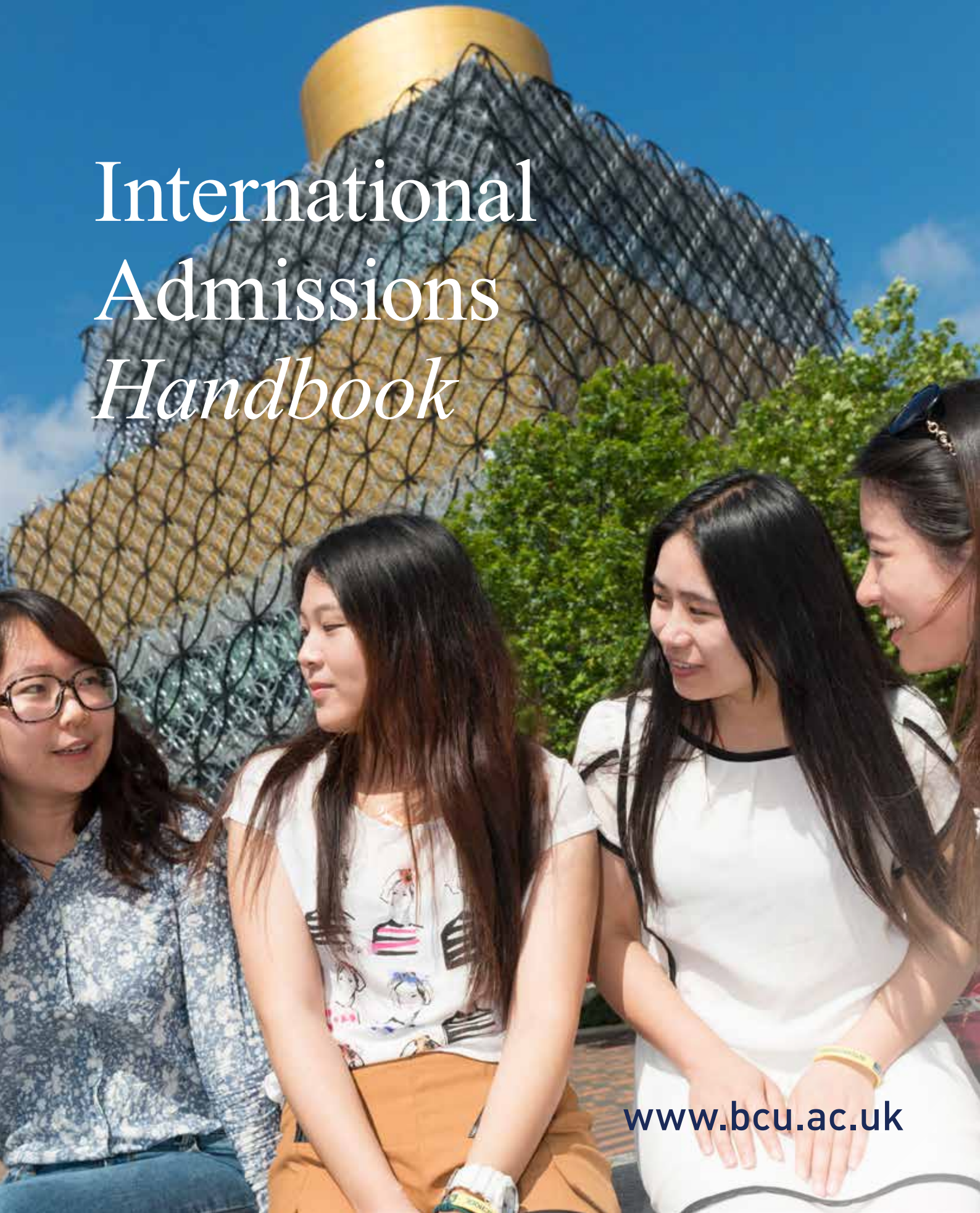




BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

International Admissions *Handbook*



www.bcu.ac.uk

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1. Introduction

Hello and congratulations!

We are delighted that you have been offered a place to study at Birmingham City University. If you decide to accept it, you will find that studying here will be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

This handbook will tell you a little more about the admissions process and what action you need to take now that you have received an offer. Included is information about accommodation, paying tuition fees and enrolment.

We hope that this will provide the answers to many of your questions and assist you in making your decision. However if you require further help or advice please do not hesitate to contact us.

About Birmingham City University

- We welcome 22,500 students from over 80 countries to study with us.
- We are mid-way through a £260 million investment plan, including a major expansion of our City Centre Campus.
- Nine out of 10 of our students go into employment or further study within six months of graduating (DLHE survey 2012/13).
- We work with companies like Microsoft, Cisco and Cartier to develop cutting edge curriculums and to collaborate on course projects.
- Our students have the opportunity to gain industry experience through work placements, mentoring schemes, Erasmus years and sandwich courses (subject to any visa restrictions).
- The University's student employment agency, 'OpportUNity - Student Jobs on Campus', helps students to find part-time work with the University (subject to any visa restrictions).





2. Your status for fee payment purposes

We have made you an offer on the basis that you are an overseas student and therefore you will have to pay the higher rate 'overseas' tuition fee. If you think this is incorrect you will need to complete a 'Fee Assessment Questionnaire' to help us correctly determine your status for fee payment purposes.

You can download the Fee Assessment Questionnaire from the international student link on our website at www.bcu.ac.uk/fee-assessment or telephone to request a copy on +44 (0)121 331 5389. You must also send us copies of all relevant documents to support your claim.

The rules relating to which students are charged the higher rate overseas tuition fee are determined by the United Kingdom Government. You can be exempt from the overseas rate by showing relevant connection with the United Kingdom or European Union.

If you fit into one of the following categories, you should be charged 'home' fees.

This is only a brief summary of persons who must be charged at the home fee rate if attending a higher education institution. If you are unsure whether you fit into any one of the categories below or if you need further information, please contact us by email at international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk.

Category 1:
Those who are 'settled' in the UK and meet the main residence requirements

In order to qualify for 'home' fees under this category, you must meet ALL of the following criteria:

(a) you must be 'settled' in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(b) you must be 'ordinarily resident' in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(c) you must also have been 'ordinarily resident' in the UK and Islands (the Islands means the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) for the full three year period before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course'. For example, if your course begins in October 2013, you must have been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands from 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2013 AND

(d) the main purpose for your residence in the UK and Islands must not have been to receive full-time education during any part of that three-year period.

Category 2:
Those who are 'settled' in the UK and have exercised a 'right of residence' in the European Economic Area (EEA) and/or Switzerland

You satisfy the qualifying conditions for this category if you meet ALL of the following criteria:

(a) you are settled in the UK AND

(b) you have left the UK and exercised a right of residence in another EEA country and/or in Switzerland, after having been 'settled' in the UK (a right of residence covers those people and their family members who are in the EEA and/or Switzerland as workers or self-employed people, or as students or self-sufficient people and, in all cases, their family members; or people who have gone to the state of which they or their family member is a national) AND

(c) you are ordinarily resident in the UK on the day on which the first term of the first academic year actually begins AND

(d) you have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories for the three years preceding the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(e) in a case where the ordinary residence referred to in (d) above was wholly or mainly for the purposes of receiving full-time education, you have been ordinarily resident in the EEA/ Switzerland immediately before that three-year period.

Category 3:
European Union (EU) nationals and their family members

To be eligible under this category:

a) on the 'first day of an academic year of your course', you must be: a national of an EU country; OR the 'relevant family member' of a non-UK EU national, and that non-UK EU national is in the UK as a self-sufficient person or as a student; OR the 'relevant family member' of a UK national AND

(b) you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories for the three years before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(c) the main purpose of your residence in the EEA/Switzerland (or the overseas territories if applicable) must not have been to receive full-time education during any part of the three-year period.

Category 4:
EU nationals in the UK

You satisfy the qualifying conditions if:

(a) you are an EU national (but not a UK national) on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course'. If you are a national of a country that joins the EU after the start of your course you will be treated as meeting this requirement in the next academic year AND

(b) you were ordinarily resident in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(c) you were ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three-year period before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(d) if during any part of the three year period, the main purpose for your residence was to receive full-time education, you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories immediately prior to the three-year period of ordinary residence in the UK and Islands.

Category 5:
EU nationals / family members with the right of permanent residence in the UK

EU nationals acquire the right of permanent residence after a five-year period of uninterrupted lawful residence in the UK. This same rule applies to family members who are not EU nationals and who have lived in the UK with an EU national for five years.

You are entitled to pay 'home' fees under this category if:

(a) you have 'the right of permanent residence' in the UK under European Community (EC) law on the 'first day of an academic year of the course' AND

(b) you were ordinarily resident in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(c) you were ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three-year period before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(d) if any of your ordinary residence in (b) was for the main purpose of receiving full-time education, you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories immediately prior to that three-year period.

Category 6:
European Economic Area (EEA) / Swiss workers and family members

In order to qualify for 'home' fees under this category, you must meet the following criteria:

(a) on the 'first day of an academic year of your course' you must be a non-UK EEA national, or a Swiss national, and resident in the UK as a 'worker' or the 'relevant family member' of such a 'worker' AND

(b) you must be ordinarily resident in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' unless you are an EEA or Swiss 'frontier worker' or 'relevant family member' of a 'frontier worker' AND

(c) you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories for the three years before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course'.

Category 7:
Child of a Swiss national

In order to qualify for 'home' fees under this category, you must meet the following criteria:

(a) on the 'first day of an academic year of your course' you must be the child of a Swiss national AND

(b) you must be ordinarily resident in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(c) you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or the overseas territories for the three years before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(d) if the main purpose for your residence in (c) above, was wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education, you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland immediately before that three-year period.

Category 8:
Child of a Turkish worker

To be eligible under this category:

(a) you must be the child of a Turkish national AND

(b) your Turkish national parent must be ordinarily resident in the UK and must be, or have been, lawfully employed in the UK AND

(c) you must be ordinarily resident in the UK on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(d) you must have been ordinarily resident in the EEA and/or Switzerland and/or Turkey and/or the overseas territories for the three years before the 'first day of the first academic year of the course'.

Category 9:
Refugees, their spouse/civil partner and children

To be eligible under this category:

(a) you must be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(b) on the 'first day of an academic year of the course', you must be a refugee recognised by the UK Government OR

you must be the spouse or civil partner of such a refugee and you must have been the spouse or civil partner of that person on the date on which their asylum application was made OR

you must be the child of such a refugee or of a refugee's spouse or civil partner and at the time the refugee made the asylum application you must have been the under-18-year-old child of the refugee or of the refugee's spouse or civil partner AND

(c) you have not ceased to be ordinarily resident since you were recognised as a refugee or, if you are a spouse, civil partner or child, since you were given leave to remain in the UK.

If you are, or if your parent or spouse or civil partner is, recognised as a refugee after the start of the course, you may be entitled to 'home' fees from the start of the next academic year.

Category 10:
Those not granted refugee status but allowed to remain in the UK with Humanitarian Protection, and their family

If you apply for asylum and the Home Office decides that you do not qualify for refugee status, you may still be allowed to stay in the UK. In such circumstances, the Home Office normally grants Humanitarian Protection (HP), Discretionary Leave (DL) or, in some cases, Indefinite Leave to Remain.

Until 1 April 2003, Exceptional Leave to Enter or Remain (ELE/R) was granted in such circumstances. To be eligible under this category:

(a) you must be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom on the 'first day of the first academic year of the course' AND

(b) on the 'first day of an academic year of the course' you must be a 'person granted Humanitarian Protection' OR

you must be the spouse or civil partner of a 'person granted Humanitarian Protection' and you must have been the spouse or civil partner of that person on the date on which the asylum application was made OR

you must be the child of a 'person granted Humanitarian Protection' or a child of that person's spouse or civil partner and, at the time the 'person granted Humanitarian Protection' made the asylum application, you must have been the under-18-year-old child of that person or of that person's spouse or civil partner.

If you are, or if your parent or spouse or civil partner is, granted permission to stay in the UK after the start of the course, you will be entitled to 'home' fees from the start of the next academic year if you meet the requirements above.

'Person granted Humanitarian Protection' means a person:

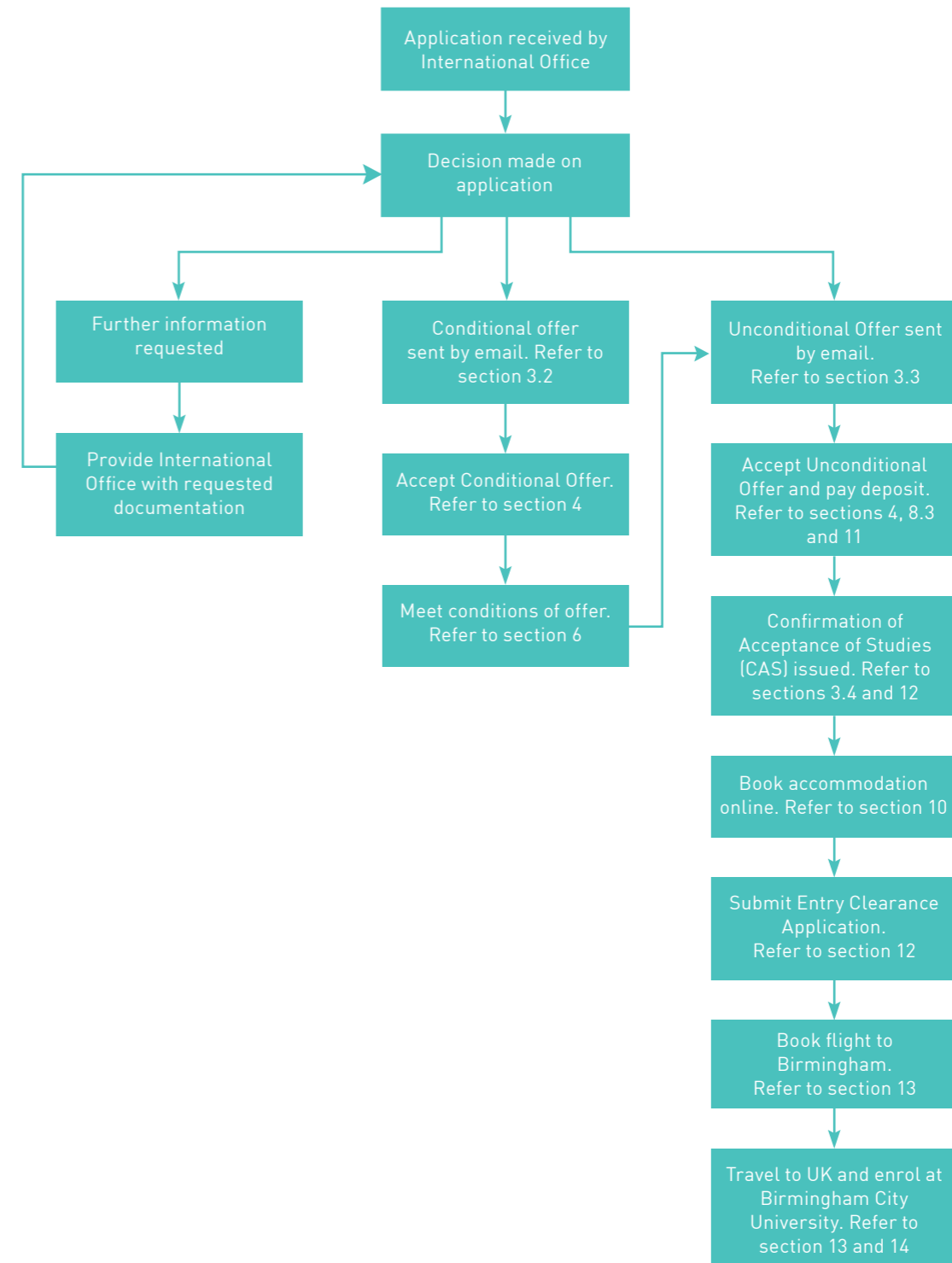
whom the Home Office has told does not qualify for recognition as a refugee but nevertheless should be allowed to stay in the UK and therefore has been granted Humanitarian Protection; and whose period of leave is still current, or has been renewed and the new leave is still current, or who is waiting for the outcome of an in time application for renewal, or is waiting for an appeal concerning their leave; and who has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands since having been granted leave. Remember, whilst the Home Office normally grants Humanitarian Protection (HP), Discretionary Leave (DL) or, in some cases, Indefinite Leave to Remain or other leave, this category is for people who have been refused refugee status and have been granted HP-only.

3. The admissions *procedure*

We are pleased that we have been able to offer you a place on a course at Birmingham City University. This offer will either be conditional or unconditional.

3.1 The admissions procedure flowchart

International students applying to study at Birmingham City University will follow the admissions procedure outlined in the flowchart below. You should refer to the appropriate section of this handbook for further guidance on each stage of the process.



3.2 Conditional Offer (not valid for visa application purposes)

The offer of a place will be conditional if you still have to take exams or if you have to meet other non-academic entry requirements. A conditional offer sets out either the exams you must pass and the results you must achieve, or any non-academic requirements you must fulfil, for example, providing academic references or a financial guarantee. The exact details of the conditions you must meet will be stated in the offer letter.

If you applied through a clearing house (see Section 4.2) your official notification of the offer will be sent to you by the clearing house.

3.3 Unconditional Offer (not valid for visa application purposes)

An unconditional offer is issued once the entry requirements have been met. This means that the University is satisfied from the information you have provided that you have met the entry requirements for your course.

If you applied through a clearing house (see Section 4.2) your official notification of the offer will be sent to you by the clearing house.

In order to firmly accept an unconditional offer and receive your Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies which is valid for visa purposes, you will have to pay a tuition fee deposit of £3,000. This deposit will be deducted from your main course

tuition fee when you enrol. The tuition fee deposit will be stated on the offer letter.

After you have accepted the offer and paid the deposit we will send you further details about joining the University, the Orientation Programme for International Students and the Meet and Greet Welcome Service. This information is normally sent two to three months before the start of your course.

3.4 Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) Information Sheet (valid for visa application purposes)

The CAS will confirm that the deposit has been paid and more importantly, it will include your Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) number. The CAS is a unique reference number that you will require in order to apply for your student visa/entry clearance. Please refer to Section 12 for more information on entry clearance.

3.5 Finances

Recent changes to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) rules require Tier 4 Sponsors to ensure that they only issue CAS to students who they feel will successfully obtain their visa to enter the UK. Therefore to ensure our compliance with UKVI regulations and help you prepare for your visa application we now require copies of your bank account statement before we can issue a CAS.

4. Accepting your offer

The way in which you accept your offer depends on whether you applied directly to the University or through a centralised Clearing House admissions service.

4.1 Direct applicants

You are referred to as a direct applicant if you completed a Birmingham City University application form and submitted it directly to the University or through one of the University's overseas recruitment consultants.

In order to accept the offer you should complete and return the Birmingham City University Response Form that accompanies the offer letter.

If you are accepting an unconditional offer you should also send any deposit payment that has been requested.

4.2 Clearing House applicants

You are referred to as a Clearing House applicant if you applied through one of the following centralised Clearing House admissions services:

- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)
- UCAS Teacher Training
- UCAS Conservatoires

With the exception of UCAS Conservatoires applicants, when you have received replies from

all of the universities on your application form you may accept two offers:

- your first choice is a firm acceptance. This means that if your examination results meet the entry requirements of the course you will take up this place.
- your second choice is your insurance place. This offer should have lower entry requirements than your first choice. You keep it as a reserve in case you fail to get the results you need for your first choice.

You should return the reply form to the relevant Clearing House to tell them which two offers you want to accept by the date specified.

If you are a Clearing House applicant and are firmly accepting an Unconditional Offer, you should return the response form to the relevant Clearing House BUT send the tuition fee deposit payment direct to Birmingham City University to secure your place on the course.

UCAS Conservatoires applicants have separate procedures for accepting offers. You should contact Birmingham Conservatoire for advice on +44 (0) 121 331 5901/ 5902 or visit www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire.

5. Deferring your offer

5.1 Eligibility for deferral

If you have a Conditional Offer you cannot apply for deferral and must re-apply for admission. If you hold an Unconditional Offer but were unable to join Birmingham City University for the term specified on your offer letter you may request to defer your offer.

For September entry courses you may defer admission for up to one academic year without having to re-apply for admission. If you wish to defer for more than one year you will need to re-apply for admission. Your application will then be re-assessed for entry in the new year of study.

We strongly recommend that you inform us of your intention to defer as early as possible.

Deferrals are only permitted for the course for which you already have an offer. If you wish to change course you must submit a fresh application.

Please note that being granted a deferral is not guaranteed.

5.2 Deferred offers and tuition fees

In order for your deferral request to be valid you must have paid the required tuition fee deposit for the academic year stated on your offer letter. The deposit must be paid before we will approve the deferral request and issue new documents.

If you wish to defer but have not already paid your tuition fee deposit, you will be required to pay the deposit fee.

By requesting a deferral it may invalidate any financial support offered as awards cannot be carried over from one year to the next. Scholarships and bursaries granted previously may not necessarily apply. You will also pay the tuition fee applicable for the following year's admission.

5.3 How to defer your offer

If you wish to defer your offer, you should send an email to international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk requesting to be deferred. The email should include your full name, your date of birth and your student application number.

Once your deferral request has been approved you will be notified by email and you will receive a new offer letter for the appropriate term. The new offer will reflect any changes in your programme requirements that may have occurred in the intervening time due to changes in the programme and/or admission requirements. Depending on the time of year that you request to defer, your new offer letter may not be issued immediately, however you will be informed by email whether your request has been approved or not.



6. Meeting the conditions of your offer

This information is relevant if you are holding a conditional offer.

6.1 Exam results

If you are holding a conditional offer it is essential that you notify us of all your exam results as soon as they are available. Any transcripts or certificates should be officially translated into English where necessary. Please send either a copy of the results certificate or a results letter from your school, college or university by post, fax or email (see section 19 for contact details). Please note that if any of the transcripts sent to us are found to be fraudulent, your offer will be withdrawn immediately.

Once we have confirmation that you have met the conditions of the offer you will be sent an unconditional offer letter to confirm your place on the course.

Please note that we may still be able to accept you onto the course if you narrowly miss the conditions of the offer. If you do not meet the conditions please contact the University for advice.

6.2 English language results (IELTS/TOEFL)

During your course all tuition, examinations and subject materials will be in English and in order to benefit from a course of study you will need a good understanding of the English language. You will also be required to prove your English ability when you apply for your student visa.

If you do not currently have an English language qualification that is recognised by the University, part of the conditions of the offer will indicate that you must pass the IELTS, TOEFL or Pearsons examination before we can accept you onto the course. The precise grade you are expected to achieve will be specified on the conditional offer letter.

You must send us a copy of your IELTS, TOEFL or Pearsons results as soon as possible. If you achieve the required grade we will confirm your offer and send you an unconditional offer letter. Please note that if any of the transcripts sent to us are found to be fraudulent, your offer will be withdrawn immediately.

If you do not meet the English language conditions we may be able to accept you onto one of our English language courses. Further details of these courses can be found in section 7 of this handbook.

If you have been asked to take the IELTS, TOEFL or Pearsons examination you may find the following information helpful:

IELTS

IELTS stands for the International English Language Testing System and this test is administered by the British Council. It is an internationally-recognised system for testing English language skills in listening, reading, writing and speaking.

IELTS exams are offered in British Council centres across the globe throughout the year. Many of the British Council centres also offer IELTS courses which begin with an entry test to help you study at the right level. If you simply want to test your English language skills they also offer preparation courses which give you a practical experience of the testing system. IELTS certificates are valid for two years.

For further details about IELTS and to locate your nearest test centre visit the IELTS website at www.ielts.org.

TOEFL

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is administered by the Education Testing Service USA. The test measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to use and understand North American English as it is spoken, written and heard in college and university settings.

There are test centres worldwide and in most regions the test is offered on computer. In areas where access to computer-based testing is limited, a paper-and-pencil version of the test is administered.

For further details about TOEFL and to locate your nearest test centre visit the TOEFL website at www.ets.org.

Pearson

Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic is an academic language test for international students; it is secure, accessible and offers quick results.

The complete test will normally be delivered in one three-hour session, for a more convenient test experience. Test takers may take the test as often as they wish, but may only schedule one test at a time. Subsequent tests may be scheduled when notification has been received that scores are ready to be viewed and provided that a minimum of five days has passed since the previous appointment.

The new test will measure overall English language competency, in addition to providing feedback on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The PTE Academic Score Report will include the availability of communicative skills and enabling skills.

For further information visit the Pearson website: www.pearsonpte.com.

Finally, while IELTS, TOEFL and Pearsons are recognised by the UKVI as Secure English Language Tests (SELT), we also recognise other English language qualifications. Please refer to the international pages at www.bcu.ac.uk for the complete list.

6.3 The Clearing system

The Clearing system only applies to applicants who have submitted an application through one of the centralised clearing house admissions services, (ie UCAS, UCAS Conservatoires).

If you did not meet the conditions of the offer you may not be accepted on to the course you have chosen.

If you find yourself in this situation you can try to find an alternative place through Clearing.

Clearing is the system that tells you which courses still have places available and it is your last opportunity to find a place for the coming academic year. Clearing starts in mid-August and if you do not have a confirmed place by then you should contact the International Office Clearing Helpline by telephoning+ 44 (0)121 331 5389. Alternatively you can email us at international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk.

7. English language courses at Birmingham City University

7.1 Pre-sessional English courses

If you apply to Birmingham City University but narrowly miss the minimum English language entry requirements, we may offer you a place on either the six-week or the 10-week Pre-Sessional English Course before you begin your main academic studies.

As well as improving your general writing, speaking, listening and reading skills, the teaching also focuses on the language and study skills that you need for academic work such as listening to lectures, taking notes, reading textbooks, academic writing and making oral presentations. Both summer courses also include a social programme of visits and events which will give you an insight into the British way of life, help you to make friends and settle down into a new environment.

In order to satisfy the United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) regulations to join a pre-sessional English course in the UK, you must already have a Secure English Language Test (SELT). These include IELTS, TOEFL and Pearson. For each of these SELTs, we have provided the scores required for the pre-sessional courses below.

IELTS SCORES

The six-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following IELTS scores:

You have IELTS	You need IELTS	Recommended course
5.5 (with a minimum of 5.0 in all bands)	6.0	6 week pre-sessional
6.0 (with a minimum of 5.0 in all bands)	6.5	6 week pre-sessional

The 10-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following IELTS scores:

You have IELTS	You need IELTS	Recommended course
5.0 (with a minimum of 4.5 in all bands)	6.0	10 week pre-sessional
5.5 (with a minimum of 5.0 in all bands)	6.5	10 week pre-sessional
6.0 (with a minimum of 5.5 in all bands)	7.0	10 week pre-sessional

TOEFL SCORES

The six-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following TOEFL scores:

You have TOEFL	You need IELTS	Recommended course
72 (with a minimum of 18 in Reading, 17 in Listening, 20 in Speaking and 17 in Writing)	6.0	6 week pre-sessional
80 (with a minimum of 18 in Reading, 17 in Listening, 20 in Speaking and 17 in Writing)	6.5	6 week pre-sessional

The 10-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following TOEFL scores:

You have TOEFL	You need IELTS	Recommended course
62 (with a minimum of 14 in Reading, 14 in Listening, 19 in Speaking and 15 in Writing)	6.0	10 week pre-sessional
72 (with a minimum of 18 in Reading, 17 in Listening, 20 in Speaking and 17 in Writing)	6.5	10 week pre-sessional
80 (with a minimum of 18 in Reading, 17 in Listening, 20 in Speaking and 17 in Writing)	7.0	10 week pre-sessional

Pearson scores

The six-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following PTE Academic scores:

You have Pearson	You need IELTS	Recommended course
Minimum of 51 in each band	6.0	6 week pre-sessional
Minimum of 54 in each band	6.5	6 week pre-sessional

The 10-week course is designed for students who have achieved the following Pearson scores:

You have Pearson	You need IELTS	Recommended course
Minimum of 46 in each band	6.0	10 week pre-sessional
Minimum of 51 in each band	6.5	10 week pre-sessional
Minimum of 54 in each band	7.0	10 week pre-sessional

If you join a pre-sessional English course, your offer for your main course at Birmingham City University will be conditional on you successfully completing the pre-sessional course.

By the end of the pre-sessional course you will need to have reached the language level required by your intended degree (eg overall IELTS 6.0 or 6.5) with a minimum of IELTS 5.5 in each of the four skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking). You will be assessed on your work throughout the course and you will also take a test at the end of the course to determine your final score. At this point, if you do not meet the English language conditions of your main course, the University may be able to offer you a place on the one-year Foundation Certificate in English for Academic Purposes (FCEAP) course.

It is important that you are aware that if you arrive late for the pre-sessional course you may be refused onto the course and therefore not be able to progress onto your main academic programme of study.

When you arrive at enrolment for the pre-sessional English course you will need to pay the tuition fee for this course in full. If you plan to stay in University accommodation during the course you will also need to pay for this in full to Accommodation Services. The summer tuition fee also includes social events and activities that you are invited to participate in during the course.

Course	Start date	End date
6 week pre-sessional	3 August 2015	11 September 2015
10 week pre-sessional	6 July 2015	11 September 2015

For 2014 the fees are as follows:

Course	Tuition Fee	Accommodation
6 weeks	£1,680	£720
10 weeks	£2,800	£1,200

7.2 Foundation Certificate in English for Academic Purposes (FCEAP)

As the name suggests, this course is designed to help you develop your academic English skills and to prepare you for study at a UK university. However, we believe that the programme also provides you with a wonderful opportunity to share and exchange opinions with students from many different cultures and backgrounds. Learning about the lives and experiences of other students in your class and throughout the University, will broaden your views and help you think reflectively; this will give you many advantages in terms of personal and professional development. The ability to understand and feel confident with a diverse range of people, especially in terms of increasing globalisation, is an important life skill and an asset to any future employer.

Course aims and objectives

Aims

The course aims to produce confident, reflective, independent learners well prepared for academic study in a UK university.

Objectives

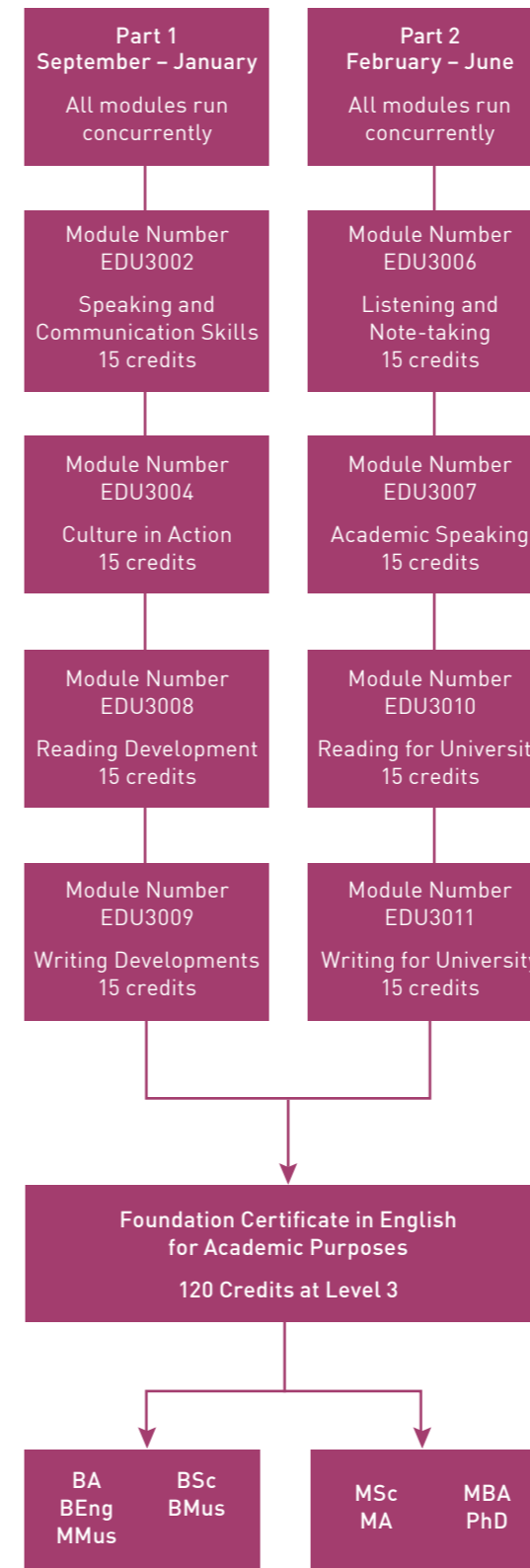
On completion of the course, you should be able to:

- demonstrate improved understanding and performance in spoken and written English
- take effective notes from spoken and written texts and write effective summaries; locate and use sources effectively within British academic conventions
- work as an independent, reflective, learner who adapts well to change.

Course title	Duration	Credits
Foundation Certificate in English for Academic Purposes	Parts 1 and 2 (September to June)	A foundation course is made up of modules with a total value of 120 credits

Course structure

Those entering Part 2 with advanced standing will be exempt from modules EDU3002 Speaking and Communication Skills, EDU3004 Culture in Action and EDU3008 Reading Development



Module Overview

Reading Development

This module will initially prepare you for the reading requirements of your academic course. It will help you to become an efficient and independent reader by teaching you to use reading strategies and techniques in order to arrive at an in-depth understanding of texts.

Writing Development

This module is designed to prepare you for academic life in a UK university specifically in the area of writing. To this end, Writing Development will help you to become a more independent writer; your tutor will introduce you to the writing skills needed to develop the precision of your writing. Writing Development is intended to prepare you for the second semester module Writing for University.

Speaking and Communication Skills

This module will help you develop competent communication skills through learner-centred activities and you will have opportunities to explore and use speaking and listening strategies in a variety of situations, including the wider community. You will also practise listening for the general idea and specific information and will use listening extracts as a model for speaking activities.

Culture in Action

This module will prepare you for the challenges of studying at university, in particular the independent working and reflective elements of your academic course. This module will help you to become a more confident, organised, resourceful learner by enabling you to discover your personal strengths and to develop new skills for more effective results in all areas of learning.

Listening and Note-taking

In this module you will explore listening skills and note-taking strategies and ways of developing these effectively. You will build upon your vocabulary and develop skills in using context clues, prefixes and suffixes and becoming familiar with the structure of lectures.

Academic Speaking

This module will provide you with the opportunity to develop your speaking skills so that you are able to participate successfully in academic roles. It is designed to help you develop confidence and contribute more effectively when involved in University activities such as group tutorials, discussions, seminars or presentations.

Reading for University

This module will prepare you for the challenges of studying at university level, in particular for the reading requirements of your academic course. This module will help you to find information quickly and accurately, to identify what is important in a text, to compare different sources of information and to read critically in order to complete an academic task.

Writing for University

This module is designed to prepare you for academic life in a UK university specifically in the area of academic writing. To this end, Writing for University will help you to produce written assignments which conform to the academic conventions of a UK university.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Minimum entry requirements for Part 1 (September – June) are IELTS 4.5 (5)

Minimum entry requirements for Part 2 only (February – June) are IELTS 5 (5.5)

8. Your finances

8.1 Tuition fees

Because tuition fees are subject to change, the following is only a guide and there will be an annual increase to international fees on a yearly basis. International students for courses in 2015/16 will pay:

Course Type	FEE
Foundation courses (FCEAP)	£8,500
Most Undergraduate and Postgraduate	£11,500
Exceptions:	
Undergraduate - Birmingham School of Acting - Acting BA (Hons)	£14,900
Undergraduate - Birmingham School of Acting - other courses	£12,600
Undergraduate - Birmingham Conservatoire	£14,900
MA framework (Band A)	£12,000
MA framework including MBA (Band B)	£14,000
Postgraduate - Birmingham School of Acting	£14,900
Postgraduate - Birmingham Conservatoire - MMus (Intensive)/ Professional Performance Adv PgDip	£17,000
Postgraduate - Birmingham Conservatoire - all other PG courses	£14,900
MSc Data Networks + CCNP	£14,900
MSc Enterprise Systems Management	£14,900
MSc Accounting and Finance (6 month)	£5,700
MSc Accounting and Finance (CIMA pathway) Dip only	£8,200
ACCA (£900 per paper) Full-time	£3,600 - £5,400
Pre-Sessional English course 6 week	£1,680
Pre-Sessional English course 10 week	£2,800

The tuition fee includes:

- Normal tuition and examination costs
- Membership of the Students' Union
- English language tuition during term-time if you need it
- Help with study skills
- Access to a wide range of student services and facilities.

8.2 Instalment options - international students

1. Payment at enrolment

There are a number of options available for paying your tuition fees. There will be a discount of £300 for students who pay their tuition fee in full before the end of the enrolment period.

Alternatively you can pay as follows:

Enrolment	Payment deadline for discount
September 2015	31 October 2016
January/February 2016	15 March 2016
April 2016	31 May 2016

2. Payment by instalments

Option 1 – Pay 50% of fees at enrolment plus:

Enrolment Period	Balance due no later than	Payment method
September 2015	31 January 2016	Online, card, cash, BACS, cheque
January 2016	30 April 2016	Online, card, cash, BACS, cheque

Option 2 – 50% of fees paid at enrolment plus the following Direct Debit instalments*

Students enrolling September 2015	Students enrolling January 2016
Minimum payment of 50% of fees or any higher value, plus monthly payments as follows:	
December 2015	April 2016
February 2016	June 2016
March 2016	July 2016

* using a UK bank or building society that facilitates this method of payment.

Option 3 - 50% of fees paid at enrolment plus the following Direct Debit instalments*

Students enrolling September 2015	Students enrolling January 2016
Minimum payment of 50% of fees or any higher value, plus monthly payments as follows:	
November 2015	April 2016
December 2015	May 2016
January 2016	June 2016
February 2016	July 2016
March 2016	August 2016
April 2016	September 2016



Any student that fails to make full or part payment or does not comply with the fee payment policy shall be subject to the following:

- The student will not be allowed to enrol unless a minimum of 50 per cent of the fees due has been paid
- All fees due will need to be paid within 30 days from the date the invoice is created if an instalment plan is not selected
- A financial statement will be issued to your University email address
- The student may lose the opportunity to pay by Direct Debit
- Instalment details are provided for illustration only based on the options available during 2014/15. These are reviewed each year and may be subject to change. Full details will be available prior to full enrolment.
- Should the fees remain unpaid after 30 days, the student will be regarded as a debtor to Birmingham City University; a debt status will be applied with associated penalties. Updates will be issued to all faculties and appropriate central departments and penalties will be imposed against the student's record in accordance with the University's credit management policy.
- If any instalment payments fail, or where there is non-compliance with payments on any of the due dates, the instalment plan will be declared void and the total remaining balance of fees due will then become payable immediately in full.

Payment by a sponsor

A sponsor is classified as follows: a company, government body, employer, charitable or third party non-domestic organisation. A relative, individual or friend is not deemed an official sponsor. Any students in receipt of full or part sponsorship must provide written evidence of funding prior to or at enrolment. This should be on official headed paper and signed by the sponsor; provision can be via the original paper copy or submitted via a scanned electronic copy of the original letter.

The sponsorship letter must be provided at enrolment and must include the following information:

- Your full name and University application number.
- The title of your course of study.
- The academic year for which the sponsorship is being provided.
- The address we should send an invoice to.
- The exact amount your sponsor will be paying towards your tuition fees.
- The sponsor's official order number.
- The name and position within the organisation of the person authorising the sponsorship.

Your sponsor will be invoiced direct for the full amount of tuition fees due. A copy of Birmingham City University's standard sponsor agreement letter is available from the International Office upon request. You can refer this to your sponsor for completion to ensure the relevant information is recorded for invoicing purposes.

Please note that the tuition fee must be paid in full on invoice and cannot be paid in instalments. You should also be aware that the University will charge you directly if your sponsor subsequently fails to pay the tuition fee.

8.3 Tuition fee deposit

When you accept an unconditional offer of a place to study at Birmingham City University you will be required to pay a minimum tuition fee deposit of £3,000 (or a higher amount up to the value of your tuition fees if you wish), in order to demonstrate to the Entry Clearance Officer who will conduct your visa interview, that you are a serious applicant with a genuine commitment.

This deposit demonstrates your commitment to the University and will be deducted from your course tuition fee upon arrival. It is strongly recommended that you pay your deposit as early as possible so that your Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) can be issued. You will be unable to make a student visa application until you have a CAS with a unique reference number.

If you are required to pay a tuition fee deposit this will be clearly stated in your offer letter.

If you are being sponsored by your Government you may find that they will not pay any deposits before you join the course. If this applies to you please send us a letter of financial guarantee from your Government to confirm that they will pay your tuition fees. We will then be able to waive the tuition fee deposit requirement and issue your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). If you are a US national and have been granted a Federal Loan you are not required to pay a deposit to receive a CAS.

In most cases applicants recruited through bi-lateral arrangements or partnerships with overseas institutions are not required to pay the tuition fee deposit.

It is important to note that if you pay more than the tuition fee deposit stated in your offer letter before enrolment, any additional money paid will be deducted from your remaining tuition fee. You will not be able to draw on this money to cover living expenses or accommodation costs.

8.4 Tuition Fee Deposit Refund Policy

Tuition fee deposits are refunded in full under the following circumstances:

1.1. Where a student visa application is rejected in writing by the Embassy / High Commission. Should a visa application be rejected, the University requires you to attach the following documents to the refund request:

- A copy of the Visa Rejection Notification from the High Commission

- The Birmingham City University CAS information sheet
- A request in writing with original signature. This does not apply where the UK Government has cancelled a visa as a result of a breach of visa conditions or rejected a renewal of a visa or if the refusal is due to falsified documents.

1.2 Where there are exceptional circumstances beyond your control such as illness or bereavement of an immediate member of family.

An application for an exceptional circumstances refund for illness or bereavement must be supported by certified documents such as a Doctor's certificate and/or other relevant documents verifying the situation. Decisions regarding exceptional circumstance refunds are at the discretion of the Director of the International Office.

1.3 In the event of a default by Birmingham City University you are entitled to a refund in the following circumstances:

- When the University does not offer a course on the advertised start date
- When the University terminates a course after the course start date and before the course completion date
- When the University does not provide a course as advertised, due to sanctions or circumstances beyond its control.

2. No refunds, other than for exceptional circumstances, will be made once you have arrived in the UK and after the commencement date of the course.

3. Should any student be found to use fraudulent documents at the time of application, at the time of applying for entry clearance or at enrolment, no refund will be due.

4. All approved refunds are sent back to the original payer using the original source and original method of payment wherever possible.

5. Bank charges may be deducted for refunds made by bank draft or electronic transfer at the discretion of the University.

6. In cases in which refunds of £3,000 or more have been agreed, you will be asked to sign an additional letter under the 2007 Money Laundering Act.

8.5 Living costs

It is important to carefully consider the financial implications of studying in the United Kingdom. Not only must you pay your tuition fees you must also cover the costs of your living expenses such as accommodation, food, heating, travel, books and stationery.

The figures below are approximate costs of following a course for a full academic year and are based on the 2014/15 academic year and are subject to change. The actual amount you will need depends on the type of accommodation you choose and your personal lifestyle. Some students are able to live more cheaply than these estimates while others find that the figures are too low in some areas. Any estimates for subsequent years will need to take account of future inflation. Please note that all rents for University accommodation are subject to an annual increase which takes place on 1 September.

Accommodation

40 - 51 weeks in University accommodation
£3,860 to £5,967

(depending on which campus you are based at prices range from **£96.50 to £128.50** per week and include energy costs and internet)

52 weeks in private rented shared housing
£3,120 to £4,680

(prices **do not include** energy costs and range from £60 to £80 per week)

Living expenses

The figures below are based on average costs and it will not be possible for you to make



significant savings on them. It is not advisable to plan on managing on much lower figures than these as it would not be realistic and would be likely to result in financial difficulty.

If possible, try to bring more than the estimated costs we have given you below as this will allow for unexpected costs and increases in UK prices.

For 40 weeks

Food **£2,600**
Gas and electricity **£2,080**
Insurance for personal belongings **£15 - £117**
Laundry (using a laundrette) **£240**
Course related costs: books/stationery/
photocopying/binding **£450**
Subscriptions to journals/magazines **£36**
Bus pass – three terms + summer pass (travel)
£138 per term
Television licence **£145.50**
Mobile telephone **£240**
Social activity costs – depends on activities
£600 - £960
Kitchen utensils, plates and cutlery **£35**
Police registration (if applicable) **£34**
TOTAL £6,803 (min) - £7,265 (max)

Additional extras - cost per item

Coat/jacket **£55**
Waterproof shoes **£50**
Trousers **£35**
Jumper/sweater **£20**
Scarf **£5**
Gloves **£5**
Hat **£8**
Basic computer **£500**
Television **£130**
International phone card from **£5**
Prescribed medicine per item (from 1 April 2014)
£8.20
Membership of the National Union of Students
£12
TOTAL £832.65

All of the above amounts are for a single student. If you plan to bring your family to the UK your expenditure will be increased significantly. You should consider carefully the costs involved for housing and maintaining your family if they will be accompanying you while you are studying in the UK.

Although the UK Government places no limit on the amount of money you can bring into the UK you may need the approval of the

exchange control in your own country. If your government restricts the amount of money it allows out of your country you should start making arrangements for transferring money several months before the start of your course. Once permission has been granted you or your sponsor will need to deposit the money in a local bank or your central or national bank. You should check how long it will take for the money to arrive in the UK once it has been deposited. You may be able to transfer money direct before departure.

Please note that if you open a bank account when you arrive in the UK it can take up to two weeks before you are able to access your money. Therefore you will need to ensure that you can bring enough money with you to cover your tuition and accommodation fees and also your initial living expenses.

8.6 Part-time work

If you are concerned about living costs the University's Job Shop can help you find part-time employment to supplement your income.

Under the immigration rules most international students are allowed to work part-time. If you are studying degree level or above (including foundation degree courses) you are permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time. If you are studying below degree level (not including foundation level courses) you can work a maximum of 10 hours per week during term time. All students can work full-time during vacations. The professional experience that you acquire through working in the UK can significantly enhance your CV and prove to be an invaluable asset when you return to the employment market in your home country.

However please note that in order to meet the immigration rules for students when applying for entry clearance you have to show that you have enough money to support yourself without needing to work in the UK. You cannot, therefore, refer to your potential earnings in the UK when showing the Entry Clearance Officer how you will support yourself.

Student Services can offer help with skills to enable to you to get a part-time job by following this link: www.bcu.ac.uk/student-info/student-services/careers-and-job-prospects.

9. Discounts, scholarships and *bursaries*

Each year the University provides a number of scholarships and bursaries to international students to cover a proportion of the tuition fee for the first year of study.

Each year we have a limited number of bursaries available varying from £500 to £1,000, for the duration of one-year. Amounts will vary and are discretionary. Some of these bursaries will be allocated on a first come first served basis and are based on you paying your deposit to the University. Others will be allocated by our Regional Managers at selected interview sessions and exhibitions overseas. For further details please contact bcuinternational@enquiries.co.uk

We also offer the following bursaries:

Loyalty bursaries

Students who have completed a minimum full-time one-year programme with Birmingham City University and who progress to another Birmingham City University programme are entitled to a loyalty bursary.

All full-time programmes with a minimum length of one year are eligible for a loyalty bursary of 10 per cent. The loyalty bursary may be awarded pro-rata for part-time or shorter courses.

Prompt payment discount

There will be a discount of £300 for students who pay their tuition fee in full before the end of the enrolment period.

This discount will apply to the amount you owe after any scholarships or bursaries have been deducted from your tuition fee.

Other sources of funding for international students

In addition to the scholarships and bursaries offered by the University, there are a number of other organisations that award funding to assist international students wishing to study in the UK. In this section we provide information about some of the main sources of funding for which you may apply, but this is by no means an exhaustive list. There are many organisations large and small that may be able to offer assistance, from governments and international organisations such as the European Commission, UNESCO and WHO, to voluntary organisations and charities.

To find out about scholarship opportunities for students wishing to study overseas, you should in the first instance contact your own Ministry of Education and your nearest British Council Office or British Embassy/High Commission. The British Council Funding Your Studies website provides links to information on the main sources of funding, and includes a UK Scholarships Database which may help you in your search. You may download a PDF version of the booklet Sources of Funding for International Students from the British Council. Another source of information you may find useful is UKCISA: The Council for International Education.

Competition for scholarships and grants to study in the UK is very fierce. Most grant-making organisations require applicants to meet strict criteria in order to be eligible for funding. If your application does not show that you meet these criteria, then you will not be considered for an award. If you do meet the criteria, then you will be considered along with other candidates. Scholarships will generally be granted to those who demonstrate superior need or individual merit.



You should consider the following points when you apply for funding:

- Apply only to those funding organisations whose criteria you meet. Try to target those sources where your chances are strongest.
- Start looking in good time and apply early. You should begin looking eighteen months before you intend to start your studies in the UK. In most cases you will have to apply at least a year before your course starts. Always make sure you make your application before the deadline.
- Ensure that your application is accurate and complete, and includes all necessary supporting documentation. If the grant-making body has its own application form, then use it.
- Bear in mind that most grant-making organisations only give small amounts of money, and it is unlikely that they will cover the whole or even the major part of the cost of your studies.

Awards for postgraduate study

The following is a selection of postgraduate studies awards offered through the UK Government for which prospective students of the University may be eligible. Remember that this is not an exhaustive list. To find out about other sources of funding consult the British Council UK Scholarships Database. The website of the Association for Commonwealth Universities may be useful to students of Commonwealth countries.

British Chevening Scholarships

The British Chevening Scholarships, funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and administered by the British Council, are prestigious awards which enable talented graduates and young professionals from overseas to study in the UK and gain skills which will benefit their countries. The aim is to bring to the UK present and future leaders, decision-makers and opinion-formers, especially from those countries with whom the UK's economic relations are expected to develop.

The Chevening programme provides around 2,300 new scholarships each year for postgraduate studies or research at UK institutions of higher education. Some of these are jointly funded with private companies, universities, trusts, foundations and other grant-making organisations, and will be advertised in those countries where they are offered. Altogether, British Chevening Scholarships are available in 160 countries worldwide. Awards can cover tuition fees only or tuition fees and living allowances.

In order to be eligible to apply for a Chevening Scholarship you must:

- be a graduate with proven academic skills
- be committed to return to your country and contribute to its socio-economic development by using the skills and knowledge acquired in the UK
- be established in a career, with a track record of excellence and achievement, and the prospect of becoming a leader in your chosen field (the vast majority of Chevening scholars are aged 25 to 35 years old)
- be able to demonstrate how the scholarship will benefit your country on your return
- have good English language skills

You should be aware that competition for the scholarships is intense, and only one out of every 25 applicants is successful. If you wish to apply for a Chevening Scholarship you should contact your nearest British Embassy/High Commission or British Council office. More information is available on the British Chevening Scholarships website.

Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships plan

If you come from a Commonwealth country or British dependent territory, you may be eligible for a Commonwealth Scholarship. These scholarships are funded by the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. They are for postgraduate study and research, so you will need a university degree or equivalent qualification. If there are no undergraduate courses in a particular subject in your region or country you may, exceptionally, be able to apply for support to take a first degree.

Grants are for one to three years and usually cover the cost of travel, tuition fees and living expenses. Additional allowances may be available in cases of special need or for married students.

You may obtain further information and application forms from the Commonwealth Scholarships and Fellowships Plan (CSFP) website.

Overseas Research Student Awards Scheme (ORSAS)

These awards, funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), are for postgraduate study leading to a higher degree at a UK university. Selection is based solely on academic merit and research potential.

Awards cover the difference between the cost of home and overseas tuition fees, and do not cover living costs. They are made for one year in the first instance, and are renewable for a second or third year subject to satisfactory progress.

Further information can be obtained from the Universities UK website or directly from the University once an offer has been made.

10. Plan your accommodation

When you come to study at Birmingham City University one of your key concerns will be where you are going to live. Birmingham City University offers accommodation in University-owned accommodation (University halls) and in partnership with private sector providers (private halls).

All unaccompanied international students over the age of 18 are guaranteed a room in self-catering accommodation for the duration of their course, provided that we receive the accommodation application before the deadline date of 31 August 2015. Students will be placed in University halls or private halls for their first year but must re-apply by December of that year if they wish to continue to have accommodation for the following year. For those who are under 18, please visit our website for further information.

10.1 University accommodation

The majority of our international students choose to live in University halls or private halls as this is the easiest option and is the ideal way to make new friends who very often become lifelong friends.

Name	Type of accommodation	Location	Priority to	Cost per week for 2015/16
The Coppice	6 bed apartments, shared bathrooms	Perry Barr, adjacent to City North Campus	City North Campus students	£96.50
Oscott Gardens	5 to 8 bed apartments, en-suite facilities	Perry Barr, adjacent to City North Campus	City North Campus students	£112.50 - £128.50
City South Campus	4 to 11 bed apartments, shared bathrooms	Edgbaston, adjacent to City South Campus	City South Campus students	£98 - £99
Private Halls	3, 4, 5, 6 bed apartments, en-suite facilities	City centre	City Centre Campus, Birmingham Conservatoire, Art and Jewellery students	£107 - £126

*Prices for 2015/16 rents are based on proposed figures and may be subject to change.

Rent for University halls or private halls include heating, lighting and hot water. Further details about rent charges can be obtained from the Accommodation Services website www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation, which will be updated, therefore please keep your eye on our website.

Most University halls and private halls accommodation is in mixed gender flats but we also have a small number of all-female or all-male flats that you can choose if you prefer.

Each accommodation site has accommodation staff and a team of workers who look after the accommodation. There are also Student Assistants who are available to help and advise students living whilst in University halls or private halls.

There are some minor variations on each campus however, a typical room is furnished with:

- Single bed, pillow, mattress and mattress cover
- Curtains
- Wardrobe
- Chest of drawers
- Study desk and chair
- Mirror
- Wash basin

In most accommodation you will share the kitchen, lounge/dining room and bathroom with the other students in your flat, with the exception of en-suite accommodation where all rooms have their own shower room and toilet. All rooms are heated and have a private telephone which allows you to make internal calls. There is also a connection to the basic package internet at all the accommodation. This can be upgraded at an additional cost if required.

All the accommodation allows for independent living. This means that you have to do your own cleaning of kitchens, bathrooms as well as bedrooms, and you will also have to cook your own meals. There are a number of catering outlets on the University campuses and they are open throughout the day so that you can obtain a hot meal or snack if you do not wish to cook for yourself.

Students with disabilities can be accommodated however you will need to mention this on your online accommodation application form so that the most appropriate accommodation can be provided for you.

10.2 Applying for accommodation

It's really easy to apply for accommodation – everything is now online. Go to our website www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation to proceed.

You can apply for a room in University halls or private halls once you have been offered and have accepted an Unconditional Offer on a course. The sooner you make your online application the more likely it is you will get your first choice of accommodation. If you have a problem applying online then please contact the accommodation office by emailing accommodation@bcu.ac.uk or telephoning +44 (0)121 331 5191/5192.

The Accommodation Services department will contact you by email to confirm details of your offer of accommodation/booking details. Please ensure your email, telephone and correspondence address details are accurate and complete on your online application form.

Please do not make any payment for accommodation prior to being offered a room.

University halls accommodation

You will receive notification by email of the University halls accommodation offered to you. Please follow the instructions within the email to proceed with the online acceptance of the room process.

As part of this acceptance process you will be asked to pay an advanced accommodation payment of £350; this will be in addition to the tuition fee deposit you may already have paid. Please ensure that you send your advance accommodation payment to Accommodation Services not the International Office. In the event that you subsequently withdraw and no longer require the accommodation we regret that this payment is non-refundable.

The remainder of the accommodation fees are to be paid at the start of each term. Once you have opened a UK bank account you can pay by direct debit but prior to this payment can be made by credit/debit card.

You will sign an accommodation Licence Agreement for 40 weeks which covers both the Christmas and Easter vacations.

If the first year of your course exceeds 40 weeks we can extend your contract accordingly to cover the vacation period from 18 June to 31 August 2016. However you must advise us of this when requested to do so during the spring term when you will be asked to complete a manual accommodation application form. Should you require accommodation after the vacation, i.e. 1 September 2016 onwards, we will arrange this but again you must inform us of this in your vacation application form above. You may need to move to another room.

It should be noted that accommodation fees increase on 1 September each year.

Private halls accommodation

You will receive notification by email of the accommodation offered to you by the University. As stated above, because we work in partnership with these providers the acceptance of the room process and tenancy/contract is different. It is important that you read the email sent from Birmingham City University and follow the instructions within it to accept the offer. Please note that you will only be given a few days to accept this offer.

Our Accommodation Services office provides information, help and advice on the different types of accommodation available to you as a Birmingham City University student. If you have a query you should refer to the accommodation website in the first instance as many of your questions will be answered there: www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation.

10.3 Private sector housing

If you do not want to live in accommodation provided by the University halls or private halls, or if you are bringing your family to Birmingham with you, you may need to consider private housing that is owned by individual landlords or organisations. This type of accommodation is widely available and popular with students. The University supports students in finding accommodation through Birmingham City Student Homes, a student-focused letting agency, owned and operated by Birmingham City Students' Union. It is a not-for-profit agency that only deals with reputable and accredited landlords and aims to offer students reliable, safe and decent accommodation.

You should note that all private housing tenancy agreements are between the student and the property owner and any issues relating to the property should be taken up with the owner.

You should be able to find private rented accommodation for approximately £60 to £80 per week. However, when budgeting for your accommodation you should be aware that this weekly fee will be for rent only. Other costs may be applicable such as deposits, gas, electricity, telephone and internet.

It is wise to seek independent advice before signing a tenancy agreement or contract as this document is legally binding on both you and the property owner. For further information about Private Sector Housing visit <http://homes.birminghamcitysu.com/>

If you still have questions that are not answered on the website please do not hesitate to contact Accommodation Services on:

Telephone: +44 (0) 121 331 5191/5192
Fax: +44 (0) 121 331 5377
Email: accommodation@bcu.ac.uk

11. How to make payments to the *University*

You can pay deposits and your course fees in a number of ways. Whichever method you choose please be aware that the University only accepts payment in Pounds Sterling.

11.1 Online payment

You can make a deposit payment online. The benefit of this is that payment will be registered within 48 hours. You will only be allowed to make a payment of £3,000 for your deposit. The link to this option is <https://ipay.bcu.ac.uk/international>.

11.2 Credit/debit cards

The University accepts most major credit/debit cards.

Please note that we do not accept American Express or Diners Club cards.

When making any payments to the University for large amounts particularly those drawn on foreign cards, we strongly recommend that you obtain prior approval for the payment from your bank or credit card company to avoid delays in your transaction being processed.

In order to pay by this method you must come in person, we cannot accept payments by credit/debit card over the telephone.

11.3 Bankers drafts

Bankers drafts should be made payable to 'Birmingham City University'. Please ensure that you write your University Application Number and full name on the reverse of the draft. You should send the draft by courier to the International Office address stated on your offer letter.

11.4 Personal cheques

Personal cheques drawn on a UK bank account should be made payable to 'Birmingham City University'. Please note that post-dated cheques (made payable for a date in the future) will not be accepted.

Please ensure that you write your University Application Number and full name on the reverse of the cheque. You should send the cheque by courier to the International Office address stated on your offer letter.

11.5 Travellers cheques

You can pay your tuition fees at enrolment using Sterling travellers cheques. The travellers cheques should be made payable to 'Birmingham City University' and you will need to countersign each cheque in the presence of the enrolment officer. You should not send travellers cheques by post.

11.6 Bank transfer

Bank-to-bank transfer is an alternative way to transfer funds, often this method incurs bank charges and takes more time to process.

When paying by bank-to-bank transfer:

1. Set up the transaction with your bank to pay direct to the University's bank account. Remember to ask your bank to quote your student number and your full name.
2. After you have made the payment you must complete and return the 'Notification of Payment by Bank-to-Bank Transfer' form to the University's Finance Department together with a copy of the transaction receipt from your bank. This will enable us to trace your payment. Once your payment has been received into the University's bank account we will send you a receipt confirming payment.

A copy of the 'Notification of Payment by Bank to Bank Transfer' form should accompany this handbook. If not you can download a copy from the International Student link on our website at www.bcu.ac.uk or telephone to request a copy on + 44 (0) 121 331 5389.

The University's bank details are as follows:

NATWEST
1 St Philips Place
Birmingham
B3 2PP
United Kingdom

Account Name	Birmingham City University
Account Number	78069467
Sort Code	60 02 35
IBAN Number	GB36NWBK60023578069467
Swift Number	NWB KGB2L

Please note that you are required to meet ALL bank charges relating to the transfer.

11.7 Cash

Although the University will accept cash payments you should NOT send cash through the post and we strongly advise that you do NOT carry large sums of money with you.

12. United Kingdom *immigration control*

12.1 European Economic Area citizens

If you are a citizen or hold a passport of a European Economic Area country there are no restrictions on your travel to and from the UK. You must simply ensure that you have a valid passport or national identity card at all times when you travel.

12.2 Non-European Economic Area citizens

If you are from a country outside the European Economic Area you will need to obtain permission to enter the UK before you travel. This permission is called entry clearance and takes the form of a short-term study visa or entry clearance vignette. The type of entry clearance you require depends on which country you are from and potentially the type of course you apply for.

12.3 Obtaining entry clearance (short-term study visa or entry clearance vignette)

The UK Government has made some big changes to the visa and immigration regulations for anyone wishing to study or work in the UK and has introduced the Points-Based Immigration System. To support you with your visa application, we have included some guidelines below which we hope will help you understand the system and provide useful advice for you when applying for your visa in order to come and study with us.

Changes to the entry clearance vignette

In 2015, the UK Government have made further changes to the entry clearance process. Students who will be coming to study in the UK for a course that is longer than six months, will only get a 30-day entry clearance vignette in their passport. On arrival in the UK, you will need to collect your Biometrics Residence Permit (BRP) which will show the dates of your full length of leave. When you are granted entry clearance in your home country you will receive a letter providing details of where to collect your BRP from.

Biometric Residence Permits (BRP)

The UKVI have announced a change to the way visas are issued to Tier 4 students coming to study in the UK. The change means that if you are successful with your visa application, you will be issued with a vignette in your passport which is valid for 30 days from your intended travel date that you gave in your visa application. This will affect all students coming to study for a period of six months or more. When you apply for your visa please indicate that you wish your BRP to be sent to us. You will then be able to collect that from us as part of your enrolment. This BRP will be valid for your entire course.

Please visit the link below for lots more detail:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biometric-residence-permits-overseas-applicant-and-sponsor-information>.

What is the Points Based System?

This is a system for supporting entry to the UK for the purposes of work, study and training. The Points Based System comprises five tiers. Tier 4 affects all international students from outside of the European Union and European Economic Area applying for entry clearance visa to come to the UK.

How does the Points Based System affect international students?

When applying for entry clearance, you will be required to pass a points-based assessment and score 40 points in order to qualify for entry to study.

How do international students obtain 40 points?

The 40 points are split as follows:

30 points for a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies

10 points for maintenance (money to cover fees and living expenses)

What is a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS)?

The Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) is a unique reference number and contains information about the course of study you have applied for and your personal details. Your CAS will be issued once you have paid your deposit and any financial checks have been made.

What is a licensed sponsor?

In the case of students, a licensed sponsor is an education provider who is registered with the UK Visas and Immigration Agency (UKVI).

Birmingham City University is a Tier 4 Sponsor.

If you chose to accept your offer at Birmingham City University, we will be your licensed sponsor while you study in the UK and our Sponsor License Number is XC799QAW5.

What is maintenance?

Maintenance describes the money you will need to show as available to cover your first year's tuition fees and monthly living expenses for your first nine months in the UK. For students on courses of less than nine months: sufficient funds to cover the full costs of their course fees plus £820 for each month of the course up to nine months.

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) recognises that it is not reasonable for a person on a three or four year course to have all their funds in place before they come to the UK so it will accept the following as evidence of sufficient funds:

For students on courses which are more than nine months: sufficient funds to pay the first year of fees only plus £7,380 to cover living costs for nine months in the UK.

If you have an 'established' presence studying in the UK, you must show that you have money for your course fees plus £820 for living costs for each month of your course, up to a maximum of two months.

Credibility interviews

In addition to requiring a CAS to gain entry clearance into the UK, you may also have to sit a short interview when you attend the visa application centre to submit your application and biometric information. The interview will focus on your reasons for coming to the UK; this is known as a credibility interview. A report of the interview will be sent to the visa officer who will consider it alongside your visa application and supporting documents. You may be called for a further interview if the visa officer needs more information.

Immigration Health Charge

In April 2015, the UK Government introduced an Immigration Health Charge of £150 per year for any students coming to the UK for a course lasting six months or more.

This sum is an annual amount and applicants will be charged the annual amount for each year of the maximum period of leave which could be granted under the immigration rules. If this period of leave includes part of a year that is six months or less, the amount payable for that part of a year is half the specified amount, ie £75 for students and dependants, and £100 for others. If the period of leave includes part of a year that is more than six months, the full annual amount is payable.

Tuberculosis screening

The Home Office requires migrants from certain countries entering the UK for more than six months to undergo screening for active pulmonary tuberculosis. You will require the certificate in order to apply for visa clearance. For more details about tuberculosis screening follow the link: www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa.

Students in private accommodation

The Immigration Bill which came into force for the West Midlands region in December 2014 has some implications on international students renting in the private sector.

All students who wish to rent in the private sector are required to provide proof to your landlord that you have no restrictions to being in the UK, or that you have limited or unlimited leave to remain in the UK.

It is mandatory for landlords to check that all persons (not just the student whose name is on the contract) who will be living in privately rented accommodation can produce evidence of their permission to be in the UK. International students will need to provide their passport and Biometric Residence Permit (where applicable) to confirm that they have an up-to-date visa. If you cannot produce the relevant documents to confirm your eligibility to be in the UK, you will not be able to rent a private property.

Students in University halls of residence will not need to provide this information separately as this would have already been confirmed when you enrol.

Further information

For further information on the Points Based System, we strongly recommend that you refer to the following UKVI web pages where you can download the 'Guidance for students applying under Tier 4 of the Points Based System' PDF document: www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa

Additionally, further useful information and guidance on the Points Based System can be found on the UKCISA (UK Council for International Student Affairs) website at: www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Preparing--planning/Visas-and-immigration/

Remember to apply for entry clearance as soon as possible. If you need to attend an interview there may be a long waiting list.

If you are coming to the UK to study you must not enter the country with a visitor visa. You cannot change from visitor to standard student status once you are in the UK. You would need to return home to change your status.

If you intend to bring any members of your family with you, you must ensure that you have obtained all the relevant entry clearances before leaving your country. Your finances must be sufficient to maintain and accommodate your family as well as yourself for the whole duration of the course.

12.4 Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

If you want to study a course leading to a postgraduate qualification in the United Kingdom, you may need to apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate.

ATAS was introduced on 1 November 2007 and is an essential part of the UK's commitment to counter proliferation. Its aim is to help stop the spread of knowledge and skills that could be used in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery.

If you require an ATAS certificate you will need to apply for this before we issue your CAS. The possession of an ATAS certificate does not guarantee you a visa or extension of stay. However, applications will automatically be refused if you need an ATAS certificate and cannot provide one. When applying for a visa, you must also provide evidence that you meet the usual student criteria.

An ATAS certificate shows details of the course and Higher Education Institution (HEI) you have applied to for clearance. If you have more than one offer from different HEIs you will need to apply for separate ATAS clearance certificates for each HEI and programme of study. An ATAS certificate is valid as long as the details of your course and HEI do not change. You can apply for an ATAS certificate up to six months in advance of the beginning of your course.

We encourage you to apply as soon as you have received your offer of study at an HEI. If you are in the UK already and you need to extend your visa to complete your course, please check whether ATAS clearance is required.

For further information visit the following website: www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme

12.5 Visa extensions once you are in the UK

Due to the changes in the immigration system it will be important to seek advice at least four months before extending a visa. Immigration advice is given by the University's Student Services department, and they also offer the

Batch Scheme to assist with visa extensions. Additionally you can keep up to date with all changes in the UK at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration.

At the time of writing the cost of visa extensions is £428 for an application made by post or £828 for an application made in person. In addition, you will also be eligible for the Immigration Health Charge. All international students applying to extend their stay in the UK are subject to these charges and the fee must be paid for an application to be valid.

13. Meet and Greet service

Birmingham City University operates a free Meet and Greet service where representatives of the University can meet you at Birmingham Airport and transfer you to your accommodation.

The service operates on set days and set times only. When you start to plan your journey it would be advisable to check the international section of the University website. The Meet and Greet service operates from Birmingham Airport only. If you are arriving outside of Meet and Greet times, full travel details are available on the University website.

To register for the Meet and Greet service the International and EU Arrival Form can be found on the Meet and Greet section of the University website: www.bcu.ac.uk/meet-and-greet. Please note that there are deadlines to register by.

If you are unable to find the information that you require please email: meet.greet@bcu.ac.uk

14. Orientation Programme

The Orientation Programme will run from 14 - 18 September 2015. Student Services organise a fun and informative week which is packed with tours, talks and social events. It is a great opportunity for us to welcome you to the University and for you to meet new friends and settle in before the busy first week of term.

During the Orientation Programme you will be able to:

- Have fun and make new friends
- Enrol onto your course
- Find your way around the University and the city of Birmingham
- Enjoy social activities with other international students. Previous activities have included a British barn dance, talent show and a prestigious event at the Birmingham Council House with the Lord Mayor and Vice-Chancellor
- Find out information about living and studying in the UK.

Further details about the Orientation Programme, including registration details, will be available on the Orientation section of our website. To register for Orientation Week you can complete the International and EU Arrival form. Alternatively you can email orientation@bcu.ac.uk.

15. Enrolment

Enrolment is the process of officially registering onto your course and becoming a recognised student of Birmingham City University. If you do not enrol you will not have access to many of the University's services and facilities. The University will also be obliged to report all students who fail to enrol to UKVI.

Enrolment will be in two stages: online pre-enrolment and on campus enrolment.

You will be required to complete the first stage of enrolment online through the "mySRS" portal, prior to the on-campus enrolment. PC terminals will be available at the 'on-campus enrolment' session for those students who have not completed this stage in advance.

15.1 Online pre-enrolment

You will be contacted automatically by email if we possess a valid email address, or by letter if not, which will advise you to log-in to mySRS and complete online pre-enrolment in advance of the start of your course. This process will require you to:

- Check personal data (name, contact details, addresses)
- Check prior qualifications
- Confirm current highest qualification
- Check and correct equal opportunity information
- Verify course details and mode of attendance
- Provide details of any sponsor and accept tuition fee liability until evidence of sponsorship is provided
- Sign up to the University's terms and conditions
- Opportunity to pay tuition fees online if required.

Students who fail to complete their online pre-enrolment will receive regular automated email reminders. The iAsk service will be available to students who have any queries with the online pre-enrolment process.

15.2 On-campus enrolment

Upon completion of the online pre-enrolment process you will be asked to attend an on-campus enrolment session. Enrolment slots are booked during international orientation week. If you fail to enrol during this week you will be able to attend further enrolment sessions up until the middle of October.

You will need to bring along the following documents to your on-campus enrolment session:

- CAS Information Sheet. If this document is not available you should bring a copy of your Unconditional Offer letter.

- Current valid passport containing your entry clearance vignette. This must state our sponsor licence number of XC799QAW5. If you have extended your leave to remain whilst in the UK you must bring your new ID card.
- Original certificates for all qualifications listed on your application form. Where a document is not in English, the original must be accompanied by a fully certified translation by a professional translator. The translation must include details of the translator's credentials and confirmation that it is an accurate translation of the original document, and the translator's contact details. It must also be dated and contain the original signature of the translator.
- A minimum of 50 per cent of your tuition fee or original sponsor letter.
- Receipts or payment details for any deposit payments you have already submitted to the University.

Police registration

If your student visa indicates that you are required to register with the police you will be given details of the date and time during the orientation week for when you need to attend the Overseas Visitors Registration Office (OVRO) Lloyd House Police Station, Birmingham.

Student changing sponsor

If you have decided to come to Birmingham City University from another university and your visa was issued on or after 5 October 2009, we are permitted to enrol you if we have proof that you have applied to the UKVI for a new visa so that we are your sponsor.

You can enrol provided that you:

- have shown original proof of submitting an application for a new visa. This can be a receipt letter from UKVI confirming that your application for a visa extension was received, a letter asking you to attend a biometric appointment or a receipt confirming proof of posting an application to the UKVI (which should show the delivery postcode as being DH99 1WJ). You must have made your application for the new visa before your previous visa expires
- satisfy all other enrolment criteria (such as fee payment and original qualifications)

- understand that this is at your own risk as there is always a possibility that permission to change sponsor will not be granted. In the event that you are not granted permission, you may need to interrupt or withdraw from your studies but will not be eligible for a course fee refund for the time that you have attended
- agree to take your passport and new visa to your faculty as soon as you receive it from UKVI so that the faculty can take a copy of it and update the VIS (visa details) screen in SITS.
- have shown proof of submitting a Tier 4 PTS application to the UKVI. This can be a letter from UKVI confirming permission to change sponsor or a receipt confirming proof of posting the Tier 4 PTS application to the UKVI (which should show the delivery postcode as being DH99 1WN). The Tier 4 PTS application must have been sent to the UKVI before your previous visa expiry date
- you satisfy all other enrolment criteria (such as fee payment and original qualifications)
- understand that this is at your own risk as there is always a possibility that permission to change sponsor will not be granted. In the event that you are not granted permission, you may need to interrupt or withdraw from your studies but will not be eligible for a course fee refund for the time that you have attended
- agree to bring in your letter confirming proof of permission to change sponsor when you receive it from UKVI so the faculty can take a copy of it and update the system.

Please note that if you were issued your visa before 5 October 2009, you are subject to different rules with regards to changing sponsors. You do not need to apply for a new visa in order to change sponsor but you must submit a Tier 4 PTS application form to the UKVI to apply for permission to change sponsor. The UKVI will send you a letter informing you whether permission to change was granted. You can enrol provided that you:

- have shown your original current passport and visa

Details of when and where enrolment will take place will be included in your joining instructions which will be emailed to the personal email address on our student records system.

16. Student *Services*

In addition to the academic support and learning resources provided by your course team and faculty office, other support services are available from the Student Services department of the University.

Student Services gives you access to a range of specialist staff who are able to give information, advice and support on:

- Visas and Immigration
- Financial Advice/Money Matters
- Careers/Job Prospects
- Health and Wellbeing
- Complaints and Appeals
- Childcare

Our team of specialist International Student Advisers are available to provide information signposting and advice on a range of issues affecting international students including immigration, working in the UK, finance and funding, academic and other welfare issues. They also provide workshops and one-to-one advice with regards to extending your visa.

Visit the Student Services website for further information: www.bcu.ac.uk/studentsservices

16.1 Disability Support

Birmingham City University welcomes applications from disabled international and EU students and aims to enable you to make the most of your time at the University. We strongly encourage you to contact our disability advisers as early as possible in the application process to discuss your support requirements.

Disabilities may include:

- Blindness/sight loss
- Deafness/hearing loss
- Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties
- Mental health difficulties
- Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLD) such as dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.
- Unseen disabilities/long-term health conditions, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, heart condition

We can provide some support services without additional costs and will liaise with faculty staff to arrange reasonable adjustments. Other services available at the University are subject to availability and require funding. International students are not eligible for UK Government funding for disabled students (Disabled Students' Allowances) therefore it is extremely important that you contact our Disability Support Team early in the application process so that they may assess your support requirements and investigate possible sources of funding. The following services require funding:

- Specific one-to-one dyslexia support
- Transcription for students with sight loss
- Any personal assistance
- Sign language interpreters (British Sign Language)
- Note-takers
- Equipment, such as a computer, Braille, personal digital recording device etc.
- Physical alterations to accommodate your requirements.

You may require more support at university than you are used to at home. For example, if you need your family to help with domestic tasks at home you will need personal assistance at university, and this will need to be funded.

If you require any further information or wish to discuss support available and need information about funding this, please contact our advisers as early as possible.

Disability Support Team
Birmingham City University
The Curzon Building,
City Centre Campus,
Birmingham, B4 7BD

T: +44 (0) 121 331 5588
E: disability@bcu.ac.uk

Or visit our website:
www.bcu.ac.uk/studentsservices/disability/

16.2 Healthcare

It is really important that you plan for how you would get help for medical problems if you became unwell in the UK.

If your course is under six months long / you register on the pre-sessional English language course, you are only entitled to free National Health Service (NHS) treatment for accidents and emergencies.

You will have to pay for any other medical treatment as a private patient. It is therefore very important that you take out medical insurance for the duration of your visit to the UK. Please note that private medical treatment is very expensive if you do not have adequate insurance.

If your course is for more than six months and you need a visa, you will have paid a healthcare surcharge as part of your visa application which will enable you to use NHS treatment from the beginning of your stay in the UK. Although the NHS service is free, there are supplementary charges associated with eye tests, dental care and prescriptions. However, you should still consider taking out insurance to cover other costs which the NHS cannot fund, such as:

- lost fees if you are too ill to complete your course
- costs of returning home if you or a relative requires treatment
- costs of a relative visiting you in the UK if you fall ill.

The University provides a healthcare service for students, but you will need to register as a patient to use the service. More details about this are on our website www.bcu.ac.uk/healthcare.

17. University *regulations*

Please note the following points as they may have a bearing on your application.

The application form you have submitted to the University provides us with the information we need to process your application. However, sometimes we may need to ask you to provide further information. If for any reason you do not provide this information we may not be able to consider your application further.

The decision we make about your application is taken on the basis of the information that you have provided on your application form. If we find that you have made a false statement or have left out significant information we reserve the right to either withdraw or amend our offer.

Similarly, the decision we make about your fee status (whether you pay home or overseas tuition fees) is taken on the basis of the information that you have provided. If we find that you have made a false statement or you have left out significant information we reserve the right to amend your fee status or to withdraw our offer.

18. Data *protection*

The application form that you have submitted to the University when applying for your place contains a significant amount of personal information. This has been required so that we could assess your suitability for the course that you have applied for. The information that you have provided has been used for this purpose and for the monitoring of equal opportunities only. It will be treated in confidence and will only be seen by those whose jobs require them to do so. This may include staff working in our overseas offices.

19. Contact *us*

We hope that the information in this booklet is helpful when making a decision about your university place. If you have any further questions or need more information please contact the International Office at:

International Admissions
International Office
Birmingham City University
University House
15 Bartholomew Row,
Birmingham,
B5 5JU

Tel: +44 (0) 121 331 5389
Fax: +44 (0) 121 331 6314
Email: international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk

Please quote your University Application Number, which is the eleven digit reference number at the top of your Birmingham City University offer letter, your full name and your date of birth on all correspondence with the University.

Further information is also available from the international student pages on the University's website: www.bcu.ac.uk.



