



University of
East London

International Student Travel 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 or 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. Please visit the UK Government website for up-to-date information on the [Student visa route](#).

When your Student visa application is granted most students 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 (BRP) Card' section for further details and whether this applies to you.

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

Kickstarter Programme

The UEL International team will 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 new students to virtually join us and learn about academic study and university life before arriving on campus.

The Kickstarter programme will take place on **Monday 5th - Friday 9th September 2022**.

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
- Enrolment session
- Understanding academic integrity and approaches to learning at university
- Accessing key tools
- Academic referencing and paraphrasing
- Presentation skills
- Structuring and planning academic reports
- Consent and wellbeing, plus an overview of the importance of attending Course Induction
- Plus, many more sessions

Virtual Pre-Departure Event

The Pre-Arrival event is an exciting opportunity for you to hear directly from your 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 student journey here at the University of East London.

We expect the Virtual Pre-Departure Event to take place on **Tuesday 13th September 2022**

This event will host the following:

- School specific sessions
- Student Experience sessions
- Arriving on campus sessions
- Mental Wealth sessions
- A virtual booth that will allow you to speak with different departments one to one
- Travelling to the UK for international students and settling in
- Enrolment session

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

International Orientation Programme

Our exciting International Orientation Programme will take place on **Wednesday 14th September**. It is important that you attend. Invites will be sent to you directly by the Student Life department. You can also follow them on Instagram to stay connected (@uelstudentlife).

The International Orientation Programme is a range of events that will give you the chance to see the campus, have your visa related questions answered, meet other students and learn about what lies ahead at University of East London.

Arrival

Preparing to travel to the UK

You should check the UK Government website for the latest advice and guidance on [entering the UK](#).

For further information please visit the [UK Government website](#).

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 a 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).

If you have any significant difficulties at this time, you can call the International Student Advice and Compliance team on +44 (0)20 8223 3050. The phone lines will be open Monday - Friday, 10am-4pm (UK time).

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](#) for quicker entry.

If you are an EU/EEA national, you should be aware that most EU/EEA nationals are no longer able to use their identity card. It is advisable to use your passport at the UK border. For further information, please refer to the link in the paragraph above.

Top Tip

If entering the UK via the eGates, you must keep a copy of your **boarding pass** as you will need this to complete your enrolment and collect your BRP card (if applicable) as this is your proof of the date you entered the UK.

Upon arrival to the UK

Travelling to your accommodation

London has a very good range of transport links via trains, underground and buses. 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 approximately £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.

Should you be required to arrive outside of the times listed on the Accommodation Portal, this is not problem, however, please ensure you are communicating with the Residential Life Team regarding your arrival dates and plans. This is so the team can ensure everything is prepared for you arrival.

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.

Residential Life will be hosting a full programme of events, activities and workshops. Please continue to check our Accommodation Portal in the lead up to your arrival to book your space!

Biometric Residence Permits (BRP) Card

If you require a BRP card, this is your visa which will cover the full duration of your course. Not everyone who is issued a Student visa will receive a BRP card.

Will I receive a BRP card?

If you apply to come to the UK for six months or less, you will be given a visa vignette (sticker) in your passport that will cover the duration of your visa and will not be issued a BRP card.

If your visa is issued for **longer than six months**, you will either receive a BRP card or a digital immigration status.

The table below shows when you should expect to receive a BRP and/or a digital immigration status:

	Visa national*	Non-visa national*
I was directed to and able to use the <i>UK Immigration: ID Check App</i> at the beginning of the visa application	E-visa (digital immigration status) and BRP	E-visa (digital immigration status) only
I was not able to use the <i>UK Immigration: ID Check App</i>	BRP card only	BRP card only

*You are considered a 'Visa national' if you are a citizen of one of the countries listed in the [Immigration Rules Appendix Visitor: Visa national list](#).

If you are issued with a digital immigration status, you will be able to view your immigration status online. You will also be able to generate a share code which you must provide to the University, so that we can keep up to date records and verify your immigration status in the UK. Please see how you can view and prove your immigration status on the [UK Government website](#).

Collecting your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card

If you require a BRP card, and you applied for your visa outside the UK, you will need to collect your BRP card from the Post Office that should be outlined at the end of your visa application, or your BRP collection letter upon arrival to the UK.

Documents to take with you when collecting your BRP card

1. Passport (with your 90-day visa vignette, that has been stamped at the UK border).
2. BRP collection letter

If you entered via the eGates - you will need to provide your boarding pass to show when you entered the UK.

If you applied for your Student visa inside the UK

If you require a BRP card, it will be posted to the address you provided on your Student visa application.

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 [UK Government website](#).

You can find more information about BRPs on the [UK Government website](#).

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)
- 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, 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

You are required to keep the University updated on the status of your visa application through your [CAS Shield Portal](#).

When you arrive in the UK, 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.

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

You can read the [Student Route Caseworker Guidance](#) (see page 93 onwards) for information and guidance on working in the UK on your Student visa.

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 2022/2023), you should receive your wages without tax being deducted.

Please visit the [UK Government website](#) for further information.

Opening a UK Bank account

We recommend you open a UK bank account once you arrive in the UK. You will need to provide 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 a 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.

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 about 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 hour (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.

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). For further information please call 0870 241 5973.

Do I need one if I live in University Accommodation

A University halls communal licence will not 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 flat mates 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

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 instagram.com/universityofeastlondon/

 youtube.com/user/videouel

 twitter.com/UEL_News