



University of
East London

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT **ADVICE** HANDBOOK



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International Student Advice

All information provided in this handbook is general and may be subject to change, please see the [UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\)](#) website for the most up to date information . The university is not responsible for any UKVI policy changes nor changes to the [UK Government travel advice](#)

Pre-arrival

Visa/entry clearance

Immigration rules and the requirements for each visa category change frequently and often with little notice. In general, most international students will need to apply for a student visa to study in the UK but you can check the [UK Visas and Immigration](#) website for further information on the other types of visa categories that may apply to you.

If you are an EU, non-EU EEA national, Swiss citizen or an eligible family member with settled or pre-settled status, you will not need a student visa to study.

If you require a student visa, you will need a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) issued by the university before making your student visa application.

You will receive regular emails, invitations to webinars and support with the university's Pre-CAS assessments and student visa application process. Up to date information can be found in the [Student visa](#) pages,

When your student visa application is granted you will receive a 90-day entry visa in your passport which allows entry to the UK and a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card collection letter. The BRP card is your visa which covers the full duration of your studies and you will collect this from designated post office in the UK. Please see 'Collecting your Biometric Residence Permit Card' section for further details.

You can email the International Student Advice team (isa@uel.ac.uk) for further support.

Kickstarter Programme:

The UEL recruitment team in partnership with Malvern House host a week-long Kickstarter programme for eligible international students a few weeks prior to the start of their course. This is an opportunity for offer holders that have paid a tuition fee deposit to join in on our innovative programme and learn about the academic structure and university life before arriving on campus.

We expect the next Kickstarter programme to take place the week commencing 30th August 2021. You will receive an email closer to the time with a schedule and links to sign-up.

This programme covers the following:

- How to set-up your UEL Account;
- Navigating Teams to communicate with tutors and learn remotely;
- Academic Referencing and Paraphrasing;
- Presentation Skills;
- Culture Shock and Adjusting to life in the UK and
- Structuring and Planning Academic Reports.
- Plus, many more sessions

Pre-Departure Event:

The Pre-Departure event will take place virtually on Wednesday, 8th September 2021. This exciting event will give you the opportunity to hear directly from you school as to how to prepare for your studies ahead and everything you need to know before you set foot on campus and start your UEL student journey.

This event will host the following:

- School Specific Sessions
- Student Experience Sessions
- Arriving on Campus Sessions
- Mental Wealth Sessions
- A virtual expo

We look forward to having you join us for this exciting event.

International Orientation Programme

You will be contacted separately regarding our exciting International Orientation Programme. This is a range of events that will give you the chance to see the campus, meet other students and learn about what lies ahead at University of East London. We will hopefully show you how to get the most out of your studies and your social life whilst you are here with us.

Arrival

Preparing to travel to the UK

The requirements you need to follow to travel to the UK depend on which country you are coming from and where you have visited or passed through in the 10 days before arrival.

Ensure you follow the latest advice and guidance on [Entering the UK](#)

Booking Flights

We recommend you do not book flights to the UK until you have received your visa. You will need to travel to the UK within the validity of your 90-day entry visa. Please contact the International Student Advice team (isa@uel.ac.uk) if you are unable to for further advice.

What to bring in your main luggage

Try to bring what you need rather than everything you want. The climate in the UK is temperate which means it does not get very cold for long in the winter or very hot for long in the summer. Although on occasion we do get snow, and it can rain frequently, so ensure you bring appropriate clothing.

What to bring in your hand luggage

Your hand luggage should contain items that you can use if your main luggage is delayed. Things to consider: Travel documents, basic toiletries, a spare change of clothing, your mobile phone and charger, first aid kit (and any prescribed medication) any valuable items, camera.

Please check with your airline how many and what size bags you can take on the plane with you. Some airlines might also have different restrictions. Check with your airline before you travel if you're not sure about what you can take as hand luggage.

Please be aware of the restrictions on electronic devices and electrical items, food, animals or plants, medicines, chemicals, toxic substances, sports equipment, tools, knives, weapons, explosives etc.

If you do take liquids in your hand luggage:

- containers must hold no more than 100ml
- containers must be in a single, transparent, resealable plastic bag, which holds no more than a litre and measures approximately 20cm x 20cm
- contents must fit comfortably inside the bag so it can be sealed

- the bag must not be knotted or tied at the top
- you're limited to 1 plastic bag per person
- you must show the bag at the airport security point

If you are bringing medicine containing a controlled drug into the UK, you will need to prove your medicine is prescribed to you if:

- it contains a 'controlled drug'
- you have it on you when you're entering the UK

This would require supporting documentation from a relevant medical professional (e.g. a letter from your doctor or a copy of your prescription).

If you are entering the UK on a student visa, you should carry the below documents in your hand luggage

Document	Tick
Passport	
Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card collection letter	
Copy of your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)	
UKVI TB test certificate (if you were required to have one as part of your student visa application)	
Copy of qualifications listed on your CAS	
ATAS certificate (if this was stated on your CAS)	
Finances (copy of your bank statement / loan letter)	
Evidence of where you are planning on staying	

Border control

When you enter the UK, you will need to pass through immigration control. You should ensure the border officer stamps your passport indicating the date you enter the UK. You will need this stamp to complete your Right to Study check and collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP card).

Should you have any significant difficulties at this stage, you can call the International Student Advice and Compliance team on 020 8223 3050. The phone lines will be open from 9am-5pm Monday – Friday.

Entering the UK via the eGates

If you are a national from an EU country, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland or the USA you may be able to enter the UK via the [eGates](#). This means you do not need to go through border control.

Top Tip

If entering the UK via the E-Gates, you must keep a copy of your **boarding pass** as you will need this to enrol and collect your BRP card as proof of the date you entered the UK.

Upon arrival to the UK

Quarantine

You may be required to quarantine upon arrival in the UK. The exact details of what period of quarantine will apply to you can be found on the [government website](#) and we recommend you familiarise yourselves with these before travelling.

Whether your long-term plan is to stay in our on-campus accommodation, or to source alternative accommodation, our Residential Life team would like to support our students required to quarantine on arrival to the UK. Residential Life can offer students required to quarantine* different packages to suit their needs, for more information on these [please see our dedicated website](#).

***Subject to the country of origin not being on the government's red list at the time of your arrival**

Travelling to your accommodation.

London has a very good range of transport links via trains, underground and busses. However, if you are travelling alone with a considerable amount of luggage, it would be worth considering alternative options.

[Heathrow Express](#), will take you from Heathrow into central London (Paddington) and is promoted as the quickest, but you will have to consider your onward journey from Paddington so for that reason it may not be the most convenient.

Underground (The Tube) Single tickets. The standard single underground ticket from Heathrow airport to central London (zone 1) is £6.00 for adults.

London taxis are available outside each terminal. The cost to central London is £45–£70, more to East London and the journey time is approximately one hour. (An hour and a half to East London)

Alternatively, [book a minicab or chauffeur](#) in advance.

[Uber](#) is also available but can be expensive if there are traffic delays.

Arrival on Campus

Should you be intending to live in our on-campus Halls of Residence, you should have already submitted an application on our [Accommodation Portal](#). If you are yet to do this, please ensure an application is submitted as soon as possible.

Please do not arrive to our Halls of Residence until you have secured a room, this means you have accepted a room offer from us.

If you are arriving from a country where you are not required to quarantine, you will be given the opportunity to book an arrival slot. Our arrival slots are offered on a first come, first serve basis via the Accommodation Portal, and a time during the Residential Life Office opening hours can be selected. All students that have secured an email when arrival slots are live.

Should you be required to arrive outside of the times listed on the Accommodation Portal, that is no problem at all, your keys will be ready for you to collect from security, subject to it being after the start date of your tenancy.

Please note, students moving into our on-campus accommodation that are required to quarantine will be asked to make their arrival date and time known to us [via our quarantine packages form](#).

All international students will be issued with a free 'bed pack', consisting of a quilt and pillow, that will be placed into your new room before you arrive.

Throughout the Residential Life welcome period of the 9th- 19th September 2021, Residential Life will be hosting a full programme of events, activities and workshops to assist you with settling into your new home. Please continue to check our Accommodation Portal in the lead up to your arrival to book your space!

Collecting your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card

Your BRP card is your visa which will cover the full duration of your course.

You are required to collect your BRP card from the post office addressed on your BRP collection letter upon arrival to the UK and only after any period of mandatory quarantine. **You must complete your quarantine first.**

Documents to bring with you when collecting your BRP card

1. BRP collection letter
2. Passport (90-day visa) with the stamp from the border officer.
3. Entered via the E-Gates?
 - a. A copy of your boarding pass to show when you entered the UK.

Under 18 years old?

If you are under 18 years old, you will need to be accompanied by a responsible adult to collect your BRP card. To do this you must nominate someone to collect your BRP card by visiting the [GOV.UK Biometric residence permits \(BRPs\)](#) page.

Applied for your student visa inside the UK?

Your BRP card will be posted to your address in the UK upon successful outcome of your visa application.

EU/ EEA national

If you are an EU/EEA national and have applied for a student visa using the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' App you will receive an electronic visa. You will not receive a BRP card. Please see how to [prove your Immigration status for](#) more information.

BRP card safety

Please keep your BRP safe. If you lose your BRP card it can take up to 8 weeks to replace.

You will only need your BRP card for the following:

- Completing enrolment.
- Registering with a doctor (General Practitioner, GP).

- Registering with the Police (if applicable).
- Opening a bank account.
- Proof of rent (if you are not living in UEL halls of residence) AND
- Proof of work (if you are wanting to get a part time job)

You are not required to carry your BRP card with you when leaving your house, so keep it safe with your passport.

If you notice an error on your BRP card

If you notice an error on your BRP please contact the International Student Advice team at isa@uel.ac.uk who can help you get it corrected.

Police Registration

You may need to [register with the Police](#) upon your arrival to the UK and after any period of mandatory quarantine depending on your nationality and visa conditions. You can find more information on the process of registering with the police by visiting the [Overseas Visitors' Register Office \(OVRO\)](#) website

Student visa responsibilities

If you are on student visa you have certain responsibilities and you will be reminded of these throughout your studies and during your international welcome programme.

Some of your responsibilities are listed below:

- Enrol online on your course before the enrolment deadline.
- Provide a copy of your passport and visa documents electronically to the university when requested.
- Meet the University's attendance and engagement policy.
- Register with the Police (if applicable).
- Ensure your contact details are always up to date on UEL Direct.
- Inform the International Student Advice team of any errors on your BRP card.
- Inform the International Compliance team if your immigration status changes during your studies.
- Pay your tuition fees on time.
- Follow the work conditions.
- Do not access public funds.

Right To study Check

The university has a statutory requirement to collect copies of your immigration documents to ensure you have the correct permission to study in the UK. You will be invited to upload evidence of your immigration permission on the Right to Study Check on [UEL Direct](#) once you have enrolled online.

The evidence you will be asked to provide will vary depending on your immigration status.

You will receive emails and further support to assist you with this process.

Please note: if you have made an in-time valid student visa application inside the UK you can enrol and study on your course whilst awaiting the outcome of the visa decision.

You are also allowed and expected to start your studies online in your home country remotely whilst waiting for your visa application to be approved and waiting to travel to the UK.

Life in the UK

Working in the UK

National Insurance number

Before working in the UK, you are required to obtain a [National Insurance Number](#). You will only be able to apply for a National Insurance Number once you have arrived in the UK.

Working restrictions

If you are on a student visa you are restricted to only working the hours stated on your Biometric Residence permit (BRP) card during term time. This will be either 10 or 20 hours per week depending on your course.

Term time is defined by the University's academic calendar and you can get a student status letter from the hub which you can show your employer before starting work.

If you are on a student visa you are not allowed to:

- Be self-employed or engage in business activity
- Take employment as an entertainer
 - Entertainer includes singers, comedians, dancers, actors and other performers.
 - There is an exception if you are undertaking a work placement on a degree level of above course in music or drama.
- Take employment as a professional sportsperson including a sports coach
- Fill a full-time permanent vacancy
- Be a Doctor or dentist in training

For more detailed guidance see page 93 onwards of [Student Route Caseworker Guidance](#)

Income Tax

You pay income tax on your earnings. However, if your total annual income from all sources (apart from student loans, scholarships and educational grants) is not more than £12,570 (this figure is for

the tax year 2021/2022), you should receive your wages without tax being deducted. Please see [Income Tax rates and Personal Allowances](#) for more information.

Opening a UK Bank account

We recommend you open a UK bank account once you arrive in the UK and after any period of mandatory quarantine. You will need to take evidence of who you are and where you live to open a UK bank account. You will need:

- A student status letter issued by the Hub
- Your passport and immigration documents

The university cannot provide you with any recommendations regarding a specific bank you should choose. You can however try using comparison websites to find a suitable bank

Registering with doctor

Some of you may have paid for the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of your visa application. This allows you to use most services on the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK for free. It is important that you register with a doctor (called a GP, for 'General Practitioner') in the UK upon your arrival after any period of mandatory quarantine.

If you live on campus you can self-register at the [Royal Docks Medical Practice](#).

If you live off campus use the [NHS Find a GP](#) to search for a GP near your home address, then contact them and let them know you would like to register.

Prescriptions

If your doctor provides you with medication, they may write a prescription for you. You will need to take your prescription to a pharmacy and pay a standard charge.

Driving in the UK

In London most students use public transport (train, tube and buses) to travel. Before driving any vehicle in the UK, you should check all legal requirements that apply to the vehicle and the driver.

For more information please see [Driving in Great Britain on a non-GB licence](#)

[UKCISA](#) also has a very useful information on driving in the UK.

Drink driving is illegal in the UK, you should always wear a seatbelt where one is provided and observe speed limits which are in miles per hours (MPH).

Television Licence

The law requires you to be covered by a TV Licence to:

- watch or record programmes as they are being shown on TV, on any channel
- watch or stream programmes live on an online TV service (for instance ITV Hub, all 4, YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, Now TV, Sky Go, etc.)
- download or watch any BBC programmes on BBC iPlayer.

This applies to any device you use, including a TV, desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone, tablet, games console, digital box or DVD/VHS recorder.

How much does a Student TV Licence cost?

A [standard TV Licence](#) costs £159. There isn't a student discount. But if you do not need your licence for a full 12 months; you can apply for a refund for any completely unused quarters (three consecutive calendar months). If you buy a TV licence in October it allows enough time to qualify for a refund at the end of the academic year. For further information please call 0870 241 5973.

Do I need one if I live in University Accommodation

A university halls communal licence won't cover your room. If you have a television in your room, you will require a valid licence.

What if I live in a house or flat share?

If you have a separate tenancy agreement for your room, you will need your own TV Licence.

If you have a joint tenancy agreement for an entire house or flat, you and your flatmates will probably need one licence to cover the whole property.

You could be prosecuted if you have been watching or recording live TV programmes on any channel or device, or downloading or watching BBC programmes on BBC iPlayer, without being covered by a licence. The maximum penalty is a £1,000 fine plus any legal costs and/or compensation you may be ordered to pay.

Please note TV Licensing is a UK Government organisation and is not part of UEL.

Emergency numbers

999 – The Main Emergency number. Emergency number for Police Ambulance Fire. You should always call 999 when it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

Calls are free, and 999 can be dialled from a locked mobile phone.

111 – the non-emergency medical number. Use this for illnesses and minor injuries where life is not threatened, but you would like some advice on what to do next.

101 – The non-emergency number for the police. Use 101 when you want to contact the police, but it's not an emergency – i.e. an immediate response is not necessary and/or will not be serve any purpose. A general rule is "if the crime is not currently in progress, use 101."

Silent Witness. If you witnessed a crime, incident or have information about a crime which occurred on campus you can report it anonymously. You can now report any such information in strict confidence; you do not have to give your name. Call **020 8223 5799** and leave a message.

London Airports

Gatwick Airport Enquiries General information

Telephone: +44 (0) 344 892 0322

Website: www.gatwickairport.com

Heathrow Airport Enquiries

Telephone: +44 (0)844 335 1801

Website: www.heathrowairport.com

London City Airport

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7646 0000

Website: www.londoncityairport.com



facebook.com/universityofeastlondon/



instagram.com/universityofeastlondon/



youtube.com/user/videouel



twitter.com/UEL_News