



# UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

## Support and Information for international student families at the University of Leeds

### Contacts at Leeds

*We welcome many students and their families each year to Leeds. You are welcome to contact Claire or the International Student Office or advice team directly to enquire about your individual circumstances if you wish to.*

Claire Freeston (International Manager for East Asia in the University's International Office):  
[c.e.freeston@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.e.freeston@leeds.ac.uk)

The generic email for the International Student Office, including pre-arrival enquiries:  
[internationalwelcome@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:internationalwelcome@leeds.ac.uk)

For enquiries relating to immigration and visas please contact the International Student Advice Team on [internationalstudents@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:internationalstudents@leeds.ac.uk)

### Support from the International Student Office

Students can attend a welcome talk when they arrive in Leeds. If they are arriving in September, they will receive information about the extended services available as part of our welcome services before arrival.

Postgraduate researchers, who may arrive in Leeds at different times of the year, are able to register for a welcome talk at the University upon arrival. For more information on the University's induction for postgraduate researchers, students can visit [here](#). Students can visit our [pre-arrival webpages](#) for information on preparing for Leeds.

**Students can also access our webpages for current students and researchers with [family](#) in Leeds.**

### Our Global Community

Our Global Community events and activities aim to connect students and researchers to intercultural opportunities here in Leeds, and give them the chance to get to know other members of the student community. Find out more about our range of events and activities [here](#). Students can also connect with us on social media, via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Amongst the events that we offer are various [out of term time](#) events, most of which are open to students' family members too.

[Get Out Get Active](#) run a range of trips and activities for students, staff and members of the public, so partners of students, or children over the age of 17, can join in with a variety of

sports, such as running, climbing or yoga. They can also join in GOGA's various trips to see different parts of the UK.

[HOST UK](#) organise visits for international students to spend a day or a weekend with a British family. You can include your husband, wife, partner or children as long as they are living in the UK for the duration of your study period, but HOST cannot accept applications from visiting family members or friends.

### Family Accommodation

The University has limited family accommodation, so it is essential to contact the University's [Accommodation Services](#) as early as possible to find out about availability. Many families also find a home in the private sector. Find out more about accommodation for families [here](#). The [Unipol website](#) has a useful tool that students can use to find out about different areas to live in Leeds, with information on how expensive it is to live there, information about the area itself and distance to the city centre and University.

### Schools, Nurseries and Childcare

Students will **need a Leeds address** before they can start the application to schools process. Therefore applicants can look at the information beforehand to be familiar with the process before they arrive, but only once they have accommodation in Leeds and have arrived here will they be able to apply to schools directly. (Unfortunately sometimes the Leeds City Council website will not work outside of the UK.)

There is a dedicated Schools section of our website [here](#).

If students are looking for childcare in their first few weeks, [Family Information Leeds](#) is a great website to use to find local childminders or childcare agencies. (Unfortunately sometimes this website will not work outside of the UK.)

[Bright Beginnings Childcare Centre](#) is a childcare centre based on the University campus that offers a range of services for students, including childcare for children from the age of three months until the term before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday (pre-school) and a play scheme during school holidays for children aged between three and 11 years.

Childcare can be expensive in the UK so it's important that students budget for this.

### *Childcare for children under the age of 3 years*

If you have children under the age of 3 years, (the age at which a child starts Nursery - also known as Kindergarten), you can find out more information about [finding childcare](#) on our website.

### *Childcare or nursery for 3-4 year olds*

All children between the ages of 3 and 4 in England are entitled to free childcare or nursery places for 15 hours per week, whatever visa you are on. If one of the parents works they may be entitled to more. For further details please visit the government's [Childcare Choices](#)

### *Children above 5 years applying to School in the UK*

All children in the UK from 5 to sixteen years old are required to attend school. Under current law, children in England must be in education from the term (semester) after their fifth birthday.

Leeds City Council publish weekly '[vacancy lists](#)' indicating the spaces available at each school every week. If a vacancy is available, all children should apply through the 'In Year Common Preference' form as linked to on our Schools information page. Students who want to find information about individual schools, including the different services available, may find it helpful to visit the individual school's websites or contact them directly via [this link](#) (this link may not always work outside the UK.)

The Schools link on our International Student Office webpage outlines the full process [here](#).

It is important to note that the information above is applicable to free, state schools. If a student wants to pay for private (also known as independent) education for their child, then they will have to apply to schools directly. Information on private education in England can be found on the [Independent Schools Council website](#).

### *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities*

Children and young people aged up to 25 with special educational needs or a disability, who need more support than that regularly provided by a school can apply for an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The EHC plan identifies educational, health and social needs and sets out the additional support required to meet those needs. It will also advise on whether the child's needs can be met in the mainstream system, or whether a specialist school is required, and if so, which school. To find out more about EHC and how to apply, please look at the [SEND website](#).

### Healthcare

You should register yourself and your family with a General Practitioner doctor as soon as possible after arrival in Leeds. Find out more about how to register and what healthcare you are entitled to [here](#). Primary care and emergency healthcare are free for everyone in the UK.

### Public transport

Travel on [First Bus Leeds](#) is free for children under 5 years old. 5-10 year olds pay half of the adult fare on the buses, and 11-18 year olds can get a half fare, but only if they have a photo card, available from [www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com).

If you are planning to travel around the UK by train as a family, it is often cheaper if you buy a [family railcard](#). The railcard costs £30 for a year and you can save up to a third on adult fares and up to 60% on children's fares. Train fares are also often a lot cheaper if purchased in advance, and if you choose to travel at a specific time, rather than with a flexible ticket.

Several taxi companies in Leeds will provide a baby/child seat when pre-booked. When booking a taxi ask about car seats, there is usually an additional cost for this service.

### Family activities and days out in the area

There are lots of fun activities for families in and around Leeds, including parks, museums, country houses, and a wide variety of sports and activities. Museums are often free to visit, and there are a large range of interesting museums with activities for children in Leeds, Bradford and York, as well as further afield. The following websites give suggestions for family days out:

<https://leeds-list.com/culture/20-free-things-to-do-with-kids-in-leeds/>

<https://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk/things-to-do/yorkshire/west-yorkshire>

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/days-out/regionyorkshirenortheast/yorkshire>

<https://letsgowiththechildren.co.uk/places-to-go/west-yorkshire/1/>

*All information is correct at time of publication (February 2020), but please check information on linked webpages for up to date information and pricing.*