



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**

**CONNECTING
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**GUIDANCE NOTES
FOR INTERNATIONAL
UNDERGRADUATE
APPLICANTS 2019**

Guidance Notes for International Applicants for 2019

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Introduction

Most of you will now have completed examinations and we hope that these have gone well. The purpose of this publication is to provide you with comprehensive information and guidance on the various procedures which will operate between now and the beginning of the academic year.

It is intended for applicants holding either a firm or insurance offer through UCAS or as a direct applicant, for admission to Queen's. (Please note that, for those applicants holding offers for deferred entry in September 2020, this is largely for information only. Up to date information will be provided to you again next year, as appropriate.) There is a short time between the release of examination results and the start of the first semester so the time-scale for completing the various steps, including immigration procedures, is very tight. I would therefore ask you to study the contents carefully.

For your convenience, our contact details and web addresses are given on this page. If you do have to get in touch, please remember to quote your UCAS Personal ID.

Cathy McEachern
Admissions Manager (International)
Admissions and Access Service

Queen's Web:
General Information for all new students:
qub.ac.uk/new-students

UCAS Decisions:
qub.ac.uk/ucas-decisions

Clearing and Adjustment Vacancies:
qub.ac.uk/clearing

Admissions and Access Service:
Tel: +44 (0) 28 9097 3004
Fax: +44 (0) 28 9097 5151
Email: intl.student@qub.ac.uk

1 Accommodation

Information about student accommodation at Queen's and how to apply is available at: qub.ac.uk/accommodation. The Accommodation website is designed to guide you through your options for living in Belfast when at Queen's and to make sure you know what you need to do in order to arrange your accommodation. Applications for new students are now open. You should apply for accommodation online via the website.

Your accommodation will be available from 14 September for a 38 week contract, or 7 September for a 39 week contract, if you are attending the International Students' Welcome and Orientation Programme – see paragraph 9 below.

As an international student your accommodation is guaranteed. Your application should be completed and submitted as soon as possible, and we would strongly recommend not later than **1 August 2019**.

Queen's Accommodation guarantees a place to all students coming from outside Northern Ireland and will allocate accommodation from 2 July 2019 if you have a Conditional Firm (CF) or Unconditional Firm (UF) offer. An offer of accommodation will be sent by email to the address you used to register with the accommodation website and you should therefore ensure that you continue to have access to this email address. If you are UF with Queen's and have not heard about your accommodation by 18 August 2019, you should contact the accommodation office as follows:

Queen's Accommodation
Elms BT9
78 Malone Road
Belfast BT9 5BW

Tel: +44 (0) 28 9097 4403
Email: accommodation@qub.ac.uk
Web: qub.ac.uk/accommodation

2 Examination results

2.1 Students taking A-levels in the United Kingdom (UCAS Applicants)

The University receives results from the examination boards for students taking examinations in the United Kingdom. Such students are not therefore required to notify the University of their results.

2.2 Students taking qualifications overseas

It is essential that the results of overseas qualifications, including A-levels, International Baccalaureate, STPM and Diplomas, are sent to the Admissions and Access Service as soon as they are available. Delay in doing so will mean that a decision cannot be taken on your application. Results can be communicated to the Admissions and Access Service by post, email (Intl.student@qub.ac.uk) or fax (+44 (0) 28 9097 5151).

Notification of results by email (attaching a scanned copy) is preferred. The timescale for universities to confirm decisions is short and it is therefore essential that the results are sent to us without delay. **You should quote your UCAS Personal ID number and course code.**

3 English Language Requirements

3.1 Acceptable qualifications

The UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requires the University to assess English Language competency and to vouch that a student has achieved a minimum of B2 Level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) in all four elements, ie Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. This can be done by means of a Secure English Language Test (eg IELTS for UKVI test) or by an alternative method acceptable to the University. Those who are nationals of a majority English Language speaking country (as specified by the UKVI) are exempted from this requirement. Those who have completed a degree in one of these countries may be exempted at the discretion of the University.

Further details are available on the UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) website at:
gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/knowledge-of-english

In terms of the **IELTS for UKVI SELT**, the UKVI minimum requirements are as follows:

- IELTS 5.5, with a minimum of 5.5 in all four elements of the test.

Please note that the University will normally require a higher level of performance overall or in individual components, as specified in your offer.

Although they are not listed as Secure English Language Tests, the University will also accept the **IELTS Academic** test and the **TOEFL iBT** (internet-based test) for direct entry to University degree programmes. IELTS and TOEFL tests must have been completed within the past two years.

The University will also accept a range of other qualifications including GCSE/IGCSE, UCLES/CIE 1119, Indian Grade XII/ HKDSE English Language Grade 4 with not less than 3 in each component, and the West African Examination Council Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education for the purposes of satisfying the UKVI requirements. These do not have to have been completed within the past two years. Applicants holding IGCSE should provide evidence of scores achieved in Speaking and Listening components, if these have been taken as optional tests, and are therefore separately endorsed.

A full list of acceptable English language qualifications may be found at: **go.qub.ac.uk/EnglishLanguageReqs**

3.2 Submission of English language qualifications

All applicants, who have not already done so, should forward verification of English Language qualifications which were already completed at the time of submission of their UCAS application and listed on the form. In all cases the University needs this and will not be able to issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) without it. However, please note that you will not be required to submit verification of your English Language qualifications with your visa application provided that the University has been able to undertake an assessment of the qualification you hold. This will apply in most cases but otherwise you should include the original certificate for all the entrance qualifications listed on your CAS under *Evidence Used to Obtain Offer*.

4 Immigration and Visa Information

Enclosed with this letter is a CAS Assessment form which all students must complete, regarding previous UK study. If you have not already done so, you **must** complete this and return it to us before we can issue your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). The form can also be downloaded at:

**[qub.ac.uk/home/new-students/
undergraduate/international-undergraduates/
immigration-visa-cas-procedures](http://qub.ac.uk/home/new-students/undergraduate/international-undergraduates/immigration-visa-cas-procedures)**

In addition, if you have not already done so, please enter your passport details on UCAS Track as soon as possible, since we require this information to assign your CAS. To ensure that all details are correct, it is important that you scan and email to the Admissions and Access Service a copy of the personal details/ photo page from your passport, and copies of any previous visa stamps for study in the UK, with a note of your UCAS Personal ID (if applicable).

If your course requires ATAS Clearance, **you must provide evidence to the Admissions and Access Service that you have already submitted an application for ATAS clearance, prior to the issue of your CAS.**

This should be in the form of a screenshot from your application record on the ATAS online application system. Please also see paragraph 11 below.

5 Confirmation of offers

5.1 UCAS Applicants

The University will make decisions on all applications which are conditional (Firm and Insurance) on an ongoing basis as results are received and will notify UCAS formally. If you have been successful, you will receive an **AS12** notification from UCAS confirming your place. Please follow the instructions to let us know whether you wish to accept or decline the offer of a place by completing the online form at **qub.ac.uk/as12**

5.2 Direct Applicants

Applicants who have applied directly, and have been successful in meeting the terms of their offer, will be contacted by email to confirm their place. Please ensure that you respond to this email to let us know whether you wish to accept or decline the offer of a place.

6 Issue of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

6.1 Candidates holding unconditional offers

Applicants who have already:

- firmly accepted an Unconditional Firm (UF) offer, ie. completed the AS12 acceptance reply (UCAS applicants), and
- provided verification of English Language qualifications, details of previous UK study and their passport details (see sections 3, 4 and 5 above)

will receive an explanatory note together with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Statement by email. The Statement includes your CAS number, which will be required when submitting your Tier 4 (General) student visa application. It is your responsibility to check all the information very carefully and advise us of any errors immediately. International Student Support (immigration@qub.ac.uk) will then contact you with further information and advice on applying for your Tier 4 visa.

6.2 Candidates holding conditional offers

If you were originally made a conditional offer and this is updated to Unconditional Firm (UF) following receipt of academic and/or English Language results, an explanatory note together with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) Statement will be emailed to you normally within 2 working days of the final decision being made, assuming you have:

- firmly accepted the Unconditional Firm (UF) offer, ie. completed the AS12 acceptance reply, and
- provided verification of English Language qualifications, details of previous UK study and passport details (see sections 3, 4 and 5 above)

To avoid any delays, it is important that you return this information now, in advance of publication of exam results. Your CAS statement will include your CAS number, which will be required when submitting your visa application for entry clearance.

As soon as you receive your CAS Statement it is essential that you check all the information very carefully and advise us of any errors immediately. International Student Support (immigration@qub.ac.uk) will then contact you with further information and guidance on applying for your Tier 4 visa.

7 Pre-Sessional English Language and Study Skills at INTO Queen's

Students wishing to develop confidence in using English in an academic environment are advised to attend a four week pre-session course at INTO Queen's University Belfast. This 20-hour per week course concentrates on academic English and prepares you for university study. The four week course runs from Monday 5 August until Friday 30 August 2019. For further information please email psequb@intoglobal.com or visit intostudy.com/queens. If you decide to enrol for this, please advise the Admissions and Access Service as soon as possible so that we can make any necessary changes to your CAS, before you apply for your visa.

8 Criminal Record Check / Health Check

Applicants for courses in **Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy and Nursing** will receive (under separate cover) important information regarding the requirements in relation to a Criminal Record Check/Health Check. You should return the requested information to the Admissions and Access Service without delay. You may not be permitted to commence your studies until these requirements have been fulfilled. In the case of a few applicants, two or more criminal records checks will be required as these have to be provided from the authorities in each of the countries where you have ever lived for one year or longer. For example, if you are normally resident in Malaysia, but have taken A-levels in the UK, both an Access NI Enhanced Disclosure check and a Certificate of Good Conduct from Malaysia will be necessary.

9 International Students' Welcome and Orientation Programme

The International Welcome and Orientation Programme will include many different types of sessions and activities aimed at getting you settled into life in Belfast and at Queen's. It is an extremely valuable time to meet new people and make friends. You are expected to take part in the programme and we look forward to getting to know you during the event which will be held from **11 - 15 September 2019**. You will then take part in the University's central Welcome programme which takes place from **16 - 20 September 2019** (register at qub.ac.uk/new-students/welcome). Please ensure you register for the International Welcome programme online at qub.ac.uk/sites/iss. Registration will be available from 1 August 2019.

University accommodation will be available from 14 September for a 38 week contract, or 7 September for a 39 week contract, for students wishing to attend the Orientation Programme.

In September International Student Support will be sending their welcome team to Belfast City and Belfast International airports to meet new students and provide a warm welcome! The team will be there to provide you with important information and to assist you in booking a taxi or getting a bus to Elm's Village, Queen's University. The welcome team will be at both Belfast airports from **Sunday 8 September to Tuesday 10 September**, 08:30 - 21:30 each day. To make use of this service, you should submit your arrival details to International Student Support by registering online at qub.ac.uk/sites/iss.

10 International Student Pre-Arrival Guide and Entry Clearance Guidance

You will receive these documents from International Student Support along with information on how to apply for your visa once you receive your CAS Statement, including information about the Immigration Health Surcharge and how to pay this. Useful resources, including the Pre-Arrival Guide, are available on the International Student Support website at: qub.ac.uk/sites/iss

This information is designed to help you prepare for your departure and to ensure that your travel to and arrival in Belfast proceeds as smoothly as possible. Please read it carefully. It is particularly important that you familiarise yourself with the information on immigration procedures, as this details the steps you should take in order to obtain the required clearance to enter the UK.

Further information about immigration is available at: qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/VisasImmigration

Further information about the Immigration Health Surcharge is available at: gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/overview

11 Enrolment and Registration - documentation required

The Welcome Guide will be emailed to the email address given in your application form from the end of August. The Welcome Guide will contain your Username and Password information which will enable you to access your Queen's email account, and the Queen's Student Information System (Qsis) in order to enrol on classes and complete online registration. Welcome Guides will also be available to collect from the Student Guidance Centre on your arrival, if required. Please note that it is possible to enrol on classes from **Monday 2 September 2019**; however it will not be possible to complete the enrolment process until you have completed an in-person Immigration Document Check with International Student Support, after arrival in Belfast.

It is essential that you bring all the required documentation with you when you register on-site in September, as you will not be fully registered as a student until you have completed each part of Enrolment and Registration and have provided the supporting documentation. The University must hold copies of various documents and make them available to the UKVI on request. The following documentation must be provided to the University in order to enrol and register:

• Passport

As part of the Immigration Document Check procedures you will be required to produce your original passport and visa during the Enrolment and Registration process, in order to verify your identity and because the University is required to retain a photocopy or scanned copy of both the personal details/photo page and the page showing your entitlement to study in the UK (the visa page) with your student record. You will not be permitted to enrol until this check has been completed. On request, these have to be made available to the UKVI.

• ATAS certificate (where appropriate)

If you were required to apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate, you will need to show the original certificate. If you require an ATAS certificate, the University will send you information about this separately.

• Original documentary evidence of school and all other academic qualifications.

Original parchments, certificates or transcripts must be provided irrespective of whether copies have previously been supplied to the Admissions and Access Service. Students with qualifications in languages other than English must provide the original and a verified translation.

Once you have fully completed registration, your photo will be taken and a student card will be issued to you. You can contact the Student Helpline if you experience any difficulties during the registration process by emailing reghelp@qub.ac.uk or by ringing the helpline on + 44 (0) 28 9097 3223.

12 Financial arrangements for international students

Please refer to the enclosed statement from the Finance Department. It should be noted that students will not be permitted to commence their studies until the first instalment of their tuition fees has been paid and the financial arrangements fulfilled to the satisfaction of the University. You may wish to pay a voluntary deposit towards tuition fees in advance of arrival.

13 Applicants with a disability or long term condition

Applicants who have indicated a disability or long term condition should have received a letter on behalf of the University's Disability Services requesting that they complete a questionnaire detailing their condition and potential support needs. If you have not received a letter, please contact the Admissions and Access Service (intl.student@qub.ac.uk). The questionnaire should be completed and submitted as soon as possible, to help the University respond to your support needs.

The University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and seeks to ensure that students with a disability or long term condition have equitable access as far as reasonably possible to all aspects of university life. Support is provided to students with a wide range of needs, including physical and mobility difficulties, sensory impairments, medical conditions, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, Autistic Spectrum Disorders and mental health difficulties. Applicants who have disclosed their disability or long term condition and submitted a completed questionnaire, will be contacted by the University's Disability Services during the coming months to arrange an appointment to register with the Service and agree appropriate supports. Depending on the individual support requirements, this may take place prior to final confirmation of a place at the University. In the meantime, further information on the support available can be found at qub.ac.uk/sgc/disability.

14 Meningitis

The Admissions and Access Service has been asked by the University's Occupational Health Service to bring the following information to your attention.

Although Meningitis continues to occur in relatively small numbers in University students in the UK, each incident presents significant risks to the student and fellow students. Students aged up to 25 years and starting university for the first time this year, should get the Meningitis ACWY vaccine from their doctor **at least 2 weeks prior to commencing studies**. The Meningitis ACWY vaccine will increase protection against four Meningitis groups (A,C,W and Y). **This recommendation applies to local, EU and international students.**

All students who are registering with one for the first time should choose a GP in the local area when starting university. If not already vaccinated, they can arrange to get this vaccine and other vaccines as appropriate. This should be done straight away – ideally in the first week of term – don't leave it until later.

If you would like further information about meningitis vaccination, you should visit nidirect.gov.uk/articles/men-acwy-vaccination-teenagers-and-students

15 Tuberculosis screening

Nationals of some countries are required to obtain a certificate from an International Organisation for Migration (IOM) accredited clinic showing that they are free from infectious tuberculosis (TB), to submit with their visa application.

Please refer to the following UKVI website to check if nationals of your country are required to obtain a certificate and, where this screening is a requirement, to obtain details of the clinics and fee in your country: gov.uk/tb-test-visa

16 Semester dates

International Students' Welcome and Orientation Programme

Wednesday 11 September 2019 to Sunday 15 September 2019

Welcome, Induction and Teaching

Monday 16 September 2019 to Friday 20 September 2019

Weeks 1-12

Monday 23 September 2019 to Friday 13 December 2019

Winter vacation

Monday 16 December 2019 to Friday 3 January 2020

Weeks 13-24

Monday 6 January 2020 to Friday 27 March 2020

Spring vacation

Monday 30 March 2020 to Friday 17 April 2020

Weeks 25-30

Monday 20 April 2020 – Friday 29 May 2020

17 Student pre-departure briefings

Queen's international teams will be hosting a number of pre-departure briefings in countries throughout the world in July and August. This will give you the opportunity to meet with staff members from the University who will help you prepare for your departure and provide practical information on visas, accommodation, banking and other aspects of living in the UK. Current students and alumni may also be present to answer any other questions you may have about life at Queen's. International Office staff will be in contact soon to update you on planned pre-departure events in your city/country, or, alternatively, pre-departure webinars. You can contact the International Office team directly at: international@qub.ac.uk.

The British Council also hold a number of pre-departure briefings in various countries. Study UK student ambassadors who are currently studying in the UK will be available to share their experiences of studying and living in the country. For more details on when and where they are being held see:

<https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/planning/advice-support>

We look forward to welcoming you to Queen's in September and in the meantime, if you have any questions or there are any changes in your arrangements, we would encourage you to contact the Admissions and Access Service as quickly as possible.