

International Students **Pre-Departure Guide**



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Message from the Principal



Welcome! We are delighted that you have decided to come to Hull College, one of the largest colleges in the UK to offer both Further and Higher Education.

Based in the bustling Hull city centre, the College is nationally recognised for its excellent quality delivery. Our growing Higher Education provision includes a wide choice of Foundation Degrees and BA Honours Degrees in many specialist subjects and the College was recently awarded the Training Quality Standard (TQS), marking excellence in education and given the 5 Star recognition by the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM).

The College's record of employer engagement is exemplary. Opportunities for work placements are extensive, with employer projects leading to many students achieving national recognition and rewards. The College also actively encourages employers to be involved with the early stages of course design, ensuring that programmes support learners on their road to

employment with industry designed skills.

We are proud of our state of the art facilities which are amongst the very best in the country and, with easy access to transport by road, rail, ferry and air, we are the ideal choice to discover the beauties of the Yorkshire coast and Europe.

To all students, I wish you every success in your studies.'

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'E McMahon'.

Dr Elaine McMahon CBE
Hull College Chief Executive and Principal

Are you new to the UK?

You may find that studying in the UK can be a life changing experience as there may be quite a difference in cultures, customs and ideas and you are probably wondering how you will adapt to life in this country.

This booklet is a short guide to living and studying in Hull. We also have a Student Handbook with more detailed information about day to day living in Hull which we will give you nearer the time you arrive.

We wish you a very pleasant stay in our country and hope that you enjoy the vibrant culture of Hull and college life itself.

Hull College

Hull College's main campus sits at the centre of this vibrant maritime city which is undergoing major regeneration. Hull is a great place to study and live!

The College is proud of its growing multicultural community. We value equality of opportunity and diversity for all and will try our best to maintain an environment where everybody respects each other's diversity and equal opportunities.

Studying abroad is a life changing experience and you are probably both excited and nervous about your move to the UK and starting your studies with us. We hope to ease this transition and ensure that you settle in quickly.

You can be sure that from the time you arrive, our highly experienced tutors will provide you with a supportive learning environment designed to set you on the pathway to career success.

We understand that you may feel homesick at times. We are here for you! Throughout your course, staff will be available at all College sites to offer practical help, advice or support.

The College website www.hull-college.ac.uk also has lots of other information to let you know about locations and life in the College.



The College values are:

Excellence

Respect

Innovation

Celebration

The College has four main centres of excellence in the centre of Hull: The Learning Zone, situated within the Kingston Communications Stadium, the Park Street Centre, housing specialist workshops and studios within the School of Art & Design, the purpose built Cannon Street Centre which contains the School of Motor Vehicle, Fabrication and Welding and the main Queens Gardens campus.

Excellent Facilities

Libraries and Learning Resource Centre

The College's libraries are well stocked with reading and learning materials to support your coursework. There is a wide range of CDs, books, videos, DVDs, newspapers and journals, as well as general interest and fictional titles. Study spaces, internet facilities and other electronic resources are available. A team of helpful staff are happy to assist, including a dedicated HE Librarian.

Cafes and Restaurant

Food, glorious food! The College's cafes are located on each campus and there is a training restaurant within the Queens Gardens campus, all of which provide a fine selection of food at low prices.

Scholars Gym and Studio at the Learning Zone

Scholars Gym and Studio is air conditioned and fitted with top of the range cardiovascular and resistance equipment. Qualified instructors are on hand to help you achieve a healthier lifestyle by developing your very own personal exercise programme. The mirrored studio with fully sprung floor is perfect for our exercise classes which include spinning, Thai Boxing, Aerobics and Flexi-bars.

Rooms to relax in

At Hull College we know that our students value their leisure time as well as their study time, and that's why we have a range of relaxation areas within all the College sites.

Hair and Beauty Salon

Hair and Beauty treatments are offered within the College's own modern, fully equipped training salons at excellent value for money. Students and members of the public are welcome to book themselves in for treatments, which mirror industry standards.



Childcare

If you need childcare to enable you to study, look no further than one of the Hull College Childcare Centres. Fully qualified staff and centre's that are OFSTED approved can offer stimulation and care of your child. All of our centers participate in the Government Nursery Grant initiative. We provide a wide variety of play and learning opportunities for children under five years of age. The centres use a balance of free-flow and structured sessions to provide children with the opportunity to participate in a range of activities. These are based around the Early Learning Goals and the Birth to Three Matters which help children develop physically, emotionally and intellectually. Hull College has two childcare centres: one at the Queens Gardens Centre, and one at the West Park Childcare Centre.

The Hull College Student Union

The College is fortunate to have an active Student Union which hosts an annual 'Freshers Fair' for students at the beginning of the Autumn term. This event is designed as a first introduction to other student members and is supported by many external agencies, focusing on building your social networks, hobbies and interests, and health and well being issues. Social events are organised by the Union throughout the year, giving students an opportunity to participate in many activities, sporting events and external visits. Through the Student Union you can make your voice heard, locally and nationally, on issues that concern you.

Learner Support Services

At Hull College we put our learners first; the College has established an excellent reputation for learner support, and is totally committed to meeting the needs of individual learners and to ensuring that you successfully complete your course, whilst at the same time enjoying your time as a member of the College community. Hull College's friendly Learner Support Services Team is based at the College's Queen's Gardens site. The International/Guidance Officer can help you with any problems and queries that you may have during your stay, including information on travel to and between College sites and to help you familiarise yourself with the local area. The College also holds regular cultural celebration events where students and their friends and families are invited to participate in dance, drama and festival activities.

Counselling and Guidance

The College provides a free confidential counselling service. The College Counsellor can advise on personal matters and can be found in the main College building in room QG 702, or by calling 01482 598736, by texting 07624805959, or by emailing listen@hull-college.ac.uk. You can also make an appointment by contacting the International team to address any personal issues or for impartial careers guidance.

The International Department

The International Department offers a dedicated service for international students at the College. The Department provides an arrival and welcome function for international students, which includes a free airport meet and greet service. Students can refer to the Department for matters relating to council tax payments, health registration, police registration, opening of bank accounts and UKBA regulation information.

The International Department organises a range of activities for international students such as a Welcome Party, New Year celebration and trips to nearby tourist attractions. In addition, the Department works closely with the international student community through close regular contact meetings and drop-in sessions.

The International Department operates an 'open door' policy allowing students to access the services or meet with staff at anytime, without having to make an appointment. An emergency out of office hours on call service is also available for students 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Team

Whatever subject you intend to study, the better prepared you are in English language, the greater your chances are of doing well in your studies. In our experience, the most successful students are those who take time to improve their level of English language beyond the minimum entry requirements.

The kind of English language skills you will need for academic study are very different from the general English you may have learned in your home country. During your studies you will need 'English for Academic Purposes' (EAP). Developing skills in General and Academic English will enable you to listen to and understand lectures, to make and take notes, to research and read literature in your specialist subject, and to write essays, reports and dissertations in your chosen subject.

For those students who have the time, and energy, to undertake a part-time English language course, the college has a number of classes aimed at preparing students for the following Cambridge examinations:

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

FCE (First Certificate in English)

CAE (Certificate in Advanced English)

BEC (Business English Certificate)

IELTS (International English Language Testing System)

For information on internationally recognised English language tests the college recognises please visit:

Cambridge ESOL: <http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/>

IELTS: www.ielts.org

Pearson PTE Academic: www.pearsonpte.com/pteacademic/Pages/home.aspx

TOEFL: www.toefl.org

English Language Support

When you are at College the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) team can offer English language support throughout the duration of your course. You can contact the Curriculum Leader for EFL – Nick Fletcher (nfletcher@hull-college.ac.uk) on +44 (0)1482 591414 for advice and assistance.

Applying for Tier 4 Entry Clearance

To obtain a Tier 4 General Student Visa you need a total of 40 points made up of:

- A 'Confirmation of Acceptance for Study' (CAS) letter from a licensed institution such as Hull College = 30 points
- Evidence of required maintenance = 10 points

In order to apply, you should go to www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en, for a step by step guide on how to apply.

For specific advice on taking English exams in your country, check the British Council website at the following address:

www.britishcouncil.org/learning-exams-take-an-exam.htm

An Introduction to life in the UK

The official name of the UK is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is situated north-west of the European continent. The name refers to the union of what were once four separate nations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



The UK has a total area of almost a quarter-of-a-million square kilometres. An interesting point to note is that no one in the UK lives more than 120 km (75 miles) from the sea.

The UK is a mixed race society, people from all cultures can be found here. About 8% of the population of the UK today are people from other cultures and ethnicities. That is 4.6 million people!

There has been a trend of growing diversification in the last 2 decades. According to a BBC Report in September 2005,

immigration made up more than half of the UK's population growth from 1991 to 2001.

English is the official language, but there are many dialects and accents, Yorkshire being one of them!



Living and studying in Hull

Hull is experiencing an exciting period of growth, offering residents and visitors a modern, eclectic mix of culture, shopping and nightlife. With a growing population of students it's a very lively place to be.

You'll never be short of places to visit and things to do. You can choose from theatres such as the internationally recognised Hull Truck, Hull City Hall or Hull New Theatre, or you could stay within the college campus to view a performance at the College's own Riverside Theatre.

Sports

Many of the world's famous sports began in the UK, including cricket, football, tennis, golf and rugby. England's national sport is cricket although to many





people football (soccer) is the most popular sport. Some of England's football teams are world famous, the most famous being Manchester United, Arsenal and Liverpool.

Hull is also the home of the Kingston Communications Stadium, a fantastic arena for both football and rugby. The stadium is also used as a venue for international music.

There are also many other places to visit including museums, galleries, cinemas, or The Deep, the UK's only 'Submarium'. There are also many sporting and leisure facilities across the city including excellent shopping facilities, cinema complexes and sports and leisure facilities including ice skating.

If you have any particular requirements, just ask the team and we'll be only too happy to find out details for you.

The weather

The weather remains the most frequent topic of conversation in the UK as it is rather changeable and difficult to predict, due to the fact that The UK is an island country and surrounded by sea.

The weather is quite variable, with quite warm summers but colder winters, although how you find this depends on what you are used to in your own country. In the summer it can occasionally be as warm as 30°C but in winter temperatures can drop to 0°C or lower. It also rains regularly and we usually achieve a minimum of 60mm per month with much more in winter.

Therefore it can seem quite chilly and we advise you to bring warm and waterproof clothes. You may want to bring an umbrella with you to prepare for an unexpected shower.

Traditional Foods

British food was traditionally based on beef, lamb, pork, chicken and fish and generally served with potatoes and other vegetables. The most common and typical foods eaten in the UK include the sandwich, fish and chips, meat and pastry products like pies, and meat, potato and vegetable meals.

However, in the last 40 years great changes in the range of food on offer mean that the British diet is more varied and includes staples from all over the world including pasta, rice, couscous, beans and imported fruits and vegetables. It is now said that the favourite British meal is curry.

Restaurants serving most cultural dishes from across the world including Chinese, American, Greek, French, Italian, Indian, English and Mexican can be found in Hull as well as many International Fast Foods and take-away outlets. Many pubs, shops and bars also serve meals or snacks too.

Tea is said to be the national drink in the UK. Every day we drink 165 million cups of tea and each year around 144 thousand tons of tea is imported. Coffee is also very popular and the last 20 years has seen a spread across the UK of national and international coffee chains.



Electricity

The power supply in the UK is 230/240 volts. Sockets accept only three-(square)-pin plugs, so an adapter is needed for international appliances. A transformer is also needed for appliances operating on 110-120 volts.

There are many places where you can buy low cost electrical items such as hair dryers and kettles. Many large supermarkets often have a range on offer. We can advise you where to find local shopping centres.

Pre-departure information

Booking you flight

Book the flight as early as possible to get a reasonable price. Don't forget to confirm the departure date and time of your flight before leaving home in case it has been changed. You may also need to book in online a day or two beforehand and don't forget to let the International Office know if there are any changes if we have arranged for you to be collected.

Travel Tips

Travelling abroad can be an intimidating experience, especially if you are leaving your home country for the first time, or travelling alone. The following list of travel tips will help make your journey more enjoyable.

Luggage:

- We suggest you to label all your luggage with your full name and the full address of your destination.
- Make sure you pack your luggage yourself and do not carry sharp objects in your hand luggage.
- Don't send your luggage in advance or take more than allowed on the flight ticket. Have the rest sent to you when your accommodation has been settled.
- NEVER leave your luggage unattended. It could be stolen or could cause a security alert. If necessary, ask a member of staff at the airport for assistance.
- The consequence of illegally importing controlled drugs is a heavy fine and often imprisonment, followed by deportation.
- Arranging travel insurance is also suggested.

Money and travel documents

You may want to bring with you some English Money (British Sterling) in reasonably small currency for your immediate needs in the first days in the UK, such as phone cards, train or bus fares, food and bedding. Euros are not widely accepted in shops but are easily exchangeable in banks and post offices.

There is no limit to the amount of money you can bring into the UK, but your own country may operate exchange controls. If this is the case, you may want to start making arrangements for transferring money well before departure.

It is essential to carry documents with you in the hand luggage upon arrival which will show immigration officers that you meet the requirements for entering the UK as a student. Such as: (All documents should be originals)

- Valid passport
- Your offer letter from Hull College which shows that you have been accepted onto a course of study
- Proof of sufficient funds to pay for your course and your living expenses.

Clothes

Wear layers of clothing. While it can be warm when you first get onto a plane, for example, the temperature may get colder throughout the journey. You may also find the weather to be cooler than you are used to when you first arrive in the UK. In addition if you are travelling far, or in case your luggage goes missing, you may want to bring toiletries and an extra item of clothing to change into upon arrival. You may want to bring an umbrella in the hand luggage too.

Airports

We are able to collect you from Manchester Airport (2 hours away) or from Humberside Airport which 30 minutes drive away from Hull College. Once you have booked your flight, please contact us as soon as possible, so we can arrange to have you collected. Other flights may be cheaper but we are not able to collect you and you will have to make your own arrangements to get to your accommodation.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the college social life like?

Hull College is very fortunate to have a very active Student Union which hosts an annual 'Freshers Fair' for students at the beginning of the autumn term. This event is designed as a first introduction to other student members and is supported by many external agencies, focussing on building your social networks, hobbies and interests, and health and well being issues. Social events are organised by the Union throughout the year, giving students an opportunity to participate in many activities, sporting events and external visits. Through the Student Union you can make your voice heard, locally and nationally, on issues that concern you.

What support do Learner Support Services offer?

At Hull College we put our learners first, the college has established an excellent reputation for learner support. The college is totally committed to meeting the needs of individual learners and to ensuring that you successfully complete your course whilst at the same time enjoying your time as member of the college community.

Hull College's friendly Learner Support Services Team is based at the Colleges Queen's Gardens site and there is an International Student Adviser whose job it is to provide information such as travel to college sites and can help you to familiarise yourself with the college and the local area. In addition, they can advise on facilities available for child care and possibly part-time employment opportunities available with the local area.

Will I have a Personal Tutor?

Yes all students at the college have a Personal Tutor. They are available to support you with your work and to work with you to ensure that you are on target to successfully complete your course.

Will I have access to a Counselling Service?

The College provides a free confidential counselling service. The college counsellor can advise on personal matters. You can make an appointment by contacting your International Student adviser.

Where can I get information and support for my religious beliefs?

The College's chaplaincy is available to all members of the College community, of any faith or none. Through the College chaplain, members of the College community have access to any of the faith leaders of the city, be that Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim or Christian. The College chaplain can be contacted through your International Learner Support Adviser, based in the main College Reception area. We will also give more information in the post departure/induction pack.

How much will it cost me to live in Hull?

Living expenses in Hull are cheaper than in the south of England. As well as the costs of your course, you will need to find money for your living expenses. You will have needed to prove this before you came, and it may be that it has come from your own funds or from a sponsor.

We do not recommend you to carry large quantities of cash, just enough to get you through the interim period, and have the rest transferred to you when you arrive. This could be by a Bank Draft, International Money Order or similar. You

will probably need to allow for about £400-500 per month after paying for your accommodation to cover food and clothes, laundry, travel, basic utility bills (for heating and lighting etc) as well as any books and equipment needed for your course.



What do I need to do in the first days after my arrival?

You should contact the International Office at Hull College on the first day you arrive – Monday to Friday. We will have arranged a collection and we will ensure your accommodation provider is aware when you will be arriving. You should then call home to let friends or relatives to say that you have arrived safely. It may be best to obtain a new sim card for your mobile phone and these are available in most shops and are usually free. You can then purchase credit to be used on your phone and it should be cheaper than using your sim card from your home country.

Alternatively you can use public telephone boxes which accept many forms of payment. Make sure you check the rate of charge before you make an international call. You may be able to use internet telephone calls to stay in touch using systems such as Skype which are free if you both have internet connections.

Internet access may be available via your accommodation or free WiFi may be available. Free use of the college computers and Wifi will be available to you in college a day after your enrolment forms have been processed on to the college system.

When do I have to register with the Police?

If you come from a non-EU/EEA or non-Commonwealth country you may have to register with the police within seven days of your arrival. This may be stamped in your passport when you enter the UK. Remember, it is a CRIME if you fail to register with the Police.

To register with the police, please visit the police station opposite to Hull College at Queens Gardens. Go to the enquiry windows to your right at the ground floor, tell them that you have come to register, and give them the following:

- £34 cash (cost in May 2011)
- Your passport
- Two passport-sized photographs
- Your letter of acceptance/CAS statement from the College and your visa.

Note: After registration, you must inform the Police immediately if you change your address or your visa has been extended. Changing address or visa extension notification is free of charge.

Immigration Issues

Check well in advance about immigration requirements at local UK Consulate/Embassy or High Commission. You can find more information about the student immigration requirement at the UKCISA website: <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>

There is also information available on the UK Border Agency website: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Your checklist of things to do and things to bring with you:

- Have you got all the necessary travel tickets, visas and entry clearance documents required? This may include proof of your ability to meet your living costs, qualifications and the CAS letter from the college. Please also have our contact details to hand in case the immigration services wish to contact us.
- Do you have travel insurance documentation?
- Have you checked the weight and size limit for luggage and organised a shipping agent if necessary?
- Have you arranged for some cash and travellers cheques to see you through the interim period when you arrive in England?
- If appropriate, do you have Medical insurance?
- If you have any medical problems, have you got a record of any medication you can or can't take and details of any previous vaccinations?
- Do your family and friends have the details of your travel and the contact details for the College and your accommodation?
- Do you have some passport photographs?
- Do you have insurance for your personal belongings?

