



International Students

Welcome

2017/2018

A pre-arrival guide for all
international students

Contents

03 Before you arrive

- 05 Introduction
- 06 Planning ahead
- 09 Arrangements for students under 18 years of age
- 10 Money matters
- 11 Immigration and visas
- 15 Working in the UK
- 16 Preparing to leave home – a checklist

17 Your journey to Canterbury Christ Church University

20 After your arrival

- 21 Life at Canterbury Christ Church University
- 24 Life in the UK
- 29 Essential things to do – a checklist

30 An A-Z of life at Canterbury Christ Church University

33 Useful websites



Zia Ur Rehman
MSc in Interprofessional Health and Social Care

Before you arrive



Izumi Hara
General English Language Course

Introduction



Congratulations on receiving your offer of a place at Canterbury Christ Church University. We are delighted that you will be joining us.

Canterbury Christ Church University welcomes international students from across the world. Within our community we have students from over 80 countries, giving you ample opportunity to meet new people, some of whom may well become life-long friends. Our University is well known for its friendliness.

The University is located in an outstandingly beautiful, safe and friendly region and we encourage you to make the most of our links with the local community through participation in Students' Union clubs and societies, sport, music and voluntary work. Life here is exciting and academically rewarding. You will acquire the skills and knowledge needed for future success as well as treasured memories of your time with us.

Remember that if you have any concerns, no matter how small or simple they seem, you can speak with our dedicated Student Support and Wellbeing Advisers or seek help from the many other specialist support services available, all of which are described in this guide.

On behalf of everyone at Canterbury Christ Church University, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you a safe journey and to say how much we look forward to welcoming you in the very near future.

Professor Rama Thirunamachandran,
Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Introduction

A welcome from the International Partnerships and Development Office at Canterbury Christ Church University

Located in the heart of Canterbury, and with vibrant campuses in Medway and Broadstairs, Canterbury Christ Church University offers a dynamic and inspirational place to study.

This guide aims to answer some of the most common questions asked by international students on topics ranging from immigration, housing and healthcare to social life and travel in the UK. It is also an introduction to some of the invaluable support services the University provides.

You should read this guide before travelling and also refer to it when you arrive in the UK as it is a useful point of reference and contains information which will help you find your way around.

It contains information relevant to all international students, including Erasmus students and those on short courses. However if you have further queries or a question that is not covered in this guide, you are welcome to contact the International Partnerships and Development Office directly.



The i-zone is a single, easy access information service for students. If needed, it can direct you to specialist support from the International Partnerships and Development Office.

Tel: +44 (0)1227 782222

Email: i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk

Web: www.canterbury.ac.uk/international-student-advice

Visit: Augustine House, Canterbury Campus

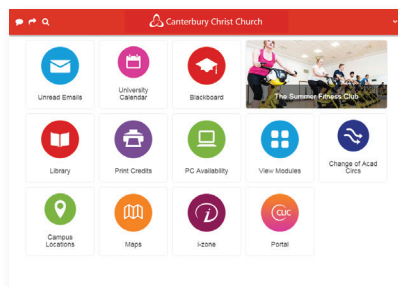
Planning ahead

How should I stay in touch?

It is very important that you stay in touch with the University and follow the instructions set out in your offer letter and/or letters from your academic department. If you have any academic-related questions, contact your academic department directly via the [Programme Administrator](#). The [i-zone](#) will be pleased to answer any questions that you may have regarding admission to the University.

[Portal](#) is the University's platform for presenting personalised and timely information to students over the web.

New students use [Portal](#) to engage with the University and complete registration for their course. Students also use [Portal](#) to obtain their Smartcard which enables them to activate their computing account, make use of the library, and other additional applications and services.



A Student Smartcard will allow you to:

- Buy food and drinks at the Campus cafes
- Borrow books from the library
- Enter Augustine House
- Access printers/copiers/scanners in Augustine House
- Get discounts on purchases in various shops

Where can I find the term dates?

These can be found on the [University](#) web pages.

I have an unconditional offer - what happens next?

As soon as you have an unconditional offer, you can begin to organise your accommodation.



Students from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland:

When your offer becomes unconditional, the University will send you a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (approximately 3 months prior to the start of your course) which you will need if you require a visa to study in the UK.

Where will I live?

The [Accommodation Office](#) is located in Rochester House on the Canterbury campus and deals with University accommodation-related allocations and queries. All single international students are guaranteed accommodation in their first year of study providing they apply before the published deadline of 31 July. Failure to meet this deadline may mean that you arrive in the UK with nowhere to live.

■ *Homestay Accommodation*

[Homestay](#) is where you live in the home of a host family and is one of the most popular types of accommodation for international students enrolled on English Language and other short courses at Canterbury Christ Church University. However, it is currently available only for students studying in Canterbury.

■ *University Accommodation*

SINGLE OCCUPANCY

We offer single occupancy accommodation to students who are here for a long term study period. The University offers various types of student residences located on or near to each campus. You may find yourself sharing a house or flat with students from a variety of backgrounds. Some rooms are en-suite (private toilet and shower) and the University can also offer some single sex accommodation. All University accommodation is self-catered meaning that you must either cook for yourself or purchase food in one of the catering outlets on campus. Once your accommodation is confirmed, and shortly before arrival, the Accommodation Office will email you details of their "E-Intro" which is an online introduction to living in University accommodation and the items you should bring with you.

FAMILY ACCOMMODATION

We cannot guarantee accommodation for couples, their families or single parent families. We do have modern 3 bed houses available in Dover Street, Canterbury at £2000 a month, but most families find that they can find cheaper accommodation in the private sector.

Home and International students with young dependants are strongly recommended to first arrive in Canterbury or Medway on their own to find suitable accommodation, before bringing their family to the area/ UK to join them. Please bear in mind that this can be difficult to arrange and could often take weeks rather than days to organise. We strongly encourage you to view all private accommodation before committing to a property.

■ *Private rental sector*

Canterbury and the surrounding areas have an abundance of privately let accommodation that you can rent by yourself or with other students. Accommodation Office staff are unable to find private rented accommodation on your behalf however may be able to offer tips and general guidance when it comes to house-hunting. It is unlikely that you will be able to arrange accommodation in the private rental sector from abroad; you will need to consider arranging temporary accommodation in a local Bed & Breakfast (B&B) or hotel for your first few days in the UK.



Remember: if you rent privately it is likely that you will have to enter into a contract for at least 6 months. Tenancy Agreements are legally binding documents and so if you have any questions, you should always seek advice before signing one. Contact a [Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser](#) who can refer you for specialist help if required.



Remember: that landlords will check your immigration status and often require tenants to have a UK-based guarantor. If you do not, you may be expected to pay a significant proportion of your rent in advance.



Remember: If you are privately renting your landlord will need to carry out a right to rent check. This means you may have to provide proof of your right to rent in the UK, showing your passport or visa. You may have to do this by skype before you arrive and when you get here. For more information click here http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/private_renting/problems_with_renting/right_to_rent_immigration_checks

Do I need medical insurance?

It is essential to take out medical insurance before leaving your home country. In an emergency, some treatment may be available to you however most will be extremely costly. [Endsleigh](#) offers a good insurance package.



Students from the EEA/Switzerland, or countries with a bilateral healthcare agreement with the UK, are entitled to NHS treatment. EEA nationals must apply for a [European Health Insurance Card](#) before leaving home.



Remember: it is mandatory for Croatian Students to have private comprehensive health insurance or a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) if you are applying for a [Yellow Certificate](#). This policy must be fully comprehensive for the duration of your studies.

My course lasts more than 6 months:

You might be required to pay the [Health Care Surcharge](#). This will need to be done before you apply for your Tier 4 Visa. This will give you access to NHS treatment. EEA nationals only need to pay for the European Health Insurance Card.



Students from outside the EEA/Switzerland: The immigration health surcharge ensures that temporary, non-EEA migrants coming to the UK for more than 6 months contribute to the NHS in line with their immigration status. The health surcharge is payable in full at the time of the immigration application.

Can I send belongings in advance?

You can have things sent by sea or air. Be sure to pack everything well and insure it against damages. Address all packages to yourself at your UK address and make sure that it will arrive after you do.

You will be asked to fill in customs forms, making it clear what is contained within any packages. State that your belongings are **“personal effects, part of my temporary move to the UK as an international student”**. Customs officials may inspect your belongings but they are less likely to do so if you have given a clear list of the contents.



Remember: the University cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to your belongings.

Arrangements for students under 18 years of age

Arrangements for students under 18 years of age

Canterbury Christ Church University requires that you have the permission of your parent(s)/guardian(s) to attend a programme if, at the time of registration, you will be under the age of 18. The University's guidelines on under 18-year-old students are available upon request. Please contact the [Admissions Department](#) for further details.

If you are under the age of 18 and your parent(s)/guardian(s) are unable to accompany you to the campus, the University will put in place arrangements for you to be met at the port of entry and escorted to the campus. Your parent(s)/guardian(s) will be advised of these arrangements, as well as all associated costs, and their consent sought.

Your offer letter will detail the extent of the responsibility the University has with regards those students under the age of 18 and will confirm whether a UK-based guardian must be appointed.

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) guidance states that all students under the age of 18 should carry the following information in their hand luggage when travelling:

- a signed letter from their parent(s)/guardian(s) giving permission to travel
- the name of the person with whom they are staying (homestay or University accommodation)
- an unconditional offer letter or Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies from the University
- the name of the Vice-Chancellor and the Head of the International Office
- your travel arrangements from the port of entry to the University

Unaccompanied children entering the UK will be given an emergency contact number by the University which they should call if any problems are experienced at immigration control.

The University's responsibilities (as detailed in the Under 18s policy) end once you reach your 18th birthday.

Money matters

Who decides my fee status?

The University decides your fee status based on the evidence you supply. To qualify for "Home Fees", you must satisfy strict nationality and residency criteria, as stated by the education departments of the UK Government. For further information, please visit the [UKCISA](#) web pages.

The University offers a reduction against its usual "International Fee" rate to those serving and retired British Armed Forces personnel (ie Ghurkas) residing in the UK, and to their spouses and children. This reduced fee rate is in line with that of "Home Fees". To qualify for a reduction, an application must be made to the Admissions Department.

If you have a question concerning your fee status, you must contact the [International Admissions Team](#) immediately. If you think an error has occurred and that you have been assessed incorrectly, it is essential to resolve the problem prior to your arrival.

Do I need to pay a deposit?

All payment details will be contained within your offer letter. This is sent by the Admissions Department.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

If you require a student visa under Tier 4 in order to study in the UK, you will be asked to pay a deposit of 50% of your tuition fees before your offer becomes unconditional.

The [University](#) web pages contain details of our refund policy.

How will I pay my fees and fund my studies?

The education departments of the UK Government decide which courses attract government funding and who can be given a loan for tuition fees and/or living costs.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

For an explanation of the conditions you need to meet in order to be eligible for funding, please visit the [UKCISA](#) web pages. If you are eligible for funding, you should apply to the [Student Finance Services European Team](#). You should apply before the relevant deadline. Remember that you'll need to make an application for each year of your course. If you have a question about the funding application process, contact a Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

If you require a student visa under Tier 4 in order to study in the UK, you will be expected to show the immigration authorities that you can pay for your tuition fees and living expenses for the duration of your studies (and those of any family members accompanying you) without having to work in the UK and without claiming welfare benefits.

Will Canterbury Christ Church University offer me a scholarship?

Scholarships are available for international students who meet the eligibility criteria. Please visit our [international funding page](#) for further information.

Immigration and visas

Do I need a student visa (entry clearance) in order to study in the UK?

It is strongly recommended that everyone uses the [UKVI self-assessment tool](#) to check this for themselves. Arranging your immigration affairs is your responsibility however you are encouraged to contact the [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) for help and guidance if you have any queries about the application process.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals:

You are entitled to enter the UK freely and do not need to obtain a visa. However, you may still be asked to show evidence that you have been accepted onto a course of study and you will need your passport.

The remainder of this section does not apply to you if you are a national from the EEA and/or Switzerland. Please proceed to the section entitled: [Working in the UK](#).



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

It is compulsory for everyone (even those who are not [visa nationals](#)) to obtain entry clearance before travelling to the UK if wishing to enter as a student under Tier 4.

If you already hold a UK visa for a different immigration category, you should check the [UKVI](#) website to see if your visa permits you to study.

Do I need a student visa (entry clearance) even if my course lasts 6 months or less?

If you are coming to the UK to study for a maximum of 6 months, you may qualify to enter as a 'short term student'.

If this is the case and you are **not** a [visa national](#), you will not need to obtain a visa/entry clearance in advance of travelling; you can apply for permission to enter the UK at the port of entry.

If you are a [visa national](#), you will have to obtain a visa/entry clearance in advance of travelling if wishing to enter the UK as a 'short term student'.

Are there special arrangements for people studying General English only?

If you are studying General English **only**, you can apply to enter the UK as a 'short term student' for a period of up to 11 months. If this is the case you must apply for a visa/entry clearance before travelling, regardless of your nationality.

What are the disadvantages of studying a short course as a 'short term student'?

- You will not be permitted to undertake any work or work placement (even if it is part of a course, or is unpaid)
- You will not be allowed to extend this visa



Remember: you should only enter the UK as a 'short term student' if you are absolutely certain you will not want to work in the UK and you will not want to extend your stay.

Further details about this immigration category can be obtained from the [UKVI](#) website.

My course lasts six months or more – what does this mean?

If you are coming to the UK to study a course that lasts longer than 6 months, you will be required to obtain a visa/entry clearance as a student under Tier 4 of the Points Based System. You must do so even if you are not a [visa national](#).

If you want to make a successful visa/entry clearance application, it is extremely important that:

- before you make your application, you read and understand the [UKVI Tier 4 policy guidance](#)
- you check that you meet all the requirements before applying
- you provide evidence in exactly the format required by the UKVI
- you complete all sections of the online form fully and accurately
- you allow plenty of time to make your application

To obtain enough points you must:

- be in possession of a valid Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) (30 points)
- meet the maintenance requirements (10 points)
- be able to satisfy the immigration rules that relate to students

The University will email you your CAS no more than 6 months prior to the start of your course and only when you have met the conditions of your offer. The CAS is a unique reference number and is accompanied by a CAS Statement. You will not have to submit the CAS Statement itself however you will need the information contained within to help you with your application form.

In order to obtain a student visa under Tier 4, you must apply [online](#). The International Office will be able to provide guidance on this, but it is important to note that you are only able to apply for your visa up to three months before your course start date.

Contact the [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) if you require any help or guidance completing the online application form or if you wish to clarify which supporting documents you need to submit.

Remember: it is important that you keep screenshots of the completed forms and all your supporting documents.

Remember: if you are asked to attend a credibility interview, you must do so. An interview might be conducted by video conferencing or by telephone and is designed to test your English language ability and that you are a genuine student.

Remember: as part of the Tier 4 (General) application, you are required to provide your biometrics (your facial photograph and fingerprints). In addition, students from some countries are required to provide a medical certificate confirming that they are clear of [Tuberculosis](#).

How much money will I need available?

If you are on a course of less than one year you will need to show you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees for one year, plus £1,015 for each month you are in the UK, up to a maximum of nine months. If your course is longer than one year you will need to show evidence that you have the money to cover your first year's fees, plus £9,135 living costs for your first year. You should check the [UKVI](#) website for more detailed information on which documents are acceptable as evidence you meet the requirements.

Which supporting documents do I need to gather?

- Online Application form*
- Application fee*
- Passport*
- Passport photos*
- CAS*
- Documents used to obtain your offer including evidence of English language ability if required (as indicated on your CAS Statement)*
- Financial documents*
- ATAS certificate (if applicable)*
- TB Certificate (if applicable)*

What does the Points Based System mean for me?

Under Tier 4 of the UK's Points Based System, student visas are issued in relation to a specific university. Your university is known as your Sponsor. If your visa is granted for a period of 6 months or more, you will be given a 30 day visa to travel to the UK. You must arrange to enter the UK within this 30 day period. NB: The earliest date that you can travel to the UK is 1 month before the start of your course.

Along with your 30 day visa in your passport, you will also receive a written notification (or decision letter) informing you of where you should collect your full visa in the UK which will be in the form of a biometric residence permit (BRP). You must carry this letter with you when you enter the UK as you will need the letter to collect your BRP. You will also require this letter if you need to obtain temporary registration at the University.

Your BRP will contain your Tier 4 immigration permission (visa) and the conditions attached to it. You must keep this safe at all times.

The University is required to inform the UK government if a student:

- fails to enrol on their course
- stops attending their course
- is absent without consent
- withdraws from the course or defers their studies
- changes their course
- finishes their course earlier than expected
- breaches the conditions of their visa

If you know you are going to be late and will miss enrolment, you must contact the University to see if it is possible to make alternative arrangements.

Further information about Canterbury Christ Church University's role as a Sponsor can be found on the [University](#) web pages.

Can my family members come with me?

Your dependants can accompany you to the UK if:

- you are studying at postgraduate level on a course lasting at least 12 months
- you are a government-sponsored student on a course lasting at least 6 months

Dependants in this instance are strictly defined by the immigration rules. Consider where you are going to live, including the proximity to schools and other family-focused services.

What happens if my visa is refused?

There is no full right of appeal. Instead, you can ask for an Administrative Review of the decision to refuse your application. This process is free. You have to make your request for an Administrative Review within 28 days of the date you receive the refusal notice. The process is explained in [Annex 4 of the Policy Guidance](#).

An Administrative Review will consider if the decision was correct based on the evidence you submitted with your forms; they do not usually result in a change in decision because in most cases you are not allowed to produce new or different documents. If you forgot to include certain documents with your application, or if you made any other error, it is likely that you will need to make a fresh application for a visa/entry clearance.

If your visa is refused and you decide to withdraw from the course, it may be possible to arrange a refund of any deposit monies paid by contacting the [Admissions Department](#). Remember though, that you will be liable for any bank charges in relation to the transfer.



Remember:

ALL immigration related queries must be directed to the [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) who will help you understand the rules and requirements.

Working in the UK

Will I be able to work in the UK?



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

All EEA and Swiss national students can work in the UK. However, strict rules apply in relation to certain nationalities.

If you are national of Croatia, you may need to apply for a Yellow Certificate to be able to work in the UK. All information to obtain a Yellow Certificate can be found [here](#).



Remember: Croatian Nationals will not be issued a Yellow Certificate unless the required documents are submitted. You can apply for a Yellow Certificate in person by booking an appointment at the UKVI offices in Croydon. This is a same day service. (You must allow at least 3 months, and possibly up to 12 months, for postal applications to be assessed.)



Remember: it is mandatory for Croatian Students to have private comprehensive health insurance or a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) if you are applying for a [Yellow Certificate](#). This policy must be fully comprehensive for the duration of your studies.



Remember: you should not come to the UK for the purpose of study if you cannot afford to support yourself without the benefit of paid employment.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

Firstly, check the wording on your Tier 4 (Student) visa/entry clearance to ensure it is correct.

You can work for up to 10 hours a week in term-time and full-time in the holidays if:

- you are applying in order to study a course which is below degree level

You can work for up to 20 hours a week in term-time and full time in the holidays if:

- you are studying a course at degree level or above

If your visa/entry clearance says “no work”, you must not work in the UK. Doing so would be a criminal offence.



Remember: you will not be permitted to work at all if you have a ‘short term student’ visa.

Preparing to leave home – a checklist

Before I leave home I must

- Obtain a visa (if applicable) and ensure that all of the details stamped on it are correct*
- Be sure that I have a current passport and that the key pages are photocopied*
- Collect any documents needed to obtain my Yellow Certificate Work Permit (Croatian nationals)*
- Buy adequate travel and medical insurance*
- Apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EEA/Swiss nationals)*
- Arrange my accommodation*
- Pack spare passport photos*
- Pack my academic qualifications and obtain a certified translation if necessary (The British Mission in your home country will be able to advise you on how to organise this)*



Your journey to Canterbury Christ Church University

Things to carry in my hand luggage

- ✓ Valid passport or travel documents with UK Visa and decision letter (if applicable)
- ✓ Chest x-ray for Tuberculosis if required for your visa
- ✓ Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) (if applicable)
- ✓ Evidence of financial support
- ✓ UK Address details
- ✓ Relevant medical records
- ✓ Enough money to cover your travel to Canterbury (including some coins)

What will happen at immigration control?

You will need to pass through Immigration Control before collecting your luggage. There are usually two main queues: one for European Economic Area and Swiss nationals, and one for everyone else. Please make sure you join the correct queue. An Immigration Officer will look at your passport and check your visa.



Remember: you should be sure to have your documents relating to your studies at Canterbury Christ Church University and finances in your hand baggage.

You may be questioned by an Immigration Officer who will want to be satisfied that you are pursuing your studies as a genuine full-time student, that you have sufficient funds to support yourself for the duration of your studies and that it is your intention to leave the UK at the end of your studies.

Before leaving Immigration Control, check that the Immigration Officer has either date-stamped your visa or, if you are a non-visa national coming for a course of less than 6 months, check that you have been stamped in as a 'short term student'.

What if there is a problem?

So long as your documents are in order, you should pass through immigration smoothly. If, however, you need any help for any reason, ask the Immigration Officer to telephone the International Partnerships and Development Office at Canterbury Christ Church University (+44 (0)1227 782940) during office hours.

What if my luggage is delayed?

Go to the helpdesk or luggage enquiries desk and explain that your luggage has not arrived. You will need to give your new UK address so that your luggage can be delivered.

How do I get to Canterbury Christ Church University?

Maps and travel guidance to each of our campuses can be found on the [University](#) web pages. You are advised to look here and plan your journey before arriving in the UK.

By road

Canterbury has excellent road links with the M20 (M25/M26) and M2 motorways providing easy links to London and its airports. The A2 and A260 connect Canterbury with the port of Dover and the Eurotunnel terminal in Cheriton near Folkestone.

By rail

Canterbury has two mainline railways stations, East and West and is served by frequent trains to and from London Charing Cross, London Victoria (approximately 90 minutes) and elsewhere in Kent. Passengers getting off at Eurostar at Ashford International will find that Canterbury is just a 20-minute rail journey.

By bus

National Express runs a service between Dover, Canterbury and London Victoria at broadly hourly frequencies. Journey time is typically around two hours to/from Canterbury.



Remember: Licensed taxis and mini cabs are a relatively expensive way to travel in the UK. However, sometimes they can be useful if there is a small group of you travelling. Always plan and book your taxis in advance and be sure to ask the driver for the approximate cost of the trip before you start your journey.

For information telling you where to report upon arrival, please refer to either [Portal](#) or your offer letter.

After your arrival



Margarita Atlasova
MSc Business and Management

Life at Canterbury Christ Church University

Support available to our students

There will be lots happening during your first few weeks in the UK and it is not uncommon for students to feel overwhelmed at times. Remember that Canterbury Christ Church University offers a great deal of support to international students – there are plenty of people to turn to if you have a problem, large or small:



- The i-zone

The i-zone is the first point of contact for students for any matter of concern not directly related to their course. The i-zone is the link between students and specialist services provided by the University to support students. You can [contact the i-zone](#) in a number of ways.

- Student Support and Wellbeing Advisers

Student Support and Wellbeing Advisers can assist you if you have any problems with settling into life in the UK. The service offered may range from practical advice on any aspect of living in the UK to helping with your welfare queries.

- International Office

The International Office provides advice regarding immigration and visa issues, overseas qualifications and matters relating to the Erasmus+ exchange scheme.

- Chaplaincy

The University Chaplaincy team is just one dimension of the church foundation upon which the institution was built. The University currently employs three full-time Anglican Chaplains who are responsible for the pastoral and spiritual needs of all staff and students irrespective of their individual creeds or beliefs. The service offered by the Chaplains is unique; confidential where necessary and is available to all. The Chaplaincy seeks to meet people where they are and offer them the support they need.

- Disability and Dyslexia Advisers

This service supports students who are disabled due to a physical or mental impairment, or medical condition, that may affect their ability to study. This includes invisible disabilities such as dyslexia, as well as those that are visible, such as a mobility difficulty. Please let us know as soon as possible, and before you arrive in the UK, if you have a disability or any additional needs for which you require support or special arrangements.

- Counsellors and Mental Health Advisers

The University offers all students a free, confidential Counselling Service, staffed by professional and experienced counsellors. Our Student Mental Health Advisers can offer confidential advice and support to students who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

- Academic Learning Development

Academic Learning Development runs a series of workshops and 1-to-1 support for students. You can get advice on how to further develop your academic skills and they provide other resources.

- The CORE

Employability and Careers Advisers can offer job hunting advice as well as a CV checking service. Workshops specifically for international students are regularly available.

- English Language Support

Free Academic English support classes are offered to students by the [Academic English Service](#).



Remember: the University has a 24 hour telephone number that you can call for out of hours support: 01227 767700



Remember: to call the police, ambulance service or fire brigade in an emergency dial 999. The call is free of charge from any UK phone but must only be used in an emergency

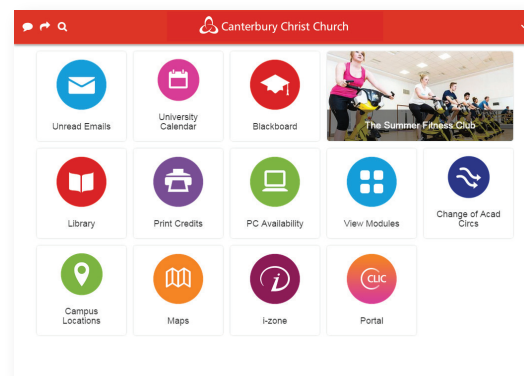
Welcome Week

The Welcome Week is open to all students. It is a free event and the programme includes several sessions to help you settle in. This is a great opportunity for you to meet other new students. Details of this year's Welcome will be available soon.

Please note that this event takes place at the Canterbury campus. For details of events at Broadstairs and Medway, please contact the [i-zone](#).

What is Portal?

[Portal](#) is a student 'portal' presenting personalised information to students over the web. New students are directed to [Portal](#) to engage with the University, register and obtain their Smartcard, activate their library and computing facilities and to gain access to additional applications and services as the admissions process progresses.



When am I officially registered?

Details of your registration and enrolment can be viewed via [Portal](#)

When will my studies begin?

Details of your timetable will be made available through [Portal](#)

How do I obtain my Student Smartcard?

A Student Smartcard will allow you to:

- Buy food and drinks at the Campus cafes
- Borrow books from the library
- Enter Augustine House
- Access printers/copiers/scanners in Augustine House
- Get discounts on purchases in various shops

By following the instructions on [Portal](#), your Student Smartcard will be ready for collection soon after you arrive at Canterbury Christ Church University.

What is Blackboard?

[Blackboard](#) is a web-based virtual learning environment that complements and builds upon traditional learning methods used at Canterbury Christ Church University.

How can I get involved?

Canterbury Christ Church University is a very friendly community of students. We welcome people of all ages from the UK, Europe and overseas. There are plenty of opportunities for you to get involved and integrate with British students. The follow examples offer fantastic opportunities in the local community.

- Become involved in the [Students' Union](#) by joining a club or society during Freshers' Week
- Join one of the University [choirs or orchestras](#)
- Become a [volunteer](#)

Can the University cater for my religious needs?

As a University inspired by its own faith foundation, Canterbury Christ Church University takes the religious needs of its staff and students seriously. Whilst Anglican in flavour, the [Chaplaincy](#) reflects both the University's history and its current cultural makeup.

The Chaplaincy strives to offer support to all members of the University irrespective of their religious affiliations and philosophies. No matter who you are, where you come from, or what you believe, the Chaplaincy is there for you and can offer support throughout your time here - whether via one to ones or simply by putting you in contact with other people from the same faith community.

The University currently offers a quiet room on all of its five campuses. There is a Christian Chapel at the heart of the Canterbury campus along with a Buddhist prayer room and brand new "male" and "female" Muslim prayer rooms. In addition, there is also the Chaplaincy Centre that has both a common room and a meditation room for people to use.

The Chaplaincy is supported in its work by the good will of local faith communities and by a panel of "faith advisors". These faith advisors represent a broad cross section of faith and are currently being established as a source of information and support.

How does the University promote equality?

Equality and diversity are central to the University's ethos and underpin all that we do. As a student here you will be an important and valued member of our community. The University does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind and is proud of its welcoming and inclusive environment.

Life in the UK

What is the cost of living in the UK?

The [British Council](#) publications give a general guide to the cost of living in the UK. These should be read before you leave home, along with our cost of living calculator.

If you are leaving home for the first time, and particularly coming from abroad, it can be difficult to know how much money you are going to need to allocate for living expenses. To give some indication of what to expect, this rough guide will give you a general idea.

Rent	£360.00 - £700.00
Food	£150.00
Clothing	£35.00
Laundry	£15.00
Day-to-day costs	£35.00
Telephone	£20.00
Travel	Variable
TOTAL	£615-£955 PER MONTH

We strongly advise against bringing large amounts of cash and recommend that you bring most of your money in Travellers' Cheques or use a Travellers' Cheque card. Keep your Travellers' Cheques in a different place to your passport.

You should carry enough money in cash to cover transport from the airport to your final destination; food; telephone calls home; and any other expenses for the first week (bus fares, stationery, social events etc). NB: If you require a Tier 4 Student Visa in order to study in the UK, there will be strict maintenance requirements stipulated by the UKVI. Please refer to www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/overview

How do I open a UK bank account?

It is possible to open a bank account if you are staying in the UK for 6 months or more. Information about choosing and opening a bank account, and the documentation you will require to do so can be found on the [UKCISA](#) web pages.

All students will require the following when opening a bank account in the UK:

- a completed application form from the bank with which you wish to open an account
- proof of identity (passport or EU National Identity Card)
- confirmation of your full-time registration at Canterbury Christ Church University (you can request a Bank Letter via [Portal](#))
- evidence of your current UK address
- evidence of your overseas address

How do I obtain a National Insurance number in order to work?

If you are employed or looking for work in the UK, you must have a [National Insurance \(NI\) number](#) (or have at least applied for one). To apply for a NI number, you will need to telephone the Jobcentre plus National Insurance allocation service helpline on 0345 600 0643. They will confirm that you need a number and arrange for you to undertake an evidence of identity interview.

How do I register with a Doctor (GP)?

The NHS (National Health Service) is the UK's state health service which provides treatment for UK residents through a wide range of health care services. Some services are free, and some you will have to pay for.


If your course of study is for 6 months or more, you will qualify for NHS treatment from the beginning of your stay. Your spouse or children with you in the UK will also be entitled to NHS treatment.

We strongly recommend that you register with a GP (Doctor) as soon as possible, even if you do not feel ill. This is to make it easier to see the Doctor when you need to, as GPs are often unable to give appointments to people not registered at their surgery.

To find your local GP, consult the [NHS website](#).

To register, you will need:

- your passport
- evidence that you are a student (for example, your enrolment letter or Student Smartcard)
- proof of your UK address (for example, accommodation contract or tenancy agreement)
- There will be members of staff at the registration event who will be able to help you register with the National Health Service

 **Remember:** only call for an ambulance if you need urgent medical assistance. Otherwise, you should see your GP.

How do I see a Dentist?

Dental treatment is not free in the UK unless you are under 19 years of age. If you are able to register with the NHS, you will pay 80 per cent of the treatment cost. Dentists and other local health services can be found via the [NHS webpages](#).

Must I pay Council Tax?

Council Tax is a charge administered and collected by local authorities to pay for public services. Full-time students are exempt from Council Tax but the property may still be liable for a bill, depending on the status of the other occupants. There can be serious consequences if you receive a bill and you ignore it. Always seek advice from a Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser and provide the Council with the information they require. Council Tax exemption certificates can be printed via [Portal](#).



REMEMBER: you may be liable for Council Tax during the intervening period between courses



REMEMBER: to contact a [Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser](#) if you hold a Tier 4 student visa and your dependant has received a bill.

Can I drive in the UK?

This will depend on where your licence was issued. You might be able to drive using your current licence for up to 12 months and then take a driving test. Alternatively, you might be able to exchange your licence for a British licence or apply for a provisional licence and then take the test. The [UKCISA](#) web pages contain very useful information about this as well as important matters such as insurance.

Must I register with the Police?

If the words:

“The holder is required to register at once with the Police” are stamped on your visa/BRP, you **MUST** do so **within 7 days**. Failure to register is a criminal offence and could result in a fine or your removal from the UK.

The [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) will direct you to the correct Police Station. Remember that an appointment must be made in order to attend and you will need to take the following items with you:

- Passport/Travel Document
- 2 Passport Photographs
- Registration fee of £34.00
- Evidence of your student status (e.g. a Student Status Letter* or your University Offer Letter)
- Proof of your address (e.g. your tenancy agreement or lease if you are in University accommodation)

(*you can request this via [Portal](#))



REMEMBER: you **MUST** update your registration certificate if your circumstances change in future (for instance, if you change address or university). The updates must be made within 7 days.

What is there to do in Kent?

Known as the Garden of England, Kent is home to many famous tourist attractions. The [Visit Kent](#) web pages will give you an idea. Whether you are interested in visiting the sea, castles, cathedrals, the zoo, places of outstanding natural beauty or the shops, you will never be bored. Sport fans can go to a football match or a game of cricket whilst those who prefer “high culture” can visit the theatre, galleries and museums. All students are encouraged to download the “My Canterbury” app for local offers.

Can I visit another country during my holidays?

Yes, providing you satisfy the immigration rules of the country you wish to visit. This may mean applying for a visa. You should always consult with the Embassy/Consulate of the country you wish to visit before making your travel arrangements. For a list of foreign embassies in the UK, visit the [UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office](#) web pages.

Non-EEA/Swiss national students wishing to visit another European country may be able to do so by applying for a [Schengen Visa](#). This can enable you to visit all of the countries within the Schengen area, rather than obtaining a visa for each of the participating countries. Any student wishing to apply for a Schengen Visa should contact a [Student Support and Wellbeing Adviser](#) for guidance approximately 6 months before wishing to travel. This is because the application procedure can be time consuming.

Is it easy to cycle in Kent?

Yes! The University has a Bicycle User Group which acts as an information resource for students who cycle. Visit the [Sustainability](#) web pages for details.

Can my family and friends visit me in the UK?

Yes, providing they satisfy the UK immigration rules. If your family member or friend is a non-EEA/Swiss national and is a visa national, they will have to seek entry clearance to the UK as a ‘visitor’.

Canterbury Christ Church University is unable to issue letters of invitation. However, your family member or friend will have to supply evidence explaining their purpose for travelling to the UK. If you require a letter confirming your student status or details of your graduation ceremony, contact the [i-zone](#).

How do I extend my Tier 4 student visa in future?

It is essential to seek advice before making an extension application. When making an application, it is extremely important that:

- before you make your application, you read and understand the UKVI policy guidance, which can be found at the [UKVI website](#)
- you check that you can meet all the requirements before you apply
- you provide evidence in exactly the format required by the UKVI, as explained in the policy guidance and on the application form
- you complete all sections of the online form fully and accurately
- you allow plenty of time to make your application and to start gathering documents
- you seek advice as early as possible if you think you are going to have any difficulties meeting the immigration requirements of Tier 4

If you do not fully meet all the requirements, or if you provide evidence which is not as the UKVI expects, it is very likely that your application will be refused.

If your permission to be in the UK has already expired, you must seek advice immediately from the [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) before you make an application.

The International Partnerships and Development office can offer advice on the following:

- Tier 4 applications
- the points required in order to make a successful application
- application fees
- passport, BRP and photo issues

- the Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies
- maintenance funds
- applying when funded by a scholarship
- applications for dependants
- in-person/premium applications at the UKVI Public Enquiry Office
- change of circumstances
- what to do if your application for Tier 4 is refused

Further guidance on completing a Tier 4 (General) Student application form can be found on the [UKCISA website](#). **You are strongly advised to read this before contacting** the International Development and Partnerships Office.

Can I work in the UK after my studies?

Depending on your nationality and whether you satisfy the UK Immigration Rules, there may be an opportunity for you to work in the UK after your studies. The [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) are able to advise you of your options.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

All EEA and Swiss national students can work in the UK. However, strict rules apply in relation to certain nationalities.

If you are a national of Croatia, you might have to make an application for a Blue Certificate as a highly skilled individual. All the information to obtain a Blue Certificate can be found [here](#).



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

Depending on your circumstances, you may be eligible to work in the UK. Please note that the immigration rules are currently subject to a great deal of change. The International Partnerships and Development Office will be able to provide you with further information.

How can I plan an international career?

The Careers Group (University of London) has launched [International Futures](#) - a site dedicated to international students considering employment in the UK, their home country or overseas.

Essential things to do – a checklist

I must

- ✓ Collect my BRP (if required to do so)
- ✓ Register as a student of Canterbury Christ Church University
- ✓ Collect my student Smartcard
- ✓ Update my personal details on [Portal](#)
- ✓ Attend my departmental welcome
- ✓ Meet my Personal Tutor
- ✓ Attend the Welcome Week sessions
- ✓ Pay any tuition and accommodation fees due
- ✓ Arrange for school age children to attend a local school
- ✓ Register with the local GP (doctor)
- ✓ Register with the Police if required to do so (check visa)
- ✓ Arrange to meet the Disability Adviser (if applicable)
- ✓ Make a note of my visa expiry date and, if required to do so, ensure I renew it in time
- ✓ Buy a TV licence if required
- ✓ Familiarise myself with the campus
- ✓ Familiarise myself with the local area
- ✓ Attend the Students' Union Freshers' Fair and join clubs and societies
- ✓ Open a bank account
- ✓ Become familiar with the local bus and train service
- ✓ Take out personal contents insurance for all belongings
- ✓ Download the Christ Church app

An A-Z of life at Canterbury Christ Church University



Advice: Remember that the [Student Support and Wellbeing Advisers](#) are a source of advice when facing day-to-day, practical problems.

Budgeting: Helping students prepare for the financial side of UK higher education, the [UNIAID Calculator](#) for international students is an invaluable tool. All students should use this before coming to the UK.

Council Tax: Be aware that if you are not living in halls of residence or Homestay accommodation, it is your responsibility to print your Council Tax Exemption certificate from [Portal](#) and take this to your local Council. The Student Support and Wellbeing Advisers can explain who counts as a student for Council Tax purposes and tell you about discounts and exemptions. Never ignore a Council Tax bill received.

Discounts: Remember to obtain your [NUS card](#) from the Students' Union and apply for the [International Student Identity Card](#) as soon as possible.

Exchanging Money: Rather than carrying large amounts of cash, it's safer to buy travellers cheques in GBP (Sterling) as they are insured against loss or theft. They can be cashed at airports, in high street banks and at local currency exchange stores.

Food: Famous for its orchards and farms, Kent produces many different fresh fruits and vegetables. Why not visit one of the many farmers' markets? Alternatively, supermarkets such as Sainsbury's, ASDA, TESCO and Morrisons will stock all you require for a weekly shop. Look out too for local oriental supermarkets.

Graduation: Once you have passed your course, you will be invited to a graduation ceremony, which is held to celebrate your achievement. Depending on where you have studied, this may be in either Canterbury or Rochester cathedral.

HOST UK: Canterbury Christ Church University international students are active participants in the UK's national [HOST UK](#) programme, which offers opportunities to spend a weekend with a British family anywhere in the UK.

i-zone: Should you have any queries, concerns or a need to access specialist help, including the Library, the [i-zone](#) is the key to finding solutions and resolutions. The i-zone is a single, easy access information service for students.

i-Borrow: This service is available in Augustine House and allows you to make use of a notebook computer free of charge. You can find out more about this service [here](#).

Jobs: The [CORE](#) offers job hunting advice designed specifically for international students.

Kent: England's oldest county is steeped in history and heritage and offers many [tourist attractions](#) for all to enjoy. Full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students can access Canterbury Cathedral for free. You will not need to apply for a Cathedral Precincts Pass as your student smartcard is sufficient.

London: Is only an hour away by train and many of its most popular [tourist attractions](#) are free.

Mobile Phones: Useful websites which provide information on mobile providers and services in the UK are [Carphone Warehouse](#) and [Mobiles.co.uk](#)

Queues: The British are a nation known as being obsessed with queuing. You may find that at the start of term, queues are particularly common because everyone is new and has a question. Staff at Canterbury Christ Church University will do all they can to minimise the time you spend queuing but please be patient. Queuing is polite, and “queue jumping” generally is frowned upon.

Radio: [Canterbury Student Radio \(CSR\)](#) is an exciting radio station which broadcasts across the Canterbury. Why not have a listen online?

Students’ Union: Make the most of your time at Canterbury Christ Church University by making friends and becoming involved. The [Students’ Union](#) is an organisation independent of the University, run by students for students. It has a range of sports clubs and societies with which you can engage throughout your time here.

Sport, Fitness, Health and Well-being: A range of sporting and fitness activities are on offer across the campus network. You can either compete competitively through British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) or on a more informal basis to improve athletic or sporting performance. The [Sports Centre](#) plays host to many sports and fitness opportunities and is just a few minutes walk from the North Holmes Road campus, Canterbury.

TV Licence: All students must be covered by a [TV Licence](#) to watch or record television programmes as they’re being shown on TV. This applies whether you live in halls of residence or a private shared house or if you are watching programmes that have already been broadcast via a ‘catch up’ service such as BBC iPlayer. The fine for non-payment can be up to £1,000.

Visas: Always make a note of the expiry date of your UK visa and if you think you may need to extend it, begin researching the immigration rules at least three months before your current visa ends. The [International Partnerships and Development Office](#) can help with all aspects of visa extensions.



Wireless: You can bring your own laptop onto campus and connect via the [Wireless](#) network.

X-rays: Certain nationalities will have to have a chest X-ray confirming they are free from infectious tuberculosis (TB) before applying for a UK visa. For further details, consult the [UKVI](#) website.

Zoo: A visit to [Howletts](#) or [Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks](#) is not only a fun day out but also a chance to see rare and endangered animals.

Useful websites



Georgina Petrescu

Summary of useful contacts & web links

Description

Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University	The University website
Students' Union	Students' Union
Student Support, Health & Wellbeing	Student Support, Health & Wellbeing
i-zone	Accommodation Office
International Office	International Office
i-zone	Admissions Department

Living in the UK

UKCISA	UK Council for International Student Affairs
DirectGov	Driving in the UK
DirectGov	National Insurance number
NHS Direct	UK health information
TV Licensing	TV licensing
Prepare for success	Learning activities to prepare you for study in the UK
International Futures	Planning an international career

UK Immigration

UKVI	UK Visas and Immigration
British Council	The British Council
UKCISA	UK Council for International Student Affairs

Money

Endsleigh	UK insurance
UKVI	Working in the UK
OANDA	Currency converter & exchange rates
International Students' Calculator	Budgeting in for life in the UK

Kent & beyond

Visit Kent	Tourist Information
Kent travel	Travel in Kent
Kent Messenger	Local newspaper
The Train Line	Independent train ticket retailer
National Express	UK coach information
National Rail	UK train information
Embassy World	Foreign Embassies in the UK
HM Revenue and Customs	Customs and Excise
Transport for London	London Underground
Visit Britain	British Tourist Authority
Time Out	City travel guides
Expedia	Booking for online travel
STA Travel	Booking for online travel
YHA	Youth Hostel Association

Additional Resources

HOST UK	HOSTUK
Student Discounts	Student discounts around the UK
ISIC	The International Student Identity Card
NUS	National Union of Students
Street Map	Online maps with detailed street maps of UK