



# International Exchange Student Handbook

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# Guide for Outgoing Exchange Students

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it does not compare, then you will be expected to purchase the host institution's insurance upon your arrival.

## Health Advice



## *Student Finance Applications*

It is your responsibility to complete the Student Finance applications, maintenance and tuition fee loans for your year abroad. Students will be entitled to full student support (including any supplementary grants). Please note full student support is subject to income assessment. Additionally, if you receive any Maintenance Loan please remember that the amount of Maintenance Loan you are entitled to may be reduced.

## *Brunel Student Centre*

You must inform the Student Centre if you are going on exchange. They will discuss available funding packages with you so that you could continue to receive the funding while you study overseas. The Student Centre will provide you with information on how much funding you would be eligible to receive.

## *Student Finance*

If your tuition fees are usually paid by your awarding agency (SFE, SFW, SFNI, SAAS) or Student Loans Company (SLC), you must advise them that you are going to study abroad on an exchange. You are still entitled to receive any funding which they usually provide but it is important to let them know that you will be away on an exchange. Also awarding agency may offer funds for the travel costs so please contact them for the details.

## Making Travel Arrangements

### *Timing Your Arrival*

Before making your travel arrangements, confirm the dates of your international student orientation. The host university will set the date they consider to be the start of your course which will dictate when you are permitted to enter the country.

If you are living on campus, you should avoid arriving at your school during the evening, on a weekend or during a national holiday, since university offices are usually closed at those times. Please note that university residence halls do not open until a few days before registration.



- Previous and current exchange students who will be able to offer advice on how they found accommodation and they may also be able to provide contact details of their landlord
- Current exchange students at Brunel from your host institution.

Some students have found it easier to arrive at their host destination a couple of weeks before term starts to find accommodation then. Where possible the Academic Partnerships Office will provide contact details for accommodation offices at your host institution, however your responsibility to find accommodation, not the responsibility of the host university or Brunel University London

## Personal Safety

When travelling abroad, it is important to take health, safety and security issues into account and research them thoroughly before departing. Most students experience no safety issues in the host country, however it is important you attend any safety and security briefings organised by your host university and pay careful attention to advice given. Discuss safety precautions with local students and always remember that it is better to be overcautious in the first few weeks as you adapt to a new environment. Ensure that your new accommodation is secure and ask your landlord to fit new locks if existing ones are inadequate. Be aware of emergency numbers (equivalent of the UK's 999) in your host country.

### *Campus Safety*

Most university campuses will have a university security staff in addition to services provided by the local police to ensure a safe campus environment. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- All students, but particularly female students, should avoid walking around campus at night alone. Ask around on campus as to whether there are any night modes of transportation to avoid walking alone.
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## Monitoring and Reporting (Tier 4 Student Visa holders)

Whilst studying overseas, you must continue to fulfil the conditions and obligations under UK Visas & Immigration Tier 4 Student Visa scheme. Brunel University London will make at least 10 engagement points (in an academic year) to which you must respond in a timely manner. If you do not respond or if you do not have a reasonable explanation, the University may take steps to withdraw sponsorship of your visa and withdraw you from the University and the host university.

## Final Note

Don't forget that going on an exchange is not just for academic purposes but is also an opportunity to experience and enjoy a new culture while making friends from all over the world. Be proactive and throw yourself into your new life and be willing to meet new people at any events organised for you by your host university. Most importantly, relax and concentrate on trying to settle and feel at home as quickly as possible. Just like in your home country, a little common sense goes a long way. We hope that you enjoy your exchange period!

## Useful Websites

- Student Finance (for travel grant) – [www.gov.uk/travelgrants-students-england/overview](http://www.gov.uk/travelgrants-students-england/overview)
- U.S. Embassy in London <https://uk.usembassy.gov/visas/nonimmigrant-visa-faqs/students-and-exchange-visitors>
- Embassy of China in London <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/visa/>
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office [www.fco.gov.uk/en/](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/)
- Hostel World – [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com)
- STA Travel [www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk)
- Transportation Security Administration [www.tsa.gov/travel](http://www.tsa.gov/travel)

## Arrival Checklist

Once you've arrived at your accommodation be sure to work through the following checklist:

1. Confirm your safe arrival with your family
2. Confirm your safe arrival with your Academic Exchange Coordinator at Brunel, and update your address and contact details on the Student Portal