

WELCOME!

UoL UNLOCKED

A guide to help you through your time at Leicester

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CONTENTS

WELCOME	02
WHY CHOOSE LEICESTER?	03
WHY CHOOSE UoL?	05
BEFORE ARRIVING	06
WHAT TO PACK	09
ACCOMMODATION	10
HOW TO GET HERE?	12
FIRST STEPS AFTER ARRIVAL	15
PREPARE FOR YOUR STUDIES	19
HEADSTART PROGRAM	20
YOUR STUDENTS' UNION	20
CULTURAL AWARENESS	24
UK FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS	27
CAMPUS MAP	28
MyStudentRecord	28
THINGS TO DO IN LEICESTER	29
ASSESSMENT MARKING	31
CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA	32
SUPPORT AT UoL	33
RELIGIOUS PLACES	34
BONUS TIPS	35

Welcome to

LEICESTER!

You have landed in a city that is amongst the most international in the country – a city renowned for its ‘superdiversity’. For many of you, this will become a home away from home – a place to discover and to realise your ambitions.

Travelling to a new country and arriving in a new city is exciting – but also challenging. I know, because once I was in your shoes coming to the UK as an international student. It took me a while to adjust – I missed the food from ‘back home’ – but I made the best of my life here and I never looked back. All the anxieties you face about life in a new country will pass. Leicester as a University and city has so much to offer – it is a world of difference at your doorstep.

So make the most of opportunities that come your way and to grow as individuals. Education is a powerful tool through which you can change yourself and change the world. You are on a journey of discovery- about yourself as well as the world around you. It is a marvellous adventure and one that will change your life.

At Leicester, our aim is to equip you with more than a degree – with the courage to question, the strength to change, and the passion to discover. As global citizens, you are the future – our hope for a better tomorrow.



So welcome. Be yourself. Express your individuality. You are Citizens of Change.

I wish you all the best with your endeavours and I look forward to meeting you soon.

Nishan Canagarajah

President and Vice-Chancellor University of Leicester

WHY CHOOSE LEICESTER?

Leicester is located in the heart of the East Midlands. From a range of tourist attractions to a combination of finest English traditions with multicultural activities, it is a city that truly provides an enriching experience.

Leicester annually hosts the largest **Diwali** celebration outside India, a **Caribbean Carnival** and parade which is largest in the UK outside of London, the largest comedy festival in the UK i.e. **Leicester Comedy Festival**, **Eid** celebrations, a **Pride Parade** (Leicester Pride) and a **Bonfire Night** in Abbey park.

Leicester is not just rich in diversity, it is also rich in sports.

The oldest professional basketball team in the country are **Leicester Riders**.



Since the introduction of a league in 1987, **Leicester Tigers** have been the most successful English rugby union football club, winning it a record eleven times, five more than either Bath or Wasps. They recently won the premiership title in 2022.

A professional cricket club based at Grace Road, Leicester is **Leicestershire County Cricket Club**, they currently play in the second tier of the county championship. They won the County Championship in 1996 and 1998.

Leicester City are a professional association football club, based at the King Power Stadium and they compete in the EFL championship. Leicester was a centre of global attention after winning the Premier League title in 2016.

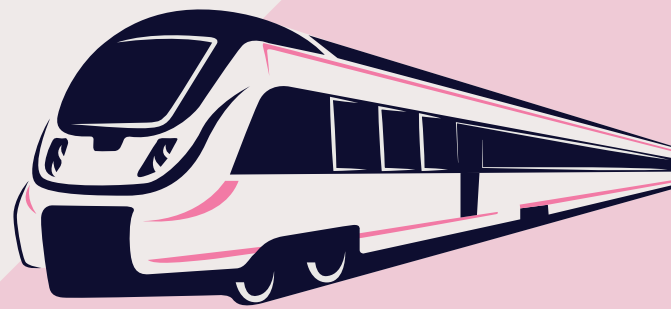
Transport:

Leicester has great connectivity in terms of transportation which can get you to majority parts of the UK directly or by changing the minimum number of trains. There are coaches available as well to get you around the UK.

Trains:

From Leicester railway station, you can get to London St. Pancras International with an approximate journey time of 1 hour, 25 minutes during peak times and then the transfers onto London underground or Thameslink may take up to additional 15 to 25 minutes to get you to London City or West End. To reach Canary Wharf, you can double the transfer time. Reaching Birmingham is a 50 minutes journey, Sheffield is approximately an hour's journey, whereas Leeds and York are approximately two hours away by train.


These were just some examples to reach some of the prime cities in the UK. You can either book your tickets online or collect them from the train station.



Buses/Coaches:

There are two main bus stations in Leicester, namely: St. Margarets and Haymarket. You can either book the tickets online or collect them from the bus stations as well.

BUS PASS	
First	£484 Annually
Arriva	£475 Annually (Zone Dependant)
Centrebus	15% off with NUS Card



You can generally get on National express if you want to travel somewhere outside of Leicester and if you want to travel within Leicester, you can generally get on Arriva Fox County, Centrebus, First Leicester, Hinckley Bus (it is a part of Arriva Midlands) and some more.

A little fact: Leicester is the midpoint of the M1 motorway which connects London to Leeds and it joins at A1(M) near Aberford to connect to Newcastle. It was the first inter - urban motorway to be completed in the UK.

[This means you can also have a road trip from Leicester!]

Amidst the cost of living crisis, you will be a little relieved to know that Leicester is ranked in the top 5 most affordable cities in the UK by Numbeo.

As per Natwest's 2021 ranking, Leicester bagged a spot in the top 10 most affordable cities in the UK and being around 25% cheaper than London on average.

YOU MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE!!



University of Leicester was founded in 1921 and has been providing world - class research and internationally recognised teaching for over 100 years. Besides this, University of Leicester is ranked in the top 25 universities in the Times Higher Education REF Power rankings. And in terms of student support, UoL is ranked **ninth (9th)** in the UK by WhatUni Student Choice Awards.

UoL is quite compact, which means it gives you a homely feeling where everyone knows everyone and the diversity in the city of Leicester is also reflected in the student body at the University of Leicester with cohorts of students from across the globe.

The university campus is located in such an area that it has access to everything. Via New Walk which is the pedestrian promenade laid out by the Corporation of Leicester in 1785, you can get to the city centre easily where you can explore new cafes, restaurants, hangout with your friends and shop. Once you've reached the city centre, the Haymarket Bus Station is a 5 - 7 minutes walk from there. Besides that, the train station is also walking distance from the university campus.

BEFORE ARRIVING

Apply for visa in time

In order to spend more than 6 months in the UK, as an international student you need to apply for a **student visa** and one should note that obtaining a student visa can take a long time and there might be some delays so it is important to apply by having enough time on hand.

The **UK Visas and Immigration** (UKVI) has licensed the University of Leicester to sponsor international students under the Student route of the Points Based System and is classified as a Student sponsor - track record. Do not forget to quote the sponsor license number for the University of Leicester (**JTV8BV799**) and the postcode of university i.e. **LE1 7RH**

Alongside visas, international students who will spend more than six months studying in the UK will have to provide evidence of finances in order to enter the UK as a student. *Check if you need a visa here.*

Ensure you have enough money to fund your studies

As part of your visa application you will need to provide evidence of how you will support yourself whilst you are studying in the UK.

These costs are:

- Your tuition fees (as quoted on your offer email and course pages)
- Your living expenses (currently £9,207)

This is an approximate idea of the expense and is dependent on the spending habits of the individual

The **NHS Immigration Health Surcharge** is paid up - front before you apply for your visa and is in addition to the amounts mentioned above so make sure you include that in your funds as well as it is not a visa fee.

For further guidance, the visa team can also be contacted via email: **visas@le.ac.uk** OR via phone: **0116 229 7400**, the phone lines are open from 10am to 12pm and 2pm to 4pm throughout the year excluding University closure days for general enquiries. Or click *here*

Satisfy conditions of your offer

There are two types of offer that you can receive while applying to the universities in the UK.

Unconditional Offer :

Again as the name suggests, an unconditional offer is an offer that has no conditions attached to it. When you receive an unconditional offer, it means you have been successful in securing a place on your desired course.

Conditional Offer :

As the name suggests, a conditional offer is an offer that is made on the basis that you will satisfy the requirements mentioned within, in order to be accepted on your desired course.

The conditions are generally related to :

- **Exam results** : A - Levels, BTECs, grades or points in your final exams, etc.
- **English language requirements** : For international students it is IELTS or TOEFL
- **Sending additional documents** : References, portfolios, etc.

The only difference between these two offers is : with a **conditional offer**, you **still have some entry requirements** to be met in order to secure a place while with an **unconditional offer**, you have a **guaranteed place** on your course

TB screening and ATAS certificate (if applicable)

Before submitting your visa application, you might be required to submit an **ATAS Certificate** or a **TB Certificate** so it is advisable to obtain them beforehand. Read your offer letter carefully because it might tell you whether you need an ATAS certificate or not.

Obtain CAS

In order for you to apply for a visa to study in the UK, you will need your CAS number. CAS stands for Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies that is issued by **UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)** to show that you are accepted by a genuine university in the UK. Without a CAS number, you cannot apply for your visa.

How do I get a CAS number from the University of Leicester?

You should hold an unconditional offer from the university and should've provided appropriate information such as passport number. You will be contacted as a part of the application process and besides that you must have also paid your £3000 deposit (undergraduate and masters students both)

How long does it take to receive my CAS?

You might get your **CAS** within two working days via email when you've provided all the relevant information. You and your agent will both get the CAS number (if you have made an application through an agent) You can even contact the CAS team via email : **CAS@le.ac.uk**

You might get an email from the CAS team to book a short interview appointment where they just check that the information that you've provided is valid. Keep an eye out on your junk/spam emails as well and if you do not receive an invite please contact the team via email as soon as possible.



Get British currency and a forex card for initial days

Until you open a UK bank account, it is advisable to bring some British currency (GBP) with you for the initial days. And as everything is getting contactless in recent times, a forex card {a forex card is a preloaded card that enables you to access money [home currency] in a foreign country} might come in handy but please do your research before getting one.

Moreover, most banks in your home country might be able to provide you with debit/credit cards that can be used in other countries, so please check with your home banks for it.

Note that this is a suggestion to make your transition to a new country easier and not a mandatory thing

Pay your fee deposit to secure your place

Receiving an unconditional offer means that you have been offered a place from the university and paying the fee deposit can be looked at as you accepting the place that is offered.

If you're not a resident of the UK/Ireland, you will need to pay a deposit of **£3,000** to secure your place. Paying your deposit is essential for you to be registered as a UoL student because if the payment does not reach the university's bank account they won't be able to register you.



HOW TO'S

If you have a sponsor?

Relatives, other individuals, bank loans cannot be considered as your sponsors, though they can pay your fee by using the **regular payment methods**. A company or organisation, a government agency or charity that has agreed to pay all of your tuition fees is considered as your **sponsor**.

Your sponsor needs to send a completed sponsor form or a financial guarantee letter containing the information to the university in order for them to pay your fee. The form/financial guarantee letter can be emailed at feesandincome@le.ac.uk

If you have a postgraduate student loan?

Masters students are eligible to apply for a postgraduate student loan just as similar to the undergraduate student loans.

Modes of payment

There are three acceptable payment methods:

- Online payment by card
- International bank transfer
- Direct bank transfers

*Further information about the payment methods can be found **here**. You can see the university's bank details **here***

WHAT TO PACK

Important documents

- Passport
- Visa
- CAS
- National Identity card
- UoL acceptance letter
- Check-in/relevant confirmation/contract of your accommodation

Finance Proof:

- *Loan documents from bank with any relevant bank statements*
- *Sponsorship document if you are a sponsored student*
- *Bank statement if you/your family/your relatives are the one funding your studies*

Clothing

- A warm jumper
- Water resistant coat
- A comfortable pair of shoes
- Formal wear
- Traditional clothes if you wish to wear on your festivals
- An umbrella that can withstand strong winds

Electrical Appliances

- UK travel adapter
- Laptop/Tablet/iPad
- Power bank (if necessary)
- Phone and laptop charger
- Extension lead
- Headphones/Earphones



Health and Wellbeing

- Medicine for common flu, diarrhoea, hay fever, any allergies
- Medical/optical prescriptions
- Any reports that are relevant for long term illnesses

Things from Home

- Any photographs of your family or friends to feel more at home

Bedroom Essentials

- Bedding and sheets
- Mattress protectors
- Coat hangers
- Clothes airer
- Laundry basket

Bathroom Essentials

- Towels
- Toiletries

Course (stationary) Essentials

- Notebooks
- Pens
- Folders/files

Kitchen Essentials

- Pots and Pans
- Plates and Bowls
- Glasses and Mugs
- Towels
- Oven Gloves
- Tongs
- Spatula
- Spoons
- Dishwashing soap/detergent
- Scrub/sponge

ACCOMMODATION

Sorting out *accommodation* should be one of your priorities and it is better to do it beforehand because there are chances that the accommodations are full and you might have to pay extra.

There's no pressure for you to choose halls of residence as your accommodation for the academic term but life in halls of residence is a great way to socialise and settle in your uni life, you are free to choose any private accommodations as well if you wish to. All new first-year students are guaranteed university accommodation, given they apply before 1st September. Just like paying a deposit to secure your place on your course, you need to pay a deposit to secure your accommodation as well. The amount to be deposited should be on your offer.

The university provides you with three diverse options (*you can browse and apply online*):

- The Village
- The City
- Freeman's Common development

If you wish to explore other options, the Students' Union works with *SULETS* as well.

You might be asked to pay some deposit upfront and have a guarantor in order to secure your room in private accommodations as well. So it is advised to have a clear communication about everything.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T HAVE A GUARANTOR?

Generally, when you rent a private accommodation in the UK, you'll need a UK rent guarantor. You might have a trail of questions around this such as : what is a guarantor/why do I need a guarantor/what shall I do if I don't have a guarantor? And much more.

Let's start by finding answers to each question, one by one.

WHAT IS A GUARANTOR?

A guarantor is a UK resident (preferably) who agrees to pay your rent just in case you are unable to pay it.

WHY DO I NEED A GUARANTOR?

One of the reasons why you might need a guarantor is when the landlord feels uncertain if you will be able to pay your rent or not. And if you are unable to pay your rent then your guarantor will be asked to pay the amount you owe to your landlord.

WHAT SHALL I DO IF DON'T HAVE A GUARANTOR?

It is quite understandable that being an international student, you might not have a UK guarantor but there are private companies out there who can act as your guarantor in return for a fee. For example: Housing Hand and UK Guarantor.

For further information about guarantors, [click here](#). You can always contact the Students' Union Advice service as well (advice@leicester.ac.uk)



ARRIVING AT HALLS

Remember your username and password for the **Accommodation portal** because you will have your accommodation welcome over there. After your induction on the portal, you will be able to book your arrival slot where you can select your arrival date and time.

Note: International students have arrival weekend a week earlier
[Accommodation welcome is a form of online induction where you can find everything about living in halls of residence. You can view your accommodation welcome at any point throughout your academic term]

You will receive a check-in document after you've booked your arrival slot, keep it handy and safe and take it with you to the key collection point.

HOW TO GET HERE?

Getting to your accommodation from the airport and that too with such heavy luggage can be a hassle but good news for you that the university runs **AIRPORT PICKUP SERVICE** for those of you arriving at London Heathrow (LHR) and Birmingham International airport before the welcome week. Make sure to book your place on it as soon as possible. Please whatsapp the pickup team if for some reason you are unable to make it on time because if they leave then you will have to make your own way back to Leicester.



Generally if you are staying in university halls of residence, let's say if you are in The Village then you will be dropped off at John Foster Hall which is the reception of The Village and it is where you will collect your room key, if you are in The City accommodation then you will be dropped off at Nixon Court (Block L), Putney Road and if you are staying in any private accommodation then please mention that in the form and the staff will help you arrange taxis to your address from Freeman's Common Reception which is a 2 min walk from Putney Road.

Please make sure you have WhatsApp downloaded on your phone and that you are connected to the airport Wi-fi to be in touch with the airport pick-up service team because the person who will be arriving to pick you up from the university's side will leave promptly on the mentioned departure time and then you will have to make your own way back to Leicester. If your flight is delayed or you don't require the service anymore, please let them know. For further details about your arrival in the UK, kindly email your queries at study@leicester.ac.uk and do not forget to include your applicant ID and mention "*airport pick-up*" in your subject of the email.

You can also reach Leicester by train, coach or taxi. The train and coach routes from Birmingham and London (Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton) airport are in the tables below:



Train

Birmingham : Birmingham is one of the nearest airports to Leicester. You can get a train straight that :

Start at	Change at
<i>Birmingham International</i>	<i>Birmingham New Street</i>

London :

Heathrow: If you are arriving at London Heathrow Airport then

Start at	Change at
<i>Heathrow Airport</i>	<i>Farringdon then at London St. Pancras International</i>

Gatwick: If you are arriving at London Gatwick Airport then

Start at	Change at
<i>Gatwick Airport</i>	<i>London St. Pancras International</i>

Stansted: If you are arriving at London Stansted Airport then

Start at	Change at
<i>Stansted Airport</i>	<i>Tottenham Hale then at London St. Pancras International</i>

Luton: If you are arriving at London Luton Airport then

Start at	Change at
<i>Luton Airport</i>	<i>Luton Airport Parkway then at Kettering</i>

Coaches (Buses)

Birmingham: You can take a coach directly to Leicester (*St. Margaret's Bus Station*) from *Birmingham Airport Bus Station*

London :

Heathrow: You can take a coach directly to Leicester (*St. Margaret's Bus Station or Braunstone*) from *Heathrow Airport Terminal 2,3,5*

Gatwick: You can take a coach directly to Leicester (*St. Margaret's Bus Station or Braunstone*) from *Gatwick Airport North Terminal*

Stansted: You can take a coach directly to Leicester (*St. Margaret's Bus Station or Braunstone*) from *Stansted Airport Coach Station*



Luton: You can take a coach directly to Leicester (*St. Margaret's Bus Station or Braunstone*) from *Luton Airport*

For reference: You can check the prices of trains and coaches here. Please note that the prices keep fluctuating and this site is recommended and for reference purposes.

Taxi

Do not take a taxi from outside the airport to Leicester. It is extremely expensive. If you wish to pre-book a taxi from a Leicester taxi firm you can contact Airport Taxis with your flight details. The cost will be approximately £100 from Heathrow to your address in Leicester.

Depending on how much luggage you bring with you, two or perhaps three people travelling together would be able to share a taxi. Larger vehicles can also be booked for groups travelling together.



FIRST STEPS AFTER ARRIVAL

Inform your family

It is quite understandable that after such a long journey you might be tired and just want to take some rest. But do not forget to inform your family that you've reached your destination. It might be the case that you don't have your local SIM card yet or maybe your SIM isn't activated, so make use of the wifi available at the airport to connect to the internet.

(Either message/call your family on whatsapp or on any other social media platform that you use to interact with them)

Collect your BRP card

As mentioned on the [UK government website](#), BRP card is a *Biometric Residence Permit* that can be used to confirm your :

- Identity
- Right to Study
- Right to any public services or benefits you are entitled to

You can collect BRP from the post office or you can collect your BRP from the university as well if you chose the university as its collection point while making your visa application.

For an international student, a BRP card is one of the really important documents so make sure you keep it safe and generally you have 10 days to collect it after your arrival in the UK. Make sure all the information on your BRP card is correct because if it is not you will have to get it corrected.

Register with your GP

A doctor is often called a GP or General Practitioner in the UK. It is recommended to register with a doctor in your nearest health centre as soon as possible.

The [Victoria Park Health Centre](#) is right next to the university campus so you can either register with them or you can find a health centre near to you by [searching on the NHS website](#)

International students who have paid their [Immigration Health Surcharge](#) as a part of their visa application are entitled to use the NHS for free but you might have to pay for some charges such as - prescriptions, eye tests and dental care, just in the same way that a UK resident does.

Visit the visa checkpoint and collect your ID card

When you first arrive in the UK, before attending any of your lectures, it is really important that you attend the *visa checkpoint and collect your student ID card* so that you can access the facilities provided by the university, mark your attendance (you will normally scan your ID card against a card reader in the lecture halls to mark your attendance), etc.

WHY ATTEND VISA CHECKPOINT?

In order to prove that you have valid permission to study with the University of Leicester, every international student is required to attend a visa checkpoint by booking an appointment beforehand. Make sure you have collected your BRP card from the post office before that and if you have opted to collect the BRP card from university, they will let you know when it arrives.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE VISA CHECKPOINT?

It is made sure that you have provided valid copies of your passport and visa in order to study your desired course at the University of Leicester. Besides that your personal details are also checked and they might ask you for a valid UK address and phone number.



Documents to successfully complete the visa checkpoint and register with the university:

- **A valid passport and visa OR**
- **Evidence of valid permission to study in the UK**
- **Your offer letter or any other document that states your nine digit student number**

Get a local SIM card

You might have a local SIM card before your arrival in the UK and you just need to activate it after your arrival but if you do not have a local SIM card and wish to buy one, it is important that you compare all the network providers and the plans that they offer before making a decision.

Request your NI number

A *national insurance number* is a form of personal number that is used to record a person's tax and NI deductions and it is issued by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It is advisable to apply for a NI number before you commence any type of work.

Open a bank account

Opening a bank account helps you keep your money in a safe place, can be used as financial evidence for your visa process later on, makes it easy for your employer to transfer your salary and much more.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT

- A valid passport or a photo ID card
- A bank letter from the university that confirms your registration, UK address and overseas student

WHERE CAN I FIND MY BANK LETTER?

Your bank letter can be found on MyStudentRecord after you've successfully completed the visa checkpoint and identity check.

- Login to the MyStudentRecord with your credentials
- Go to My Uni Documents tab
- This is where you will find your bank letter, certificate of registration and certificate of employability.



Attend induction week

Induction week is a good way to socialise and get to know your fellow students, relevant academic staff, get your reading list, meet your peer mentor (if you are an undergraduate), meet your personal tutor, ask questions about any concern that you might have about your course or anything else. Your induction events will be reflected on your timetable once you are registered successfully.

Register with the police

The police registration scheme ended on 4th August, 2022 which means you no longer need to register with the police after you arrive in the UK if you have applied for a visa from outside of the university or need permission to stay longer if you are already in the UK.

Attend freshers' fair

Your SU organises freshers fair each year where you will be able to grab free goodies, attend fun events, gain information and much more. All the international students are encouraged to attend these welcome weekends. Do keep an eye out on the *Students' Union website*.

Get familiar with your locality

It is important to get familiar with your locality, not only around your accommodation but also around the university campus.

Supermarkets: Morrisons (Aylestone Rd, Leicester LE2 7LT) is the nearest supermarket to the university campus apart from Sainsbury Local on Queen's Road and Choice Supermarket on London Road.

Pharmacies: City Pharmacy on London Road is the nearest pharmacy to the university campus if you need anything urgently.

Convenience Stores: Welford Superstore is the nearest convenience store to the university campus.

Cafes: University campus has some options in terms of foods and drinks which can be found *here*. Apart from that, if you've got some free time and want to hangout with your friends outside the university campus, there are some cafes on London road, New Walk and Clarendon Park that you can explore if you don't want to walk up to City centre. And for the students in Brookfield campus, the nearest cafes to you might be in Evington or Stonegate.



PREPARE FOR YOUR STUDIES

Term/Semester dates and Timetable

It is helpful to download the MyUoL app that will have your *timetable* for the academic term and if not, you can also check your time table in the outlook app. Generally the timetable is made available at the *start of the term*.

Personal Tutoring

It can be challenging for some students to study and live in the UK. Your Personal Tutor is a key contact to help with settling in and helping you to succeed on your course. Personal Tutors can advise or signpost you with support for studying, assessment, visas, fees and much more. Your trained Personal Tutor will contact you at least monthly and respond to your emails normally within 3 working days during term time. Personal Tutors are happy to advise on a wide range of personal and academic topics.

Training: Personal Tutors are given training on the role of and requirements for personal tutoring at Leicester and are informed about all University support services.

Topics: Conversations can be about academic and personal matters. Personal Tutors will signpost you to the right support service for topics best handled by experts, such as mental health.

Regular contact: During term-time you are contacted by your Personal Tutor at least monthly. This may include invitations to individual or group meetings or check-in emails.

Responding to you: Your Personal Tutor will respond to you normally within 3 working days during term time. If they are away, you will be informed about alternative support.

Finding out more: Your school has a page where you can find information about Personal Tutoring and how to contact your Personal Tutor.

Useful academic contacts

View the full list [here](#)



HEADSTART PROGRAM

Moving to a new country can be an intimidating experience but for a soft-landing, the University of Leicester has launched *HeadStart*.

HeadStart is a program that provides you with all the relevant resources, guidance and the support that you need for your transition to uni life. It is advisable to attend sessions under HeadStart if you wish to prepare a little bit before your arrival.



YOUR STUDENTS' UNION

You would be pleased to know that once you are enrolled as a student at UoL, you are an official member of the Leicester Students' Union (all with no additional fee/cost!!!)

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Leicester Students' Union is an empowering, innovative and inclusive student-led union that effectively captures students interests and provides a community that is a home away from home.

OUR MISSION

To represent and empower students in achieving their full potential

OUR VISION

By 2026, students will see us as an empowering, outstanding union that effectively represents their interests.

OUR VALUES

Our aspirations are about enhancing students' lives. Our work to achieve these aspirations is underpinned by our values:

We are led by students. We believe students make the best decisions about what impacts them.

We remove barriers. The full diversity of students should be supported by everything we do.

We are proudly radical. We are bold, innovative and challenge the status quo.



MEET YOUR OFFICERS

Each year a team of six students are elected by YOU and they work as YOUR University representatives. This team of six full - time officers are your Executive Team and look after specific areas within the Union.

Meet your SU President:

Name: Archie Robinson

Role: Union President

What my role entails: My role works on ensuring student voice is consistently heard across the year. As lead contact for the University, I sit on many high level boards and councils at the University, consistently making your voice, as students, is heard and acted on. I also lead the democratic processes at the University, working on providing students with a valuable voice through various different aspects of University life. Whether that be the Union Parliament, Scrutiny Committee or our ideas system. Finally, I also work on union development, ensuring your University and Student Union experience is consistently the best it can be!



Meet your SU Education Officer:

Name: Prachi Bhatt

Role: Education Officer

What my role entails: Some of my main responsibilities as your Education Officer is promoting the academic interests of students in the University meetings, working with the Voice team to develop the Academic Representation System and acting as a main point of contact for course representatives. I am always here to make your student experience better, not just in terms of academics but overall as well.



Meet your SU Liberation Officer:

Name: Jade Thomas

Role: Liberation Officer

What my role entails: As Liberation Officer, I'm responsible for being the Students' Union's primary lead on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. I am also responsible for representing students on campus, especially those who come from liberation backgrounds, and running campaigns that represent and celebrate our diverse student body.



Meet your SU Sports Officer:

Name: Joe Hyett

Role: Sports Officer

What my role entails: In my role I represent the student voice with all things surrounding sport and work to make the student experience the best it can be within sport! I am continuously working together with clubs and committee members to provide all students with equal opportunities as well as help clubs achieve their desired successes in sport over the course of the academic year.



Meet your SU Activities Officer:

Name: Jack McDonald

Role: Activities Officer

What my role entails: Activities encompasses a wide variety of things. I lead on all things student groups and societies, as well as volunteering, fundraising, employability and all things Sustainability. I represent the student voice in those areas and I'm the principal representative for students with the Sustainability Team, Careers and Employability, the Volunteering Team and the Attenborough Arts Centre, so you can come to me if you have anything about those areas. A lot of my role also involves internal reviews of Student Union student groups and Volunteering Hub processes.



The Students' Union offers a wide range of support and opportunities to students and mainly it can be categorised as:

VOICE

The goal of our Voice team is to provide easy to access ways for students to influence change at university. This can be about your course, the facilities on campus, wider campaigns – it's basically anything you can think of, and our team will give you the support and direction to make change. Under the Voice umbrella, we have a number of formal roles, where students can campaign to make change, support their peers, and represent their cohorts. Roles we support include our Academic Reps, Peer Mentors and the members of Student Council, among many others. The key thing about our team is that we are there to amplify and support the Student Voice – empowering students to have the university experience they deserve.

You can contact the Voice team by emailing at **su-voice@leicester.ac.uk**

ADVICE

The advice service is a small and friendly team who offers free, impartial and independent signposting, advice and support for students. They are based on the 2nd Floor of the Percy Gee Building (Opposite Support Services Reception) and their friendly Receptionists will be happy to help with any enquiries. The Reception desk is open during term time and vacations during 11-3pm.

Advisers Support with:

- Appeals (senate Regulations 10)
- Plagiarism/Collusion (Senate Regulation 11)
- Complaints
- Housing – Housemate Finder – Legal Aid
- Mitigating Circumstances
- Signposting – Wellbeing, Welfare, Visa, Fees and Income, Legal Clinic, Peer Mentoring
- C-Card

Clinics under Advice:

- Ted our Therapy Dog
- Mental Health Matters
- Victim First

You can contact the advice service by email **advice@leicester.ac.uk** for Signposting/advice/appointment



ACTIVITIES

Your Students' Union offers a wide range of activities and opportunities for students to get involved in. From clubs and societies to volunteering and work experience, there is something for everyone. One of the most popular activities is joining a club or a society. With over 200 to choose from, students can explore their interests and meet like-minded individuals. If you are into sports, there are clubs for football, rugby, martial arts, yoga and more! Throughout the year, there are tons of fun events like live music, comedy nights, quizzes that give you the chance to socialise and have a blast outside your studies. The Students' Union also offers volunteering opportunities so that you can make a difference and gain valuable experience by helping out with the local community projects (or even volunteering abroad)

You can contact the activities team via email : unionactivities@leicester.ac.uk

For more information about how to get involved with the SU, visit the website leicesterunion.com or just pop in the office!

Your SU organises a lot of events throughout the year so make sure you attend as many as you can because it is a nice way to make new friends!



CULTURAL AWARENESS

Transitioning to a new culture may be intimidating and some students might experience a *cultural shock* (which is temporary usually). It is nothing to be afraid of because even people who go on a holiday (somewhere abroad) face it. As UKCISA simply explains, cultural shock is a common thing that the international students face when arriving in the UK, it is basically noticing the difference between how things are done and what you are used to at home. It can be the difference in food, how the people dress, behave, speak, being away from your friends and family, meeting a lot of new people, basically all aspects of one's life.

At first it may seem frustrating and isolating like no one seems to understand you but please remember one thing i.e. all your fellow international students are also experiencing the same thing. The very first thing that is recommended is taking rest after your arrival in the UK because if you are tired or jet - lagged, every small thing might irritate you out of proportion.

Some of the most common areas where one can experience cultural shock are:

Climate: If you are from a warmer climate, the British weather might affect you a lot because of the greyness and cold in the winter. Also it gets really dark in winters around 5-5:30 pm so it might take some time to get used to it and in summers it would be bright till 9:30 pm.

Food: Some people might find British food heavy or bland or just taste different if you are used to including a lot of spices in your food. But you can always add your own spices to your food and get that homely taste. But do not always rely on fast food, try to find familiar food and also include fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet.



Dress: Dressing is another common thing that will be different no matter where you go. The very first thing you might find a little strange/not comfortable is layering up with heavy winter clothing if you are from a warmer climate. But with the time passing you will get used to it and again you should always dress in a manner that you feel comfortable in without any hesitation.

Language: The UK has regional accents which might be a little difficult to understand when you first arrive in the UK and it is not a thing to worry about because even the people whose first language is English find it difficult to understand at times but you will quickly get used to the local accents and slangs.

Values: Just how there are cultural differences in the physical environment (food, climate, dressing), you might observe that there are cultural differences on the views of the world. It might be a little surprising to find out that people do not share the same ideas as you do. And instead of being disheartened, take it as an opportunity to meet people from a wide range of backgrounds and beliefs and learn about their way of life.

Other significant things: Some of the small things are, people here in the UK might greet you like “You alright?”, “You okay?” and that just means it is a general way to say “Hi” so don’t think that there’s something wrong with you or you look unwell, it's just them greeting you.

- It is completely normal to drink “tap” water but bear in mind, you should not consume hot water from the tap.

- You should never break a queue and wait for your turn patiently.

- It might be surprising to see that there are no locks in the rooms and washrooms (depending on your accommodation), so just be careful in those terms.
- You might not find any drainage holes in the washroom except the shower area.
- Never cross the road without looking, press the wait button and wait for the light to turn green with the pedestrian sign. Besides that, in the UK, cars drive on the left side of the road and some electric cars and bikes might be too quiet for you to hear.
- You might find people addressing each other with their first names even when they're older than you and that is normal.
- Always carry a bottle of water with you because purchasing them from shops/supermarkets might not always be feasible in terms of cost. You will find water fountains (in the uni and in some other places as well) from where you can refill your bottle.

- Most of the times when you book your train tickets/coach online, you will get the tickets in your registered email but at times you will be provided with a reference code and you will have to collect your tickets from the kiosk at the train station.



- You might also find the shops closing early and that it gets a little quiet in the evening which can feel a bit unusual in the beginning. Moreover, some big supermarkets will be closing earlier than their regular times on Sunday.

- Time management would be a crucial part of your life because here you will have to do everything by yourself, whether it be cooking, laundry, assignments/courseworks, job, grocery shopping, etc. No one will be prompting you to complete your work in time.

- Your GP will send your prescription to the pharmacy nearest to you and then you will be collecting your medicine and prescription both from that pharmacy.

- Never shy away from asking for help, it is completely okay to ask people about something that you don't know, whether it be operating a coffee machine, printing a document or self scanning your grocery items at the supermarket.

UK FESTIVALS AND TRADITIONS

The UK is rich in culture and some of the main celebrations and traditions are as follows:

Chinese New Year: Chinese New Year is the biggest celebration in London, outside Asia. In the West End, there is a parade carried out each year through Chinatown.

Bonfire Night: There will be firework displays in most cities on 5th November, so don't feel confused as to what is happening! Bonfire Night marks the anniversary of Guy Fawkes' plot to blow up the House of Lords and assassinate King James I in 1605 and this failed plot is commemorated with spectacular displays of fireworks.

Wimbledon Tennis: The world's oldest tennis tournament and a summer highlight for sports fans is - Wimbledon. Since 1877, Wimbledon is held at the All England Club in London with a tradition for spectators to eat strawberries and cream



Christmas: Christmas is by far the biggest festival in the UK and mostly all of them celebrate it even if they are not religious. You will find Christmas trees, presents, carol singing, mulled wine (warm and spiced red wine), mince pies and you will be in for a treat if it snows because you might see snowmen and have snow fights!!

You can also get involved with your Students' Union to get to know more about the traditions in the UK because they host a lot of cultural events as well.

THINGS TO DO IN LEICESTER

With Leicester being in the heart of the UK, there are a lot of things to do. The detailed list can be found [here](#). Some of them are listed below:

King Richard III Visitor Centre:

KingRichard III Visitor Centre is a museum in Leicester which showcases the life of KingRichard III and the reburial of his remains in 2021- 2015.



National Space Centre:

If you are a space science or astronomy enthusiast, the National Space Centre is the place for you. But even if you

are not into space science or astronomy, you can still visit it as it is a very useful educational resource. *A little fact: National Space Centre has a space research program in partnership with the University of Leicester.*

Bradgate Park: Bradgate Park is a public park that covers 850 acres of land. It is Leicestershire's only Medieval Deer Park. Apart from that, it is steeped in history, with wonderful wildlife, the UK's oldest fossils and home of Lady Jane Grey.



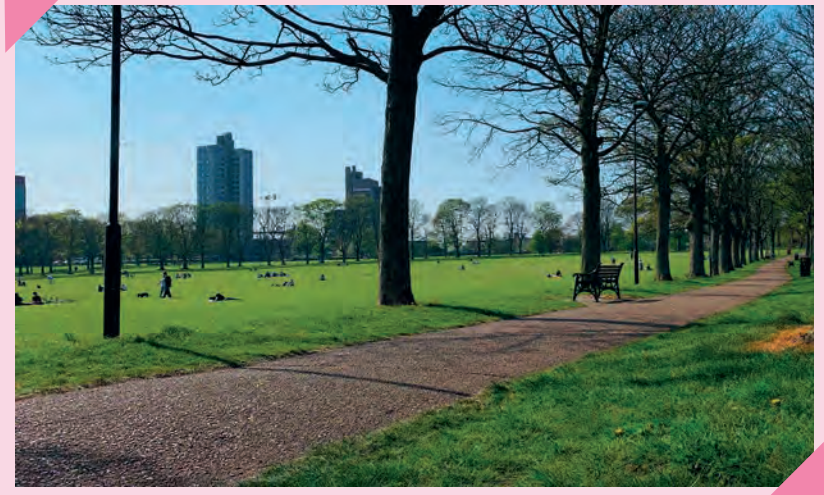
University of Leicester Botanic Garden:

The University of Leicester Harold Martin Botanic Garden is walking distance from Oadby Halls of residence and you can get to Oadby Halls of residence by hopping on the University Shuttle service from theUniversity of Leicester.

King Power Stadium: The home of Leicester City, King Power Stadium is a football stadium where Leicester City famously lifted the Premier Club Title in 2016.

Abbey Park: Abbey Park is Leicester's one of the Premier parks and the River Soar divides it into two parts: Western part - that consists of fascinating Abbey grounds with the remains of twelfth century Leicester Abbey. Eastern part - consists of a decorative Victorian part of the park with green shrubberies, trees, boating lakes and miniature railway.

Victoria Park: Victoria Park is a lush green space next to the University of Leicester(it was the city's race course until 1883). You can easily get to Victoria Park from the university's campus and can even spend some time between your lectures just for a break.



Leicester Market: Leicester Market is a good place to buy quality fruits and vegetables and it is an outdoor market just south of the clock tower.

The Golden Mile: It is known as The Golden Mile because of the road's plentiful gem-laden jewellery shops dripping in 22ct Indian gold. The festival of lights - Diwali is the biggest celebration in Leicester, outside of India and you should

definitely visit it at Diwali. Not to forget, the restaurants here are a must try if you ever get a chance.



Leicester Museum and Art Gallery: The Leicester Museum and Art Gallery is a museum on New Walk, which is not far from the city centre and contains displays of history, art and science.

Highcross Leicester: Highcross is a shopping centre in Leicester that contains most of the necessary shops that you would want to shop for and if you visit it around Christmas, it is all illuminated.

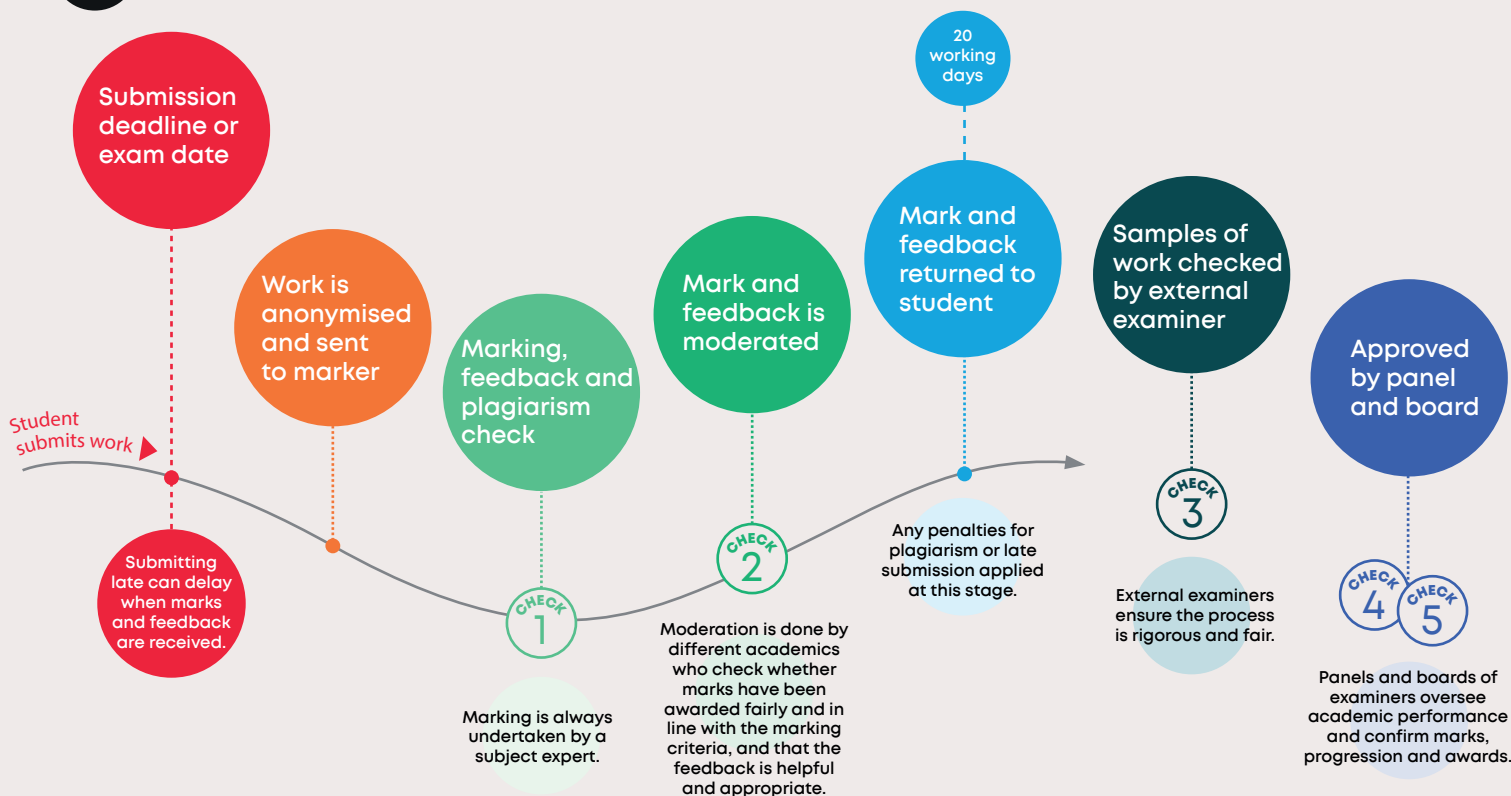
ASSESSMENT MARKING

Education systems are different in every country. One should be aware of the types of assessments, how they are marked, how the exams are conducted, etc.

Below given is a marking infographic from the university that explains how your assessments are marked and why they take 20 days in general to return the marks.

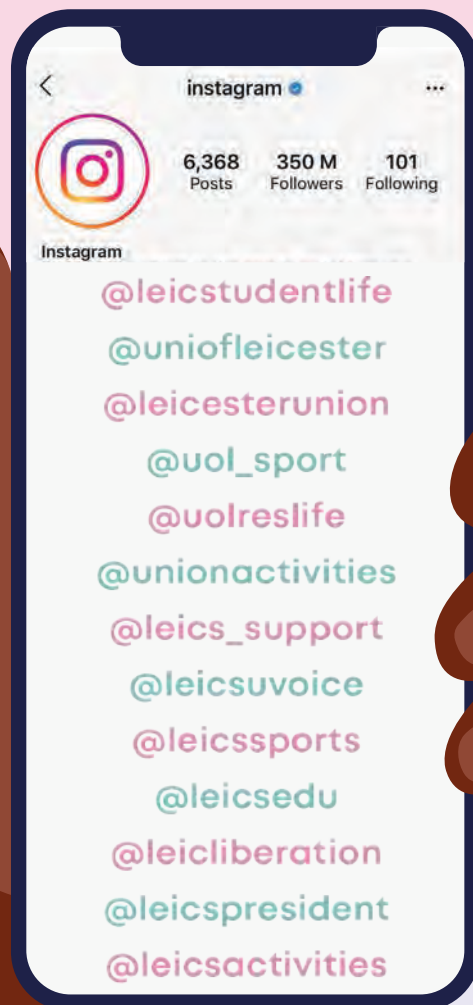


Students, markers, moderators and external examiners all use the same marking criteria



CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

As a student, it is advisable to keep yourself updated with the relevant information and events about the university and students' union via their official pages. The same goes for all of the societies and sports clubs as well.



SUPPORT AT UoL

**Student
Support**

**Support in halls
of residence**

**Life in
halls**

Careers and Employability: The Careers and Employability team at Leicester have resources to support you wherever you are in your career development journey and whatever your next steps might be.

Whether you want to build your career in the UK, or develop your experience before returning home or going overseas, our tailored resources, guidance and activities are here to support you every step of the way.

Activate your **MyCareers** account to access our support, and set your communication preferences so you can receive details about the opportunities that interest you. On MyCareers you can find our jobs board, arrange a one-to-one careers appointment with an expert adviser, or book onto events and workshops to enhance your career development.

Through our subscription you also gain access to Student Circus - register for an account using your university email to access job opportunities, country and immigration guides, and career toolkits all designed specifically for international students. For further guidance and support from the careers team:

**Undergraduate
Student**

**International
Postgraduate Student**

**Postgraduate
Student**

AccessAbility Centre: There is support available for students with dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties, sensory disabilities, mobility difficulties, mental health conditions and autism.

Note: The David Wilson Library is open 24/7

RELIGIOUS PLACES

Below mentioned are some religious places that are NEAR the university campus but Leicester is a multicultural and diverse city so there are many other places of worship in the city catered to your faith.

Geeta Bhavan, 70 Clarendon Park Rd, Clarendon Park, Leicester LE2 3AD

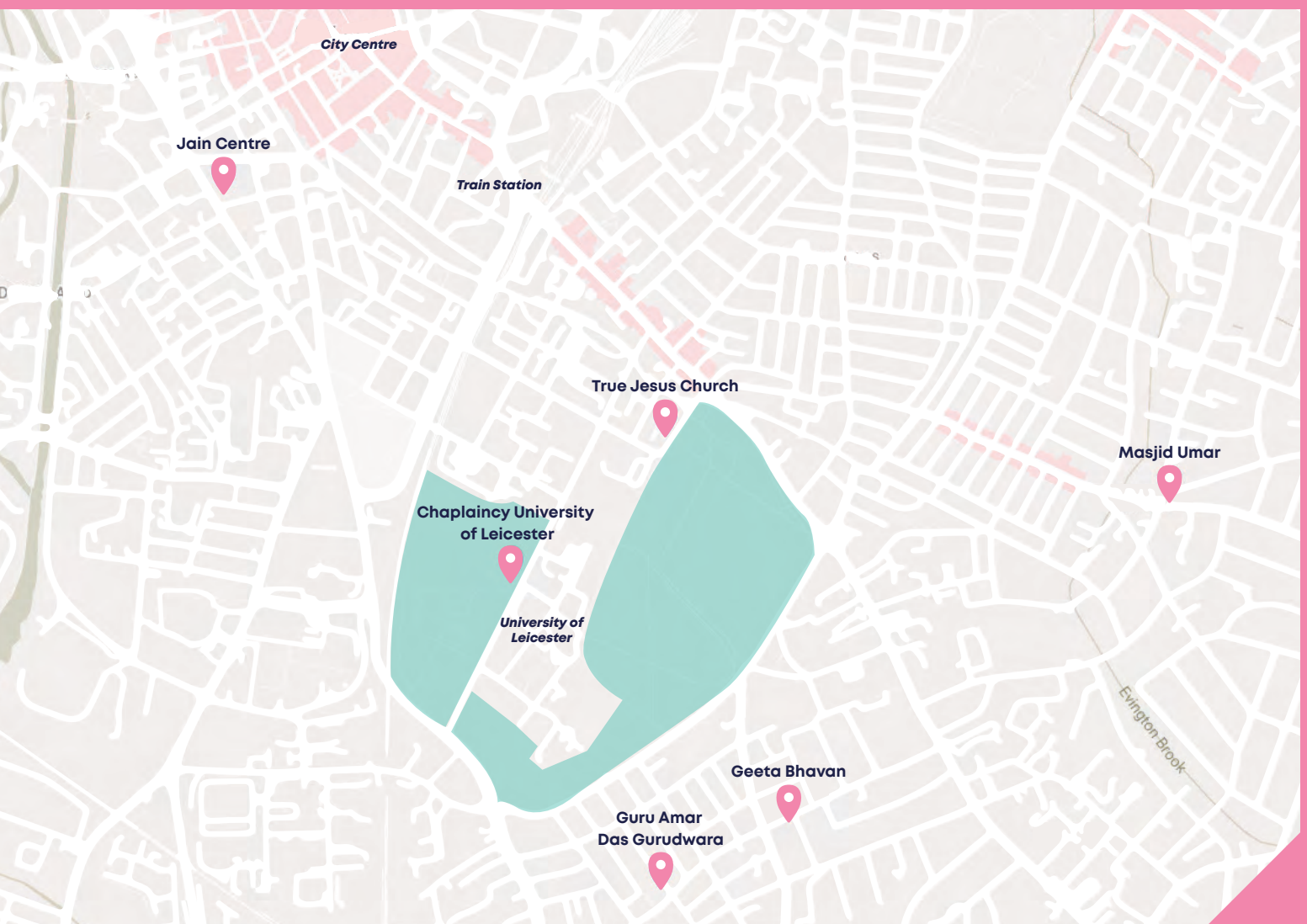
Jain Centre, 32 Oxford St, Leicester LE1 5XU

Chaplaincy University of Leicester, The Gate House, University Rd, Leicester LE1 7RH

True Jesus Church, 5 Granville Rd, Leicester LE1 7RU

Guru Amar Das Gurudwara, 219 Clarendon Park Rd, Leicester LE2 3AN

Masjid Umar, 5-7 Evington Dr, Leicester LE5 5PF



BONUS TIPS

UPay is a cashless payment system that is used across the campus for easy transactions, so it is recommended to download it.

- Download apps like Unidays and StudentBeans to get a discount on your purchases. Another app that is useful in terms of safety is SafeZone (download it for iPhone/iPad [here](#) and for Android [here](#)), SafeZone helps you to alert the University Security if you have any kind of emergency while on campus.

UNiDAYS



SafeZone

- If you have to take multiple trips around the city in a day, then instead of getting a ticket for every trip, you can just get a flexi-day ticket as it allows you to take multiple trips around Leicester under a reasonable price.

- If you are living in the halls of residence then you might want to attend the [res life events](#) happening every evening which can be found on their instagram handle ([@uolreslife](#))

- International students are prone to being a victim of fraud and theft so it is important that you never share your personal details (bank details, BRP number, etc.) to anyone who imposes being an official.

- The most common fraud that happens with the international students is that they are threatened to be deported from the country/their visa to be revoked. It is important that you visit the official website of the UK government instead of believing the hoax call. *[The main form of communication in terms of your visa/bank account/accommodation is email so please keep that in mind and do not fall for these traps]*



- It is a good practice to register your valuables with some property register so that if in any case they are stolen or lost you will have a high chance of getting them back. One such recommended website is *Immobilise*. (It is free to use, easy to setup and the user can report any lost/stolen item in moments)



- For commuting in the city, bicycles are a good option as well because there are designated lanes for bikes and you can reach your destination easily. You can either rent the bicycles or even buy a new one.

- Deliveroo and Uber Eats are two most used options if you want to order a takeaway.

- The university and your students' union provides a number of resources to support you throughout your time here at Leicester so if you need support in any area then do not hesitate to contact/ask for help. For further details on how you can access the support/what support is offered, check *out-of-hours support* or *support*.

**WE HOPE YOU ENJOY YOUR TIME
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER!**

