2018/19

Pre-Arrival
Information
Preparing to arrive.
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WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME

It is important to be organised before you leave home. Following the guidance in this leaflet before you come to Glasgow will make your transition into life at Strathclyde much easier. Make your arrangements in plenty of time to avoid any last minute panic.

Making travel arrangements

Glasgow’s Airports

Glasgow is served by two airports; Glasgow International Airport - being just a few miles outside the city centre is the main airport for transatlantic and worldwide flights. There is a regular bus service into the city centre costing around £8, alternatively a taxi from the airport to the University will cost around £25. We would recommend the taxi option as you will no doubt be carrying lots of luggage.

Glasgow Prestwick International Airport is approximately 30 miles away from Glasgow city centre and is a smaller airport mainly used by low cost airlines offering domestic and European flights. Prestwick Airport is connected to a train station which is accessed via a covered walkway and journey time between the airport and Glasgow city centre is approximately 50 minutes. Passengers are entitled to a 50% discount on the train fare if they show their flight ticket/confirmation (the fare is approximately £6 with discount). The University of Strathclyde is around a ten minute walk from Glasgow Central railway station or a short taxi journey (the fare is approximately £5).

Insurance

You should arrange suitable travel insurance to cover your luggage when travelling, and you should arrange insurance for your possessions (particularly expensive items such as laptops or cameras) once you arrive in Glasgow.

Travelling via the Republic of Ireland

When planning your journey to the UK, it is best to avoid travelling via Ireland (this is particularly applicable to students from the USA as many flights are routed through Ireland). Although the Republic of Ireland is not part of the UK, we do have a common travel area agreement which minimises immigration checks. When you arrive in Ireland, your passport will be stamped in green by Irish immigration officials, this will indicate you are a visitor. However, when you pass through UK immigration on arrival in the UK your visa will NOT be stamped, as you have entered the UK through the common travel area. This means that your UK visa will not be activated or if you were looking to request a Short Term Study Visa on entry there would be no means to do this.

If you do arrive in the UK through the Republic of Ireland and subsequently take a trip out of the UK (such as to mainland Europe) in order to come back in to the UK and pass through UK immigration control and have your visa endorsed, you will have to provide evidence of the dates and flights you arrived and left Ireland on. This may prove to be problematic and may disrupt your studies so it is probably best to avoid travelling through the Republic of Ireland.

Airport arrival - Meet and Greet

We will have Welcome Ambassadors at Glasgow International Airport during welcome weekend - the 8th and 9th of September from 0800h – 2000h, and we encourage you to log your arrival so that they are expecting you. Full details and registration at https://ewds3.strath.ac.uk/forms/General/Airport-Meet-and-Greet
Our Ambassadors will meet you at international arrivals. They will assist you with onward travel and answer general enquiries.

If you are arriving during our published times for our September welcome programme, we will be offering FREE taxi transportation to the following student accommodations:

- All University of Strathclyde accommodation
- Blackfriars
- Dobbie’s Point – North Hanover Street
- Foundry Courtyard – Kennedy Street
- Hello Student – George Street
- Merchant Studios and Collegelands
- Nido St James
- Havannah House

If you are not staying in accommodation listed above, the Ambassadors will guide you to public transport services. Most students take a taxi to their accommodation. The Ambassadors will help you find a taxi and also find other students who may want to share, and thus reduce the cost. A taxi from airport to the University usually costs around £25.

You will find our student welcome team at the Welcome Desks – they will be easily identified by their purple University of Strathclyde sweatshirts.

Hand luggage

When arriving in the UK, it is essential to carry the following:

- Valid passport
- Valid entry clearance (sticker in your passport) if applicable
- Landing card
- Your Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) if applicable
- Documents used to make your original application for your visa
- Health certificate and medication if necessary, including TB Screening Testing if required
- Some cash in GBP Pounds for your first few days in Glasgow (before you open a bank account and can transfer money)

You should read the following before you travel to the UK:

- For more information on preparing for your arrival in the UK, see the UKVI's advice on entering the UK.

Arrival in Glasgow

Arriving in Glasgow for the first time may seem daunting, but you will soon call it home. The city centre itself is quite small and is easy to get around without needing to use public transport. The University’s campus is located just a few minutes’ walk from the main city centre square (George Square) and the two main train stations (Glasgow Central and Queen Street). If you do get lost, just ask someone – they will be happy to help! One of the first things you will need is a city map. Both Glasgow Central and Queen Street railway stations have maps available to buy from vending machines for around £1. Alternatively you can visit Glasgow iCentre which is located at 156a/158 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, G1 2LL.
**Accommodation**

**University accommodation**

The University of Strathclyde has 2,000 rooms in halls of residence on campus which creates a “student village” feel. You can apply for University Accommodation online as soon as you have a conditional offer from us. Please see [www.strath.ac.uk/accommodation/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/accommodation/) for full information on the application process, eligibility and to apply. Please note the deadline for applications is 25 August 2018.

**Private halls of residence**

In addition there are a number of privately run halls of residence in the city centre, situated very close to the University’s John Anderson campus. If you choose this option you will live with students from other universities and colleges in Glasgow.

For more information go to  
[www.freshstudentliving.co.uk/location/glasgow/](http://www.freshstudentliving.co.uk/location/glasgow/)  
[www.unite-students.com](http://www.unite-students.com)  
[www.libertyliving.co.uk](http://www.libertyliving.co.uk)  
[www.hellostudent.co.uk/student-accommodation/glasgow/george-street-apartments/](http://www.hellostudent.co.uk/student-accommodation/glasgow/george-street-apartments/)

**Temporary accommodation**

If you book University accommodation, you will be sent information on when to arrive. Similarly, if you arrange accommodation with one of the private housing providers, you will be given a date when your contract starts. You will not be able to access your accommodation until the date specified, therefore if you plan to arrive early, you will have to book temporary accommodation for a few nights. The same advice applies if you are planning to arrange accommodation once you arrive in Glasgow.

If you do need temporary accommodation for a few nights when you first arrive in Glasgow, it is important to book in advance. There will be several thousand new students arriving in the city within a few days therefore hostels and private halls may fill up early. For more information go to:  
[www.hostelbookers.com](http://www.hostelbookers.com)  
[www.eurohostels.co.uk](http://www.eurohostels.co.uk)  
[www.visitscotland.com](http://www.visitscotland.com)

Alternatively, the private halls of residence listed under “Accommodation” (above) may be able to provide short term accommodation.

**Private rented sector accommodation**

A room in a shared flat can vary between £100 and £125 per week plus your share of bills. For example it may cost £400 per year for heating.

The University’s Accommodation Office can provide you with information and advice on the private rented sector in Glasgow (mentioned above) and other scattered private flats around the city. Price and quality of accommodation will vary widely. You should always view the property before you sign a contract. Please also see [www.glasgowpad.org/](http://www.glasgowpad.org/)

Please bear in mind that with both University and private accommodation you will be asked to sign a lease or tenancy agreement, which is legally binding. If you are not happy with your accommodation it will be extremely difficult to break this contract, so pay attention to the terms of the contract, what is included in the price and your responsibilities as tenants.
Budget/Cost of living

Although Glasgow is one of the least expensive cities in the UK, you may find that living here is more expensive than in your home country. It is important that you plan your budget in advance and take into consideration all expenses you may have whilst you are here as there is little financial support available if you run into difficulties. Work out your finances for the entire duration of your studies as underestimating the cost of living will cause you a great deal of stress.

If you are bringing your spouse or any dependants with you, you have to provide £680 per month living costs for each person who accompanies you. (This figure, set by our Government, applies to students who study outside of London).

Whilst most international students are entitled to work part-time, do not expect to rely on these earnings to support you during your studies.

Cost of living 2018/19

This estimate is based on the cost of a single room in self-catering University accommodation. One or two University residences do not include the cost of heating in the cost of rent so keep this in mind.

Nine months /37 weeks
Undergraduate academic year, Postgraduate Diploma

Twelve months /50 weeks
Postgraduate academic year, taught Masters Degree, PhD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Costs</th>
<th>per week</th>
<th>per 37 week session</th>
<th>per 50 week session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>£100-142</td>
<td>£3700-5354</td>
<td>£5000-7100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, local travel, laundry, entertainment etc.</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>£3700</td>
<td>£5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bed sheets, towels, plates, cutlery, books and stationery, warm clothing, graduation fee etc.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>£600</td>
<td>£600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>£8000-9554</td>
<td>£10600-12700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The UK Government’s statutory level of maintenance for Tier 4 students living outside of London is a minimum of £1015 per month and £680 per month for every dependant who accompanies the student.

These figures are basic averages based on costs current students have given us. When working out your budget you may need to adjust these figures - especially if you wish a more expensive lifestyle. We have not made any allowance in this estimate of costs for any travel you might undertake, or for the cost of shipping your belongings back to your own country at the end of your period of study.

If your studies will last for more than one year you should take into account the annual increase in the UK cost of living – usually between 2-3%. Tuition fees also increase each year by a similar amount.
Personal finances

You should think about how you are going to get your money to the UK – having a member of your family transfer your funds to your UK bank account once it is opened is probably the safest method. Exchange rates can fluctuate considerably over the duration of your course, having enough money for tuition fees and living costs in your home currency can quickly change if the exchange rate drops. You could consider transferring all the money you need to cover these at the beginning of your course.

Remember, you will need to bring sufficient funds to pay your initial accommodation rent (e.g. temporary accommodation), buy food and general expenses until your UK bank account is set up (this may take 2 to 3 weeks). It is not advisable to bring large sums of cash. Instead bring traveller’s cheques and only a small amount of cash. You should be able to use your credit/debit card from home.

Banks

The UK has strict banking regulations which mean that banks must undertake identity and credit checks on people opening new bank accounts.

In order to make the process of opening a bank account easier you should:

- Check if your home bank has a partner bank in Glasgow. If so, you should be able to open a bank account with them with relative ease.
- If you do not wish to open an account but wish to use your home bank account using your debit card, you may be able to use this partner bank to access your home bank account without incurring heavy bank charges.
- If your home bank does not have a partner bank in Glasgow do not worry. There are many banks in Glasgow for you to choose from. You should visit several to find out which one offers you the best service.
- The majority of banks will give an international student only a basic bank account. However some banks will give you a debit card, so be prepared to shop around to find the bank which most suits your needs.
- Several banks will ask you to confirm your name (as it appears in your passport), your UK and home address and that you are a registered student at the University. The University can provide you with a letter to assist you in opening a bank account in the UK. (It is important that you update your details on the University’s PEGASUS system before you request a bank letter). The bank letter is available from your PEGASUS account from the start date of your course.
- Be patient! There will be thousands of other home and international students trying to open bank accounts at the same time so the processing of new accounts takes slightly longer at the start of each semester.
Married Students and Students with Children

International students coming to the UK to study a postgraduate course lasting 12 months or more; or a new Government Exchange student studying for 6 months or more can bring their spouse and children under the age of 18 with them as their dependants. However, if you plan to bring your spouse/ family with you, please bear in mind that the cost of living will increase accordingly. You should think carefully whether bringing your family with you to the UK is the best option, or whether they should remain at home. It will not be possible for two or more people to live on a budget for only one.

In order to get visas for your dependants, you will have to show that you have sufficient funds for yourself (£1015 per month) and each dependant (£680 per month) to live on and that you have either a) arranged suitable accommodation or b) have sufficient money to pay the rent of appropriate accommodation which you will arrange for you and your family once you get to the UK. We would not advise you to enter into a contract with a private sector landlord without first having seen the accommodation he/she is offering you.

Finding accommodation for you and your family may take some time therefore you should be prepared to have to search for suitable accommodation once you arrive in Glasgow. It is strongly recommended that you come to the UK on your own in the first instance to find accommodation which most suits your needs then bring your family over. The University has only very limited accommodation which is suitable for families and demand is very high. Information on private accommodation is available from the Accommodation Office.

As well as the cost of suitable family accommodation, you should give careful consideration to other factors such as very limited and expensive childcare facilities when deciding whether or not to bring your family to Glasgow.

NOTE: If you have a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa, your dependant partner will be permitted to work full time whilst you study in the UK. However finding suitable employment may be difficult. Your partner may also have to consider their language skills when looking for employment. You and your family cannot rely on earnings from employment here in the UK to finance your stay in the UK. You are not entitled to claim any state benefits.

Schools

It is compulsory for children between the ages of 5 and 16 years to attend school. Your child will be accepted into a local state school at no charge. The best way for caring for children under the age of 5 is for you and your spouse to organise your study and free time to ensure that you personally meet the needs of your children. Childcare for children under 5 is extremely expensive and places are very limited. Expect to pay upwards of £920 per month for full time childcare for pre-school aged children. Information on schools can be found at https://www.strath.ac.uk/sees/infoint/ifg/.

International Family Group

Relocating to the UK and starting a new life in Glasgow with your family can be a daunting experience. Our International Families Group is here to support you and your family during your time in Scotland. We organise activities and trips for you and your spouse/partner and children to take part in throughout the year.

Keep up to date with important information and activities by joining our mailing list.

Please see http://www.strath.ac.uk/sees/infoint/ifg/ for more details.

1 http://www.which.co.uk/reviews/childcare/article/childcare-in-the-uk/how-much-does-childcare-cost
What to bring

Check what is included in your accommodation, most things will either be provided or will be easy to purchase when you are here, but if you can’t live without your favourite pillow, bring it with you. You will be able to buy books and supplies for your studies here; however you might want to bring your laptop with you. If you do, be sure to arrange insurance (either from home or when you get here).

Don’t forget to bring some photographs of your friends and family and other mementos from home. However, do not attempt to bring any plants or foodstuffs into the UK.

Clothes/Climade

The UK may be much colder/wetter/milder than your home country; therefore you will need suitable clothing, particularly good waterproof shoes and a warm winter coat. The Scottish are well known for talking about the weather, and it’s for good reason – Scottish weather is very unpredictable and Glasgow’s weather is no exception. In Glasgow we joke that we can experience four seasons all in one day! On the whole, we do not experience extremes of weather: summers are warm, but not hot with temperatures around 15° - 20°C and winters are cold and frosty with temperatures around 0°C. Spring and autumn are generally quite mild. The west coast of Scotland can get a lot of rain, so a waterproof jacket and shoes are a must. Generally several light layers of clothes are better for staying warm than one thick sweater. Glasgow has a huge selection of shops, so suitable clothes can be found to meet any taste or budget.

Culture shock

While usually temporary, culture shock is common among international students arriving in the UK. You will notice differences between the way things are done and what you are used to at home. These include the way people dress, speak and behave, teaching and learning styles, food - potentially all aspects of life.

See more at www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Preparation-and-Arrival/Facing-culture-shock

Further information

This document should be read in conjunction with our online resources at www.strath.ac.uk/studywithus/strathlife and www.strath.ac.uk/sees/inpoint

Connect

We have included below a list of Facebook Groups that you may wish to join to connect with other new students, University Services and Societies.

Strathclyde International Society
International Student Support Team
University of Strathclyde Students’ Association (USSA)
University of Strathclyde
Accommodation Office
Looking forward to meeting you!