, and universities often have a student cinema that shows films on campus at student-friendly prices.

If you love sport, the UK offers a range of ways to explore your passion. We're fanatical about every kind of sport here, and many of our athletes and clubs lead the world. Whether it's global team sports, like football, or individual sports like athletics, you will find ways to compete in and celebrate the sports you care most about alongside your studies.

UK weather and clothing

Although UK weather is unpredictable, it is rarely extreme. Wear several layers so that you can put them on or take them off as the weather changes, and always carry an umbrella.

In summer, the average temperature ranges from 9–18 degrees Celsius (48–64 degrees Fahrenheit). On occasion, it can reach around 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit) in a heatwave.

In winter the average is between 2 and 7 degrees Celsius (36–45 degrees Fahrenheit), but temperatures can drop below 0 degrees Celsius (36 degrees Fahrenheit). Most houses, buildings, trains and buses have good heating systems. In general, there is little difference between the regions of the UK, but you will experience more snow, rain and wind in northern and mountainous areas.

Most UK towns and cities have a large range of shops selling clothes to suit all styles and budgets. You will see all kinds of fashion at UK schools, colleges

and universities, and almost anything goes. Students usually dress casually during the day – jeans and t-shirts are fine – and more smartly if you're going out in the evening. Very few student bars and pubs have a dress code.

Some courses require you to wear specialist clothing for health and safety. For example, if you are in a science laboratory, you may need to wear protective glasses and a white lab coat.

The UK is a multi-cultural place and it is common for people to wear clothing associated with their culture and religion, for example a head scarf, kippah, turban, sari or long skirt. In major towns and cities you will find specialist shops selling clothing from around the world, particularly Asian and Middle Eastern clothing.



Explore the UK

From bustling cities to snow-capped mountains, rolling green hills to highlands and islands, the UK is beautiful and exploring is a must.

Its relatively small size and good transport links mean that you can see a lot while you are here. Some highlights include London with its fascinating history, iconic buildings, cutting-edge fashion, theatre and food; northern cities like Manchester and Liverpool, which are well known for their famous football clubs and great nightlife; Scotland's stunning mix of wild beauty and buzzing cities; the stunning landscapes of Wales' national parks; and the spectacular coastline of Northern Ireland.

For more information about exploring the UK visit:

www.visitbritain.com

Health and safety

With one of the best healthcare systems in the world and low crime rates, studying in the UK is safe and secure.

The UK's NHS (National Health Service) is one of the world's most advanced healthcare systems, offering safe and modern treatment.

To gain access to the NHS, you will be required to pay an immigration health surcharge as part of your visa application fee.

The UK is a safe country, with low crime rates and a trustworthy police force. Many institutions have their own security services who patrol campuses. Your institution will usually provide you with information on staying safe on campus.

Religion in the UK

As a multi-faith society, students of all religions can expect to feel welcome in the UK, along with plenty of places to practise their faith. With a history of multi-culturalism dating back hundreds of years, we have well-established communities representing all major religions, and a deep commitment to supporting students' religious needs on campus.

We are proud to be a very tolerant society in every way, and it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of their race, nationality or religion.



Useful links

General:

Study UK website:
study-uk.britishcouncil.org

Study UK Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/StudyUK.
 BritishCouncil

Find a University:
study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/university#/

What subjects can I study?:
study-uk.britishcouncil.org/find/subjects-areas

Sign up to the Study UK newsletter:
study-uk.britishcouncil.org/newsletter

Moving to the UK:
study-uk.britishcouncil.org/moving-uk

Scholarships:

study-uk.britishcouncil.org/scholarships

Student visas:

For information and guidance:
www.gov.uk/visas-immigration

For Visa Application Centre (VAC) information:
www.vfsglobal.co.uk/en

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS):
www.ucas.com

Unistats: The official website for comparing UK higher education course data
unistats.ac.uk

Association of Colleges:
 A map of colleges in the UK
www.aoc.co.uk/about-colleges/map

Prospects: Postgraduate course search
www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study

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