



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Perth College



Arriving in Scotland

A guide for International Students

www.perth.uhi.ac.uk

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Welcome

We are delighted that you have chosen to study at Perth College UHI. We hope you will find the experience of studying here a pleasant and rewarding one.

This guide offers useful and practical information for your arrival in Perth for the 2019/20 academic year. We suggest that you familiarise yourself with Perth College UHI by reading this booklet. This will help you to understand what to expect when you arrive.

The team at Perth College UHI International Centre is here to help you with information and advice on anything that concerns you including non-academic and immigration issues.

The International Centre is on the Ground Floor of the Brahan Building, Room 009. The staff in the International Centre have lots of information and advice and they will help you to get the most out of your time at Perth College UHI. We are happy to speak to you about any problems or questions and direct you to the best source of help.

If you are from an EU country please contact Admissions on

01738 877205.

We look forward to meeting you in Perth.



Perth College UHI

Studying at Perth allows you to be within an hour of Scotland's two largest and most cosmopolitan cities - Edinburgh and Glasgow - whilst enjoying the peace and security of a smaller city.

We are part of the University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), Scotland's newest university with 12 other colleges and internationally renowned research centres.

Our City

The city of Perth is home to around 50,000 people and in the centre of Scotland. It is easy to reach by car, train or bus. Whichever way you travel to Perth you will see some of the country's most beautiful scenery.

The city has a good range of shops, restaurants, pubs and entertainment including a theatre, cinema and concert hall. Some pubs have live music in the evenings. Walking around the city is a pleasure; it is safe and friendly and there are lovely walks through parks, along the river and in the nearby hills. There is also a good city bus service.

Perth has many beautiful parks and gardens and wins awards every year for its flower displays.

Academic Calendar 2019-2020

Semester 1 - 2019

August	Monday 19 Friday 23	Academic Staff Commence Staff Conference (no classes)
September	Monday 2 - Friday 6 Monday 9 Monday 16	Induction for all FE and HE Courses Commencement of Semester 1 - All Courses Start Most Vocational Evening Courses Commence Most Day/Evening Leisure Courses Commence
October	Thursday 3 Monday 14 - Friday 18	College Graduation Ceremony Autumn Recess
November	Friday 15	Staff Conference (no classes)
December	Monday 9 - Friday 20 Friday 20	Degree Teaching/Exam Weeks Degree Courses - Semester 1 Finishes
December/January	Monday 23 - 3	Christmas/New Year Recess - Students and Staff

Semester 2 - 2020

January	Monday 6 Monday 13 Friday 24 Monday 27	FE and HN Courses - Continuation of Semester 1 New Day/Evening Leisure Courses Commence FE and HN Course - Semester 1 Finishes Commencement of Semester 2
February	Wednesday 12 Thursday 13 and Friday 14	Staff Conference (no classes) Academic Staff Fixed Holidays
March/April	Monday 30 - Friday 10	Easter Recess
April	Monday 20	New Evening Leisure Courses Commence
May	Monday 4 - Friday 15 Friday 15	Degree Teaching/Exam Weeks Most Undergraduate Degree Courses - Semester 2 Finishes
June	Thursday 4 Friday 5 Friday 19 Friday 26	FE Prizegiving FE and HN - Semester 2 Finishes Staff Conference (no classes) Academic Staff Finish
August	Monday 17	Academic Staff Commence



Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

For more information visit www.scqf.org.uk.

SCQF Level	SQA Qualifications		Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions	SVQ's / MA's	
12		Professional Development Award (PDA)	Doctoral Degree	Professional Apprenticeship	
11		Professional Development Award (PDA)	Masters Degree, Integrated Masters Degree, Post-Graduate Diploma, Post-Graduate Certificate	SVQ 5, Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship,	
10		Professional Development Award (PDA)	Honours Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship	
9		Professional Development Award (PDA)	Bachelors/Ordinary Degree, Graduate Diploma, Graduate Certificate	SVQ 4, Graduate Apprenticeship, Professional Apprenticeship,	
8		Higher National Diploma (HND)	Professional Development Award (PDA)	Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	SVQ 4, Higher Apprenticeship, Technical Apprenticeship
7	Advanced Higher, Awards, Scottish Baccalaureate	Higher National Certificate (HNC)	Professional Development Award (PDA)	Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	SVQ 3, Modern Apprenticeship
6	Higher, Awards, Skills for Work Higher	National Certificate (NC)	Professional Development Award (PDA)	National Progression Award (NPA)	SVQ 3, Modern Apprenticeship, Foundation Apprenticeship
5	National 5, Awards, Skills for Work National 5	National Certificate (NC)	National Progression Award (NPA)		SVQ 2, Modern Apprenticeship
4	National 4, Awards, Skills for Work National 4	National Certificate (NC)	National Progression Award (NPA)		SVQ 1
3	National 3, Awards, Skills for Work National 3	National Certificate (NC)	National Progression Award (NPA)		
2	National 2, Awards	National Certificate (NC)	National Progression Award (NPA)		
1	National 1, Awards				

This table shows how the Scottish qualifications relate to each other and how you can progress through the framework.

Teaching at universities in the UK may be less formal than you are used to at home. You will have a mix of lectures, tutorials, seminars and will also be expected to undertake a significant amount of independent study.

Lectures are delivered to large groups and you will be expected to listen and take notes.

Tutorials and seminars will be in smaller groups and will give you the opportunity to discuss the subject with fellow students, with guidance from the tutor.

Independent study means that you are expected to study on your own. This is to encourage you to consider and develop your own ideas using materials and textbooks as advised by your tutor.

Managing your time

Lectures, tutorials and seminars will be timetabled so you know where you should be and at what time. Independent study is done in your own time so you must allow extra time for this.

You will be advised of timescales for submission of assessments and exam dates. Please note these in your diary and plan your work accordingly.

Don't forget to allow time for independent study when considering taking a part-time job. Assessments and exams are taken very seriously. Any breach of regulations will incur a severe penalty. Plagiarism, copying another student's work or written text from a book or the internet, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Studying here in Scotland may be very different from studying in your home country but if you have any queries your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) will be happy to help.

More information on studying in the UK can be found on the UKCISA website at:

www.ukcisa.org.uk

Prepare for Success is an interactive web learning tool for international students who are getting ready to come to the UK to study. We strongly advise you to make good use of these resources in the weeks before you travel.

www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk



Rights and Responsibilities

All students have rights and responsibilities whilst studying at Perth College UHI. For instance, you have a right to information about your course, to an education of a high standard and to fair and equal treatment.

With these rights come responsibilities, including making an effort with your studies, behaving in a responsible way and attending classes on time and regularly.

You will find information on your rights and responsibilities in the student charter below.

Student Charter

Perth College UHI will provide you with:

- A prompt, efficient and fair response when dealing with your enquiry, application and selection.
- Information and support if you have a disability or additional learning needs.
- An impartial information, advice and guidance service covering education, careers, finance and personal matters.
- A comprehensive Induction programme.
- Education of a consistently high standard.
- An opportunity to comment on your course and your experience of the College.
- Services delivered in a non-discriminatory manner, promoting equality of opportunity for all.
- An environment which promotes good relations between people of all racial groups.
- A prompt and thorough investigation of any complaint, leading to a solution within a reasonable time.
- An environment where diversity is recognised and valued.

Help with your studies

We are committed to providing you with the support you need to be successful on your chosen course. Facilities are available to help with all aspects of learning. The first point of contact for any issues concerning your studies is your Personal Academic Tutor.

The Language School

The Language School holds drop-in sessions for you to speak to an experienced English language teacher for help with your English. Ask at the International Centre for details.

In return we expect you to:

- Value the time you spend at Perth College UHI.
- Put your best efforts into your studies.
- Attend all classes regularly and arrive on time.
- Comply with Perth College UHI course requirements, including meeting deadlines for completion of work.
- Respect the College environment and avoid dropping litter or damaging property.
- Follow our Health and Safety Rules, especially in workshops, laboratories and practical areas.
- Behave responsibly as part of the Perth College multi-cultural community.
- Treat other students and staff with respect.
- Follow the College Disciplinary code.
- If you are studying on a HN or degree programme, you will be given details of the UHI's additional charter.

Facilities on Campus

As a Perth College UHI student, you will have access to a wide range of facilities on campus to help you make the most of your time with us.

Academy of Sport and Wellbeing

The new multi-storey Academy of Sport and Wellbeing is a place in which you can exercise and keep fit as well as enjoy a selection of treatments offered by our Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing teams. Leisure facilities include a bright and spacious gym with a variety of cardio and strength resistance equipment, dedicated weight-lifting area, sports hall, as well as a climbing centre offering more than 90 climbing routes of varying grades. Within the fitness studio, you will also have the opportunity to participate in a range of body conditioning classes. Perth College UHI students are eligible for discounted membership rates.

The Beauty Therapy and Hairdressing team offer a variety of discounted treatments during the week to students including massages, facials, eye treatments, waxing, manicures, pedicures, hair cutting, styling, conditioning and colouring. Please ask at the Academy of Sport and Wellbeing or see our website at for further information.

Library and Study Facilities

The Study Centre in the Brahan Building has an excellent range of resources and study facilities that will be available to you while you are studying with us, including the Library and IT Suite. You will use some of these facilities as part of your course, but you can also use the Study Centre at other times.

The Library is on the first floor of the Study Centre and contains a wide variety of resources to help you with your studies, including books, journals, newspapers, computers, CD ROMs and videos / DVDs. You will also have access to photocopying and laminating / binding facilities there. In addition to the computer facilities on offer in the Library, you will be able to make use of our IT Suite, which is located on the ground floor of the Study Centre.

Food and Drink

There are cafeterias on the first floor of the Brahan Building and the ground floor of the Goodlyburn Building where you can buy snacks, confectionery, meals and hot and cold drinks. In partnership with our Hospitality students and Sodexo, the Food Court in the Brahan Building offers a varied selection of meals and is always a popular choice. You will also find Costa Coffee outlets located next to the Food Court and within the Students' Union - Link at the Webster Building.

Snacks and drinks are available to purchase in the Brahan Refectory Shop, which also stocks magazines, newspapers and greeting cards.

The Gallery Restaurant

Our Gallery training restaurant, which is located on the third floor of the Brahan Building, has won the accolade of being the 'Best College Restaurant in Scotland and Northern Ireland' on two occasions. Prepared by students on Catering and Hospitality courses, the delicious meals served during term-time at affordable prices are not to be missed and early booking is recommended.

The Union Link

Our modern and friendly Students' Union based in the Webster Building is the main social space on campus. It is an ideal place to relax and unwind between classes. You can listen to music, have a game of pool, make use of the computer facilities or just enjoy a chat and a cup of coffee with friends.

A number of events are also organised by the Union throughout the year including Freshers' Fair, Diwali, Christmas parties and summer barbecues.



Visas and Immigration

If you are an EEA or Swiss national, you will not require a visa to study in the UK and the information in this section does not apply to you. If you are a national of a country which requires a visa to study in the UK, your unconditional offer will indicate the type of study visa for which you should apply. Depending on your programme of study, you may be advised to apply for either a Tier 4 (General) Student visa, Short-term Study visa or an Extended Short-term Study visa.

The information in the following section is relevant to students who have been instructed to apply for a Tier 4 (General) visa. Students who have been advised to apply for a Short-term Study visa or an Extended Short-term Study visa, including those who will be undertaking an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course, should refer to the section entitled 'Short-term Students' instead. If you have any doubts about this, please contact the International Centre, who will be happy to advise.

www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa

In all cases, it is important to note that it is not possible to apply for a visa with a conditional offer letter. Students who will be undertaking a full-time course of study for more than 6 months will be issued with an unconditional offer letter containing a Confirmation of Acceptance For Studies (CAS). This is the unique reference number which you need to apply for your Tier 4 (General) Student visa.

What will my visa allow?

A Tier 4 (General) Student visa allows overseas students to live and study in the UK for the duration of their course. Students with this visa can undertake a course-related work placement during their stay and may be able to also work part time during term-time (10 or 20 hours a week), and full-time during the holidays. Any permission to work in will be clearly indicated on your visa.

How can I get a Visa?

To obtain permission to come to the UK to study you need to apply for a Tier 4 (General) Student visa. You can download the form and guidance notes from:

www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa

Credibility interview

As part of the visa application process you will be required to attend an interview. You will need 40 points to qualify for a visa. You earn the points as follows:

30 points

Confirmation of Acceptance for studies (CAS) from your Sponsor. You need a CAS number and a letter that confirms your acceptance to study. You will receive this letter after you have paid your course fees and met any other conditions of your course. This letter contains details about you and your future course of study. This letter is very important. It shows that your education provider is both confident you are capable of undertaking this course and will be acting as your immigration sponsor thereby accepting responsibility for you while you are in the UK.

10 points - Maintenance (Funds)

To gain the 10 required points for maintenance you need to show that you have enough money to support yourself through your studies: money to pay your course fees and living expenses. This is shown in the form of bank statements or bank letters.

Many students find it useful to use the services of an authorised educational agent to help with the visa application process. Please contact the International Centre if you wish to make use of this free service.

There have been many changes to the legislation on student visas. To make sure you have the most up-to-date information please visit:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration

Immigration Health Surcharge

The immigration Health Surcharge is a financial contribution to our National Health Service (NHS), which must be paid when you make your Tier 4 (General) visa application.

The surcharge is currently £300 for each year of leave for which you are applying. If this includes part of a year that is six months or less, you will be charged an additional £150 for this period.

Further information on this provision can be viewed on the UK Visas and Immigration website at:

www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application

Tuberculosis Testing

Students from certain countries who will be coming to the UK to study for more than six months are required to take a tuberculosis test from an approved clinic. Please refer to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website to check if this applies to you: www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa

to check if this applies to you.

If the test confirms that you do not have tuberculosis, you will be issued with a certificate, which you must include with your Tier 4 (General) visa application. Please note that the test certificate is only valid for 6 months from the date of your x-ray.

Collecting your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)

If your Tier 4 (General) visa application is successful, you will be issued with a short-term entry clearance visa in your passport, which is valid for 30 days. The remainder of your immigration permission will be detailed on your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), which you must collect within 10 days of your arrival in the UK from the collection point indicated on your letter from UKVI confirming that your immigration permission has been granted.

Where your collection point is a Post Office branch, you can find out more by visiting:

www.postoffice.co.uk

Your BRP will be available for collection from the date printed on your letter from UKVI. Please remember to bring this letter with you when you travel to the UK, as you will need to present this along with your passport when you visit the collection point to obtain your BRP.

If you do not collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival in the UK, you may be subject to a financial penalty or a reduction or cancellation of your leave.

Police Registration

Tier 4 (General) students of certain nationalities who will be coming to the UK to study for more than 6 months are required to register with the Police within 7 days of arrival within the UK. The list of countries whose nationals need to register can be found in Appendix 2 of the Immigration Rules, which is available at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules

If you are required to register with the Police, this will be printed on either your letter from UKVI confirming your grant of leave, your entry clearance vignette or your BRP. You will be given further information about the Police registration process by the International Centre when you arrive.

Visa Credibility Interviews

All Tier 4 (General) applicants overseas can expect to receive a short credibility interview at the beginning of the application process and some may later be required to take part in a longer and more in depth interview.

Tier 4 (General) applicants in the UK may initially be contacted by telephone for an interview and in some cases may be invited to attend an in person interview.

A transcript of your interview will be included in the information which the caseworker will use to decide your application. You can request a copy of your transcript and we suggest that all students do this.

You will be asked questions about why you chose the UK, the University of the Highlands and Islands and your course, how you intend to fund your studies in the UK and also how this fits into your career aspirations.

Typical questions may include:

Q: Why did you choose UHI?

Think about why you chose the UK rather than your home country, other English-speaking country or country which other students of your nationality choose to study in. You may find it useful to refer to the university profile on the following link:

www.uhi.ac.uk/en/about-uhi. UHI is a campus university - what attracts you to the student lifestyle on a campus rather than in a city location?

Q: Why did you choose your course?

There may be many courses in the same subject area as the one you plan to study at UHI. What is it specifically about the UHI course which you prefer and which suits you over other course choices? Think about your decision process. Did you apply for other courses - why did you choose UHI over them?

Q: How do your studies fit into your career plans?

Think about what your plans are after you graduate - how will the knowledge and skills you gain from your course at UHI help you with the type of work you hope to do. Does your course lead to any professional exemptions or qualifications and are these recognised in your country? Do you know what others graduating from the course you will be following went on to do, eg. the types of roles and organisations they work for? If the course you plan to study is at a similar academic level to previous studies, how does it represent progression and does it have vocational focus? If this is the case, be prepared to explain this.

Q: If the costs of pursuing your course of study are higher in the UK than in your home country, why have you decided to incur the extra costs involved with studying in the UK?

Think about the advantages that a degree from the UK might give you and why you and/or your family are prepared to make this investment. Have you made a realistic assessment of all the costs involved and how you plan to pay for them. These costs include accommodation and costs of living.

Q: You have previously studied in the UK - why have you chosen to return?

Think about how the new course relates to previous studies and how it might build on your previous learning.

Q: You have had a long break in your studies, why are returning to study now?

Think about how you explain your decision in the context of your long-term career plans.

Q: Do you plan to work in the UK?

You must be aware that you cannot rely on funds from working to pay your course fees and living costs. The main purpose for being in the UK is your studies so, if you do hope to work, you will need to think about how this would enhance your academic studies. You will also need to demonstrate an understanding of the hours you are allowed to work and typical rates of pay.

Q: How will you fund your studies?

The purpose of this question is to check that your funds are genuinely available to you for your studies. As part of your application you will have submitted proof of your finances - ensure that you are very clear about the source and availability of these funds, also how you plan to pay for subsequent years fees if your course is more than a year in duration. If you have official financial sponsorship make sure you are aware of the amounts and exactly what is covered. If you have a loan, how will you afford to pay this back? How much will your accommodation cost and are you clear about the cost of living in the UK?

The interviewer will also be checking your ability to converse well in English, if there is any issue with hearing them clearly, eg. via the video link, you should ensure that you raise this so that they are aware that it is a technical issue and not one of comprehension.



Short-term Students

Short-term Study Visa (Less than 6 Months)

If you will be studying with us for a period of less than 6 months, your unconditional offer letter will advise you to apply for a Short-term Study visa. This may include non-EEA Exchange or Study Abroad students or those who will be undertaking an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course for less than 6 months. As a short-term student, you will not be permitted to do any kind of work, work experience or work placement during your studies in the UK. You should also be aware that short-term students are not allowed to extend their immigration permission or apply to switch into any other immigration category while still in the UK.

Visa Nationals

If you are a visa national, you must apply for entry clearance as a short-term student before you travel to the UK (please see the Immigration Rules, Appendix 2 of Appendix V for a current list of visa nationals www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-v-visitor-rules).

You will find further information on the documents that you must provide in support of your Short-term Study visa application on the UKVI website at:

www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa.

It is advisable to carry with you all of the documents that you submitted with your entry clearance application, when you travel to the UK, as the Border Force Officer may still ask to see them at the airport on arrival.

Non-Visa Nationals

If you are a non-visa national (i.e. you are a national of a country that is not listed in the Immigration Rules, Appendix 2 of Appendix V), you may choose to apply for entry clearance as a short-term student prior to travelling, or you can request to enter as a short-term student on arrival at a UK airport instead.

If you do not obtain entry clearance before you travel, you will need to present all the documents to support your application to enter the UK as a short-term student to the Border Force Officer when you arrive at the UK airport. This includes evidence of your unconditional offer to study in the UK and evidence of your finances demonstrating that you have sufficient funds to support yourself during your studies, details of where you intend to stay and your travel plans. It is important that you make a special effort to explain to the Border Force Officer that you are seeking admission as a short-term student, so that you obtain the correct stamp in your passport.

Travelling to the UK

If you are a non-visa national and intend to seek entry clearance as a short-term student on arrival at a UK airport, it is extremely important that you do not travel to the UK via the Republic of Ireland. As both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland are part of a Common Travel Area, there is no immigration control on arrival in the UK and you will not have the opportunity to apply for immigration permission as a short-term student at your UK arrival point. Further information regarding this can be found on the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website at www.ukcisa.org.uk.

Extended Short-term Study Visa (Maximum of 11 Months for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Students Only)

If you will be studying on an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) course for a period of more than 6 months, your unconditional offer letter will advise you to apply for an Extended Short-term Study visa. There is a special provision within the Immigration Rules to enable those intending to undertake a purely English language course to study for up to 11 months via the Short-term Study route. You will not be permitted to do any kind of work, work experience or work placement during your studies in the UK.

You should also be aware that you will not be allowed to extend your immigration permission or apply to switch into any other immigration category while still in the UK.

Applying for Entry Clearance

If you have been advised to apply for an Extended Short-term (11-month) visa, you must submit an application for entry clearance before travelling to the UK, regardless of whether you are a visa national or a non-visa national. You will find further information on the documents that you must provide in support of your Extended Short-term Study visa application on the UKVI website at <https://www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa> . This includes evidence of your unconditional offer to study in the UK and evidence of your finances demonstrating that you have sufficient funds to support yourself during your studies, details of where you intend to stay, your travel plans and a valid Tuberculosis test certificate (if applicable).

It is advisable to carry with you all of the documents that you submitted with your entry clearance application, when you travel to the UK, as the Border Force Officer may still ask to see them at the airport on arrival.

Tuberculosis Testing

Students from certain countries who will be coming to the UK to study via the Extended Short-term Study route are required to take a tuberculosis test from an approved clinic. Please refer to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website at www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa to check if this applies to you. If the test confirms that you do not have tuberculosis, you will be issued with a certificate, which you must include with your visa application. Please note that the test certificate is only valid for 6 months from the date of your x-ray.

Immigration Health Surcharge

As part of your entry clearance application, you will also have to pay an Immigration Health Surcharge of £300. This means that you will be entitled to access our National Health Service (NHS).

Collecting Your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)

If your Extended Short-term visa application is successful, you will be issued with a short-term entry clearance visa in your passport, which is valid for 30 days. The remainder of your immigration permission will be detailed on your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), which you must collect within 10 days of your arrival in the UK from the collection point indicated on your letter from UKVI confirming that your immigration permission has been granted.

Where your collection point is a Post Office branch, you can find out more by visiting <http://www.postoffice.co.uk>. Your BRP will be available for collection from the date printed on your letter from UKVI. Please remember to bring this letter with you when you travel to the UK, as you will need to present this along with your passport when you visit the collection point to obtain your BRP. If you do not collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival in the UK, you may be subject to a financial penalty or a reduction or cancellation of your leave.

Police Registration

Students of certain nationalities who will be coming to the UK to study via the Extended Short-term Study route are required to register with the Police within 7 days of arrival within the UK. The list of countries whose nationals need to register can be found in Appendix 2 of the Immigration Rules, which is available at www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules.

If you are required to register with the Police, this will be printed on either your letter from UKVI confirming your grant of leave, your entry clearance vignette or your BRP. You will be given further information about the Police registration process by the International Centre when you arrive.

Accommodation

At least two months before you arrive, you should make arrangements for where you will live in Perth. You must let us know as soon as possible if you would like us to arrange this for you.

Subject to availability, you can choose from 4 options:

Homestay: Half board

With this option, you will live with a local family. Your homestay provider will supply bed, breakfast and an evening meal plus lunch at weekends. Homestay providers might be a family with children, a couple or a single person. This option provides the best opportunity to learn about the culture and lifestyle of people in Scotland and to practice your English with your homestay provider at mealtimes.

The cost of this is £130 per week.

Special Diets is £155 per week.

Homestay: Self catering

This option allows you to live with a homestay provider, but provide your own meals, so you shop and cook for yourself. You will, of course, have access to cooking and washing facilities. The cost of this is £95 per week.

All homestay accommodation is inspected by Perth College UHI and meets British Council guidelines.

For both homestay options, the minimum booking is 4 weeks, unless the duration of your course is less than this.

Fees for accommodation must be paid 4 weeks in advance with the first payment due at least one week before the agreed date of arrival and is non-refundable. After you have arrived, you will sign a student contract and receive a payment schedule. You must make payment for homestay fees at the International Centre in accordance with the timescales set out in the plan. All payments run from Sunday to Saturday inclusive.

If you wish to stay in your homestay accommodation during College holidays, this must be agreed with your homestay provider and payment for that period must be made directly to the homestay provider.

If you decide to leave the accommodation during College holidays, you are not required to pay rent to your homestay provider for that period.

However, a small fee of £5 per day will be payable to your homestay provider unless you take all of your belongings with you.

Payment will resume to Perth College UHI when the official holiday period is over. For further information or to apply for homestay accommodation, please email:

homestay.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Student Residences (Halls)

This accommodation is on campus and offers secure and comfortable self-catering, fully furnished flats for 72 students.

The accommodation is divided into 16 flats. Each has its own kitchen, dining and living area and either single or twin bedrooms, with their own en-suite bathroom.

Access to the residences, and to individual bedrooms, is securely controlled. We provide on-call campus security 24 hours a day with wardens available at all times in our on-site residence office.

You can apply for on-campus student accommodation at Perth College UHI if you will be studying full-time for a full academic year, and you are aged 17 or over when you begin your studies. We will consider your application when you have formally accepted an unconditional offer of a place on a course. Everyone who applies for places in the residences must meet the eligibility criteria before applying.

For more information or to apply email:

residences.perth@uhi.ac.uk

You must commit to a period of let for the full academic year, which at Perth College UHI is 2 semesters, usually from the end of August until the start of June. The academic year varies depending on the course you attend, but it will be either 37 or 40 weeks.

The cost of this is £5,276 for a single room, £4,133 per person for a twin room (for 40 week period). Charges include all utility costs including internet, you will need to budget separately for food, laundry and other living expenses. Fees must be paid in full at least 4 weeks before arrival.

Private accommodation

There is no shortage of private accommodation to rent in the city centre of Perth. We do not currently offer a signposting service to private accommodation and recommend that you use the standard internet searching options to find accommodation.

If you plan to share an apartment with friends, you should be aware that unless the landlord has an HMO (Houses of Multiple Occupancy) Licence for the property, it is against the law for more than 2 unrelated people to occupy the apartment.

Always take a friend when you go to view an apartment or room. Never agree to meet a stranger alone.



Arriving in Scotland

Your passport and documents will be checked when you arrive in the UK. There will be separate control points for European Economic Area nationals and all other passport holders.

Immigration control

Do not worry if the Immigration Officer asks to speak to you. This is quite normal. He/she simply wishes to find out some information about why you have come to Scotland, what you are going to do and what you will do when you have finished your course.

Take your time and answer truthfully. You will see some typical questions and answers on the next page.

You may need to show the following documents:

- Your passport.
- Your unconditional/CAS letter from the college.
- Evidence of financial support such as bank statements.
- Evidence of Immigration Healthcare Surcharge

Be aware that, as you may be tired after your journey and the Scottish accent is unfamiliar, you may have some difficulty understanding what the Immigration Officer is saying. Just keep calm and listen carefully to what they say.

If you cannot understand what you are being asked, simply say:

‘Excuse me, could you repeat the question more slowly, please?’

Some typical questions and answers:

Q Why are you coming to the UK?

A I am coming to the UK to study.

Q Where will you be studying?

A I will be studying at Perth College UHI.

You may also be expected to provide some information about your course, so be prepared.

Q What course will you be studying?

A I will be studying (course title).

Q How long will you be staying in the UK?

A I will be here until (give the date that you plan to go home - before the date that your visa will expire - for example: September 13, 2020).

Q Where are you going to stay/live?

A I am going to stay at - give the address of your accommodation.

Q Where are you from?

A I am from (your home country).

Q What will you do after you finish your course?

A I plan to return home or I plan to continue study on another course, at a higher level.

Travel

Taxi Transfers

We can arrange an airport transfer which will take you from the airport directly to your booked accommodation. If you wish us to arrange a transfer for you, please supply information on the application form - the arrival airport, arrival date, arrival time and flight number. Detailed instructions on where to meet your driver, how to make payment and what to do in the event of any delay will be sent to you by email. The cost of this is £80 from Edinburgh airport. If you require a transfer from Glasgow International airport or Glasgow Prestwick, different fees will apply. Please contact us for details. Students arriving in groups will be met and transferred under separate arrangements which will be advised directly by email. If you choose to travel independently, you can take a bus or train to Perth.

Train

From Edinburgh Airport, you can take the Airport Bus (‘Airlink’ www.lothianbuses.com/timetables-and-maps/airlink) for £4.50 to Waverley Station in Edinburgh city centre (30 minutes).

From there, the rail journey to Perth takes an hour and 15 minutes and costs around £16.00. Direct trains to and from Edinburgh run at approximately hourly intervals and you can find information on timetables and fares at www.nationalrail.co.uk or from Edinburgh Airport, you can take Stagecoach Bus Jet 747 to Ferry Toll/Inverkeithing railway station and then to Perth railway station.

From Glasgow Prestwick Airport, there is a train link to Central Station in Glasgow city centre for about £8. The walk to Queen Street Station, where trains to Perth leave from, takes about 15 minutes.

There is a Glasgow shuttle link from Glasgow International Airport to Queen Street Station (Glasgow West George St). The direct train to Perth from Glasgow, runs hourly from Queen Street. The journey takes around an hour and also costs approximately £16. For many journeys, the earlier you book, the cheaper the fare.

Bus

Bus services are operated by Stagecoach, Citylink and Megabus and you can find timetables and fares on their websites at:

www.stagecoachbus.com

www.citylink.co.uk

www.megabus.com/uk

Megabus from Edinburgh Airport to Perth starts from £12 and takes around 1 hour and 30 minutes. You must book online.

Some buses terminate at Broxden Park and Ride, about 2 miles from the city centre and you can then take another bus to Perth city centre. If you arrive late at night after 7pm then you will need to get a taxi from Broxden or there is a Travelodge Hotel on site.

Tram

Edinburgh’s newly opened tram system also operates a direct service from the airport to both Haymarket and Waverley stations. The journey time to Waverley is under 40 minutes and costs £5.50.

Arriving at Perth College UHI

The International Centre is located on the ground floor of the Brahan building in room 009. On your arrival at the college, you must come to the International Centre with your passport, visa and educational certificates to enrol. There will be introductory orientation events for new international students. You will receive information on these at enrolment.

Money

Scottish banks issue their own bank notes in all denominations. These differ in design from English notes, but are of the same value and are accepted elsewhere in the UK. English notes are accepted in Scotland. Banks usually give the best exchange rate for foreign currency.

Bank accounts

If possible, it is a good idea to open a bank account with an international bank such as HSBC before you leave your own country and make arrangements to access your money here in the UK. Otherwise you should check with your bank in your home country to find out if it is possible to withdraw money from UK cash point/ATM. If you are coming on a short course (6 months or less) it may not be possible to open a UK bank account.

The International Centre can provide a letter which will help you to open a bank account within a few days of arrival.

Living Expenses

You should allow a minimum of £1,015 per month for living expenses including accommodation.

Typical costs are:

Homestay: £130 per week

Rent: Approximately £95 per week + Council Tax*

Electricity: £10-£15 per week

Lunch in College:

Refectory: Sandwich £2.60

Soft drinks: From 90p

Groceries:

Litre of milk £0.79

6 eggs £1.25

250g butter £1.50

Loaf of bread £1.00

Bottle of wine £5.00

*Council Tax: Local Tax Payment.

Some full-time students will now have to pay for council tax. You can check this information on the information website for international students

www.ukcisa.org.uk or ask at the the international centre if you are unsure.

Health and Wellbeing

National Health Service (NHS)

Upon arrival in Scotland all students who are on a course longer than 6 months (and their dependants) have access to free treatment under the NHS once they have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge (if applicable).

NHS treatment includes appointments with general practitioners and hospital treatment.

You must register with a doctor when you arrive in Perth (details of doctor and dental surgeries will be provided in your welcome pack on arrival). Do not wait until you are ill. The International Centre will provide you with a letter which you should use to register with any doctor close to where you live.

Students with disabilities

Perth College UHI welcomes students with disabilities and has made provision for those with mobility difficulties and students with sensory impairments. Further information on provision for disabled students can be obtained from our Student Services staff. Capability Scotland is Scotland's largest disability organisation and provides a national advice and information service.

For further information on their services, see

www.capabilityscotland.org.uk.

Insurance

You should consider taking out private insurance for the following reasons:

To cover your journey to the UK, and in case you need to return home due to medical emergency.

To cover pre-existing conditions which require ongoing treatment which may not be provided by the NHS.

To cover you if you are staying in the UK for less than 6 months and are not from a EEA national country, Switzerland or a country that has a reciprocal agreement with the UK. To find out more:

www.ukcisa.org/student/info_sheets/keeping_health.php.

To cover your personal possessions.

In case you need to cancel your travel.

If you need to return home for other unforeseen reasons.

EEA and Swiss Nationals

The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) entitles the holder to healthcare during temporary travel in member states. You should apply for your EHIC before you leave your home country. It entitles you to full NHS treatment on the same basis as students who are studying for more than 6 months.

Dentists and Opticians

Some local dental practices accept NHS patients but many only take private (paying) patients. Opticians will not charge for eye tests, however you will have to pay for spectacles.

Bringing money into the UK

Please do not bring large amounts of cash money into the UK both for security and currency control limits. Your bank in your home country can advise you on transferring money. For your arrival in Perth you will only need enough money in pounds sterling GBP for a few days (approximately £200) and other money (about £500) in cheques or travellers cheques) for expenses when you first arrive.

Budgeting

To help manage your budget for your stay in Scotland, you should open a bank account as soon as possible. The international centre can give you a letter to support your application for a bank account. In most jobs, your wages will be paid directly into your bank account. If you need any advice on managing your money, please ask at the international centre. There are also websites designed to help, try:

www.studentcalculator.org.uk or

www.educationuk.org/pls/hot_bc/bc_eduфин.page_pls_budget_planner.

Scholarships

There are a few scholarship schemes open to international students. You can get more details from www.perth.uhi.ac.uk/scholarships, your local British Council office or online at: www.britishcouncil.org.



Religion

There are prayer and contemplation rooms in the Goodlyburn Building and Room 214A, Brahan Building – please ask at Reception.

There are places of worship for many different religions in and around Perth. If you require further information, please ask at the International Centre.

Church of Scotland

North Church, 209 High Street, Perth.

Telephone: 01738 622298

www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Roman Catholic Church

St John's Catholic Church,

20 Melville Street, Perth

Telephone: 01738 622241

www.stjohns-perth.org.uk

Mosque

Perth Islamic Society

65 Glasgow Road, Perth.

Go through the metal gate to the end of the building, where you will find a flight of stairs leading up to the Mosque. The Imam is normally there all day and during the evenings.

Hindu Temple Glasgow

78 Hamilton Rd, Rutherglen,

Glasgow G73 3DQ

Telephone: 0141 643 0377

www.hindutempleofscotland.com

Synagogues in Glasgow

(Reform, Orthodox, Lubavitch)

<http://www.scojec.org/resources/files/guidebook.pdf>

Working During Your Studies

If you require a student visa to study with us, you will only be allowed to undertake a limited amount of part-time employment during term-time (up to a maximum of 10 or 20 hours per week), if this is permitted under the visa category for which you must apply and it is detailed as a condition on your visa. Further information regarding this can be found on the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Can-you-work>.

If your visa permits you to work, you will be able to work full-time during the published College vacation periods.

Please remember that it is a breach of your visa conditions and a criminal offence if you work when your visa does not permit you to do so, or if you work more hours than your visa allows.

All EEA and Swiss nationals can work in the UK. Further information regarding this can be found on the UKCISA website at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/EEA--Swiss-Students/Working>

Most part-time work is in hotels, restaurants, shops and care homes. We cannot guarantee that you will be able to find a job. Remember your main purpose for coming to the UK is to study to gain an internationally recognised qualification which will help in your future career.

Part-time work should not conflict with your studies.

Where to find a job

It is not easy to find a job but the best place to find part-time work, which will fit in with your studies, is Jobcentre Plus. You can visit the Jobcentre Plus office in the High Street in Perth or check out the website at:

www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus.

You can also find jobs advertised in the local newspapers, The Perthshire Advertiser on a Friday and The Courier, also on Friday. Both these newspapers are available in the college library. You will also find job information on the notice board outside the employability centre of Brahan building next to the entrance to the study centre. More information and advice is available online at:

www.careers-scotland.org.uk.

If you need a reference please ask before you give the name and contact details of any member of staff.

Wages

Employees in Scotland must be paid at least the statutory National Minimum Wage.

Rates from 1 April 2019

£8.21 - the rate for workers aged 25 and over.

£7.70 - the rate for workers aged 21 and 24.

£6.15 - the rate for workers aged 18 and 20.

If anyone asks you to work for less money than this, they are breaking the law.

For more information on wages and working:

www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates.

National Insurance number

You may have to pay Income Tax and National Insurance (NI) if you earn more than £166 per week. Your employer deducts tax and NI from your earnings. See www.gov.uk/student-jobs-paying-tax, or telephone: 0845 600 0643 for more information.

You must apply for a National Insurance number if you intend to work. You will need to contact the Job Centre to make an appointment to register for an NI number. You can find more about this at:

www.gov.uk/national-insurance

Income tax

If you earn more than £1,042 a month on average (2019/20), then you will have to pay income tax.

You can check out information on income tax at:

www.gov.uk/student-jobs-paying-tax

Making the Most of Your Leisure Time

When you are not studying, we hope that you will enjoy your free time and take the opportunity to explore Perth and the surrounding area while you are here. As Perth is centrally located in the heart of Scotland, we are fortunate to have the beautiful scenery of Highland Perthshire in close proximity while still being within easy reach of larger cities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee. This section includes some suggestions to help you make the most of your leisure time.

Places to Visit in Perthshire

During your time with us, you may wish to consider visiting some of the following places in Perth:

- Perth Museum and Art Gallery
- Scone Palace and Gardens - the crowning place of Scottish Kings and the original home of the Stone of Scone.
- The two Inches - the North and South Inches are lovely parks in the centre of Perth.
- The Fergusson Art Gallery
- The Black Watch Regimental Museum

If you also wish to explore the wider Perthshire area, you may enjoy the following places, which are easily accessible by public transport.

- Pitlochry - The charming town of Pitlochry is worth a visit and is surrounded by beautiful scenery. Pitlochry Festival Theatre - Scotland's 'Theatre in the Hills' - offers an exciting programme of events throughout the year. You can also visit the Heathergems Visitor Centre and Pitlochry Dam.
- Blair Atholl Castle and Gardens - This is an interesting Castle to visit and a variety of events take place here including the Blair International Horse Trials in August. The House of Bruar and the Falls of Bruar are also nearby.

- Dunkeld - There are some nice walks in the Dunkeld area. The historic Cathedral is a popular attraction and wedding location. Some musical events take place here as part of the Perthshire Amber Festival in Autumn.
- Aberfeldy - Explore the Birks of Aberfeldy, a popular woodland walk, visit the Dewar's Whisky Distillery, enjoy the scenery by the river or try the putting course.
- Crieff - When the weather is nice, MacRosty park is a good place to spend an afternoon.

For further information on attractions and details of events held across the Perthshire area, please refer to the Visit Scotland website at:

<https://www.visitscotland.com/destinations-maps/perthshire/>

Festivals and Events

A variety of festivals and events take place in Perth throughout the year including the Perth Festival of the Arts, the Scottish Game Fair, the Perth Show and the Winter Festival celebrations. For up-to-date further information on forthcoming events, please refer to the City of Perth website at:

www.perthcity.co.uk/

Cinema

You will be able to see the latest films at Perth Playhouse cinema in Murray Street. Current listings are available at:

www.perthplayhouse.co.uk/

Perth Concert Hall

Perth Concert Hall offers a varied programme of events throughout the year including musical performances, comedy acts and touring productions. Further information can be found at:

www.horsecross.co.uk.

The newly-refurbished Perth Theatre also hosts a wide range of drama productions, plays and the annual festive pantomime.

Sports Facilities

Aside from our new Academy of Sport and Wellbeing, which is located on our Campus, there are various sports facilities in the Perth area.

Perth Leisure Pool is an ideal place for keen swimmers of all abilities. If you would like to try the Scottish sport of curling or go ice-skating, you may enjoy visiting Dewar's Rinks. Bell's Sports Centre, which is situated on the North Inch hosts a wide range of national and international sporting events and offers a varied programme of activities to the public.

The North Inch is a popular location for golf, rugby, football, cycling, running and walking.

McDiarmid Park - the home ground of St Johnstone football club - is within walking distance of Perth College UHI.



Contact Information

International Centre

www.perth.uhi.ac.uk/international

Email: perthinternational.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Tel +44 (0) 1738 877000

Student Accommodation

www.perth.uhi.ac.uk/accomm

www.perthstudentpad.co.uk

On-Campus Residences

Email: residences.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Specialist Support and Counselling (SVS)

pc.studentservices@perth.uhi.ac.uk

allie.scott.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Perth College UHI

www.perth.uhi.ac.uk

University of the Highlands and Islands

www.uhi.ac.uk

www.perthcity.co.uk

Information about Perth city, tourism, shopping, events, food etc.

Homestay

Email: homestay.perth@uhi.ac.uk

Tel +44 (0) 1738 877268

www.britishcouncil.org

British Council homepage.

www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa

Information on obtaining visas to the UK.

www.ukcisa.org.uk

Excellent source of information for international students.

www.rail.co.uk

Information on UK rail travel.

www.oanda.com

Currency converter.

www.hmrc.gov.uk

Information on bringing goods into the UK.

www.citylink.co.uk

www.megabus.co.uk

Bus transport in and around Perth.

Emergency Contact

Police, Ambulance or Fire Service Tel: 999

Checklist

When you think your preparations are complete, please take a few moments and use this checklist to make sure you have not forgotten anything:

Immigration

- Obtain any necessary student visa/entry clearance for study in the UK.
- Thoroughly research information on the college and your course, for your own benefit and also to help answer questions from immigration officials.
- Ensure you have your CAS letter/unconditional offer letter.
- Photocopy the personal details pages of your passport and visa stamp and keep them in a safe place.
- Evidence that you can support yourself in the UK (bank statements).
- Evidence of Immigration Healthcare Surcharge (If applicable)

Perth College UHI

- Inform the College you accept your offer of a place.
- Return accommodation completed request form
- Know exactly where and when you should arrive at Perth College UHI.

Financial

- Check information and fees for your course and cost of living whilst in Perth.
- Ensure all necessary fees are paid to the college and you have sufficient funds to live in Perth.
- Check with your bank concerning regulations concerning transferring money to the UK.
- Check your government's restrictions on taking money out of the country.
- Obtain travellers cheques and/or British currency for your first few days or weeks.

Travelling to the UK

- Buy travel tickets and travel insurance.
- Plan your journey from the point of entry to your final destination.
- Check your luggage weight against your airlines allowance.
- Baggage does sometimes get lost in transit. Make sure you have all your important documents in your hand luggage.
- Obtain a letter of explanation from your doctor for any prescribed drugs you may need to bring with you.
- If possible have someone to contact when you arrive or at an agreed meeting point, eg rail station.

Medical

- If you are required to take a tuberculosis (TB) test, bring your test certificate.
- Visit the dentist/optician as care can be expensive in the UK.

OK? Now you are ready to go – we look forward to welcoming you to Scotland very soon!

Unless you receive different information on your offer letter, please come to the International Centre on your first day and bring your passport, visa and certificates - for registration and enrolment.

Don't forget to contact your family to let them know you have arrived safely.



www.perth.uhi.ac.uk

International Centre, Perth College UHI

The information in this publication is for your guidance only and is subject to change as part of our policy of continuous improvement.

Perth College is a registered Scottish charity, number SC021209.