



International Students

Welcome

2011/2012

A pre-arrival guide for all
international students

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Zia Ur Rehman
MSc in Interprofessional Health and Social Care

Before you arrive



Izumi Hara
General English Language Course

Introduction

Welcome to Canterbury Christ Church University and the International Student Advice Service

Located in the heart of Canterbury, and with vibrant campuses in Medway, Broadstairs, Folkestone and Tunbridge Wells, Canterbury Christ Church University offers a dynamic and inspirational place to study.

This guide aims to answer some of the most common questions asked by international students on topics ranging from immigration, housing and healthcare to social life and travel in the UK. It is also an introduction to some of the invaluable support services the University provides.

You should read this guide before travelling and also refer to it when you arrive in the UK as it is a useful point of reference and contains information which will help you find your way around.

It contains information relevant to all international students, including Erasmus students and those on short courses. However if you have further queries or a question that is not covered in this guide, you are welcome to contact me directly via the i-zone.

Laura Spencer – International Student Adviser



The i-zone is a single, easy access information service for students.

Tel: +44 (0)1227 782222

Email: i-zone@canterbury.ac.uk

Web: www.canterbury.ac.uk/international-student-advice

Visit: Augustine House, Canterbury Campus

Planning ahead

How should I stay in touch?

It is very important that you stay in touch with the University and follow the instructions set out in your offer letter and/or letters from your academic department. If you have any academic-related questions, contact your academic department directly via the [Programme Administrator](#). The International Office will be pleased to answer any questions that you may have regarding admission to the University.

[StudentNET](#) is a student 'portal' presenting personalised and customisable information to students over the web. New students are directed to [StudentNET](#) to engage with the University, register and obtain their Smartcard, activate their library and computing facilities and to gain access to additional applications and services as the admissions process progresses.



A Student [Smartcard](#) will allow you to:

- Buy food and drinks at the Campus cafes
- Borrow books from the library
- Enter Augustine House
- Access printers/copiers/scanners in Augustine House
- Get discounts on purchases in various shops

Where can I find the term dates?

These can be found on the [University](#) web pages.

I have an unconditional offer - what happens next?

As soon as you have an unconditional offer, you can begin to organise your accommodation.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

When your offer becomes unconditional, the International Office will send you a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (no earlier than 6 months prior to the start of your course) which you will need if you require a visa to study in the UK.

Where will I live?

The [Accommodation Office](#) is located in Augustine House on the Canterbury campus and deals with University accommodation-related allocations and queries. All international students are guaranteed accommodation in their first year of study providing they apply before the published deadline of 31 July. Failure to meet this deadline may mean that you arrive in the UK with nowhere to live.

■ *Homestay Accommodation*

[Homestay](#) is where you live in the home of a host family and is one of the most popular types of accommodation for international students enrolled on English Language and other short courses at Canterbury Christ Church University. However, it is currently available only for students studying in Canterbury.

■ *University Accommodation*

University accommodation is offered to those students who are here for a long term study period. The University offers various types of student residences located on or near to each campus. You may find yourself sharing a house or flat with students from a variety of backgrounds. Some rooms are en-suite (private toilet and shower) and the University can also offer some single sex accommodation. All University accommodation is self-catered meaning that you must either cook for yourself or purchase food in one of the catering outlets on campus. Once your accommodation is confirmed, and shortly before arrival, the Accommodation Office will email you details of their "E-Intro" which is an online introduction to living in University accommodation and the items you should bring with you.

■ *Private rental sector*

Canterbury and the surrounding areas have an abundance of privately let accommodation that you can rent by yourself or with other students. Accommodation Office staff are unable to find private rented accommodation on your behalf however may be able to offer tips and general guidance when it comes to house-hunting. It is unlikely that you will be able to arrange accommodation in the private rental sector from abroad; you will need to consider arranging temporary accommodation in a local Bed & Breakfast (B&B) or hotel for your first few days in the UK.

! **Remember:** if you rent privately it is likely that you will have to enter into a contract for at least 6 months. Tenancy Agreements are legally binding documents and so if you have any questions, you should always seek advice before signing one. Contact the International Student Adviser who can refer you for specialist help if required.

! **Remember:** that landlords often require tenants to have a UK-based guarantor. If you do not, you may be expected to pay a significant proportion of your rent in advance.

Do I need medical insurance?

My course lasts less than 6 months:

- It is essential to take out medical insurance before leaving your home country. In an emergency, some treatment may be available to you however most will be extremely costly. [Endsleigh](#) offers a good insurance package.



Exception: Students from the EU/EEA/Switzerland, or countries with a bilateral healthcare agreement with the UK, are entitled to NHS treatment. EEA nationals must apply for a [European Health Insurance Card](#) before leaving home.

My course lasts more than 6 months:

- You will qualify for NHS treatment from the beginning of your stay and so too will your spouse or children with you in the UK. However, it may still be wise to buy some form of insurance cover. [Endsleigh](#) offers a good insurance package.

Can I send belongings in advance?

You can have things sent by sea or air. Be sure to pack everything well and insure it against damages. Address all packages to yourself at your UK address and make sure that it will arrive after you do.

You will be asked to fill in customs forms, making it clear what is contained within any packages. State that your belongings are "**personal effects, part of my temporary move to the UK as an international student**". Customs officials may inspect your belongings but they are less likely to do so if you have given a clear list of the contents.

! **Remember:** The University cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage to your belongings.

Money matters

Who decides my fee status?

The University decides your fee status based on the evidence you supply. To qualify for "Home Fees", you must satisfy strict nationality and residency criteria, as stated by the education departments of the UK Government. For further information, please visit the [UKCISA](#) web pages.

The University offers a reduction against its usual "International Fee" rate to those serving and retired British Armed Forces personnel (ie Ghurkas) residing in the UK, and to their spouses and children. This reduced fee rate is in line with that of "Home Fees". To qualify for a reduction, an application must be made to the International Office.

If you have a question concerning your fee status, you must contact the International Student Adviser immediately. If you think an error has occurred and that you have been assessed incorrectly, it is essential to resolve the problem prior to your arrival.

Do I need to pay a deposit?

All payment details will be contained within your offer letter. This is sent by the International Office.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

If you require a student visa under Tier 4 in order to study in the UK, you will be asked to pay a deposit of 1/3 of your tuition fees before your offer becomes unconditional.

How will I pay my fees and fund my studies?

The education departments of the UK Government decide which courses attract government funding and who can be given a loan for tuition fees and/or living costs.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

For an explanation of the conditions you need to meet in order to be eligible for funding, please visit the [UKCISA](#) web pages. If you are eligible for funding, you should apply to the [Student Finance Services European Team](#). You can do so as soon as you have an offer for a designated course and should apply before the relevant deadline. Remember that you'll need to make an application for each year of your course. If you have a question about the funding application process, contact the International Student Adviser.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

If you require a student visa under Tier 4 in order to study in the UK, you will be expected to show the immigration authorities that you can pay for your tuition fees and living expenses for the duration of your studies (and those of any family members accompanying you) without having to work in the UK and without claiming welfare benefits.

Will Canterbury Christ Church University offer me a scholarship?

The International Office will send full details of any scholarships available along with your offer letter.

Immigration and visas

Do I need a student visa (entry clearance) in order to study in the UK?

It is strongly recommended that everyone uses the [UKBA self-assessment tool](#) to check this for themselves. Arranging your immigration affairs is your responsibility however you are encouraged to contact the International Student Adviser for help and guidance if you have any queries about the application process.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals:

You are entitled to enter the UK freely and do not need to obtain a visa. However, you may still be asked to show evidence that you have been accepted onto a course of study and you will need your passport.

The remainder of this section does not apply to you if you are a national from the EEA and/or Switzerland. Please proceed to the section entitled: [Working in the UK](#).



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

It is compulsory for everyone (even those who are not [visa nationals](#)) to obtain entry clearance before travelling to the UK if wishing to enter as a student under Tier 4. The UKBA has produced a very useful [video](#) explaining how to apply for a student visa. Everyone is encouraged to view this as it is available in several languages.

If you already hold a UK visa for a different immigration category, you should check the [UKBA website](#) to see if your visa permits you to study.

Do I need a student visa (entry clearance) even if my course lasts less than 6 months?

If you are coming to the UK to study for a maximum of 6 months, you may qualify to enter as a 'student visitor'.

If this is the case and you are not a [visa national](#), you will not need to obtain a visa/entry clearance in advance of travelling; you can apply for permission to enter the UK at the port of entry.

If you are a [visa national](#), you will have to obtain a visa/entry clearance in advance of travelling if wishing to enter the UK as a 'student visitor'.

Are there special arrangements for people studying General English only?

If you are studying General English **only**, you can apply to enter the UK as a student visitor for a period of up to 11 months. If this is the case you must apply for entry clearance before travelling, regardless of your nationality.

What are the disadvantages of studying a short course as a 'student visitor'?

- You will not be permitted to undertake any work or work placement (even if it is part of a course, or is unpaid)
- You will not be allowed to extend this visa



Remember: You should only enter the UK as a 'student visitor' if you are absolutely certain you will not want to work in the UK and you will not want to stay for longer than 6 months.

Further details about this immigration category can be obtained from the [UKBA website](#).

My course lasts six months or more – what does this mean?

If you are coming to the UK to study a course that lasts longer than 6 months, you will be required to obtain a visa/entry clearance as a student under Tier 4 of the Points Based System. You must do so even if you are not a [visa national](#).

If you want to make a successful visa/entry clearance application, it is extremely important that:

- before you make your application, you read and understand the [UKBA Tier 4 policy guidance](#)
- you check that you meet all the requirements before applying
- you provide evidence in exactly the format required by the UKBA
- you complete all sections of the form fully and accurately
- you allow plenty of time to make your application

To obtain enough points you must:

- be in possession of a valid Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) (30 points)
- meet the maintenance requirements (10 points)
- be able to satisfy the immigration rules that relate to students

The International Office will email you your CAS no more than 6 months prior to the start of your course and only when you have met the conditions of your offer. The CAS is a unique reference number and is accompanied by a CAS Statement. You will not have to submit the CAS Statement itself however you will need the information contained within to help you with your application form.

In order to obtain a student visa under Tier 4, you must complete application form [VAF 9 & Appendix 8](#) and apply no more than three months prior to your course start date.

Contact the International Student Adviser if you require any help or guidance completing the paperwork or if you wish to clarify which supporting documents you need to submit.



Remember: it is important that you keep photocopies of the completed forms and all your supporting documents.

How much money will I need available?

If you are on a course of less than one year you will need to show you have sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees for one year, plus £600 for each month you are in the UK, up to a maximum of nine months, plus £400 for each dependant for each month they will be with you in the UK, up to a maximum of nine months; if your course is longer than one year you will need to show evidence that you have the money to cover your first year's fees, plus £5,400 living costs for your first year. You should check the [UKBA](#) website for more detailed information on which documents are acceptable as evidence you meet the requirements.

There are special, lower, maintenance requirements for you if, when you make your immigration application, you already have student immigration permission and you satisfy certain criteria. Please refer to the [UKBA](#) website for more detailed information or contact the International Student Adviser for help.

Which supporting documents do I need to gather?

- ✓ Application form
- ✓ Application fee
- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Passport photos
- ✓ CAS
- ✓ Documents used to obtain your offer (as indicated on your CAS Statement)
- ✓ Financial documents
- ✓ ATAS certificate (if applicable)

What does the Points Based System mean for me?

Under Tier 4 of the UK's Points Based System, student visas are issued in relation to a specific university. Your university is known as your Sponsor. When you are granted your visa/entry clearance it should state Canterbury Christ Church University's Sponsor Licence Number on the stamp. This means that you are linked to us. If you decide to change your place of study you will need to obtain a new visa. Canterbury Christ Church University is required to inform the UK government if a student:

- fails to enrol on their course
- stops attending their course
- is absent without consent
- withdraws from the course or defers their studies
- changes their course
- finishes their course earlier than expected
- breaches the conditions of their visa

If you know you are going to be late and will miss enrolment, you must contact the International Office to see if it is possible to make alternative arrangements.

Further information about Canterbury Christ Church University's role as Sponsor and its Highly Trusted Status can be found on the [University web pages](#).

Can my family members come with me?

Your dependants can accompany you to the UK if:

- you are studying at postgraduate level on a course lasting at least 12 months
- you are a government-sponsored student on a course lasting at least 6 months

Dependants in this instance are strictly defined by the immigration rules.

What happens if my visa is refused?

There is no full right of appeal. Instead, you can ask for an Administrative Review of the decision to refuse your application. This process is free. You have to make your request for an Administrative Review within 28 days of the date you receive the refusal notice. The process is explained in [Annex 4 of the Policy Guidance](#).

An Administrative Review will consider if the decision was correct based on the evidence you submitted with your forms; they do not usually result in a change in decision because in most cases you are not allowed to produce new or different documents. If you forgot to include certain documents with your application, or if you made any other error, it is likely that you will need to make a fresh application for a visa/entry clearance.

If your visa is refused and you decide to withdraw from the course, it may be possible to arrange a refund of any deposit monies paid by contacting the International Office. Remember though, that you will be liable for any bank charges in relation to the transfer.



Remember: ALL immigration related queries must be directed to the [International Student Adviser](#) who will help you understand the rules and requirements.

Working in the UK

Will I be able to work in the UK?



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

All EEA and Swiss national students can work in the UK. However, strict rules apply in relation to certain nationalities.

If you are a national of **Bulgaria or Romania**, you might be subject to the [Worker Authorisation Scheme](#). **This means that you will not be able to work until you have obtained a Yellow Certificate.** In order to obtain a Yellow Certificate, you must submit certain documents including proof that you have sufficient resources not to become a burden on the UK's social assistance system during your time as a student. Ideally, this should be in the form of original bank statements covering a three month period. If a parent, relative or friend is supporting you, the evidence should be a letter from him/her confirming this together with formal documents showing their financial situation.



Remember: You will not be issued a Yellow Certificate unless you submit the required documents. You can apply for a Yellow Certificate in person by booking an appointment at the UKBA offices in Croydon. This is a same day service. **(You must allow at least 3 months for postal applications to be assessed.)**



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

Firstly, check the wording on your Tier 4 (Student) visa/entry clearance to ensure it is correct.

You can work for up to 10 hours a week in term-time and full-time in the holidays if:

- you are applying in order to study a course which is below degree level and which is not a foundation degree
- you apply as a Tier 4 (Child) Student

You can work for up to 20 hours a week in term-time and full time in the holidays if:

- you are studying a course at degree level
- you are studying a foundation degree course

If your visa/entry clearance says "no work", you must not work in the UK. Doing so would be a criminal offence.



Remember: You will not be permitted to work at all if you have a student visitor visa.

Preparing to leave home – a checklist

Before I leave home I must

- Obtain a visa (if applicable) and ensure that all of the details stamped on it are correct
- Be sure that I have a current passport and that the key pages are photocopied
- Collect any documents needed to obtain my Yellow Certificate Work Permit (Bulgarian and Romanian nationals)
- Buy adequate travel and medical insurance
- Apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EU/EEA/Swiss nationals)
- Arrange my accommodation
- Pack spare passport photos
- Pack suitable clothing (remember that UK weather conditions can change quickly.)
- Pack my academic qualifications and obtain a certified translation if necessary (The British Mission in your home country will be able to advise you on how to organise this)

A close-up portrait of a young man with short, dark hair and a light beard, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a red and black plaid shirt. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an outdoor setting with some architectural elements.

Your journey to Canterbury Christ Church University

What will happen at immigration control?

You will need to pass through Immigration Control before collecting your luggage. There are usually two main queues: one for European Economic Area and Swiss nationals, and one for everyone else. Please make sure you join the correct queue. An Immigration Officer will look at your passport and check your visa.



Remember: you should be sure to have your documents relating to your studies at Canterbury Christ Church University and finances in your hand baggage.

You may be questioned by an Immigration Officer who will want to be satisfied that you are pursuing your studies as a genuine full-time student, that you have sufficient funds to support yourself for the duration of your studies and that it is your intention to leave the UK at the end of your studies.

Before leaving Immigration Control, check that the Immigration Officer has either date-stamped your visa or, if you are a non-visa national coming for a course of less than 6 months, check that you have been stamped in as a 'student visitor'.

What if there is a problem?

So long as your documents are in order, you should pass through immigration smoothly. If, however, you need any help for any reason, there are two things you can do:

- Ask the Immigration Officer to telephone the International Student Adviser at Canterbury Christ Church University (+44 (0)1227 782675).
- Ask to see a representative of the Immigration Advisory Service.

If your luggage is delayed, please do not panic. Go to the helpdesk or luggage enquiries desk and tell the official that your luggage has not arrived. You will need to give a UK contact address so that your belongings can be sent on.

How do I get to Canterbury Christ Church University?

Maps and travel guidance to each of our campuses can be found on the [University](#) web pages. You are advised to look here and plan your journey before arriving in the UK.



Remember: taxis are a relatively expensive way to travel in the UK. However, sometimes they can be useful if there is a small group of you travelling. Always plan and book your taxis in advance and be sure to ask the driver for the approximate cost of the trip before you start your journey.

For information telling you where to report upon arrival, please refer to either [StudentNET](#) or your offer letter.

After your arrival



Margarita Atlasova
MSc Business and Management

Life at Canterbury Christ Church University

Support available to our students

There will be lots happening during your first few weeks in the UK and it is not uncommon for students to feel overwhelmed at times. Remember that Canterbury Christ Church University offers a great deal of support to international students – there are plenty of people to turn to if you have a problem, large or small:



- **The i-zone**

The i-zone is the first point of contact for students for any matter of concern not directly related to their course. The i-zone is the link between students and the services provided by the University to support students. You can [contact the i-zone](#) in a number of ways.

- **[International Student Adviser](#)**

The International Student Adviser can assist you if you have any problems with settling into life in the UK. The service offered may range from practical advice on any aspect of living in the UK to helping with your visa/immigration queries.

- **[Chaplaincy](#)**

The University Chaplaincy team is just one dimension of the church foundation upon which the institution was built. The University currently employs three full-time Anglican Chaplains who are responsible for the pastoral and spiritual needs of all staff and students irrespective of their individual creeds or beliefs. The service offered by the Chaplains is unique; confidential where necessary and is available to all. The Chaplaincy seeks to meet people where they are and offer them the support they need.

- **[Disability and Dyslexia Advisers](#)**

This service supports students who are disabled due to a physical or mental impairment, or medical condition, that may affect their ability to study. This includes invisible disabilities such as dyslexia or depression, as well as those that are visible, such as a mobility difficulty. Please let us know as soon as possible, and before you arrive in the UK, if you have a disability or any additional need for which you require support or special arrangements.

- **[Counsellors and Mental Health Adviser](#)**

The University offers all students a free, confidential Counselling Service, staffed by professional and experienced counsellors.

- **[Study Skills Advisers](#)**

Student Study Support runs a series of workshops and clinics specially for international students. These aim to help you understand what is expected of you in a UK academic environment and how this may be different from your own country. You will also get advice on how to further develop your academic skills.

- **[Employability and Careers Advisers](#)**

Employability and Careers Advisers can offer job hunting advice as well as a CV checking service. Workshops specifically for international students are regularly available.

- **[Student ICT Trainer](#)**

The aim of the ICT (Information & Communication Technology) Trainer is to provide support and high quality training for students in a range of ICT applications in use across the University.

- **[English Language Support](#)**

Free Academic English support classes are offered to students by the Department of English and Language Studies. (Please note, these are not General English classes.)



Remember: The University has a 24 hour telephone number that you can call for out of hours support: 01227 767700



Remember: To call the police, ambulance service or fire brigade in an emergency dial 999. The call is free of charge from any UK phone but must only be used in an emergency

Can I attend the International Students' Welcome?

The International Students' Welcome is open to all international students. It is a free event and is hosted by Student Support & Guidance. The programme includes several sessions to welcome you to Canterbury Christ Church University and gives you plenty of useful information to help you settle in. This is a great opportunity for you to meet other new international students. Details of this year's Welcome can be found on the [University](#) web pages.

What is StudentNET?

[StudentNET](#) is a student 'portal' presenting personalised and customisable information to students over the web. New students are directed to StudentNET to engage with the University, register and obtain their Smartcard, activate their library and computing facilities and to gain access to additional applications and services as the admissions process progresses.



When am I officially registered?

Details of your registration and enrolment can be viewed via [StudentNET](#).

When will my studies begin?

Details of your timetable will be made available through [StudentNET](#).

How do I obtain my Student Smartcard?

A [Student Smartcard](#) will allow you to:

- Buy food and drinks at the Campus cafes
- Borrow books from the library
- Enter Augustine House
- Access printers/copiers/scanners in Augustine House
- Get discounts on purchases in various shops

By following the instructions on [StudentNET](#), your Student Smartcard will be ready for collection soon after you arrive at Canterbury Christ Church University.

What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is a web-based system that complements and builds upon traditional learning methods used at Canterbury Christ Church University. There is an International Student Advice Blackboard for enrolled students which you are encouraged to view regularly. The Blackboard provides general advice and guidance to current international students on a range of immigration and welfare matters. There are also many useful information sheets and links to external resources.



How can I make friends?

Canterbury Christ Church University is a very friendly community of students. We welcome people of all ages from the UK, Europe and overseas. There are plenty of opportunities for you to meet new friends and integrate with British students. The following examples offer fantastic opportunities to make friends in the local community:

- Become involved in the [Students' Union](#) by joining a club or society during Freshers' Week
- Join one of the University choirs or orchestras
- Become a [volunteer](#)
- Become a Student Ambassador
- Become a Student Buddy or be "buddied"

Can the University cater for my religious needs?

As a University inspired by its own faith foundation, Canterbury Christ Church University takes the religious needs of its staff and students seriously. Whilst Anglican in flavour, the Chaplaincy reflects both the University's history and its current cultural makeup.

The Chaplaincy strives to offer support to all members of the University irrespective of their religious affiliations and philosophies. No matter who you are, where you come from, or what you believe, the Chaplaincy is there for you and can offer support throughout your time here - whether via one to ones or simply by putting you in contact with other people from the same faith community.

The University currently offers a quiet room on all of its five campuses. There is a Christian Chapel at the heart of the Canterbury campus along with a Buddhist prayer room and brand new "male" and "female" Muslim prayer rooms. In addition, there is also the Chaplaincy Centre that has both a common room and a meditation room for people to use.

The Chaplaincy is supported in its work by the good will of local faith communities and by a panel of "faith advisors". These faith advisors represent a broad cross section of faith and are currently being established as a source of information and support.

How does the University promote equality?

Equality and diversity are central to the University's ethos and underpin all that we do. As a student here you will be an important and valued member of our community. The University does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind and is proud of its welcoming and inclusive environment.

Life in the UK

What is the cost of living in the UK?

The [British Council](#) publications give a general guide to the cost of living in the UK. These should be read before you leave home, along with the [International Student Calculator](#).

We strongly advise against bringing large amounts of cash and recommend that you bring most of your money in Travellers' Cheques or use a Travellers' Cheque card. Keep your Travellers' Cheques in a different place to your passport.

You should carry enough money in cash to cover transport from the airport to your final destination; food; telephone calls home; and any other expenses for the first week (bus fares, stationery, social events etc).



Remember: [Bulgarian and Romanian](#) students must obtain a Yellow Certificate before being permitted to work in the UK.

How do I open a UK bank account?

It is possible to open a bank account if you are staying in the UK for 6 months or more. Information about choosing and opening a bank account, and the documentation you will require to do so can be found on the [UKCISA](#) web pages.

All students will require the following when opening a bank account in the UK:

- a completed application form from the bank with which you wish to open an account
- proof of identity (passport or EU National Identity Card)
- confirmation of your full-time registration at Canterbury Christ Church University (you can request a Bank Letter via [StudentNET](#))
- evidence of your current UK address
- evidence of your overseas address

How do I obtain a National Insurance number in order to work?

If you are employed or looking for work in the UK, you must have a [National Insurance \(NI\) number](#) (or have at least applied for one). To apply for a NI number, you will need to telephone the Jobcentre plus National Insurance allocation service helpline on 0845 600 0643. They will confirm that you need a number and arrange for you to undertake an evidence of identity interview.

How do I register with a Doctor (GP)?

The NHS (National Health Service) is the UK's state health service which provides treatment for UK residents through a wide range of health care services. Some services are free, and some you will have to pay for.

If your course of study is for 6 months or more, you will qualify for NHS treatment from the beginning of your stay. Your spouse or children with you in the UK will also be entitled to NHS treatment.

We strongly recommend that you register with a GP (Doctor) as soon as possible, even if you do not feel ill. This is to make it easier to see the Doctor when you need to, as GPs are often unable to give appointments to people not registered at their surgery.

To find your local GP, consult the [NHS website](#).

To register, you will need:

- your passport
- evidence that you are a student (for example, your enrolment letter or Student Smartcard)
- proof of your UK address (for example, accommodation contract or tenancy agreement)



Remember: Only call for an ambulance if you need urgent medical assistance. Otherwise, you should see your GP.

How do I see a Dentist?

Dental treatment is not free in the UK unless you are under 19 years of age. If you are able to register with the NHS, you will pay 80 per cent of the treatment cost. Dentists and other local health services can be found via the [NHS webpages](#).

Can I drive in the UK?

This will depend on where your licence was issued. You might be able to drive using your current licence for up to 12 months and then take a driving test. Alternatively, you might be able to exchange your licence for a British licence or apply for a provisional licence and then take the test. The [UKCISA](#) web pages contain very useful information about this.

Must I register with the Police?

If the words:

“The holder is required to register at once with the Police” are stamped on your visa/ID card, you **MUST** do so **within 7 days**. Failure to register is a criminal offence and could result in a fine or your removal from the UK.

The International Student Adviser will direct you to the correct Police Station. Remember that an appointment must be made in order to attend and you will need to take the following items with you:

- Passport/Travel Document
- 2 Passport Photographs
- Registration fee of £34.00
- Evidence of your student status (e.g. a Student Status Letter* or your University Offer Letter)
- Proof of your address (e.g. your tenancy agreement or lease if you are in University accommodation)

(*you can request this via [StudentNET](#))



REMEMBER: you **MUST** update your registration certificate if your circumstances change in future (for instance, if you change address or university). The updates must be made within 7 days.

What is there to do in Kent?

Known as the Garden of England, Kent is home to many famous tourist attractions. The [Visit Kent](#) web pages will give you an idea. Whether you are interested in visiting the sea, castles, cathedrals, the zoo, places of outstanding natural beauty or the shops, you will never be bored. Sport fans can go to a football match or a game of cricket whilst those who prefer “high culture” can visit the theatre, galleries and museums.

Can I visit another country during my holidays?

Yes, providing you satisfy the immigration rules of the country you wish to visit. This may mean applying for a visa. You should always consult with the Embassy/Consulate of the country you wish to visit before making your travel arrangements. For a list of foreign embassies in the UK, visit the [UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office](#) web pages.

Non-EEA/Swiss national students wishing to visit another European country may be able to do so by applying for a Schengen Visa. This can enable you to visit all of the countries within the Schengen area, rather than obtaining a visa for each of the participating countries. Any student wishing to apply for a Schengen Visa should contact the International Student Adviser for guidance approximately 6 months before wishing to travel. This is because the application procedure can be time consuming.

Can my family and friends visit me in the UK?

Yes, providing they satisfy the UK immigration rules. If your family member or friend is a non-EEA/Swiss national and is a [visa national](#), they will have to seek entry clearance to the UK as a 'visitor'.

Canterbury Christ Church University is unable to issue letters of invitation. However, your family member or friend will have to supply evidence explaining their purpose for travelling to the UK. If you require a letter confirming your student status or details of your graduation ceremony, [contact the i-zone](#).

How do I extend my Tier 4 student visa in future?

It is essential to seek advice before making an extension application. When making an application, it is extremely important that:

- before you make your application, you read and understand the UKBA policy guidance, which can be found at the [UKBA website](#)
- you check that you can meet all the requirements before you apply
- you provide evidence in exactly the format required by the UKBA, as explained in the policy guidance and on the application form
- you complete all sections of the form fully and accurately
- you allow plenty of time to make your application and to start gathering documents
- you seek advice as early as possible if you think you are going to have any difficulties meeting the immigration requirements of Tier 4

If you do not fully meet all the requirements, or if you provide evidence which is not as the UKBA expects, it is very likely that your application will be refused.

If your permission to be in the UK has already expired, you must seek advice immediately from the International Student Adviser before you make an application.

The International Student Adviser can offer advice on the following:

- Tier 4 applications
- the points required in order to make a successful application
- application fees
- passport, ID card and photo issues
- the Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies
- maintenance funds
- applying when funded by a scholarship
- applications for dependants
- in-person/premium applications at the UKBA Public Enquiry Office
- change of circumstances
- what to do if your application for Tier 4 is refused

Further guidance on completing a Tier 4 (General) Student application form can be found on the [UKCISA website](#). **You are strongly advised to read this before contacting the International Student Adviser.**

The International Student Adviser operates the Student Batch Scheme whereby your application for further leave to remain is checked thoroughly before being sent to the UKBA on your behalf. The process and rules remain the same but, if required, the International Student Adviser is able to contact the UKBA whilst the application is being processed. **If you wish to make use of this service, you are advised to book an appointment with the International Student Adviser at least 3 months before your current visa expires.**

Can I work in the UK after my studies?

Depending on your nationality and whether you satisfy the UK Immigration Rules, there may be an opportunity for you to work in the UK after your studies. The International Student Adviser is able to advise you of your options.



European Economic Area nationals (i.e. EU nationals plus those from Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway) and Swiss nationals plus family members:

All EEA and Swiss national students can work in the UK. However, strict rules apply in relation to certain nationalities.

If you are a national of **Bulgaria or Romania**, you might be subject to the [Worker Authorisation Scheme](#) and so may have to make an application for a Blue Certificate as a highly skilled individual.



Students from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland:

Depending on your circumstances, you may be eligible to work in the UK. Please note that the immigration rules are currently subject to a great deal of change. The International Student Adviser will be able to provide you with further information.

Essential things to do – a checklist

I must

- Call home to let family and friends know I arrived safely
- Register as a student of Canterbury Christ Church University
- Collect my student Smartcard
- Update my personal details on StudentNET
- Visit the library in Augustine House
- Attend my departmental welcome
- Meet my Personal Tutor
- Attend the International Students' Welcome sessions
- Pay any tuition and accommodation fees due
- Arrange for school age children to attend a local school
- Register with the local GP (doctor)
- Register with the Police if required to do so (check visa)
- Arrange to meet the Disability Adviser (if applicable)
- Make a note of my visa expiry date and, (if required to do so,) ensure I renew it in time
- Buy a TV licence if required
- Familiarise myself with the campus
- Familiarise myself with the local area
- Attend the Students' Union Freshers' Fair and join clubs and societies
- Look at the [Jobshop web pages](#)
- Open a bank account
- Become familiar with the local bus and train service
- Take out personal contents insurance for all belongings
- Be sure to know how to contact the International Student Adviser!

An A-Z of life at Canterbury Christ Church University



Valentine Chimezie Alinta
BSc (Hons) Politics and International Relations

Advice: Remember that the International Student Adviser is a source of advice when facing day-to-day, practical problems.

Budgeting: Helping students prepare for the financial side of UK higher education, the [UNIAID Calculator](#) for international students is an invaluable tool. All students should use this before coming to the UK.

Council Tax: Be aware that if you are not living in halls of residence or Homestay accommodation, it is your responsibility to print your Council Tax Exemption certificate from [StudentNET](#) and take this to your local Council. The International Student Adviser can explain who counts as a student for Council Tax purposes and tell you about discounts and exemptions. Never ignore a Council Tax bill received.

Discounts: Remember to obtain your [NUS card](#) from the Students' Union and apply for the [International Student Identity Card](#) as soon as possible.

Exchanging Money: Rather than carrying large amounts of cash, it's safer to buy travellers cheques in GBP (Sterling) as they are insured against loss or theft. They can be cashed at airports, in high street banks and at local currency exchange stores.

Food: Famous for its orchards and farms, Kent produces many different fresh fruits and vegetables. Why not visit one of the many farmers' markets? Alternatively, supermarkets such as Sainsbury's, ASDA, TESCO and Morrisons will stock all you require for a weekly shop. Look out too for local oriental supermarkets.

Graduation: Once you have passed your course, you will be invited to a graduation ceremony, which is held to celebrate your achievement. Depending on where you have studied, this may be in either Canterbury or Rochester cathedral.

HOST UK: Canterbury Christ Church University international students are active participants in the UK's national [HOST UK](#) programme, which offers opportunities to spend a weekend with a British family anywhere in the UK.

i-Zone: Should you have any queries, concerns or a need to access specialist help, including the Library, the i-zone is the key to finding solutions and resolutions. The i-zone is a single, easy access information service for students.

i-Borrow: This service is available in Augustine House and allows you to make use of a notebook computer free of charge.

Jobs: The [Employability and Careers Service](#) offers job hunting advice designed specifically for international students.

Kent: England's oldest county is steeped in history and heritage and offers many [tourist attractions](#) for all to enjoy.

London: Is only an hour away by train and many of its most popular [tourist attractions](#) are free.

Mobile Phones: Useful websites which provide information on mobile providers and services in the UK are [www.carphonewarehouse.com](#) and [www.mobiles.co.uk](#)

Newspaper: The Students' Union produces a regular newspaper for students called [UNified](#) and welcomes contributions from all students.

Oysters: From Whitstable, these are a famous delicacy, exported across the Roman Empire during the Roman occupation of Britain.

Pubs: There are plenty of pubs in Kent. Why not visit Britain's oldest brewer, [Shepherd Neame](#), at Faversham, to find out how Kentish hops are turned into beer.

Queues: The British are a nation known as being obsessed with queuing. You may find that at the start of term, queues are particularly common because everyone is new and has a question. Staff at Canterbury Christ Church University will do all they can to minimise the time you spend queuing but please be patient. Queuing is polite, and “queue jumping” generally frowned upon.

Radio: [Canterbury Student Radio \(CSR\)](#) is an exciting radio station which broadcasts across the Canterbury. Why not have a listen online?

Students' Union: Make the most of your time at Canterbury Christ Church University by making friends and becoming involved. The [Students' Union](#) is an organisation independent of the University, run by students for students. It has a range of sports clubs and societies with which you can engage throughout your time here.

Sport, fitness, health and well-being: A range of sporting and fitness activities are on offer across the campus network. You can either compete competitively through British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) or on a more informal basis to improve athletic or sporting performance. The [Sports Centre](#) plays host to many sports and fitness opportunities and is just a few minutes walk from the North Holmes Road campus, Canterbury.

TV Licence: All students must be covered by a [TV Licence](#) to watch or record television programmes as they're being shown on TV. This applies whether you live in halls of residence or a private shared house. An annual licence costs £145.50. The fine for non-payment can be up to £1,000.

Umbrella: One thing you can guarantee during your time in the UK is that it will rain so remember to buy an umbrella.

Visas: Always make a note of the expiry date of your UK visa and if you think you may need to extend it, begin researching the immigration rules at least three months before your current visa ends. The International Student Adviser can help with all aspects of visa extensions.



Wireless: You can bring your own laptop onto campus and connect via the [Wireless](#) network.

X-rays: Certain nationalities will have to have a chest X-ray confirming they are free from infectious tuberculosis (TB) before applying for a UK visa. For further details, consult the [UKBA](#) website.

You: As a student at Canterbury Christ Church University, you will have many opportunities to enjoy your spare time, develop new interests and hobbies, make new friends and build skills and confidence.

Zoo: A visit to [Howletts](#) or [Port Lympne Wild Animal Parks](#) is not only a fun day out but also a chance to see rare and endangered animals.

Useful websites



Georgina Petrescu

Summary of useful contacts & web links

Description

Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University	The University website
Students' Union	Students' Union
i-zone	Student Support & Guidance
i-zone	Accommodation Office
i-zone	International Office
i-zone	International Student Advice Service

Living in the UK

UKCISA	UK Council for International Student Affairs
DirectGov	Driving in the UK
Direct Gov	National Insurance number
NHS Direct	UK health information
TV Licensing	TV licensing
Prepare for success	Learning activities to prepare you for study in the UK

UK Immigration

UK Visas	UK Visas
UKBA	UK Border Agency
IAS	Immigration Advisory Service
British Council	The British Council

Money

Endsleigh	UK insurance
UKBA	Working in the UK
OANDA	Currency converter & exchange rates
International Students' Calculator	Budgeting in for life in the UK

Kent & beyond

Visit Kent	Tourist Information
Kent travel	Travel in Kent
Kent Messenger	Local newspaper
The Train Line	Independent train ticket retailer
National Express	UK coach information
National Rail	UK train information
Embassy World	Foreign Embassies in the UK
HM Revenue and Customs	Customs and Excise
Transport for London	London Underground
Visit Britain	British Tourist Authority
Travel insurances	Compare travel insurances
Time Out	City travel guides
Expedia	Booking for online travel
STA Travel	Booking for online travel
Visit London	London online resource
London Town	London online resource
YHA	Youth Hostel Association

Additional Resources

HOST UK	HOSTUK
Student Discounts	Student discounts around the UK
ISIC	The International Student Identity Card
NUS	National Union of Students
Street Map	Online maps with detailed street maps of UK