

International Study Centre

# WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME

A guide for students preparing to join us at  
Durham University International Study Centre

# Welcome to your new home

Queen's Campus at Stockton-on-Tees is a fantastic place to live and study. This friendly and welcoming campus will be your new exciting home away from home, a place where you will create new memories that you'll treasure for life.

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

**For up-to-date information before your arrival, visit:**  
**[durhamisc.com/welcome](https://durhamisc.com/welcome)**

## Contact details

### Address:

Durham University International Study Centre  
Ebsworth Building, Queen's Campus  
University Boulevard, Stockton-on-Tees  
TS17 6BH United Kingdom

### Useful websites:

[durham.ac.uk/isc](https://durham.ac.uk/isc)  
[ukcisa.org.uk](https://ukcisa.org.uk)  
[gov.uk/student-visa](https://gov.uk/student-visa)



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# Get ready to join us at the International Study Centre

You will find useful information on our Welcome Hub to help you to prepare for starting your course. Before you join us, there are five things you need to do first.

## 1 Apply for your visa

To study in the UK, you are required to have a valid visa. Our Admissions Centre will advise and issue the relevant documents you will need.

### Student visa

For a Student visa you will need a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) number which will be issued to you by our Admissions Centre. You can only apply for your Student visa once you have received your CAS number.

**Step 1:** You may be required to have a Pre-CAS interview. You will be contacted by Admissions to book your Pre-CAS interview via a link. Remember to then attend your interview on the pre-booked date.

**Step 2:** Our Admissions Centre will issue a CAS preview by email usually within **six months of the course start date (three months if you are in the UK)**, provided you:

- Have met all academic, English language and other conditions in your offer letter.
- Have completed, signed and returned your Acceptance and Indemnity Form to the Admissions Centre.
- Are up-to-date with your payments as stated in your offer letter and payment plan.

**Step 3:** Carefully check all the details on the CAS preview and return the signed CAS Declaration document. Once we have received your CAS Declaration, we will issue you with your CAS statement that will include your CAS number.

**Step 4:** Before you submit your Student visa application, make sure you understand and meet all the requirements to avoid a visa refusal. Before you apply, make sure you have:

- sufficient funds in an acceptable account maintained for at least 28 consecutive days and the financial document is not expired at the time of payment for visa application.
- paid the Immigration Health Surcharge for NHS health care treatment.
- all required documents in support of your visa application.

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

## Student Visas are Moving to Digital

If your visa application is approved, you are likely to be granted a digital eVisa. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) is transitioning from physical documents to an online digital immigration system.

You will be able to access details of your immigration status, such as your visa expiry date, online through your UKVI account. You will need a Share Code\* to prove your immigration status.

\*A share code is a personal identifier that verifies your immigration status. This allows us to access your eVisa and confirm your right to study in the UK. To obtain a share code, visit: [www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status](https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status)

## 2 Complete our Pre-Registration form

It's important that we have up-to-date information for you. Fill out and update the information in the form at any time as you finalise your study and travel plans. The form can be found on your Welcome Hub.

## 3 Book your accommodation

During your time at the International Study Centre you can choose to either live in allocated student accommodation or arrange your own private accommodation.

If you have requested accommodation on your application form, our Central Student Services Team will contact you directly regarding the options available. Keep your contact details up to date via the Pre-Registration form so we can contact you without delay regarding your accommodation request.

You may prefer to arrange your own accommodation. Make sure that you have secured your accommodation before arriving in the UK and update the details in your Pre-Registration Form. Please note that you must live within a 60-minute commute of the International Study Centre.

Email: [durhamisc.css@studygroup.com](mailto:durhamisc.css@studygroup.com)

## 4 Book your travel

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

You should not book any flights home until you arrive in the Centre and speak with the Student Experience Team as there may be further assessments after the end of term dates shown on your offer letter. You can then book your flight back home to be scheduled after any final assessments.

Please see page 8 for your suggested arrival airport.

If you require a taxi transfer from the airport, you need to complete the relevant section in the Pre-Registration form.

## 5 Ensure you are insured

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

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

**For full information on StudyCare Insurance, visit:**  
[studygroup.com/studycare](https://studygroup.com/studycare)

Depending on the country you live in, you may need to have a tuberculosis (TB) test before you apply. Please read the full visa guidance at: [gov.uk/student-visa](https://gov.uk/student-visa)

If you need help and advice, your local representative or your student enrolment advisor can help you.

# What to bring with you to the UK

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

## Things to pack in your hand luggage

- ☐ Passport and visa
- ☐ UKVI Visa decision letter
- ☐ Your offer letter
- ☐ Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) letter
- ☐ Academic qualification certificates and IELTS certificate or other original Secure English Language Test result
- ☐ Evidence of funding for your tuition fees and living costs, including sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- ☐ Accommodation documents, including your signed tenancy agreement
- ☐ If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian details and Under 18 parental consent form
- ☐ Any insurance documents
- ☐ Medical certificates including vaccination records
- ☐ Essential toiletries and medications (please check with your airline what's permitted)
- ☐ Enough money to live on in the first few weeks. We advise you do **not** bring large amounts of cash.

\*You must have a PC or Mac based computer available for use in order to access course materials, Learning Management System (LMS) / Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform and undertake assessments - it is important that all students are prepared with the appropriate technology. Linux, Chromebooks and Windows 10S/11S Mode are not supported.

Please note it is not possible to complete your assessments on an iPad or a Chromebook and these are not suitable substitutes for one of the above. While it is possible to access and interact with most course content using various tablets and smartphones, such as iPads, iPhones and Android devices, these devices will not work for assessments.

### Windows

**Operating System:** Windows 10 or a more recent version of Windows (Note: Windows 10S/11S Mode are not compatible operating systems)  
**Memory:** 4 GB RAM  
**Hard Disk Space:** 200 MB of free hard disk space  
**Hardware:** Webcam and Microphone  
**Software:** Installation of Zoom for Virtual Classrooms  
**Web Browser:** Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge (Chromium version)

### Mac

**Operating System:** Mac OS/X 10.15 or a more recent version  
**Memory:** 4 GB RAM  
**Hard Disk Space:** 200 MB of free hard disk space  
**Hardware:** Webcam and Microphone  
**Software:** Installation of Zoom for Virtual Classrooms  
**Web Browser:** Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge (Chromium version)

## Things to pack in your suitcase

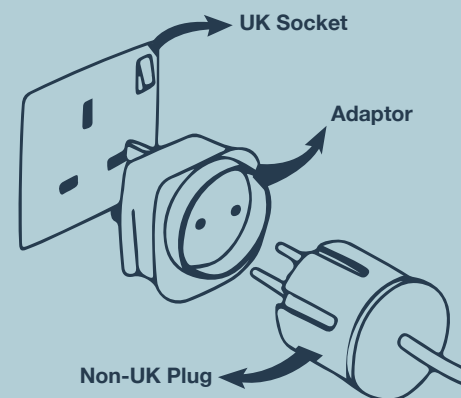
Stockton-on-Tees has a variety of shops so you'll be able to buy everything you need to live comfortably. Many of the personal items you wish to bring with you, such as clothes, accessories and books can go in your suitcase.

### You must bring:

- **Laptop computer** and charger.\*
- **Comfortable clothes** - the International Study Centre has an informal dress code. You can bring comfortable clothing such as trainers, jeans, t-shirts, jumpers and a warm/waterproof coat.
- **Study supplies e.g. pens and paper notepads** - these may be less expensive in your country.
- **Mobile phone** and charger
- **At least one travel adaptor plug** - 240v with a three-pin plug (like the one pictured opposite).

Your accommodation may provide a bedding and catering pack.

If you have booked private accommodation, you will need to check what is supplied.



## Top Tip

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

Calling from the UK? Once you're in the UK and calling from a UK phone, you don't need to include the '+44', just replace it with a '0'. For example, a number that internationally is +44 191 334 0698 becomes 0191 334 0698.

# Arriving in the UK

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



For up-to-date information visit: [gov.uk/uk-border-control](https://gov.uk/uk-border-control)

## At Border Control

Be prepared for an immigration interview with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) staff.

It is common for international students to be stopped at the border, so please don't worry if this happens to you. Border Patrol will most likely just want to check that you are safe to enter the country.

You must be able to answer some questions in English and have a basic conversation without the assistance of an interpreter – failure to do so may result in you being denied access to the UK, at which point you will have to return home. The UK border control can be very busy, so don't be surprised if you have to wait in a queue.

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

**Welcome to the UK!**

## Top Tip

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





# Getting to Durham University ISC from Newcastle Airport

Newcastle Airport or Durham Tees Valley are the closest international airports to Durham University International Study Centre at the Queen's Campus, Stockton-on-Tees. Alternatively, you can fly to Manchester.

## By plane and pre-booked transfer

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

You will need to have completed the Arrivals Form we will send you and return it to [durhamisc.css@studygroup.com](mailto:durhamisc.css@studygroup.com)

If you are heading directly to your accommodation booked with our Central Student Support Team, the taxi driver will take you to collect your keys – they will have been informed where you will be staying, but it is a good idea for you to have the details to hand.

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

If you are staying in private accommodation, you will need to have provided the address at the time of booking directly with the taxi company via the Pre-Registration form.

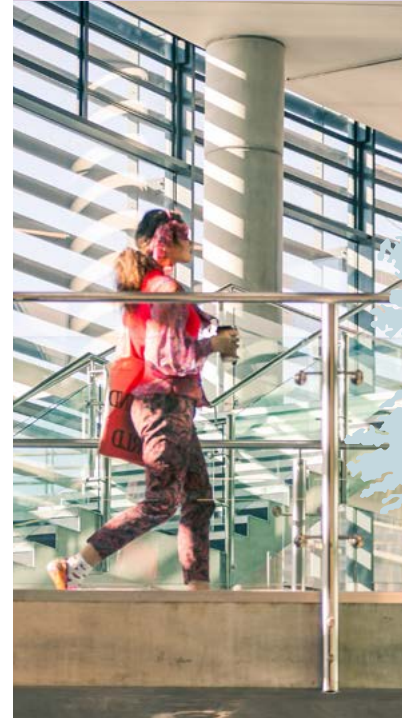
## Making your own way

The closest train station is Thornaby which can be reached from Darlington, a station on the main rail line between London and Scotland.

By train: visit [nationalrail.co.uk](http://nationalrail.co.uk)

## Top Tip

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



## Keeping your information up-to-date

It's really important that you keep your contact details up-to-date via our Pre-Registration form in case we need to contact you at any point.



# Your welcome week

On your first, exciting day with us it is important that you start on time.

It's vital that you start on time so that you don't miss out on meeting your new classmates and enjoying all of the great social activities that have been planned for you.

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

## What to bring with you when you come to the Centre

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

- Evidence of your Secure English Language Test
- Passport
- UKVI Visa Decision Letter or EU Settlement Scheme eligibility share code and conditions letter
- Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian's details and Under 18 parental consent letter
- Evidence of eligibility to study (e.g. CAS letter)
- Decision notification letter if you were granted an eVisa (student route application EU/EEA nationals)
- Digital photo of yourself (passport size)

- Your share code\* to prove your immigration status
- Your visa vignette showing your entry stamp to the UK (sticker in your passport) or flight evidence if your vignette was not stamped on arrival

As soon as you arrive at the centre, you must provide your registration documentations on your first day. Without submitting these documents, you **may not** be permitted to start attending your course. If you experience any technical difficulties, please speak to the student support team immediately.

\*A share code is a personal identifier that verifies your immigration status. This allows us to access your eVisa and confirm your right to study in the UK. To obtain a share code, visit: [www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status](https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status)

## During your welcome week you will learn about:

### Opening a bank account

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

In order to open a bank account you will need:

- a passport
- proof you are a student – we will issue you with a letter
- proof of a UK address
- proof of your current immigration status

### Your chosen programme

Get your all-important timetable and find out what you need to achieve to progress to the University.

### Registering with the University

Once you are registered with the University you will get your student card and be able to set up and log on to the University's internet network. You will also get information about the University sports facilities and gym memberships.

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

**"It's my first time in the UK, so the first couple of weeks were hard, but now I'm getting into it.** The staff did a great job, helping me and showing me around and trying to make me feel like I belong here."

### Jad from Lebanon

Studying International Foundation Year in Business, Economics, Accounting and Finance  
Aiming to study BA (Hons) Business and Management

## Advice on settling in

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

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

If you have any problems or queries during your welcome week, please email the Student Experience Team: [DurhamISCStudentSupport@studycgroup.com](mailto:DurhamISCStudentSupport@studycgroup.com)

## Top Tip

**Make sure you remember your UKVI account login details so you can access it on your device anytime. This way, you can easily provide information about your immigration status, like your visa expiry date.**



# Your campus





# Aerial map



1. Teesside Retail Park  
2a. Ebsworth Building  
2b. Wolfson Building  
2c. Holliday Building

3. Infinity Bridge  
4. Queen's Campus Sports Centre  
5. Thornaby Railway Station

6. Rialto Court (accommodation)  
7. Stockton Town Centre  
8. Infinity House (accommodation)



# Your checklist



## As soon as possible

- ☐ Have you checked your contact information and provided other details in the Pre-Registration Form?
- ☐ Have you paid the required fees for your tuition, accommodation and insurance (if applicable)?
- ☐ Have you applied for and received your visa?

## Up to one month before you depart

- ☐ Have you checked the information in your Pre-Registration form?
- ☐ Have you received your visa and booked your travel?
- ☐ Have you arranged a taxi transfer through the Pre-Registration form?
- ☐ Have you booked your accommodation and received confirmation of your room allocation?
- ☐ Have you organised money to bring with you?
- ☐ Have you made a copy of your passport and other essential documents?

## What to bring with you to the Centre

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

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Your visa vignette showing your entry stamp to the UK (sticker in your passport) or flight evidence if your vignette was not stamped on arrival
- ☐ E-visa and Share Code
- ☐ UKVI Visa Decision Letter or EU Settlement Scheme eligibility share code and conditions letter
- ☐ Decision notification letter if granted eVisa (student route application EU/EEA)
- ☐ Confirmation of Acceptance for Study letter (CAS)
- ☐ Sponsor letter (if you are being sponsored)
- ☐ If you are under the age of 18, a copy of your UK Guardian's details and Under 18 parental consent letter
- ☐ Evidence of your Secure English Language Test

# Get involved!

Why not join our social network

 [facebook.com/iscdurham](https://facebook.com/iscdurham)

 [instagram.com/durhamisc](https://instagram.com/durhamisc)

 [youtube.com/c/DurhamUniversityInternationalStudyCentre](https://youtube.com/c/DurhamUniversityInternationalStudyCentre)

#MyDurhamFuture

We can't wait to welcome you!