

WELCOME TO WORCESTER



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ARRIVAL GUIDE 2017

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If you are unsure about where to find information, there is just one word you need to remember: **firstpoint**.

We recommend that you download our app: <https://guidebook.com/app/worcester> for all your International Induction events.

WELCOME TO WORCESTER!

Hello! We are really pleased you have chosen University of Worcester for your study and hope that you will be very happy and successful here.

Firstpoint is the initial point of contact for all student enquiries - from your first week right through to Graduation.

So, if you'd like more details on any of the topics listed here, visit us in the Peirson Study and Guidance Centre (firstpoint is open from 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday) or get in touch at firstpoint@worc.ac.uk



You can also follow us on:
 Facebook- University of Worcester - An International Experience
 Twitter- worcester_uni and download our App – UW Mobile

VISAS AND BIOMETRIC RESIDENCE PERMITS (BRP/BID)

Tier 4 students

You will need to collect your BRP from the Admissions Office in the Woodbury Building, between 14.00 and 16.00 on Tuesday 12 or Wednesday 13 September. Please do not try to collect at any other time as Deb Graddon will not be there.

If you miss these BRP collection times follow the instructions on the Late Arrivals Checklist.

To collect your BRP, you must bring the following with you:

- Passport
- Letter received from the UKVI
- Your CAS
- Original qualifications as listed on the CAS

The International Student Advisor will take copies of your passport and visa and Admissions staff will check your original qualifications as both are a requirement of our Tier 4 licence.

Short Term Student visa (or 6 Month Visa stamp)

You will need to show your visa, or visa stamp and passport to firstpoint before they issue you with a Student Identification card.

Our International Student Advisor, Deb Graddon, is trained to answer your immigration and student status questions. You can access the Advisor either by asking to make an appointment at Firstpoint, by emailing d.graddon@worc.ac.uk or by attending a Drop-in.

If your current visa was issued to study at a different institution, it's important that you contact the International Student Advisor as soon as possible.

REGISTERING AS A STUDENT AND COLLECTING YOUR ID CARD

Your acceptance letter contains a User Name and Password. Follow the link in your letter and register online. Upload a passport-sized photograph of yourself, then confirm your personal and course details are correct. Be careful to complete your home and local address details correctly.

If you have successfully registered online, you can collect your Student ID card from firstpoint.

You will need to show your passport (and Short Term Visa if you have one) to firstpoint to collect your student card.

Use it for:

- Loading money for printing, photocopying and dining
- Identification as a student

Are you unable to register online? Come to firstpoint on Wednesday 13 September between 14.00 and 16.00 for help.

If you have a Tier 4 Student Visa you must pick up your BRP, attend the compulsory part of the International Induction and have your original qualifications checked before you can collect your Student ID card.

OPENING A UK BANK ACCOUNT

If you are going to be in the UK for more than 6 months you should normally be allowed to open a free basic UK bank account. This is an account which allows you to put money in and take it out using a Debit Card. It will not normally allow you to have a Credit Card or an overdraft.

You can choose which bank to use but look carefully at what they offer. Some banks will offer a more flexible account or a 'student account' but there may be a monthly charge for this account. They may offer you 'free gifts' but consider carefully the value of the gift in relation to the charge. The Post Office and some Building Societies also offer basic bank accounts.

Applying online: UniZest is an online bank account, www.unizest.co.uk

Applying in person: you can make an appointment with your chosen bank to go into and open the account with them. This may take up to 1.5 hours. You must take your essential documents with you. Your Debit Card will then be posted to your UK address.

Essential Documents:

- Your passport
- Your visa (if applicable)
- A student status letter showing your home address and your UK address.

How to get a Student Status letter

- Go to student portal on website
- User name and password
- SOLE page
- Living
- Bank Letter

It can take several weeks to get your Debit Card so please be sure you have brought enough cash with you to last you until it comes.

Approximately £250 should be enough. We don't advise you to bring very large amounts of cash with you; for larger amounts of money you can bring a bankers draft or cheque made out to yourself.

Banks in Worcester city centre:

In Worcester you will find all the normal UK High Street banks and you should be able to open a bank account with one of these banks.

There are two ATMs on St John's campus – one at Main Reception; the other in the Students' Union building. You can also withdraw money at the Co-op on Oldbury Road.

Need to know more? Look at the BBA Banking leaflet (on your Induction App).

REGISTERING WITH THE POLICE

Some non-EU students need to register with the UK police within 7 days of arrival in the UK. This will be clearly marked on your visa and on your letter from the Home Office confirming your visa status.

You should be able to apply for your Police Registration online and will be able to book an appointment at a Police Station online.

We will help you complete this online form during International Induction and if the online form has not been launched by the time of Induction, we will request help from our Police Community Support Officers.

You will need:

- **Passport**
- **Completed application form**
- **£34 in cash (exact amount please)**

CHANGING YOUR MODULES

We hope that you have already selected your modules and that you are happy with your choices.

However, if you need to change your modules you are allowed to do this during the first two weeks of the semester. After the deadline of Friday 6 October, you will no longer be allowed to make changes.

To change your modules, please either complete the module change request form on your SOLE page or attend a module selection workshop (Thursday 14 September, PN1001 between 9:00 and 12:30).

ACCOMMODATION

If you have chosen University-managed accommodation, you will be asked to sign a binding contract for a set number of weeks. However, we understand that you may not be happy with your choice and we offer a five day 'cooling off period'. This means that you can ask the Accommodation Office to release you from your contract during the first five days after your arrival. If you leave your accommodation after the first five days you will be asked to pay your accommodation fees in full for the contracted weeks unless you can find another student who wants to take your room. You must not swap your room with another student without informing the Accommodation Office first.

Any changes to your accommodation arrangements must be made within 5 days of arrival.

If you're in University-managed accommodation, remember to read your Accommodation Guide, which will be in your room on arrival.

Light bulbs not working? Trouble with heating or plumbing? Log a job on the maintenance portal via your student home-page and the student app portal.

SETTLING IN

CLIMATE AND CLOTHING

The first thing you will notice about English weather is that it is unpredictable. September can be warm and dry with temperatures of 15 – 20 degrees Celsius. However, it may suddenly change and become wet and cold with temperatures as low as -1 – 5 degrees Celsius. Summer temperatures can be in the range of 25 – 28 degrees Celsius. Classrooms can be very warm or quite cold. We tend to dress in layers to cope with varying conditions. Dress in the UK is usually informal so you can wear whatever you like.

Clothing we recommend:

- Hat
- Gloves
- Waterproof jacket
- Umbrella
- Warm jumper or sweatshirt
- Comfortable socks and shoes for walking

There are plenty of shops to buy inexpensive clothes in Worcester. You will soon find that some excellent bargains can be found in second hand or vintage clothes shops.

Don't underestimate how cold and damp it can be. Wear natural fibres in layers for optimal warmth.

POST

Post addressed to students living in halls of residence is delivered to the Hines Building on the St John's campus or to the reception of the Charles Hastings Building on the City Campus. The Hines building is located near to the Students' Union.

Campus Services will deliver letters to halls of residence but parcels and any post sent by recorded delivery must be collected. You will receive a notification from the post team to say when a package has arrived for you. There will be specific instructions about where and when you can collect your post.

HEALTHCARE

You should register with a doctor as soon as you arrive in Worcester, so that if you need to access medical care or use a dentist you will already be registered with the NHS and can seek treatment immediately. We have a Doctor's Surgery, Farrier House Surgery, with a clinic on campus. You will have an opportunity to register with them on Thursday 14 September at the Student Services fair. There will be a second opportunity at the Students' Union Fair or you can choose to register with a practice closer to where you live.

In the UK doctors are called General Practitioners (GPs) and they are usually based in Healthcare Centres called 'Surgeries', 'GP Practices' or 'Primary Care Practices'.

If you are an EU or EEA national or 'insured' resident you should obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

If you are a Tier 4 Visa student you will be eligible for free NHS treatment if you have paid your healthcare surcharge.

Not sure if you are eligible? Need more information? Check the UKCISA website: www.ukcisa.org.uk/

Accidents or emergencies

If you require urgent, emergency medical care, call an ambulance on 999 (landline or mobile) or 112 (mobiles only).

Serious injury or illness that requires urgent treatment

Go to the nearest accident and emergency department (commonly known as A&E).

A&E departments are usually open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, but not all hospitals have an A&E department. The A&E in Worcester is Worcestershire Royal Hospital (phone number: 01905 763 333, address: Charles Hastings Way, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR5 1DD.)

Minor injury and illness

• Visit an NHS walk-in centre or minor injuries unit; both offer convenient access to a range of treatment. These clinics are usually managed by nurses and are available to everyone.

Patients do not need an appointment. The nearest NHS walk-in centre and minor injuries unit to Worcester is Malvern Community Centre, close to Malvern Link station (a 12 minute train ride and a two minute walk from the station).

• Call 111 for medical help or advice, available 24 hours a day

To see a doctor or nurse

Call the GP practice that you are registered with to make an appointment. For help outside of normal practice hours, you can still phone your GP practice and you'll usually be directed to an out-of-hours service. The out-of-hours period is from 18:30 to 08:00 on weekdays and all day on weekends and bank holidays.

Non-urgent medical advice or concern

Use the online symptom checker on www.nhs.uk or speak to a pharmacist or chemist based locally around town. They can offer advice on common problems such as coughs, colds, aches, pains and mild ailments. Many pharmacies have a private consultation area too. They can also help you decide whether you need to see a doctor. Pharmacists can be found at local chemist shops, such as Boots or Superdrug.

FOOD SHOPPING

The nearest shops to St John's Campus are outside the Malvern Gate; if you turn right and walk just a few minutes along Oldbury Road you will see Loco convenience store.

If you turn left and walk five minutes down Oldbury Road you will see a small Co-operative shop on the corner.

There are also three big supermarkets in St John's – the Co-op, Aldi and Sainsbury's.

City centre supermarkets popular with students are: Asda, Aldi, Iceland and Lidl

But if you are hungry for home food try:

Yum Yum Oriental Foods
1-2 St Nicholas Street
Worcester
WR1 1UW
01905 234 50

Friends Malayali Asian Store
8 Cecil Rd
Worcester
WR5 1AX
01905 359651

Baltic Amber
42 Upper Tything
Worcester
Hereford And Worcester
WR1 1JZ
01905 739 154

Lowesmoor also has a variety of food stores from a range of Eastern European, Middle Eastern and Asian countries.

You can also take the train to Birmingham New Street (approximately 45 minutes) and try the Bull Ring Market for African and Caribbean foods, fresh fish, fruit and vegetables from round the world and a lively China Town.

EATING OUT AND TAKEAWAYS

If you would like to have someone else cook for a change, there are plenty of inexpensive takeaway restaurants who will be happy to deliver to your house or room.

For a special occasion see the booklet 'Places So Good We Had To Share' in your Welcome Folder for some suggestions of good places to eat out in Worcester.

- Many restaurants accept NUS cards for great student discounts. Vegan, vegetarian or other dietary requirements? Check before you go.
- Is the 'tip' or service charge included on the bill? If not - 10% is a suitable amount.

If you are invited to eat with a UK family, it is customary to take a small gift – a bunch of flowers, an inexpensive bottle of wine or soft drink, some chocolates or a small token from home.

MAKING FRIENDS

Most people you meet in International Induction Week and Welcome Week are just as new to Worcester and the University as you are. Take every opportunity to join in induction events and get to know people. If you have a specialist interest or would like to learn a new sport or skill, join an SU club or society. **You can find out about these at the Sports and Activities Fair on Wednesday 20 September.**

Talk to E.I.L. at the Student Support Fair on Thursday 14th September about spending a day or a weekend with a British family – it is a great experience and you might make friends for life!

The International Experience team will run several trips or visits to places of cultural interest over the year, so look out for notices of these on Facebook, wechat or Twitter.

Fancy a cuppa? (English idiom meaning literally 'Do you want a cup of tea?' but used to mean 'Come and have a chat' or 'Let's take a break').

Come along to the "Fancy a Cuppa?" event for a free hot drink and a chat with friendly and welcoming members of Student Services.

They are there to listen to you share your experiences and offer advice if required. If you would like to speak to someone in private, a room is available so please ask.

On certain days they will be joined by a therapy dog, Monty, whom you are welcome to stroke and pet.

LOCAL TRAVEL

Walking: Worcester is not a huge city – you will find that you can walk or cycle easily between the University sites or from your accommodation. There are also some great walks you can do for pleasure in the city or in the surrounding country. See the Walking and Cycling map in your Welcome Folder.

Cycling: Many students buy a second hand bike to get around the city a bit faster. If you haven't space to keep a bike or you are here for a short time, you can sign up to the University bike loan scheme.

University Bike Loan Scheme

£20 deposit gets you a helmet and the right to pick up and put down one of our bikes to get between campuses. see: www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/bike-loan for more information.

Campus Bike Shop – every Wednesday 12.00 – 14.00, visit the Bike Shop opposite the Students' Union Building for reliable, second hand bikes.

Local Bus: The University and City Centre are serviced by 31 and 31B buses every 10 minutes. There is a bus stop on the St John's campus outside the Students' Union, and the bus station in the City Centre is located next to the CrownGate Shopping Centre, a short distance from The Hive and City Campus.

For student tickets and discounts visit www.firstgroup.com/worcestershire/tickets/ticket-types/student-bus-travel/

Train: to get to local towns such as Malvern, Hereford or Birmingham, the train is a good option. With a Student Railcard (look in your Welcome Folder) you can get 1/3 off most fares. If you travel in groups of four, you can often travel half price.

The best deals are advance fares – so use www.nationalrailenquiries.com or www.thetrainline.com/ to find the cheapest fares.

National Express Coach: National Express and Megabus coaches come into Worcester CrownGate Bus Station.

TRAVEL AND STUDY ABROAD

Worcester is a great launch pad for travel as it is centrally situated and on major road and rail networks. It is only 45 minutes to Birmingham International airport, from where you can get cheap flights to Europe.

You will need to check the visa requirements of the country or countries you are travelling to before you make your plans to travel. Go to the website of the embassy of the country to which you want to travel for further information.

Do not travel if your UK student visa will expire when you are abroad, as you may not be able to get back into the UK! Check the terms of your UK visa before you make plans.

If you are a non-EU citizen and would like to travel to other countries within Europe, you must apply for a Schengen visa. A Schengen visa allows you to travel to up to 26 European countries using only one visa. Find out more at: <http://www.schengenvisa.info/>

For those of you who are here for a three year degree, you might want to consider spending a semester or a year with one of our partner universities on an Exchange or Study Abroad programme. For more information email internationalexperience@worc.ac.uk or book an appointment through Firstpoint to see Clare Perkins, the Exchange and Study Abroad Coordinator.

PREPARING FOR STUDY

For some of you, the style of Higher Education in the UK may come as a surprise. There is a strong emphasis on self-directed study and reflection. You may be asked to prepare for lessons in advance using materials provided by your tutor. You may find that your assignments come at the end of semesters but you will have had to work towards them with direction from your Course Tutor. There is a strong emphasis on original thinking so you will have to get in the habit of **referencing** if you are using other people's ideas. Failure to do this is considered copying or cheating. It is called 'plagiarism' and is taken very seriously by the University.

Academic Inductions:

Undergraduate Students:

During Welcome Week (18 – 22 September), you will attend Academic Induction sessions delivered by your institute or subject area. These events are compulsory and should take precedence over any social activity which is scheduled at the same time. You will find a link to your Welcome Week timetable by logging onto your student homepage.

Exchange or Study Abroad Students:

If you are taking a diverse range of modules, you may find that you belong to more than one institute. Please attend the Academic Induction most suited to you. You may attend as many as you wish but you will find that some of the information will be repeated.

Postgraduate Taught Students:

Your course leaders will be contacting you to give you a date for your Academic Induction. These will normally take place during Welcome Week but some courses may have a different start date. In any case, please contact your course leader for advice on how best to prepare for your study.

You will all be assigned an Academic Tutor to guide and direct you through your programme at Worcester. Please be proactive in contacting your Academic Tutor; they will be happy to help you but can only do so if you ask.

PART TIME AND VOLUNTARY WORK

Tier 4 Student Visa

Normally, no more than 20 hours per week this can be a paid or unpaid work or voluntary work undertaken in semester time (the UKVI define a week as a period of 7 days, starting on a Monday and ending on a Sunday).

Short term student visa

No right to work (paid/ unpaid or voluntary work)

Postgraduate students

No 'vacation period' so normally no more than 20 hours per week until you have submitted your dissertation and completed all study.

Croatian students

Apply for a yellow registration certificate <http://www.gov.uk/croatian-national>

All other EU students

Unrestricted hours but university recommends

no more than 20 hours per week to maintain a good study / work / life balance.

You must be sure that you have permission to work under the terms of your visa. You must not work more hours than it states on your visa in a working week. You are not allowed to be self-employed, engaged in business activity, be employed as a professional sports person or an entertainer. If in doubt, ask the International Student Advisor: d.graddon@worc.ac.uk

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering at the University or in the community is a great way to get involved and to get to know people. If you like volunteering, go for the V-Record with the Students' Union: www.worcsu.com/volunteer/vrecord/ You will get a certificate at the end of the year, a free ticket to the VoScAs awards night, and any student who achieves a 50 hour award or higher will have it recorded on their HEAR (the official degree transcript).

Voluntary Work

(Any time spent here counts towards the hours allowed on your visa). Workers will usually have contractual obligations to perform the work (e.g. to attend at particular times and carry out specific tasks) with the employer being contractually required to provide the work – the contract does not have to be written. The employer will have special exemption and may pay you in kind.* Another way of looking at it, if you are not there and the charity would need to have someone there to do the work this would be Voluntary work and not volunteering, an example of this would be undertaking a shift at a charity shop.

Volunteering

No employment contract; not be a substitute for an employee; not doing unpaid work – i.e. receiving payment in kind* (although you can sometimes be reimbursed for reasonable travel and subsistence expenses).

Volunteers usually help a charity or voluntary or public sector organisation.

***Payment-in-kind (PIK)** is the use of a good or service as payment instead of cash. So if you weren't there the charity would not need another worker to be there in your place, an example of this might be occasionally attending a day centre.

CAUTION! If in doubt consult the International Student Advisor: d.graddon@worc.ac.uk

Part-time Work

You may want to work during your studies to earn extra money and build your CV. Jobs are available in the Worcester area, and we have a Careers and Employability team who can coach you to fill out application forms correctly or give you interview practice. Our part-time jobs bulletin is a useful place to start looking.

Earn as You Learn – for jobs on campus keep looking at the university website: <http://www.worcester.ac.uk/community/current-vacancies.html>

Jobs include:

Student Ambassadors
Catering Staff
Cleaning staff
Research assistants

Sign up for a workshop on Friday 15 September to find out more about National Insurance numbers and techniques to help you find work.

National Insurance numbers: key info

- It is your unique personal number
- To work legally in the UK, your employer and you must contribute towards the National Insurance scheme.
- To get a number make an appointment by telephoning 0345 600 0643, Monday to Friday, between 08:00 and 18:00.
- You can start work before your National Insurance number arrives if you let your employer know that you've applied for one, and give it to them when you have it.

www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number

WORCESTER AWARD

Go for the Worcester Award and really add value to your degree. The Worcester Award is an employability award that allows students to record extra-curricular activities they engage in during their time at the University and encourages them to reflect upon how these activities can help to improve their future employability.

There are three elements to the Award:

Work experience: paid or unpaid.

Personal development activities such as volunteering, involvement in student societies, extra courses and international activities.

Employability activities such as CV workshops and mock interviews.

Doing the Worcester Award helps students to make the most of their experiences and skills so that they truly stand out from the crowd when applying for jobs.

KEY CONTACTS

People You Need to Know:

- internationalexperience@worc.ac.uk
International Experience team for any enquiry particularly related to being 'international' (immigration or visa questions for example), for international themed social events and weekend trips and for Exchange and Study Abroad enquiries).
- firstpoint@worc.ac.uk
Firstpoint for any other student related enquiry (paying fees, financial issues, accommodation queries, health, module changes etc)
- Your **Academic Tutor** for any course-related queries and for advice about assignments, assessment and exams. You will be assigned an Academic Tutor during Welcome Week. Please make an appointment to see them as soon as you can.
- Your **Student Course Representative (Course Rep)** for issues relating to your course such as feedback from lecturers, changes of room and / or time of lectures and resources. Your Course Rep will make themselves known to you in Welcome Week.
- **Students' Union International Officer** – a part-time elected officer in the Students' Union who will represent you and other international students and arrange social events.
- **Residential Ambassador and Student Experience team** for any issues with relationships in your house, flat or hall.



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