

Pre-Arrival Guide for International Students Starting Courses in May



Central College
Nottingham

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Thank you for choosing **Central!**

This booklet contains important information for international students travelling to the UK to study at Central College Nottingham. It is designed to help you to make sure you are suitably prepared before you travel to the UK, and to advise you on what to expect when you arrive. We have also included some general information on British culture and customs that you might find useful in the first few days of your life in the UK.

Please read this information carefully and keep it safe so that you can use it as a checklist as you make your travel preparations.

Further information about the College, your course and support available to you throughout your time with us will be provided during your Induction Programme.

If you require any further information or advice before you travel please contact the International Office team:

Admissions Enquiries:

Mr Paul Klotschkow
Tel: +44 (0)115 8842804
E-mail: paul.klotschkow@centralnottingham.ac.uk

Accommodation & Welfare Enquiries:

Ms Marlys Murray
Tel: + 44 (0)115 8842536
E-mail: marlys.murray@centralnottingham.ac.uk

Before you leave checklist

Please use this checklist to make sure you have everything prepared before you travel to the UK. You will find further information on each of these items in the following pages.

Important: please make sure all of these documents are in your hand luggage, because you will need them on your arrival in the UK to be able to pass through Immigration.

Essential travel documents

- Valid passport
- Appropriate Visa and Entry Clearance documents
- Flight ticket

Course/offer details

- Offer letter
- CAS statement
- Original academic transcripts and IELTS certificate used to obtain your offer and your visa

Evidence of funds

- Bank statement to show you have adequate funds in your bank account to cover the remainder of your course fees, plus living expenses. Or Sponsorship Letter if you are a government sponsored student.

Money

- British currency
- Credit and/or debit card

Accommodation details/payment

- Accommodation confirmation (if already booked)
- Evidence of any payments made for accommodation

Transfer details

- Details of your Airport Pick-up (if you have booked one)

Insurance and emergency contact details

- Please ensure you have adequate travel and medical insurance to cover yourself and your belongings whilst travelling. Please keep all documents in your hand luggage.
- Contact details for the person who should be contacted in case of an emergency.

Personal belongings

- Warm clothing
- Adaptor for electrical appliances
- Mobile phone
- Any medication you are currently taking (in its original packaging in case of questions at Airport Customs)

Before you travel to the UK

Arrival dates and booking your flight

The earliest date international students should arrive in Nottingham is Tuesday 7th May. Please do not book a flight to arrive before this date, because accommodation will not be available.

Have you arranged your Airport Pick-up?

The College offers a **free** Airport Pick-up for all students under the age of 18, and for all students studying for 1 full academic year.

For students aged 18 or over, and those who are studying a shorter programme, the International Office can arrange an Airport Pick-up on request for an additional charge to be paid directly to the driver. The prices for 1 person with reasonable luggage are: London Heathrow £145; Manchester £93; Birmingham £62; East Midlands £27.

If you would like to book an Airport Pick-up you must complete a **“Transfer Request Form”** (available from the College website or from your Agent), and return this to Chengni Fu at least 1 week before you travel to the UK.

Important: If you do not return your completed form to us 2 weeks before you travel we will not be able to guarantee your Airport Pick-up.

When we have received your completed form, we will contact you to confirm your Airport Pick-up details. If you do not hear from us within 2 days of submitting your form, please contact us to make sure we have received it.

Have you arranged your accommodation?

The International Office offers an Accommodation Service to help you to find suitable accommodation before you arrive in the UK. The following accommodation is available to book in advance:

Self-catering Student Accommodation - this is self-catering accommodation, specifically designed for students. This type of accommodation is for students aged 18 or over only. We have arrangements with 2 private accommodation providers for student accommodation located in Beeston. One of these is **UPP Broadgate Park**, which is next to the University of Nottingham campus, approximately 25 minutes' walk or 5 minutes by bus from the College's Beeston Centre. The accommodation at Broadgate Park is Studios, which are self-contained, with en-suite shower and toilet and small kitchen area. Our other accommodation provider is **Comery House**, which is a large, traditional building close to Beeston Station, with 8 en-suite rooms and 2 rooms with a shared bathroom, and a shared large kitchen area. This is also approximately 20 minutes' walk or a 5 minute bus ride from the College.

Student accommodation can also be arranged at other purpose-built student accommodation in and around Nottingham city centre - please ask the International Office for details.

Homestay - this involves living with a British family, and is ideal for all international students who want to learn more about British life and improve their English. Homestay is compulsory for all

students under the age of 18. The College has a network of Homestay providers, whose properties are visited and inspected annually to ensure they comply with safety requirements and the facilities are adequate. All Homestay providers undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks prior to being appointed.

The College is also a member of **Unipol** to enable students who wish to live in private rented shared houses to access information on local, registered properties. Please ask for details.

Please note: the College cannot arrange private rented accommodation on behalf of students, but can offer advice on how to do this on arrival in the UK. Only students aged 18 or over are permitted to live in this type of accommodation.

If you would like the International Office to arrange accommodation for you, please complete an **“Accommodation Request Form”** (available from the College website or from your Agent), and return this to Chengni Fu (chengni.fu@centralnottingham.ac.uk) at least 2 weeks before you travel to the UK.

Important: If you are under the age of 18, you must return your **Accommodation Request Form** to us before your CAS will be released. This is so we can be sure all students under 18 have suitable accommodation arranged before arrival. For all other students - if you do not return your completed form to us at least 2 weeks before you travel we will not be able to guarantee your first choice of accommodation.

When we have received your completed form, we will contact you to confirm your accommodation details. If you do not hear from us within 3 days of submitting your form, please contact us to make sure we have received it.

Applying for your visa

You can apply for your visa as soon as you receive your CAS (or Confirmation Letter if you are planning to come to the UK on a Student Visitor Visa). Please do not delay applying for your visa, because July and August are extremely busy times for students preparing to come to the UK, so your visa application could take several weeks to process.

When applying for your visa, please ensure you have the following:

- Your CAS Statement (or Confirmation Letter).
- Your Offer Letter from the College.
- All of the original and certified translations of school transcripts, examination results and certificates (including IELTS), that are mentioned on your CAS Statement.
- Bank statements to prove you have sufficient funds to cover your course fees plus living expenses (approximately £800 per month). This must have been in your bank account for at least 28 days before you submit your visa application.
- Your Sponsorship Letter (if you are a government sponsored student).
- A letter of consent from your parents or legal guardians if you are under the age of 18, confirming they support your application and consent to arrangements for your care in the UK.
- Details of your accommodation if you have booked it in advance.



Other forms to complete before you travel

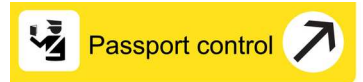
You should also complete and return the following forms to Chengni Fu before you travel to the UK:

- Social Activities Consent Form (if you are under the age of 18)
- Medical Consent Form (all students)

If you have not received these forms please either ask your Agent, or contact Chengni at:
chengni.fu@centralnottingham.ac.uk , or phone: +44 (0)115 884 2218.

When you arrive in the UK

Immigration/Passport Control



The first thing you will have to do when you arrive at the airport is pass through Immigration. This might take a long time due to the large number of people arriving in the UK during peak times such as September and January, so please be patient.

You will need to have the following documents ready to show the Immigration Officer:

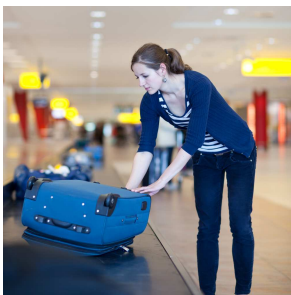
- Passport
- Visa/Entry Clearance papers
- Letter of acceptance and confirmation of your course place from the College
- Evidence that you have sufficient funds to cover your outstanding tuition fees and living expenses
- Some students may need to show evidence of a recent Medical Examination or an International Vaccination Certificate. Advice can be obtained on this from the British Embassy or High Commission when you apply for entry clearance.

In addition the Immigration Officer may ask you questions regarding:

- the benefits of the course you plan to attend
- your English Language proficiency
- any family connections in the UK
- your plans to return to your home country
- your accommodation arrangements (particularly if you are accompanied by family)

Please ensure you answer any questions clearly, politely and honestly. If you have any problems at Immigration please contact the International Office on: 0115 884 2218 during office hours (8.30am to 5.00pm), or 07843 340105 if you arrive when the office is closed.

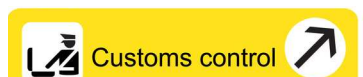
Baggage collection



After you have passed through Immigration, you will need to go through to the Baggage Claim area to collect your checked-in baggage. You should look for the carousel showing your flight number and departure airport.

If you find that your baggage is missing (i.e. it does not appear on the carousel after everything else has been claimed by other passengers), please ask a member of staff for help and they will tell you what to do next.

Customs



Once you have collected your baggage you will pass through Customs. If you have no items to declare you should exit through the **Green** channel. If you have goods to declare you should exit through the **Red** channel.

If you are carrying more than 10,000 Euros (approximately 7,840 GBP or US\$12,200), in the form of cash, bankers draft or cheque you must declare this at Customs.

Airport Transfers - pre-booked Airport Pick-up

If you have booked an Airport Pick-up through the International Office, the driver will be waiting for you in the Arrivals Hall, when you have passed through Customs. Please look for a driver holding a sign showing the following:



Full details of your Airport Pick-up are shown in your Transfer Confirmation Letter. This letter includes contact details for the taxi company and gives you instructions on what to do if your flight is delayed, or if you are unable to find the driver.

If you have booked accommodation at UPP Broadgate Park or Comery House (or other self-catering student accommodation booked through the International Office), you will be taken directly to your accommodation and a member of the staff on duty at the accommodation will be there to meet you and show you to your room. If the Reception is closed at the time you are due to arrive, we will arrange with the accommodation for you to be met on arrival by the out-of-hours duty warden.

If you have booked Homestay accommodation you will be taken directly to your accommodation wherever possible. However, if there is a reason why this is not possible, for example if your host is at work during the daytime, or you are arriving very late at night, alternative arrangements will be made (e.g. to bring you directly to the College, or to a hotel for the first night). You will be informed of this in your Transfer Confirmation Letter. Please note that you will be responsible for the cost of the hotel room if one is required, approximately £40-50.

Please note: it takes approximately 2½ hours to travel to Nottingham from London Heathrow Airport in normal traffic (not peak times); approximately 2 hours from Manchester Airport and 1 hour from Birmingham Airport.

Making your own travel arrangements to Nottingham

If you have not booked a transfer through the International Office before travelling to the UK you can travel to Nottingham using one of the following forms of transport:

Train

From **London Heathrow Airport** you should take the London Underground to St Pancras Station. From St Pancras you can travel directly to Nottingham in around 2 hours. The approximate cost will be from £65 to £85 (depending on the time of travel) if booked in advance (see “Useful Websites” on the next page).

From **Manchester Airport** you should take a train from the airport to Manchester Piccadilly station. These run every 10 minutes. You can travel from Manchester Piccadilly to



Nottingham. Some services are direct, and for some you might have to change trains at another station on the journey. Please check this carefully when booking your ticket. The journey will take 2-3 hours depending on whether you have to change trains, and the cost will be around £35.



From **Birmingham Airport** you should take the train from the airport to Birmingham New Street Station. You can then travel directly to Nottingham. The journey takes about 1½ hours and costs around £22.

When you arrive at Nottingham Station (from any of the above), you can either take a further train to Beeston, or travel to Beeston by taxi. Please note that Beeston Station is very small so facilities there are very limited. A taxi from Nottingham to Beeston will take about 20 minutes in normal traffic.

Coach/bus

From **London Heathrow Airport** you should take the National Express coach, which departs from the Central Bus Station, 5 minutes' walk from Terminal 1 and Terminal 3 via a lift/escalator and walkway. Coaches also depart from Stops 13 and 14 outside Terminal 4, or Stops 13 and 16 outside Terminal 5. Coaches go through to Nottingham Coach Station. The journey takes between 3 and 4 hours, depending on the number of stops.

From **Manchester Airport** you should take the National Express Coach. The journey to Nottingham takes from 3 to 5 hours depending on which service you choose and number of stops.

From **Birmingham Airport** you should take the National Express Coach. The journey to Nottingham takes from 2½ to 4 hours depending on which service you choose and number of stops.

When you arrive at Nottingham Coach Station, you can either take a taxi to Beeston, or travel by bus.

Taxi

From any of the airports you can take a taxi to Nottingham, but please take care if you choose this form of transport. It is best to book a taxi at the Information or Travel desk in the airport, and obtain a price for the journey in advance.

Please note: if you take a taxi that has not been booked at the desk it can be very expensive and we strongly recommend that you do not do this. See page 9 for details on Airport Pick-ups arranged by the College at very competitive prices.

Useful websites

The following websites might be useful if you are making your own travel arrangements to Nottingham:

National Rail Enquiries

www.nationalrail.co.uk

East Midlands Trains (for trains to and from Nottingham)

www.eastmidlandstrains.com

National Express Coaches

www.nationalexpress.com

Transport for London (for transport within London)

www.tfl.gov.uk

Your first few days in College

Induction

The Induction Programme will begin on Monday 13 May for all courses.

It is extremely important that you attend the Induction Programme, as this will count towards your overall attendance for your course. It is also when you will officially enrol on your course, pay your course fees and learn a lot of important information to help you throughout your time in the UK, such as how to open a bank account and how to register with a doctor.

Induction Programme

Day 1

Please come to the College's International Reception at Beeston Centre. Staff from the International Office will meet you and show you where to go.

Things you will do on Day 1 include:

- Meet your Personal Tutor
- Receive your timetable and information about your course
- Complete enrolment documents
- Complete other relevant forms
- Welcome presentation by the International Office
- Information sessions from external organisations - i.e. Fire Service; Police; local banks
- Meet other members of College staff and learn about College services (e.g. Careers Advice)
- Welcome lunch with the International Team and course tutors.

Day 2

Classes begin.

What to bring with you

Please make sure you bring the following items with you during the Induction Programme:

Day 1

- Offer letter and any other documents from the College confirming your place (e.g. CAS Statement).
- Your original academic certificates and transcripts
- Your original English language qualification documents (e.g. IELTS certificate)
- Offer letter and any other documents from the College confirming your place (e.g. CAS Statement).
- Original passport and student visa
- Receipts for any payments already made
- Sufficient funds or a debit/credit card to pay your remaining tuition fees; or a valid Financial Guarantee Letter if you are sponsored by your government

Please note: if you do not pay your course fees in full on Day 1 then you will not be able to enrol on your course.

If you are unable to arrive in time for the Induction Programme (for example, if you have a delay in obtaining your visa), you must let the International Office know as soon as possible and confirm your expected arrival date. For students arriving after the main Induction Programme, a slightly shortened Induction will be arranged each week.

Important rules for international students at Central College Nottingham

All international students who enrol at Central College Nottingham will be expected to abide by certain rules throughout their time with us. Students who do not follow the rules of the College will be dealt with through the College's formal disciplinary process.

The rules we set for international students are to ensure the College complies with the rules set for us by the UK Border Agency, so students who break the rules will risk their Student Visa being withdrawn.

The key rules for international students are:

- You must attend all of your classes shown on your timetable, including English language classes, as these all form part of your course and count towards your overall attendance.
- You must be on time for all of your lessons.
- If you are unable to attend your class for a valid reason (for example if you are ill), you must inform your tutor or the International Office immediately. Failure to do so will result in your absence being "unauthorised".
- If you miss 10 consecutive days of classes without producing formal evidence to show the reason you were absent (for example, a medical certificate/doctor's note), the College will report you to the UK Border Agency for unauthorised absence. This will affect your Student Visa and there is a serious risk that you will have your visa withdrawn and be asked to leave the UK.
- If your attendance falls below 90% without reasonable explanation this will be dealt with through the College's disciplinary process. Your parents and Agent (if applicable) will be informed.
- If, as part of the disciplinary process, you fail to show improvement you will be withdrawn from your course and will have to return home immediately at your own expense. Your visa will be cancelled and will no longer be valid for you to remain in the UK. The College has a strict no-refund policy for students who are withdrawn for disciplinary reasons.
- You should not usually arrange to return home or take holidays outside designated College holiday periods. International students are allowed to take up to 5 days per year "extra leave", but this must be formally applied for and authorised in advance by your Personal Tutor. Students who take extra leave without authorisation, or take more than 5 days, will be marked as absent and will be dealt with through the disciplinary process.
- If you wish to leave your course early, you must apply for permission from the International Office. Refunds are not usually granted for students choosing to leave early unless there are exceptional circumstances. Government sponsored students must obtain written permission from their Embassy if they wish to leave their course early. Any students who do leave early will have their visa cancelled via the UK Border Agency, and will be expected to provide a copy of their flight ticket to prove they are returning home.

Useful information for your first few days in the UK

Currency

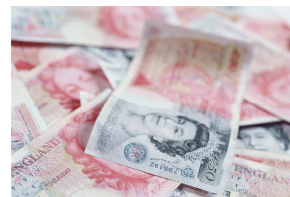
The unit of currency in the UK is Pounds Sterling (£), divided into Pence (p).

It is a combination of coins and paper notes.

There are 100 Pence to 1 Pound (100p =£1).

Coins: 1p; 2p; 5p; 10p; 20p; 50p; £1; £2

Notes: £5; £10; £20; £50



Changing money

You can change money into Pounds Sterling at banks, building societies, Post Office and travel agencies. All of these will charge a small fee for changing money. This is called “commission”. You can also change money at the Bureau de Change at the airport, although the fees charged are usually higher.

Living costs

We recommend that you bring at least £600 per month to cover the cost of your accommodation and general living costs, but precisely how much you will need depends on your personal circumstances and spending habits. You should ensure you have some British currency with you to cover your first few days in the UK.

Opening a bank account

The International Office will provide you with all of the help you need to open a bank account during Induction. There are several banks in Beeston, within walking distance of the College.

Telephones/mobile phones

There are public telephones at all airports and train station and in many public areas.

Most telephones accept coins, and some take major credit and debit cards, as well as pre-paid international phone cards. International calls can be very expensive, but all calls are usually cheaper in the evening after 6.00pm.

Most students choose to buy a mobile phone or a SIM card for their existing mobile phone on arrival in the UK. You can do this on a “Pay As You Go” basis, where you buy credit for your phone as you need it, or you can sign up for a contract where you will pay a set monthly amount that includes a specified number of minutes and text messages (you will need to provide identification and proof of a UK address for this).



Weather/suitable clothing

The weather in the UK is quite changeable and temperatures can vary between 0°C in winter (December to February) to 25°C in summer (June to August). In the summer it is often sunny and mild, but can also be cloudy with some rain. In the winter it is usually cold, with frequent rain and even snow.

It is important that you bring suitable clothing with you for the weather conditions. We recommend you have several layers of light clothing that can be added or removed as required to keep you warm. A good, warm coat is essential in the winter and a waterproof jacket or umbrella will be useful in case of rain.

Food

Most large supermarkets sell a variety of different foods from different cultures. Examples of these are: Tesco (very close to Mooregate House), and Sainsburys (in central Beeston). Beeston also has a small specialist mini mart selling specifically Asian food, (Fresh Asia) and other specialist supermarkets can be found in the centre of the city of Nottingham.

There are also several cafes and restaurants in Beeston, where you can buy everything from sandwiches and light snacks to a main meal. The average price for a sandwich is about £2.00 and coffee or tea is usually about £1.50 (or slightly more in specialist coffee shops, e.g. Caffe Nero). For a main meal in a restaurant you should expect to pay around £10.00.



General British customs/rules of behaviour

Greetings

The usual greeting British people use is: “Hello”, and they will often ask how you are. It is usual to give a brief reply, such as: “I’m well, thank you. How are you?”.



In a more formal situation (e.g. such as meeting your landlord or Host for the first time), a person might say: “Good morning”, or “Good afternoon”, and put their hand forward to shake your hand. The person might also say that they are pleased to meet you, and it is polite to respond in a similar way.

Kissing and embraces are not usual in the UK when first meeting people, so you should avoid them. These are usually reserved only for family and close friends.

It is expected that you will always look at the person speaking to you and maintain reasonable eye contact as a sign of interest and respect.

How to address people

When you first meet someone, they will usually introduce themselves to you as the name they wish to be called. In more formal situations, they might use “Mr” or “Mrs” along with their family name. In less formal situations a person will tell you his/her first name (given name). In College the environment is quite informal and most of the tutors prefer to be called by their first names.

Men and women are considered to be equal in the UK and should be treated accordingly.

Talking to people and “personal space”

When chatting with someone, you should take care to maintain a reasonable distance between yourself and the person you are talking to (approximately 60-100cm). Standing closer than this would be considered to be invading someone’s “personal space”, and British people are very conscious of this. It does not mean they are being impolite; they just do not like to stand too close.

Time-keeping

British people are quite strict with time-keeping. If you make an appointment, or have a class at a certain time, you should make sure you are there either at the exact time, or even a few minutes early. It is considered to be disrespectful if you arrive late.

Queues

It is usual in the UK to wait for your turn in shops, banks, at bus stops, in bars and coffee shops, etc, by standing in a queue. It is very impolite to walk straight to the front if there are people queuing.

Remaining term dates for 2012/2013

Summer Term

Course start date:	Monday 13 May 2013
Classes begin:	Wednesday 15 May 2013
Half-term (no classes):	Friday 24 May - Friday 31 May 2013 (inclusive)
End of term:	Wednesday 10 July 2013 for September start courses and EFL; Friday 9 August 2013 for January and May start International Foundation

Term dates for 2013/14

Autumn Term

Classes begin:	Wednesday 11 September 2013
Half-term (no classes):	Monday 21 October 2013 - Friday 25 October 2013 (inclusive)
End of term:	Friday 20 December 2013
Christmas holiday:	Monday 23 December 2013 to Monday 6 January 2014 (inclusive)

Spring Term

Classes begin:	Tuesday 7 January 2014
Half-term (no classes):	Monday 17 February 2014 to Friday 21 February 2014 (inclusive)
End of term:	Friday 4 April 2014
Easter holiday:	Monday 7 April 2014 to Monday 21 April (inclusive)

Summer Term

Classes begin:	Tuesday 22 April 2014
Half-term (no classes):	Monday 26 May to Friday 30 May 2014 (inclusive)
End of term:	Friday 4 July 2014

Important note: you are only authorised to take holidays during designated holiday periods (see above). You must not take holidays at any other time.