Welcome to your new home
A guide for students preparing to join us at University of Surrey International Study Centre
surrey.ac.uk/isc
Welcome to your new home

Surrey is a fantastic place to live and study. This friendly and welcoming campus will be your new, exciting home away from home, a place where you will create new memories that you’ll treasure for life.

We want to help you settle into your new home quickly and easily, so that you can concentrate on your studies and start enjoying student life in Surrey. This guide provides all of the important information you need to prepare for travelling to the UK as well as living and studying at University of Surrey International Study Centre (ISC).

For up-to-date information before your arrival, visit: isc.surrey.ac.uk/apply/prearrival-information

Contact details

Address:
International Study Centre
First Floor Philip Marchant Building
University of Surrey
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 7XH
England

Telephone number:
+44 (0) 1483 689904

Emergency telephone number:
+44 (0) 7824 590698

Useful websites:
surrey.ac.uk/isc
ukcisa.org.uk
educationuk.org/global/main/living-and-studying
gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas
1 Apply for your visa

To study in the UK, most non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals require a visa. The most common study visas are Tier 4 and the Short-term student visas. Our Admissions Centre will advise and issue the relevant documents based on the type of visa you will be applying for.

**Tier 4 visa**

For a Tier 4 visa you will need a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) number which will be issued to you by our Admissions Centre. You can only apply for your Tier 4 visa once you have received your CAS number and three months or less before your course start date.

**Step 1:** Our Admissions Centre will issue a CAS preview by email usually within three months of the course start date, provided you:
1. Have met all academic, English language and other conditions in your offer letter
2. Have completed, signed and returned your Acceptance and Indemnity Form to the Admissions Centre
3. Are up-to-date with your payments as stated in your offer letter and payment plan.

**Step 2:** Carefully check all the details on the CAS preview and return the signed CAS Declaration document. Once we have received your CAS Declaration, we will issue you with your CAS statement that will include your CAS number.

**Step 3:** Before you submit your Tier 4 visa application make sure you understand and meet all the requirements to avoid a visa refusal.

Before you apply, make sure you have:
- sufficient funds in an acceptable account for 28+ days
- paid the surcharge for NHS health care treatment

As part of your visa application you may be asked to attend a visa interview either face to face, by video conference or on the telephone. You may be asked questions about the reasons for studying in the UK, why you have chosen to study at your chosen destination and why you will study your chosen course. You should know about your chosen study destination and course and how it relates to your overall career plans as well as how you intend to fund your studies in the UK. You must answer all questions truthfully and accurately.

**Short-term study visa**

For the Short-term study visa, you will be issued a visa letter that will outline all the necessary details about your course (duration, fees etc.).

As part of the application you will need to submit:
- Evidence that you can financially support yourself during your studies e.g. bank statements for the last 6 months
- Proof of the course you intend to study
- You may also need to submit additional supporting documents depending on your circumstances.

For both types of visa, depending on the country you live in, you may need to have a tuberculosis (TB) test before you apply.

Please visit: gov.uk/tb-test-visa/overview for more information
You can read the full visa guidance at: gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas
2 Book your accommodation

Did you request accommodation when you filled out your application? If so, our ISC Accommodation Team will contact you directly regarding the options available.

You might prefer to book your own accommodation, which you should secure before you depart for the UK. You will need to let us know where you will be staying, by emailing: iscaccommodation@studygroup.com

3 Book your travel

Once you receive your visa, you can book your travel. You should arrive ready for the first day of term to get a good start to your studies. If you have booked your accommodation with us, it will usually be available two days prior to the start of term.

You should book any flights home after the official end of term date, which can be found in your offer letter.

Please see page 7 for your suggested arrival airport.

About the Biometric Residence Permit

If your Tier 4 visa application is successful, you will have a 30 day entry vignette in your passport (entitling you to enter the UK within the 30 day period indicated) and a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) decision letter outlining the details of your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). See page 9 for information on how to collect this once you arrive in the UK.

4 Complete our pre-arrival form

At around one month before term starts, we will email you with a link to an online form. You will need to complete this with your travel information - so we know when to expect you - and your visa details.

If you would like us to arrange your taxi from the airport, please let us know by ticking the box on the form.

5 Ensure you are insured

In our experience, it is essential that international students have the protection of personal insurance for the duration of their time in the UK.

When you applied to the International Study Centre, you will have had the option of taking insurance cover with StudyCare. This insurance policy covers loss of personal possessions as well as providing health and medical insurance. If you have not taken this option, please make sure you have secured your own policy.

For full information on StudyCare, visit: isc.surrey.ac.uk/fees/student-insurance

If you need help and advice, your local representative or your student enrolment adviser can help you.
What to bring with you to the UK

You’ll need to pack some important items, such as your passport and visa, in your hand luggage for easy access, while other non-essential items can be packed away in your suitcase.

Things to pack in your hand luggage
- Passport and visa
- UKVI decision letter
- Your offer letter
- Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement
- IELTS certificate or other original Secure English Language Test result
- Evidence of funding for your tuition fees and living costs, including sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- Accommodation documents, including your signed tenancy agreement
- Four passport-sized photographs
- Any insurance documents
- Medical certificates including vaccination records
- Essential toiletries and medications (please check with your airline what’s permitted)
- If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian details
- Enough money to live on in the first few weeks. We advise using traveller’s cheques and not bringing large amounts of cash.

Things to pack in your suitcase
Guildford has a variety of shops so you’ll be able to buy everything you need to live comfortably. Many of the personal items you wish to bring with you, such as clothes, accessories and books can go in your suitcase.
We recommend that you bring:

- Comfortable clothing such as trainers, jeans, t-shirts, jumpers and a warm coat. The dress code at the International Study Centre is informal.
- Study supplies e.g. pens and paper notepads – these may be less expensive in your country.
- Laptop computer and charger – you can set English as the main language choice. This will help you to improve your English and assist you with everyday aspects of your life in the UK.
- Mobile phone and charger
- At least one travel adaptor plug – 240v with a three-pin plug (like the one pictured opposite).

Top Tips

Check with your airline on what you can bring in terms of size and weight for hand and checked luggage.

Calling from the UK? Once you're in the UK and calling from a UK phone, you don’t need to include the ‘+44’ just replace it with an ‘0’. For example, a number that internationally is +44 1483 689904 becomes 01483 689904.

Your accommodation may provide a bedding and catering pack. Check the accommodation section at: surrey.ac.uk/isc/accommodation

If you have booked private accommodation, you will need to check what is supplied.
Arriving in the UK

Travelling to a new country can be a little overwhelming. To make it easier for you, we’ve outlined the process below so that you know exactly what to expect when you arrive.

At Border Control

If you travel by plane your airline will give you a landing card - fill this in before you arrive at border control. It will look like the one pictured on the right.

If you are from outside the European Union (EU), when you reach border control, please enter through the Non-EU entrance. Be prepared for an immigration interview with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) staff. You must be able to answer some questions in English and have a basic conversation without the assistance of an interpreter – failure to do so may result in you being denied access to the UK, at which point you will have to return home. The UK border control can be very busy, so don’t be surprised if you have to wait in a queue.

After collecting your luggage and making your way through customs, you will reach the Arrivals Hall.

Welcome to the UK!
Top Tip

Make sure you have original, paper copies of all your documents, not in digital formats on smart phones, tablets or other electronic devices. Keep them in your hand luggage in case you need to show them at the UK border.
Getting to University of Surrey ISC from a London airport

London Heathrow or London Gatwick Airport are the closest international airports to Surrey.

By plane and pre-booked taxi transfer
If you are arriving by plane and have asked for a taxi transfer, you will be met by the taxi driver in the Arrivals Hall. The driver will be holding a sign with your name on it.

Please do not pay the taxi driver as your fare will be added to your account.
If you are heading directly to your accommodation booked with our ISC Accommodation Team, the taxi driver will take you to collect your keys – they will have been informed where you will be staying, but it is a good idea for you to have the details to hand.

Check your room confirmation for details of where and when to collect your keys, particularly if you are arriving late at night or early in the morning when residence receptions may not be open. If you are arriving when the reception is not open, check your room confirmation for out of hours key collection information.

If you are staying in private accommodation, provided you have given us the address in advance, the driver should have this information.

What if my plans change?
If you have booked a taxi transfer but your arrival date changes or you decide to arrange your own taxi transfer, you will need to let us know as soon as possible. We will require two business days’ notice to be able to change or cancel your booking.

Please email: iscaccommodation@studygroup.com

Making your own way
Guildford is the closest train station.

By train: visit nationalrail.co.uk
Top Tip

Don’t forget to email or phone your parent or guardian to let them know you have arrived.

Journey time from London Heathrow Airport to Surrey is 35 minutes and from London Gatwick Airport to Surrey is 40 minutes.
Your Induction Programme

On your first, exciting day with us it is important that you arrive on time. During your induction you will have a complete introduction to the UK, the University, and the International Study Centre.

It’s vital that you arrive on time so that you don’t miss out on meeting your new classmates and enjoying all of the great social activities that have been planned for you. Activities include a tour of the University campus to help you discover your new home.

We will work with you in your first week to find out about your academic levels and how we can best support you in your studies.

What to bring with you on your first day

Please bring the following documents, so that we can register you on the course:

✓ Evidence of your Secure English Language Test
✓ Passport
✓ UKVI decision letter
✓ Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
✓ If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian’s details

During your Induction Programme you will learn about:

• Opening a bank account
  If you bring a banker’s draft in pounds sterling with you (payable to yourself) or arrange for it to be sent, you can open a bank account once you have registered for your course.

In order to open a bank account you will need:

✓ a passport
✓ proof you are a student – we will issue you with a letter
✓ proof of a UK address

• Obtaining your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) – Tier 4 students only.
  You must collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival in the UK. Staff at the International Study Centre will be able to advise how to collect your BRP and from where it needs to be collected as well as assist you and make all necessary arrangements for the collection process.

What is the Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)?

The BRP holds your details (name, date and place of birth) as well as your photo and fingerprints. It shows your immigration status and entitlements while you remain in the UK. BRPs are issued to foreign nationals from outside the EEA who are granted leave to enter the UK for more than six months.

• Your chosen programme
  Get your all-important timetable and find out what you need to achieve to progress to the University.
Top Tip
When you arrive, continue to view your fees online and select how you want to pay - login details are in your offer letter and statements.

• Registering with the University
Once you are registered with the University you will get your student card and be able to set up and log on to the University’s internet network.

You will also get information about the University sports facilities and gym memberships.

• Registering with health services and the police (if required)

Advice on settling in
1. Say hello to your new neighbours. Living in a student residence is a great way to make new, life-long friends. Other students around you, both from the UK and abroad, will be feeling the same as you. Talking to each other will really help you settle in. Why not take the first step by introducing yourself?
2. Join in! There will be events planned at the International Study Centre as well as plenty of clubs and societies to join.
3. Don’t forget to set your morning alarm on your first day – you’ll need plenty of time to get ready.

We want you to feel at home as quickly as possible. If you have any worries, you can always approach any of our friendly staff and they will be very happy to help.
Your campus
Your checklist

As soon as possible

☐ Have you paid the required fees for your tuition, accommodation and insurance (if applicable)?
☐ Have you booked your accommodation?
☐ Have you checked your passport is valid for at least six months from your course start date?
☐ Have you applied for and received your visa?

Up to one month before you depart

☐ Have you completed the online pre-arrival form (sent by email) with your flight and visa information?
☐ Have you organised money to bring with you?
☐ Have you received confirmation of your room allocation?
☐ Have you made a copy of your passport and other essential documents?
☐ Have you obtained four passport-sized photos?

What to bring with you on your first day

Please bring the following documents, so that we can register you on the course:
☐ Passport
☐ UKVI decision letter
☐ Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
☐ If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian’s details
☐ Evidence of your Secure English Language Test

Get involved!

Why not join our social network

facebook.com/iscsurrey
weibo.com/surreyisc

Introduce yourself to your new classmates by uploading a selfie #HiSurreyISC

We can’t wait to welcome you.

University of Surrey International Study Centre is run by Study Group in partnership with the University of Surrey.
For more information visit: studygroup.com