



BIRMINGHAM CITY  
University

# POSTGRADUATE PARENT AND CARERS' GUIDE



# WELCOME

After their undergraduate degree, your child may decide they want to continue studying at postgraduate level, also known as a Master's degree. This may be because they want to explore their chosen subject in-depth, begin their career in academia or specialise in a certain industry or sector. We understand there can be lots of information and things to think about when it comes to your child continuing their education, so our guide explains it all.



# UNDERSTANDING POSTGRADUATE STUDY

There are different types of Master's degrees which relate to the area of study the subject sits under. For example, the qualification obtained after studying a Master's in Fine Art is a Master of Art. The different types of qualification include:

## DIFFERENT TYPES OF QUALIFICATION

- Master's of Arts (MA)
- Master's of Science (MSc)
- Master's of Philosophy (MPhil)
- Master's of Engineering (MEng)
- Master's of Architecture (MArch)
- Master's of Research (MRes)\*

\*A qualification awarded for research-based study

**APPLY NOW**

Postgraduate applications are accepted throughout the year and are submitted direct to the university.\*

Current undergraduate students at BCU can apply in less than a minute with our fast-track application, without having to submit a personal statement.

Find out more about postgraduate study and the application process: [www.bcu.ac.uk/postgraduate](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/postgraduate)



\*If your child is applying for a teacher training course, Conservatoire course or a law course then this is done through external portals. Some courses – including MSc Social Work, MSc Dietetics, MSc Speech and Language Therapy and MSc Physiotherapy – have an application deadline. Details can be found on the course page where this is the case.

# WHY STUDY A POSTGRADUATE DEGREE?

## 1. EMPLOYABILITY

There are an increasing number of occupations where employers **require a postgraduate qualification**, including some areas of law, engineering and teaching, professional psychology roles, international development and NGOs, technical roles in the environment profession and roles in investment banking.

[Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services].

## 2. BUILD CONNECTIONS

Studying at postgraduate level gives students an opportunity to develop professional networks with industries in Birmingham and the rest of the UK. Our STEAMhouse business innovation centre provides students with access to industry links, placement opportunities and talks from business experts.

## 3. EARN MORE

Someone with a Master's degree or PhD earns £5,000 more per year, or £200,000 over a 40-year working life, than someone with just a degree.

[Graduate Labour Market Statistics 2023, Department for Education].

## 4. PASSION

**Postgraduate study will allow your child to explore their chosen subject in depth.**

Our contemporary, flexible courses with practice-based learning and international opportunities allow them to develop their knowledge and become experts in their field.

## 5. LEARN FROM THE EXPERTS

Postgraduate students are taught by experienced researchers who are focused on advancing their area of research and will help your child to master your subject. 93% of our research was recognised internationally for originality, significance and rigour, of which 19% was judged world-leading [REF 2021]. Many of our staff maintain links with industry and will be there every step of the way to help postgraduate students establish their own careers.







# STUDENT FINANCE

**Studying a postgraduate qualification is a significant investment into your child's future, but loans and financial support are still available to help with course and living costs at postgraduate level.**

Postgraduate students are able to apply for a government loan to cover the cost of their tuition and their living costs. Unlike the undergraduate student loan, this loan is not based on household income and your child will be able to apply for as much as they think they will need to fund their studies. Alternatively, some postgraduate students choose to self-fund.

Postgraduate students are responsible for paying their tuition fees direct to the university, meaning that budgeting their money will be a key skill as a postgraduate student.

Each year, there are a range of additional scholarships, loans and bursaries offered by external organisations that are available to those pursuing postgraduate study. These could be companies or charities wanting to encourage study in a particular area or from the universities themselves.

Lots of postgraduate students choose to supplement their student loan with work. Both part-time and full-time postgraduate study are popular options:

Full-time study	Part-time study
More study hours and dedication to independent study	Fewer study hours and time on campus
An intensive year of learning	Learning is spread out over two years
Time to get a part time job to supplement income	Time to work in full-time employment to supplement income

## GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

**Did your child study their undergraduate degree at BCU?  
If so, they could be eligible for 20% off their tuition fees with our graduate scholarship!**

More info: [www.bcu.ac.uk/postgraduate-finance](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/postgraduate-finance)



# EMPLOYABILITY

**There are an increasing number of occupations where employers require a postgraduate qualification, and even if they're not a necessity, postgraduate degrees are still valued by many companies.**

At postgraduate level, students develop several key skills vital to working in industry or completing further study such as time management, problem solving and critical thinking.

Each postgraduate course has a range of opportunities for your child to gain industry-relevant experience, either as part of the course, on placements or in volunteering roles. BCU supports its students in gaining placement and work opportunities through the Careers+ service. Our careers experts provide tailored advice on applications, CVs and interviews or assessment centres.

Our live projects, guest speaker events and new STEAMhouse building allow postgraduate students to network with industry professionals and make important connections.

## WHAT IS STEAMHOUSE?

Our brand new £70 million building, STEAMhouse, provides space for students to learn alongside businesses in residency. Based at our expanding City Centre Campus, this state-of-the-art centre will enable our students to share their ideas with industry and work on real, industry-based projects, as well as provide access to outstanding facilities and equipment and opportunities to network with local businesses. STEAMhouse is also the perfect springboard for a student to launch their own business.

# ALUMNI STORIES

Our postgraduate alumni are shaping the world with the skills they have honed at BCU. Developing their skills with the support of BCU's experts allows our graduates to thrive in their careers.

## **Abed's story:**

Abed has had a stammer from a very young age and will continue to stammer for the rest of his life. He was worried that this would affect his chances of becoming a teacher. Thankfully, the staff at BCU provided the support he needed and he's now working in his dream career.

*"Being a postgraduate student at BCU was amazing. The staff were incredibly helpful, and they offered sessions for me to improve my academic writing. Whilst on this course I learnt techniques that I definitely couldn't cope without in my working life, such as lesson planning and managing behaviour."*

"My latest achievement was being awarded Teacher of the Year at the Nasen (National Association for Special Educational Needs) Awards. I'm so passionate about my teaching career and want to help people like myself."

## **ABED AHMED**

**PGCE Secondary Mathematics**

Head of Department (for Maths)  
at KEVI Handsworth Wood Girls' Academy





### Elvinah's story:

Growing up in Belgium, Elvinah had big dreams of working on some of the UK's biggest television shows. She started to make her dreams a reality when she attended a BCU Open Day and soon threw herself into studying Media and Communication, followed by an MA in Media Production. With enough skills and experience under her belt to break the industry, Elvinah is now working on the likes of The Great British Bake Off, The Love Trap and 24 Hours in A&E.

*"I went to a BCU Open Day and I just fell in love, from the media rooms to the equipment, I knew that it was me. Most of the tutors worked in the industry before teaching, so they had a lot of advice and stories to share with us. Work experience at Sky and Universal Music during my degree prepared me to go straight into the industry."*

*After graduating I started working in roles on big TV shows like The Great British Bake Off and All That Glitters. I'm really proud that I've been able to have so many experiences and I can't wait to continue to grow from here."*

## ELVINAH XHIGNESSE

### MA Media Production

Researcher for Channel 4's  
24 hours in A&E



# HOW YOU CAN STILL SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT POSTGRADUATE LEVEL



## FINANCIALLY

Although postgraduate loans are available, your child may ask for extra financial support during their Master's degree. This can help them with accommodation or living costs, course supplies or their social life.

## SUPPORT THEIR INDEPENDENCE

Postgraduate study is a chance for your child to become even more independent than they did at undergraduate level. Allow them to explore their independence, whether that means giving them more freedom at home or in their postgraduate accommodation.

## TALK ABOUT THEIR PASSIONS

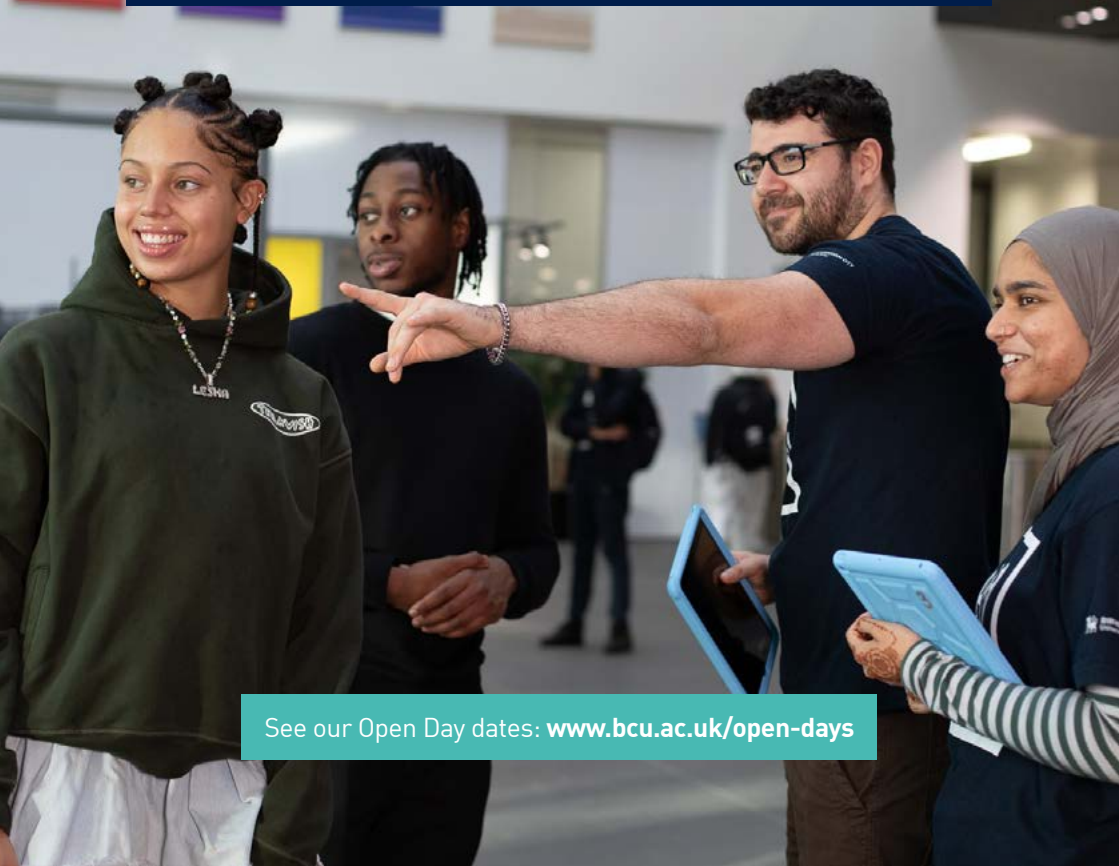
Your child will be pursuing a subject they're enthusiastic about; talk to them about their research and work to get involved and encourage them.

# ATTEND AN OPEN DAY

Attending an open day with your child can be useful if they're considering further study.

## If you attend with them, you'll find:

- » Our staff and students ready to answer any questions you might have
- » More information about postgraduate student finance and the application process
- » The opportunity to hear about work placement and networking opportunities
- » The chance to look around our state-of-the-art campuses and facilities
- » Birmingham, which is right on our doorstep for you to explore



See our Open Day dates: [www.bcu.ac.uk/open-days](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/open-days)

# STUDYING A MASTER'S IN BIRMINGHAM

If your child chooses to study with us, they'll be at the heart of the dynamic city of Birmingham – with all the social and employment possibilities that brings. Birmingham is home to around 43,000 companies. We work with businesses across the city from Jaguar Land Rover to Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to ensure our postgraduate students make connections in the city.

## TOP TEN

**Birmingham is ranked in the top ten cities in the UK for graduates, ranking factors such as job opportunities, living costs, and number of other 21-30 year olds in the community, making it the perfect place to kick-start their career.**

Compare the Market, 2023



## ACCOMMODATION

As a postgraduate student, your child will still be able to apply for university accommodation. During the application process, they will be able to list their preferences to ensure they can find the best fit for them.

We have a range of student accommodation residences which all offer full kitchen facilities, WiFi, furnished rooms, a maintenance service, laundry facilities and 24-hour CCTV. Plus, all of our accommodation is within easy distance of our campuses and Birmingham city centre and its transport links.

All bills are included in the weekly fee, so there is no need for new students to worry about budgeting for these during their stay. Rooms are subject to availability.

More information: [www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation)





# ANYTHING YOU NEED TO ASK US?

For prospective students: Course Enquiries **+44 (0) 121 331 5595**

For applicants: Admissions **+44 (0) 121 331 6295**

Other enquiries: Switchboard **+44 (0) 121 331 5000**

**[www.bcu.ac.uk/parents-and-guardians](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/parents-and-guardians)**

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