

International Students' Information Guide



Swansea
University
Prifysgol
Abertawe

Student Life
Bywyd Myfyrwyr

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Here is what you can find covered in the pages of this Information Guide. We hope you find many of the sections useful as you adapt to your new life in Swansea.

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Welcome!

Dear Student,

I am so very happy to have the pleasure of welcoming you to Swansea University and I hope that you will have a truly rewarding and exciting time during your stay with us.

Many students say that the opportunity to study abroad changes their life and provides them with experiences that shape their future stay with them forever. I wish this positivity for you and hope that both your academic and personal journeys are fruitful.



This booklet has been put together to try and provide you with information that you may need whilst living and studying in Swansea - especially when preparing to come or in the first few months whilst you settle in.

Please be aware that if you have any questions or worries, **do not isolate yourself**. You can get in contact with a member of VISA Advice staff and we will do our very best to assist you.

We hope that we will see you soon at one of our many trips or events which run throughout the year. You can find details of these on our social media or by booking your place through our Native [page](#)

Make sure that you read this booklet carefully, check your University email regularly and visit our pages at <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/> and <https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/international/visa-advice/> to see how we can help to make your time with us here a very happy one.

You can also follow us across social media on Instagram by searching **@CampusLifeSU**

Good luck and all the very best,

Emma Gwynnett-Davies

Head of Visas and International Student Advice (VISA)

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What we offer

Welcome and induction activities
Advice and information on certain aspects of immigration procedures
Assistance with student visa extension applications
Information and advice on regulations relating to employment
Information and advice about daily life in the UK
Access to employability projects
GO Team! Project
Swansea University: International Family Charter Project
Yearly programme of GO! social events and activities

About the service

The VISA Advice Team provide information and advice on a range of matters, including immigration and living in the UK. We support all international students regardless of nationality, religion, gender, age, sexual preference or health status. Confidential advice is offered free of charge and without discrimination.

We operate according to the UK Council for International Student Affairs/Association of International Student Advisers (UKCISA/AISA) Code of Ethics and meet the strict rules and standards of the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner. Our full Statement of Service can be found [here](#).

Our location

The VISA Advice team works across both Swansea University campuses (Singleton and Bay Campus). For updated information on our location, opening times and other useful information, please see our [website](#).

Contact Details

Email: VISA.Advice@swansea.ac.uk

Website: www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice



Getting the Help and Advice you need

It is important to VISA Advice that they are available to support students as much as possible in a variety of ways.

If you need advice quickly, it is worth checking to see whether the information you require can be found within the VISA Advice webpages.

There is lots of information about:

- visas;
- working regulations;
- living and learning in the UK;
- volunteering opportunities;
- dealing with unexpected events and a whole host of other information.

These web resources can be found on the main University website [here](#).

Or MyUni pages: <https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/international/visa-advice/>

Quick Query Sessions & Appointments

If you can't find the answers to your queries via the website, it is always best to drop us an email in the first instance. We answer emails very quickly and in order of date received.

The VISA Advice Team have other ways you can contact them with Quick Queries which include Live Chat or Drop-in sessions. **No appointment is necessary for drop-in sessions but if you need a subsequent, longer appointment, an Advisor may arrange this with you during the Quick Query session.**

You can find details of when and how Quick Query sessions are being facilitated on a week-to-week basis via our main landing page [here](#).

We suggest you **check the website before attending a session** in case of closures or cancellations.

Longer appointments usually take place in the afternoon and the team will try and accommodate you as quickly as possible via the method most convenient to you. Please have any documentation relevant to your query with you so we can help as quickly and fully as possible. You can find details of when our Quick Query sessions are available [here](#).

Immigration

A wealth of information regarding student and post-study immigration for overseas students can be found on the VISA Advice web pages:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/>

If you are a Student visa holder, it is important that you are aware of and comply with the immigration regulations during your stay in the UK.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Think ahead and make a note to organise all the documents you need to extend your student visa **at least 8 weeks** before your current visa expires;
- Provide the University with a copy of your passport, BRP, Digital Immigration share code and ATAS certificate (if applicable) - if you are issued a new passport or visa you must provide the University with a copy of this;
- Keep the University up to date with your current contact details;
- Enrol for your course when you are expected to;
- Study whilst you are in the UK (ensuring that you have good attendance on your course and no significant gaps or absences);
- Follow University procedures if you decide to suspend your studies or withdraw from your course;
- Leave the UK if you suspend your studies or withdraw from your course;
- **Do not work in the UK** if you suspend your studies or withdraw from your course;
- Make every effort to **complete your course on time without any repeat or resits***
- **Understand that you may not be able to apply for the Graduate Route if you do not successfully complete your course on the original course end date**

The University's responsibilities are to:

- Keep copies of passports and Digital Status records where applicable;
- Keep contact details up to date (and keep a record of any changes of address);
- Report to the UKVI when international students holding a Student Visa:
 - Do not enrol within the enrolment period;
 - Enrol, but do not adhere to designated University attendance monitoring procedures;
 - Permanently or temporarily stop studying (including discontinuation or suspensions of study);
 - Make significant changes to their circumstances (such as the successful completion of a course earlier than expected, a change of course or completion from home);
 - Break the conditions of their permission to stay, such as working illegally or not leaving the UK when required.
 - Notify the UKVI once a student becomes eligible to apply for the Graduate Route (within 4 weeks of formal results being released)

It is important that you take these immigration regulations seriously and abide by the rules while you are in the UK. These regulations are set by the British Government and not the University and so are **non negotiable**.

Correct visa lengths

If you have a Student visa it is important for you to check that this has been issued for the correct length of time. When considering your application for a visa, the Visa Centre in your country (or the country in which you apply) should comply with the following guidance:

Type/length of course	Length of stay allowed
12 months or more	The full length of the course + 4 months after the end of your course
6 months (or more) but less than 12 months	The full length of the course + 2 months after the end of your course
Pre-session course of less than 6 months	The full length of the course + 1 month after the end of your course
Course of less than 6 months that is not a pre-session course	The full length of the course + 7 days after the end of your course

If you believe that you have not been issued with the correct length of visa you need to come to **email VISA Advice** as soon as possible for further advice. Information on correcting eVisas and our contact details can be found [here](#).

Police Registration

As of 1st August 2022, the requirement to register with the police has been **removed**. This means that students do not need to register on arrival to the UK and students who are already here in the UK will not need to update any existing Police Registration Certificate. We have provided answers to some frequently asked questions about Police Registration at our [website](#).

Making a Student visa extension

If you need to extend your Student visa to start a new course, or to complete a course you have already started, the VISA Advice Team can assist you. **You may not be able to make this application in the UK**, so it is vital you seek advice early. You will need to start thinking about this around 12 weeks before your visa expires so that you have plenty of time to get organised and ensure you have sufficient funds in your bank account to meet the Student Route financial requirements - **if required**.

Making a Student visa extension - cont.

For full, detailed information about extending your visa, and the process for accessing our support with this, please visit our comprehensive 'Extending your visa in the UK' pages:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/extending-your-student-route-visa-in-the-uk/>

EU/EEA/Swiss students and immigration

From the 1st July 2021, EU/EE/Swiss nationals entering the UK will need the relevant immigration status to enter and study in the UK. If you hold a valid status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), you can still live, work and study in the UK and have access to the National Health Service. If you do not have EUSS status it is **mandatory** for you to apply for immigration to come to or remain in the UK. You will either need to apply for a Student Route visa or a Visitor Visa, depending on the length of your course.

You can find more information on the EU/EEA/Swiss web pages here:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/eu-students/>

Making a change to your studies

If you are considering making a change to your studies, i.e. by suspending or withdrawing from your course or by transferring to a different course or institution, you must seek advice from relevant parties prior to taking any action. This will ensure that you are fully informed of any financial and immigration implications and of any steps you will need to take to keep safe within the immigration rules. There are also regulations (time caps) relating to how long you can study in the UK as an undergraduate/below degree level, so it is important to be aware of these.

You will need to undertake the following steps if thinking of making a change to your studies:

1. Speak to your Faculty as they will be able to advise you on whether the change you want to make is academically viable. In some cases you may need to make a fresh application via Admissions.
2. Contact VISA Advice to see whether the change will have any implications on your visa. It might not be possible for you change course without applying for a new visa- especially if the change will result in a change of overall course length, course level or visa conditions. You may have to leave the UK to make any fresh visa applications.
3. Contact Student Compliance about attendance monitoring implications and any UKVI reporting that they will have to undertake as a result of any changes
4. Contact **Finance** to ensure that you are fully aware of the financial implications of the change you are proposing. Do not assume that all fees will be returned to you if you have already enrolled on a course and are wishing to leave or switch part way through.

It is important to note that if you suspend or withdraw from your studies you will be expected to leave the UK and reapply for fresh entry clearance (a new visa) to come back into the UK to resume your studies. You would be prohibited from working in the UK whilst suspended or withdrawn.

Working in the UK

European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) member state nationals

If you are a national of an EU/EEA member state or Switzerland, and you have **EU Settled Status under the EUSS** (either pre-settled or settled), you can continue to work in the UK without restrictions.

If you have entered the UK under a **different immigration route**, you will be subject to the conditions relating to that specific visa type as per the information below.

Standard Visit visa or Short Term Student visa holders

If you hold either a Standard Visit visa or a Short term student visa, **all work is prohibited** (including work placements and experience) . Please see:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/visitor/> or

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/student-visa/>

Student Route visa holders

If you are a Student Route visa holder, you do not need to apply for special permission in order to work.

However, the hours and type of work you can do are restricted and depend on when you made your most recent application for immigration permission and on the level of course you are studying. It should state on your visa (Digital Status) how many hours you are able to work during term time (usually 20 hours per week for UG/PG but check your visa or your visa decision letter to make sure). There are only certain specific periods when you are allowed to work full-time.

Details of when full time working is permitted, the kinds of work you are able to undertake and other information about working during your studies can be found on the ICL website:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/pre-arrival-information/arrival-and-induction/working-during-studies/>

The University cannot write you a letter 'permitting you' to work or confirming your work right- this right is bestowed by the UK Government. MyUniHub is able to provide a letter with term dates as this confirms whether you are in term or vacation. An employer can check with the Home Office that you are allowed to work by calling the Employers' Helpline on 0300 123 4699.

The Graduate Route (Post Study Work Visa)

Once you graduate, you may be eligible for a 2 year post-study visa (3 years for PhDs) to remain in the UK to find and undertake work. More information can be found here:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/graduate-route/>

Dependants

If your spouse/partner comes to the UK with you (or joins you at a later date during your studies), whether they can work or not depends on the length and level of your course and also when they applied. Please see up to date information regarding dependants which is provided by the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA):

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student-advice/visas-and-immigration/student-route-bringing-your-family/>

Swansea Employability Academy (SEA)

The Swansea Employability Academy exists to help students gain the vital skills and experience they need to secure a successful career up to and after graduation. SEA provide unique opportunities for students to engage with industry, undertake work placements and work experience, so that they are fully equipped for the world of work when they leave us. Make sure you take full advantage of all the opportunities available to while you study at Swansea University. Visit their website to find out more: www.swansea.ac.uk/sea/



Volunteering

The GO! Team and DiscoverySVS

Student Life are pleased to be able to offer students the exciting opportunity to become a member of the GO! Team under a volunteering and employability project in conjunction with DISCOVERY Student Volunteering Swansea.



As well as having amazing time getting involved with the development and delivery of the GO! Team Project and helping Student Life to deliver their social programme and other exciting tasks, GO! Team members will gain vital employability skills for their future careers!

GO! Team activities include:

- Promoting and attending social activities aimed at engaging international students
- Welcoming new international students to the University on a year round basis
- Helping to deliver the International Welcome Day and ongoing induction activities
- Developing and producing a regular GO! Team Newsletter- promoted to all students
- Helping to run the social activities
- Participating in and promoting the DISCOVERY Student Volunteering Swansea
- Making webcasts and videos about the GO! Team project
- Joining the GO! Team members Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/goteamvol> and engaging with University wide social networking activities
- Working with other GO! Team members in developing and organising new, supported, social and cultural events and activities
- Writing short reports, and maintaining statistics related to, of activities undertaken under the GO! Team Project
- Building interest and momentum in the GO! Team Project to ensure ongoing success

Student Life are always looking for new GO! Team members. If you are interested you can find the application form and further information at:

<https://volunteering.discoverysvs.org/volunteers/opportunity/10193151> or email gosocial@swansea.ac.uk.

DiscoverySVS have a vast range of volunteering opportunities for International Students to get involved with while they're studying at Swansea University - there's bound to be a scheme you're interested in! Just visit their website for more information:

<https://discoverysvs.org/>





Finances

Banking for International Students

It is usual for International Students to open a UK bank account once they have enrolled at the University. After enrolment you will be able to request a student bank letter to assist you in opening a bank account from the MyUniHub team. You will need to decide which bank it is that you want to bank with, so that the letter can be addressed to them- this is a requirement from the banks themselves.

We've put together a useful resource explaining the banking options available to you here in Swansea and throughout the UK Finance sector - please take a look at this via the link provided as this may help you identify the best banking option:

www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/pre-arrival-information/banking

General independent information and tips on opening a bank account can be found on the UKCISA website at: <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Opening-a-bank-account>

It is very important that you remember **never carry large amounts of money around with you** and **do not keep it stored in your accommodation as it is not safe**. We have had students in the past who have been in great financial difficulty due to having had large sums of money lost or stolen- we do not want this to be you!

Scams

Unfortunately there are some nasty people out there who specifically target international students. Be savvy to this and read the Frauds and Scams section in this Guide as well as the information provided by the Money Advice team for you here:

<https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/finance/money-advice/scams/>

Managing your money

It is a good idea to work out how much you have to spend each month and write everything down so that you can see how you are managing. There are some great online resources that can help you with budgeting. Here are a few:

- UKCISA money tips: <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student-advice/life-in-the-uk/>
- British Council: <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/planning/money-costs>

Initial Costs

If you do not have a bank account in the UK before you arrive, you should bring enough money to cover all your expenses such as transport and food for the first few days until you have made arrangements to draw money from an account in Swansea. Travellers cheques can be used to avoid carrying large amounts of cash on your person and you can also use cards such as Visa, Mastercard, American Express and a few others to withdraw cash in Pounds Sterling from UK ATMs.

Help and Advice

If you think you will have problems managing your money please come and talk to a member of the Money Advice team. Don't wait for a crisis before you tell anyone. You can find the Money team information on the website: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/money-advice/>

You can also contact the Students Union Advice Centre for any issues you may be having.

Money Required for a Visa Application

You must be able to prove to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) that you have enough money to pay your tuition fees and living costs during your studies. The exact amount you will need is dependent on the length of your course and the cost of your fees as per the guidelines below:

- Courses of 9 months or more £9,207 plus course fees for the first year
- Courses of 9 months or less £1,023 for each month of the course plus the course fees

The exact amount of your course fees payable will be shown on your CAS statement. Any fees you have already paid to the University will not need to be shown again in your bank account or sponsorship letter.

If you are making a Student visa application from within the UK and have been resident here for 12 months or more, you should be exempt from having to include financial evidence as part of your application (though we always recommend that you have the funds in place if possible)

In addition to the above you will also need to pay the visa application fee which is currently £348 (for applications made outside the UK) and the Immigration Health Surcharge which is £470 per year (if your course is 6 months or less then you will pay £235). This will need to be paid at point of application.

For full details please visit the Visa and Immigration pages on our website at:

www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/immigration/



Tuition Fees

The tuition fees you pay cover a range of things. As well as tuition, they contribute towards the cost of matriculation, registration, examinations, use of the libraries and IT facilities, access to student services and Students' Union membership. The tuition fee you pay will depend on your choice of course and classification as either an Overseas or Home/EU student. All tuition fees are listed on each course page:

Undergraduate - www.swansea.ac.uk/undergraduate/courses/

Postgraduate - www.swansea.ac.uk/postgraduate/

You will be required to pay a deposit in order to obtain a CAS statement which counts toward part of your tuition fee. This will only be refunded in the event of a visa refusal. You are then required to pay all or at 50% of the tuition fee on or before enrolment. If you chose to only pay 50% upfront, the remaining balance can be paid in 2 further installments on dates set by the university. For further information and advice on how to pay your fees to the university please visit: www.swansea.ac.uk/finance-swansea-university/paying-tuition-fees-and-other-information/pay-fees-international-students/

If your tuition fees are being paid by a recognised sponsor, you will need to provide your sponsor letter to the University as documentary evidence before or at enrolment.

Scholarships

You may be entitled to a reduction in your fees by securing a scholarship. There are several scholarships available to International Students coming to study at Swansea University. Visit the scholarship pages for the eligibility requirements:

www.swansea.ac.uk/international-students/my-finances/international-scholarships/

Accommodation Costs

If you will be living in University owned accommodation, you will need to pay your rent each term. You will be emailed an invoice 10 days before the due date. In order to secure the accommodation you will also need to pay a deposit before you arrive. The deposit will be deducted from the summer term rent payment. However, the deposit is non-refundable if you decide not to move in. Please visit the Accommodation webpages for full details of the costs, payment dates and payment methods:

www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-fees1920/

If you will be living in private accommodation then the costs and methods of payment will differ to the above. Please refer to the **Cost of Living** section next.

Cost of Living in Swansea

The cost of living in Swansea is relatively low compared to many other cities in the UK. However it is still vital that any potential student prepares their finances before they attend University. It is difficult to estimate the cost of living since so much depends on lifestyle and the subjects you study but the University has produced the table below as approximations of costs (please be aware these are liable to fluctuate).

These are updated each year so please visit: www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/living-costs/

Expense	Cost per week	Cost per academic year (40 weeks)
Leisure Spending	£16.18	£661.20
TV License/home entertainment	£5.84	£233.60
Clothes/Laundry	£10.69	£427.60
Groceries/Household items	£22.08	£883.60
Phone (Mobile)	£3.09	£123.60
Clothes	£8.38	£355.20
Childcare Costs	£200.00	£8000.00
Travel Costs (Bus Pass)	£7.31	£380.00
Private Rent (area and property size dependant)	From £80.77 +	From £4200 +

Depending on your course there may be additional costs applicable to you. For full details, please contact your school/college/department but general information is provided here: www.swansea.ac.uk/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/tuition-fees/additionalcosts/

Budget-friendly Home and Fashion

With the cost of living in the UK rising each year it is a good idea to explore ways to cut your costs by finding cheaper clothes, household items and furniture (if you happen to rent an un-furnished property).

Charity shops:

Charity shops are a great way to find second-hand clothes, household items and furniture. They also donate the money made from selling these items to charities. So not only are you saving money and being sustainable, you are also helping good causes.

- **Wales Air ambulance** - 9 College St, Swansea SA1 5AF
- **YMCA** - 238-239 Oxford St, Swansea SA1 3BL
- **Cats Protection** - 85 Brynymor Rd, Swansea SA1 4JE

These are only a few charity shops - there are many dotted around Swansea. To find one near you have a look on google maps:

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/search/charity+shops+in+swansea/>

Low-price shops:

- **Aldi, Lidl and Iceland Warehouse** - A4067 Quay Parade, Swansea SA1 2AL, all of these stores can be found in Parc Tawe retail park and sell low-cost groceries and some kitchenware.
- **Primark** - St Mary's Square, Swansea SA1 3LP, known for it's low-priced clothing including men's, women's, children's, shoes and health and beauty products.

Second-hand shops:

- **Tip treasures** - Llansamlet, Swansea SA6 8QN. All items on sale are second-hand to reduce the items sent to landfill. There are electrical goods, furniture, clothing, homeware and more sold here.
- **Enfys** - Industrial Estate Briton Ferry SA11 2HZ, Enfys mainly sells second-hand furniture but they also sell other household items including electrical goods.

Online shops:

These online stores consist of individual sellers posting their own items for sale.

- **Gumtree** - Clothes, household items and more - <https://www.gumtree.com/>
- **Facebook market place** - Clothes, household items and more - <https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/>
- **Depop** - Mainly for clothes, shoes and accessories - <https://www.depop.com>
- **Vinted** - Mainly for clothes, shoes and accessories <https://www.vinted.co.uk>
- **Free Cycle** - free unwanted items - <https://uk.freecycle.org>

Accommodation

If you are coming to study at Swansea University, either as an independent student or bringing your family, your accommodation will probably be one of your biggest concerns. It is important to try and get this organised as soon as possible, both in order to feel more relaxed about your transition to the UK and to be able to access essential services as soon as you arrive (e.g. registering with a doctor, accessing schools, libraries and for employment purposes).



It is likely that in a lot of cases you will not be able to sign an accommodation contract until you can evidence that you have been granted a visa to study. So, make sure that you are also applying for any visas you need at least 3-4 months before you plan to travel (Student route visas can be applied for up to 6 months before travel), as this will prevent additional delays.

It is also important to note that as soon as you have a UK address you can apply for any school places that you will need for your child dependants- even if you haven't yet arrived in the UK! We recommend doing this if possible.

Most new students live in University Accommodation during their first year and will then move into Private Accommodation for the remainder of their time at Swansea. As there is limited University family accommodation, families often go into private accommodation from year one. For families, as well as the information below, please see our Guide for Families:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/pre-arrival-information/guide-for-families/>

Accommodation application timings

We advise that, if at all possible, you try and arrange accommodation before you arrive. Unfortunately, the University doesn't have on demand or emergency accommodation and so you could end up having to pay for a last minute hotel- which can be both costly and stressful. If you can't get permanent/long term accommodation sorted before arrival, you should at least have a plan for a temporary stay somewhere. You may be able to find temporary accommodation via one of the sites below:

- AirBnB - www.airbnb.co.uk
- Serviced Letting - www.serviced-lettings.co.uk
- Booking.com - provides listings for local hotels as well as short-term apartment and holiday lets - www.booking.com

Types of Accommodation

There are 4 ways that you can find accommodation in the UK. These are: University accommodation; Studentpad, private accommodation via an external Letting Agent or private accommodation direct with a landlord.

There is further information around these available on the University Accommodation Services pages. Their information includes how to apply for University accommodation, fees and services available, as well as some guidance around private lettings. You will find that here: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-options>

University Accommodation

The University has a wide range of accommodation available on Singleton Park Campus and Bay Campus, or located off campus at Hendrefoelen Student Village or Beck House. University accommodation is conveniently located on campus, within walking distance or a short bus ride from campus. Most bedrooms are single occupancy with free wireless and internet access. You provide your own bed linen, towels, crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils. University Accommodation provides for a range of needs and budgets. A huge amount of information regarding accommodation at Swansea University can be found on our webpages: www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/

Swansea University Family Accommodation

Swansea University provides a range of properties on Park and Bay campuses, as well as very limited off-campus options.

A popular University accommodation choice is **Ty Beck / Beck House**, located within walking distance of Park Campus in the Uplands area, where there are 29 family flats available to students. You will need to apply early for **this accommodation as it is usually in very high demand and can be oversubscribed.**

You can find information on this property, how to apply, fees and services at <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/accommodation/accommodation-options>

You must apply as soon as possible for this accommodation. If you are offered a place, you MUST accept this before the deadline advised and remember that you may also need to provide evidence of any necessary visas to do so.



Private Accommodation via SAS Student Housing (Studentpad)

There is a lot of private accommodation to rent both in and around Swansea - mainly in Brynmill, Uplands, Sketty, Sandfields, Port Tennant and St. Thomas (information about these areas can be found in the locations and neighbourhoods section below).

SAS Student Housing is a joint venture between Residential Services and the Students' Union set up to offer students good quality student houses and help with finding accommodation for second and third year students. Private landlords must apply to register with **Studentpad** and their properties, which must meet certain quality and safety checks set by Swansea Council, are advertised via the website. Many local landlords advertise their properties via Studentpad so it's a good place to start your accommodation hunt:

<https://swanseastudentpad.co.uk/Home>

The Students' Union are there to help with problems you might encounter while renting a property via their Advice Centre. For more information, visit their website:

<https://www.swansea-union.co.uk/support/adviceandsupport/>

We strongly recommend that, if you are an individual student, you contact SAS for your accommodation needs. The University has no control over external private letting agencies; they may charge you fees and the University will not usually be able to help if you have problems with these private accommodation landlords.

Private Accommodation via Letting Agency

Letting / Estate Agencies can be a great option, often providing a “one-stop” service - managing all aspects of the letting, from contracts to maintenance, and have numerous properties available. You can provide them with a list of requirements (for example, two bedrooms, in a certain area, furnished or unfurnished) and they will provide options and show you the properties.

There are several reputable and established agencies across the area, including but not limited to the below:

- Dawsons Property - A local agency with properties in many locations in the area - www.dawsonsproperty.co.uk
- Belvoir! - A UK Wide chain with offices serving the Central Swansea area, as well as Sketty and Mumbles / Gower areas - www.belvoir.co.uk/swansea
- Bay - Independent agency specialising in properties around Swansea's Marina, SA1 and Mumbles areas - www.bayestateagents.com
- Peter Alan - Wales based agency with properties available across the country - www.peteralan.co.uk

If you choose to use an agency, your contract will usually be held directly with them and all aspects of your agreement will be between you and the agent. The agent then holds a separate relationship with the property owner.

Private Lettings

If you choose to let directly from the owner of a property, this is a 'Private Letting'. The property owner (known as the 'Landlord') will usually arrange a contract with you directly and agree their responsibilities and roles.

You should not have to pay any 'Agency' fees if renting directly from a Landlord. Your rental contract will be held directly with the property owner, and they will usually be your sole point of contact and assistance for any issues that arise.

There are a number of services where you can search for Private Lettings which include:

- Zoopla - www.zoopla.co.uk
- RightMove - www.rightmove.co.uk
- On The Market - www.onthemarket.com
- Open Rent - www.openrent.co.uk

We are also aware that many students and Landlords use the Overheard at Swansea University! Facebook group* to offer and request accommodation, so you may also want to join that: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/945080628890568>

***Please note that the University has no affiliation with, or control over, that Facebook group whatsoever.**

Rent guarantors

Some lettings require an additional "guarantor" - another person or service who will agree to fulfil your rental payments should you fail to. Typically, this would be a UK National on whom a full referencing for credit and employment can be carried out.

If this option is not available to you, there are several independent Guarantor Services which are provided for a fee. Once again, we do not recommend or affiliate with these services, so you need to check them yourself, however some services include:

- Rent Guarantor - www.rentguarantor.com
- Housing Hand - www.housinghand.co.uk

The University, its staff or services cannot act as guarantors, so please ensure this is not your expectation.

Signing a contract

Once you have signed a contract it is legally binding and you may not be able to break this without the Landlord's permission. You cannot just walk away and switch to a different property (unless the house is legally unsafe). This is why you should not sign a contract in haste and make sure you are happy with the property, location and your housemates **before** making a decision. The University cannot intervene in private contract agreements between Landlords and students, so make sure you think carefully before signing a contract. Always make sure that you know who to contact should there be an issue with your accommodation. If renting privately, this may either be the Letting Agent or the Landlord direct.

The Welsh government provides further advice and information at gov.wales/renting-from-private-landlord - we recommend you read this before entering any contract.

Accommodation costs

There are many things you must consider when viewing a property and agreeing a contract. Your main consideration should be the total cost of housing and transport - not just the rent. Finding out all these costs, and checking they are within your budget, will help protect you from any financial shocks.

Contract fees and Agency administration charges

Some Letting Agents charge finding or administration fees- either at the beginning of a contract and/or as an ongoing cost. Make sure that you ask about these and are clear before signing a contract.

There is legislation around fair fees and charges. You can find a guide to fees and charges at www.gov.wales/letting-fees-guidance-tenants. You should read this information before agreeing to pay any fees or charges.

Bills and Essential Services

Services and bills may, or may not, be included in your rental price - **it is important you find out what is included and what is not BEFORE entering any contract as these charges will be your responsibility!**

The most common charges you should consider are:

- Gas and Electricity Charges
- Water charges
- Internet and Phone services
- Television License
- Council Tax (more below)

When viewing any property, you must establish which of these charges are “inclusive” in the cost and which are not. Charges that are not inclusive will need to be paid by you directly. You can find some example costs in the ‘Living Costs’ table on **PAGE 15**.

Rent

There is a broad variety of property available throughout the Swansea area, from “Studio” apartments (open-plan with one main large living and sleeping space and separate bathroom) to flats and houses with multiple bedrooms. Rents will vary depending on the size and the location of the property. Rents may be advertised as “PCM” which means Per Calendar Month, or “PW” which means Per Week

Typically 1 - 3 bedroom properties within a short walk of the Park Campus, in areas like Uplands and Sketty, are available from around £595 to £900PCM. Areas closer to Bay Campus, such as Port Tennant, have 1-3 bedroom properties from around £480 to £850PCM . The highly sought-after area of Mumbles has much higher rents, with small one-bedroom properties for rent between £650 to £750PCM*

*Please note: prices can be higher than this and figures here are only an illustration to help you understand the costs

Rental Deposits

Most rental contracts require a deposit payment. This is a set amount that you pay separately from the rent, which is held to make sure that you return the property and any furnishings in the same condition. Some deposit may also be retained by a Landlord for the property to be cleaned after you leave. The deposit is held in a registered deposit protection scheme - **you must check that the deposit will be held in a government approved scheme.**

Deposits can be anywhere from 1-6 months' rent - so if your rent is £500pcm, your deposit could be £500 - £3000. The deposit can legally be used at the end of the tenancy to cover repairs for proven damage to property or furnishings. Should you fail to pay rent or leave your tenancy early, you may forfeit your deposit. In the event of a dispute, the Deposit Protection Scheme will assist in managing this situation.

It is worth taking photographs of your rental property before you move in and again before you move out. Take care then you record any existing damage when you move in- to prevent you being unfairly charged for this later.

Council Tax

Please see the section on Council Tax on **PAGE 29**

'Furnished' and 'Unfurnished' properties

Rental properties usually fall into three categories:

- Unfurnished - you are paying for the property. Only "hard fittings" such as kitchen cabinets and bathroom fixtures are usually included, but no other furnishings
- Part Furnished - some items will be included, typically this will include essential basic items such as a sofa, beds and washing machine / fridge. This will vary from property to property.
- Fully Furnished - this will be an "instantly liveable" property with hard and soft furnishings provided throughout.



For Un- or Part-Furnished properties, you must consider the costs of the furnishings you'll need to buy to make the property liveable. There are a few ways to get second-hand household goods that are considerably cheaper than buying them new:

- Charity shops - these will stock large furnishings such as sofas and beds as well as clothes: (<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/search/charity+shops+in+swansea/>)
- Tip Treasures - a reuse shop that reduces the amount of items that end up in landfill. You can find low cost household items here: (<https://swansea.gov.uk/tiptreasures>)
- Enfys reuse and restore shops - Industrial Estate Briton Ferry SA11 2HZ: (<https://enfys.org/>)
- Online market places:
 - gumtree - allows you to buy and sell second-hand items including household goods, furniture and clothes (<https://www.gumtree.com>)
 - Facebook marketplace - You will need a facebook account to access it (<https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/>)
 - Free cycle - get household and other items for free. This online shop reduces waste by encouraging people to list their unwanted items for free instead of sending them to landfill (<https://uk.freecycle.org/>)

You will be required to remove any of your own furniture and items when you leave the property. There may be a disposal charge applied if you leave things behind which the landlord or agent must dispose of.

For Part- or Fully-Furnished properties, make sure an inspection is carried out of all furniture before you sign your contract (take photos if you can). You should be provided with a full list of the items ("inventory") as well as notes on any existing damage and defects. If this is not completed and agreed, you may be held liable for costs of damage that was not noted in the first inspection.

Repairs and Damages

Make sure that, before you enter any contract, an inspection of the property is carried out to identify all existing damage or defects within the property. You should be provided with an agreed list and, at the end of your tenancy, this can be used to identify any new damage to the property caused during your tenancy.

If additional damage is found, additional repair costs may be due - these should be reasonable and agreed upon, although in the event of a dispute some or all of your deposit may be retained to cover these costs.

Residential locations & Neighbourhoods

Swansea has a diverse variety of neighbourhoods and areas, all of which have their own characteristics and friendly communities. Here are details of some of the areas:

- Uplands - Uplands is a small town located a few minutes' walk from Park Campus. It has a variety of bars, restaurants and shops, and is very popular with our student population. Transport links are excellent with bus services connecting to both campuses and the city centre. It has a great mix of people, families and culture, with easy access to parks and schools.
- Swansea Marina / SA1 - the Marina and SA1 areas, sited around the city's waterfront and docks, are very central but are much quieter than the city centre itself. This area is mostly popular with couples and young professionals, but it also offers family suitable housing too with great access to the seafront.
- Swansea City Centre - the city centre area has a wide variety of accommodation options to suit all needs. Please bear in mind that this is a relatively busy area, with the heart of Swansea's shopping and nightlife located there. Wind Street, the hub of night-time activity, can be busy and noisy until the early hours of the morning. City centre living is a very convenient for shopping, transport links and access to services.
- Mumbles / West Cross - located to the west of Park Campus, Mumbles is a small town with independent shops and many family facilities - its neighbouring West Cross is a residential area. These areas are highly desirable, and rents are higher here. Transport links to Park Campus and the City Centre are good, however they are not on any of the UniBus routes. Discounted student bus tickets cannot be used to or from these areas. Travel to Bay Campus is difficult and takes considerable time.
- Brynmill - situated between the city centre and park campus, and with excellent links to both, Brynmill is a relatively quiet neighbourhood. Its centre, Brynymor Road, provides many independent shops and restaurants. It has great access to schools, parks and the beach, as well as other facilities and has a relatively high student population.
- St Thomas / Port Tennant - this area is located to the east of the city centre, meaning it is closer to Bay Campus - if this is your study location, this area is well worth considering. It's a residential area with services and amenities for families within easy reach. The area is a short walk from the City Centre and has great access to UniBus services.

Travel

Both the Bay and Park campuses are served by numerous bus services - these run via core student population areas such as Uplands, Brynmill, Sketty and Hendrefoilan. University busses (UniBus) can be used with a discounted Student Ticket, but other busses require full price tickets.

Take a look at <https://www.firstbus.co.uk/south-west-wales> for information on services and costs.

Living in shared accommodation - how to do this happily

It is very important when sharing a house or flat that you show respect to your housemates. There is nothing worse than having bad feeling in a house that has been created by housemates acting in a manner that is distasteful to each other. It is really important that you sit down with your housemates at the beginning of your shared time together and set some ground rules. These should include:

- If you have shared bills to pay, how, when and by whom will they be paid?
- Will everyone be responsible for their own cleaning and washing up or will you have a shared rota
- What about the shared spaces like the living room, kitchen or bathroom?
- What is an agreeable period of time in which people must do their washing up? Will you cook separately or together?
- What time do you like to eat and will this be a problem if you all want to cook together?
- Will you have shared utensils or only use your own?
- What day must you put rubbish out for the Council to remove and will you have a rota for this?
- If you have a washing machine, will you have set days for each person to do their washing?
- Will you have a rule that wet washing can or cannot be hung in shared spaces?
- Will you have an agreed time for music and televisions to be switched off or turned down?
- Will this be the same at the weekend or will the rules be relaxed?
- Will you be able to have friends stay over and if yes, how many and for how long? If you have problems in the house how will you resolve them?
- Do you need a weekly or monthly 'house meeting' to air any differences or sort out rotas etc?
- Have you discussed safety issues and is everyone aware of them?
- Do any of you **smoke** and if so, will this be allowed in certain rooms in the house or just outside?

Through honest discussion and careful rule making at the beginning of your tenancy you can ensure that you avoid tensions and problems later on. It may seem strange and difficult to suggest such action to you new housemates but you could perhaps show them this booklet and use the pointers above as a guide.

Further help & advice around accommodation

Swansea University doesn't offer a direct advice and assistance service for students in private accommodation (except via letting through SAS). If you encounter problems or have questions about your property or contract you will need to make every effort to sort these out between yourself and the landlord and/or Letting Agency.

The University takes no liability for you not seeking or obtaining appropriate accommodation, for your failure to secure a suitable contract, or for any difficulties such as failure to pay your bills, rent or for any other financial or contractual issues you encounter. They are unable to compel a landlord to release you from a contract or to intervene in legal disputes.

While serious issues are rare, there are a number of independent services and organisations available to assist you in the event of disputes or issues. Some of these include:

Swansea University Students Union

The Students Union operates an 'Advice and Support' service. Some of the services they provide include:

- Contract Reviews - they will review any contract before you sign it and provide explanations and guidance, this is a great service and we recommend taking advantage of it.
- Housing Checklist - a list of things to consider when viewing a property
- Legal and Contract dispute assistance

Please see their website for further information and contact details: www.swansea-union.co.uk/support

Shelter Cymru

An independent organisation providing free help and support to those in need of legal advice or in urgent need of housing assistance. They have online and phone services available as well as local offices. You can find details at www.sheltercymru.org.uk/get-advice

Swansea Council Housing Options

Provided by Swansea Council, this service provides emergency support as well as general advice and guidance on housing issues within Swansea. You can find them online at www.swansea.gov.uk/contacthousing

Welsh Assembly Government

The Welsh Parliament / Assembly provides an online guide to laws and regulations they have established to manage the property rental sector. This is for the protection of both renters and property owners. Take a look at www.gov.wales/renting-property for general and detailed information.

You will also find helpful information about accommodation in the UK on the UKCISA website:
<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student-advice/life-in-the-uk/accommodation/>

Living in the UK



Social behaviours

It is very important that you treat the people and places around you with respect. The University works hard to maintain a positive reputation for both itself and its students and cannot do this without your help!

Many Swansea University students live in accommodation amongst local communities. These communities are people's homes and you should behave in a manner which reflects this.

Although University is a time for you to enjoy socialising and spending time going out with friends, make sure that you pay heed to the following pointers so as not to get into any trouble with the police, the University, other students or the local community:

- Do not shout in the street late at night people might be trying to sleep
- Do not swear in public as some people might get offended
- Do not smoke in pubs, clubs, cafés, shops, University buildings or other enclosed public spaces (including toilets!) as it is illegal
- Do not damage other people's property (this includes garden ornaments and wheelie bins)
- Do not get so drunk that you become a danger to yourself or others!
- Do not have parties every night of the week!
- Do not drop litter, it is illegal to do so in the UK and you could get an on the spot fine from police
- Do not leave rubbish on pavements outside your house - again this is illegal as well as looking (and smelling) terrible
- Do not take illegal drugs (including cannabis)
- Do not get involved in verbal or physical fights - if you have a problem with tension in your house ask the University for help with mediation

- Do not touch people unless invited to do so - British people attach strong importance to personal space and your actions could be taken the wrong way
- Never drive a car without checking you are legally allowed to do so and that you are covered by insurance - this is the biggest reason that our international students get into trouble with the police!
- Treat all other people with polite respect - treat others the way you would expect to be treated in any situation.

Alcohol

Alcohol is freely available to all adults over the age of 18 in the UK. You can buy it in shops or supermarkets or choose to drink out in a restaurant or a pub. A pub (or Public House) is a traditional British establishment that serves all types of beer, wine, spirits, non-alcoholic drinks, coffee, tea and sometimes food, you can find one in the Students' Union. Many people in the UK choose to meet their friends in the pub for a night out or a drink or coffee in the day; it is perfectly acceptable to visit a pub and not drink alcohol if you would prefer a soft drink.

Some international students come from a culture where alcohol is not widely available, especially for young people, and there can be a temptation to drink a lot because of a new found freedom to do so. It is very important to remember that drinking too much alcohol can be dangerous and if you are not used to it, you could get very drunk very quickly.

If you want to drink alcohol, make sure you are doing so responsibly and check the alcohol content of the drink you are going to buy. Beer and cider (a popular alcoholic drink made from apples) contain lower alcohol at around 4-6%, wine has a higher alcohol content at around 9-13% and spirits, such as whiskey, vodka and gin have the highest alcohol content at around 35-40%. If you are not used to drinking alcohol, you should not think that you can just drink a large glass of vodka for example as it will make you very drunk, cause you to be less able to function responsibly and could make you sick! Choose any drinks carefully and make sure that you stay with friends never ever leave a drunk friend on their own!

Drugs

Many recreational drugs are illegal in the UK. Being caught with drugs will get you into trouble with the police and the University. Never let anyone pressure you into trying something that you don't want to take. You can find information and help regarding drugs at the following website: www.talktofrank.com/

Parties and Noise

Everyone wants to have a good time at University and we want you to as well! It is perfectly OK for you to invite your friends over to your accommodation (as long as any housemates you have agree) but you must remember the following information to avoid the police visiting you:

- People in the UK eat and party earlier than many cultures. Parties tend to start about 7-8pm and become quieter around midnight even if they do continue into the early hours;
- Do not invite more people than you can fit in the house comfortably as it makes a party difficult to contain;
- Do not list your address and that you are having a party on social networking sites;
- It is polite to visit your neighbours or write them a short note explaining that you are having a party and that it will not be a regular occurrence;
- Do not let people stand in the street. This is the biggest cause of police being called to our students' parties. If people need to go outside to smoke at night time make sure they are going into the back garden, talk quietly and keep the door shut;
- If you have a day to night party in your back garden, make sure everyone has moved into the house by an agreed time to prevent disturbing neighbours;
- Keep your doors shut late at night - this prevents noise from travelling and also stops unwanted visitors from wandering in;
- Have someone responsible for answering the door. If you leave it to chance people will not know who is genuinely invited and could let strangers in;
- If unwanted guests turn up ask them politely to leave; if they will not, suggest you will call the police and do so if they still will not leave. **Use the police telephone number 101 to log a complaint** - this should be enough to make the people leave voluntarily;
- Agree a time to turn very loud music down midnight is a reasonable suggestion. You can still play music after this time as long as it is not too loud. Perhaps go outside and close the door to see how noisy it is but don't forget that neighbours may be sharing your walls and that noise does travel;
- Try not to let your guests get too drunk! Drunk people lose inhibitions and become less reasonable and it may be harder to keep things under control if you or your guests have overdone the alcohol;
- If the police arrive, apologise and turn the music down. If it is a good time for the party to end anyway, you can ask them to help you to get people to leave. They will not charge you with anything as long as you are behaving properly they are just making sure the community is safe and happy;
- If the police have arrived do not continue, or allow guests to continue, the behaviour that caused the visit in the first place -if they have to come around a second or third time they may decide to charge you with disturbing the peace or another crime and no international student wants to end up with a UK criminal record...

General Information

Mobile phones

Many students find mobile phones a convenient way of keeping in touch with family and friends. There are many different companies offering a wide variety of deals.

Giffgaff

You can access a **free SIM card on the GiffGaff network from us at Right to Study checks.**

Each SIM card comes with £5 free credit when you activate and top it up.

All calls and texts to any other GiffGaff phones are completely FREE!

These SIM cards have special overseas rates though you might like to source your own at a later date. They are flexible and have a range of no contract plans to chose from.

SIM cards can be topped up via your mobile phone, via your online GiffGaff account or by purchasing an airtime voucher. Vouchers are available at Post Offices or local shops providing epay, payzone or paypoint services. They will display the following symbols:



If you are unable to purchase GiffGaff vouchers, O2 vouchers will also work. For further top up information, please visit:

<https://community.giffgaff.com/t5/Solve-your-questions/How-do-I-top-up-using-a-giffgaff-top-up-voucher/ta-p/3518139>

Other Networks and Contracts

Several mobile phone shops such as EE, O2, Tesco and others can be found in the high streets of most towns. Some mobile phone shops will ask you to sign a contract meaning you agree to pay a certain amount of money per month for your mobile phone. **Think carefully before signing any contract as these are legally binding.** You will be expected to pay the monthly amount even if you break or lose the phone! Failure to pay is a criminal offence and it is very difficult to get out of a contract once you have signed.



Television licenses

In the UK, You must be covered by a TV Licence to:

- watch or record programmes as they're being shown on TV or live on an online TV service, such as All4, Sky Go and YouTube, or;
- download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer.

This could be on any device, including a TV, desktop computer, laptop, mobile phone, tablet, games console, digital box or DVD/VHS recorder. Visit:

https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/check-if-you-need-one/for-your-home/students-aud1?WT.mc_id=r107&x=0

If you live in University halls of residence there will already be a license covering communal areas but you will need your own license if you have a television in your room. If you live in a shared house and have a joint tenancy agreement for the whole house, you may only need one license between you. However, if you have a separate tenancy agreement for your room, you'll need to be covered by a separate license.

The current cost of a television license is **£174.50 a year**, which you can either pay in full upfront or with a monthly payment plan. You can buy a license online at:

www.tvlicensing.co.uk/ or at any shop/supermarket offering Paypoint.

If you are found to be watching television without a license you could be given an immediate fine of £1000 - so make sure you are properly covered.

Council Tax

Council Tax is a system of local taxation, which is collected by local authorities. It is a tax on domestic property. Full time students are not liable to pay council tax. You may have to provide evidence of exemption to your landlord or the local council (they will write to you if they want you to do this). Full time students who live only with other full time students or in halls of residence will not have to pay the tax. If you are a single parent living with your child/children you will receive a 100% discount. However if you live in a household with another adult who is liable to pay council tax you will need to pay but are eligible for a 25% reduction in your council tax.

The University can provide you with a Council Tax Exemption Certificate to use as evidence. Please contact Hwb for further information.

Please note that you stop being exempt from paying Council Tax as soon as you complete your course (for Student Route visa holders, this is the date of completion on your CAS statement and not the date of the end of your visa as that might be 2 or 4 months later). This means that if you remain in the UK once your course completion date has passed, the local council may ask you to pay your Council Tax. Simply holding a Student Route visa is not considered as exemption as you must be actively engaged in full time study at that time (i.e. attending classes).

Driving licenses and insurance

Before driving any vehicle (car, motorbike, van etc) in the UK, you should check that you meet all of the legal requirements which apply (a) to the driver and (b) to the vehicle.

It is a criminal offence to drive using a licence that is not valid in the UK. You will also need to check that you are aware of the correct procedures and rules of the road which may be very different from your home country. If you have brought a car with you, you may also need to register it as being in the UK. You can check to see if you can drive in the UK with a non-UK driving licence here: www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence

Please note that it is illegal to drive a car in the UK without having proper motor insurance and you can face serious penalties if caught doing so. For further information about driving in the UK, visit UKCISA's website: <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student-advice/life-in-the-uk/travel-and-transport-in-the-uk/>

Parking permits

If you buy a car in the UK, or have brought your car with you, you will need to check whether you need a parking permit for the street in which you live. If you do live in an area where you need to have a permit and you do not have one, you could get an on the spot parking fine of £70! You can find instructions on travel, parking and how to check and apply for a parking permit in your area by following this link: www.swansea.gov.uk/parkingpermits

Food and Grocery Shopping

It is very important that in order to keep fit and healthy you eat a balanced diet. The University has a number of places on each campus where you can eat and which cater for different diets and tastes. If you are cooking for yourself there are shops and supermarkets nearby where you will be able to buy a wide range of foods suitable for your individual taste.



On Campus

You will find several places to eat on the University campuses, as well as various self-service vending machines widely available. Most catering outlets offer vegetarian and vegan options. This is normally clearly marked but you can check by asking any of the catering assistants.

Opening times for our various catering outlets can be found here:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/catering/places-to-eat/>

In addition to the University catering outlets, the Students' Union bars on both campuses (JC's in Singleton and Tawe Tavern in Bay) serve café style food and drink. There are shops on each campus which sell the basic essentials such as milk, bread and various ready prepared meals, as well as a selection of world foods. You can access information about Students' Union facilities on their website: www.swansea-union.co.uk/

Shops on Campus

Costcutter

This is the main shop on Single Park Campus, also situated in Fulton House (on the left of the main entrance). A traditional supermarket, this is the biggest shop on campus and sells a range of food, stationary and household products.

Tesco Express

There is a small branch of Tesco located in the Bay Campus. They sell all the essentials and are conveniently placed right in the centre of the campus, a short walk from the accommodation so you don't have to walk far with those heavy bags. At every Tesco store you can access discounts in store when you use your tesco clubcard:

<https://www.tesco.com/zones/apps>

Supermarkets in Swansea

There are several shops and supermarkets near to the University:

Tesco (SA1 3RA)

There is a very large Tesco in Swansea City Centre, open 24 hours a day (except Sunday), which is located next to the main bus station in the city centre. Tesco sells a vast range of food, clothing and household products to suit all budgets. From the Singleton Park Campus this supermarket is most easily accessible by catching a bus from the bus stop directly in front of Fulton House. Bus numbers 4, 3A,, 14,43 all run direct to the bus station but you can only get student discounted bus tickets on the number 4. There is also a taxi rank very close to the supermarket. You can also book a taxi to pick you up with your shopping right outside the door - see the transport section of this booklet for more information. There is also a large, free car park for those who drive.

Sainsbury's (SA1 8JA)

Sainsbury's is another very large supermarket located in the city centre but further away from the bus station - about a 15 minute walk. It is slightly closer to the Bay Campus and buses stop close by. The number 4 bus runs along this route. It sells similar products to Tesco. There is also a large, free car park for those who drive. You can also access discounts by getting a nectar card - you earn points to get money off your shop:

<https://www.sainsburys.co.uk/shop/gb/groceries/get-ideas/delivery-and-guides/values/howtojoin-nectar>

Lidl (SA1 2AA)

There is a Lidl supermarket which sells good value food and British and Continental products in Parc Tawe. It is about a 20 minute walk from the main bus station in Swansea. There is also a large, free car park for those who drive. To know about the latest discounts and coupons in store, download their Lidl plus app: <https://www.lidl.co.uk/lidl-plus/lidl-plus-coupons>

Aldi (SA1 2AA)

There is a Aldi supermarket which, much like Lidl detailed above, sells good value food and British and Continental products in Parc Tawe. It is about a 20 minute walk from the main bus station in Swansea. There is also a large, free car park for those who drive.

B&M Bargains (SA1 2AA)

B&M is a great place to pick up good quality household products at low prices. They stock a big range of cleaning products, toiletries and even some food. It is also conveniently located next to Lidl which means you can do all your shopping in one trip.

Iceland Food Warehouse (SA1 2AL)

Iceland is a supermarket famous in the UK for its low priced, high quality frozen food which is great for stocking your freezer full of essentials. Located in Parc Tawe, city centre, where there is a large car park for those who drive.

When you pay for your shopping in a supermarket and pay using a debit card you may be asked if you would like some cashback. Cashback is just a way of obtaining money, equivalent to using a cash machine.

Markets

Markets often offer a different a high quality food product at varying prices to large supermarkets so you might like to try them as an alternative.

Swansea Indoor Market

Swansea Market is the largest indoor market in Wales, an award winning, historic market that offers a unique shopping experience. Swansea Market houses over 100 stalls all under one enormous roof! It's open 6 days a week and sells fresh, local produce and traditional Welsh foods as well as gifts and household products. There are also cafés and coffee shops.

Swansea Bay Street Markets

Unlike Swansea Market, these smaller markets are only set up on a few days in the month. They sell locally prepared food, fresh vegetables, meat and unique gifts. There is always a lovely, community feeling around these markets, especially on a sunny day. These are great places to get out and experience real Swansea life. Visit their website for more information: <https://swanseabaystreetmarkets.co.uk/>

- Uplands Market takes place 9AM - 1PM on the last SATURDAY of each month at Gwydr Square, Uplands, Swansea SA2 0HD - this is only a short walk if you live on Singleton Park Campus or in Brynmill/Uplands!
- Marina Market takes place 10AM - 3PM on the second SUNDAY of each month at Dylan Thomas Square, Marina, Swansea SA1 1TT. The marina area of Swansea is located a short walk from the central bus station so is easy to get to if you're coming by bus from Singleton Park or Bay Campus.
- Mumbles Market takes place 9AM - 1PM on the second Saturday of each month at The Dairy Carpark, Mumbles, Swansea SA3 4BX.

Ideas for saving money on regular food shopping

- If you use the same supermarket regularly, you should apply for its loyalty card; show this each time you shop to collect 'points' which can later be used to buy things or exchanged for vouchers for goods or activities.
- Check 'best before' or 'use by' dates to make sure that you don't waste food. Supermarkets may sell fresh food cheaply if it is close to its 'use by' date, especially just before a day on which the shop is closed
- Goods sold using the supermarket's own label may be cheaper than branded goods, and the quality is often similar
- Supermarkets often have special offers such as 'two for the price of one'
- It is often cheaper to buy larger packs than individual portions. You may want to shop together with a friend and split larger packs between you
- Fruit and vegetables are usually cheaper and fresher if bought from a market or at a greengrocers rather than from a supermarket
- Download [Too Good To Go](#) to grab food from vendors before expiry dates!

Cooking at home

Specialist and World Foods

If you want to cook your own food, there are a number of specialist food stores available locally including Halal, Kosher, vegetarian and vegan and representing countries from around the world. Good places to explore in Swansea are St Helen's Road and the surrounding areas where you'll find a Chinese store and a World Foods store.

Student Cooking TV

Studentcooking.tv is a stylish and informative website that shows students how to cook great tasting, nutritious meals on a budget, while understanding completely the limitations of a student kitchen. Student Cooking TV can show you where to buy certain British and International produce- a great 'how to guide' for international students. Check the website out at: www.studentcooking.tv/

Eating out

People in the UK love to eat out and enjoy food from all over the world - you should sample as many of them as possible whilst you are here! In Swansea, you will find restaurants representing countries from all over the world.

If you are nervous about ordering different trying cuisines, maybe find a friend from that country to go with you to shops or restaurants so they can advise you on what is good.

If you have children they may be able to eat at a discounted rate, especially during school holidays, you can check

<https://moneysavingcentral.co.uk/kids-eat-free> for deals but make sure to check with the restaurant/café.



Student Life run a Monthly GO! Eat Supper Club where we offer students the chance to dine out at a different restaurant each month (usually for a subsidised set price of £10-15 for multiple courses) - so far we have eaten Turkish, Chinese, Sri Lankan, Jamaican and Thai food with more planned for the future! Tickets can be bought at: <https://university-swansea.native.fm/group/5010/student-life-go>

Tips for eating/ drinking in the UK

- It is safe to drink water from the taps in this country
- Foods will be labelled, often with a 'V' for vegetarian and 'Ve' for vegan
- Many foods will contain nuts. **If this is the case then it will be mentioned on the product label**
- Eating in the University catering outlets may be cheaper than commercial cafes or restaurants
- Cooking for yourself will be cheaper than buying ready-made meals/eating out
- When travelling, consider taking some snacks or a picnic with you
- Eating local and seasonal food is cheaper
- It may be more expensive if you try to eat in the same way as in your home country so try British food!
- It is usually cheapest to buy food from a large supermarket

Travel and Tourism



Everyday Travel

The University has comprehensive information about getting around, whether this is by train, bus, bike or foot.

Both the Singleton and Bay Campuses have efficient and affordable public transport links with regular bus services serving the city and making it easy to travel to and from our campuses. You can purchase daily, termly and year long bus tickets via the app as well as information on routes and available buses:

<https://www.firstbus.co.uk/south-west-wales/routes-and-maps/swansea-university>

The Swansea Bay cycle path links the two campuses. We are a cycle-friendly University with plenty of bike parking on both campuses, as well as showers and other supporting facilities. The Next Bike scheme has bike docks on both campuses so you can enjoy the benefits of cycling without owning your own bike.

To see how to access travel deals, and for other general information about travelling around Swansea and between campuses, please visit our Travel webpages at: www.swansea.ac.uk/sustainability/travel/

Tourism - UK

While you live in Swansea, you might like to travel and explore more of the UK by taking trips to England, Scotland or Northern Ireland. The good news is, once you're in the UK you can visit England, Scotland or Northern Ireland without any additional documentation!

However, you might like to hop on a flight to visit Europe or other nearby countries in some of your **vacation periods**.

Abroad

It's important to check whether you need a visa to travel to the country of your choice so make sure you check their embassy's website for details.

Sporting Activities

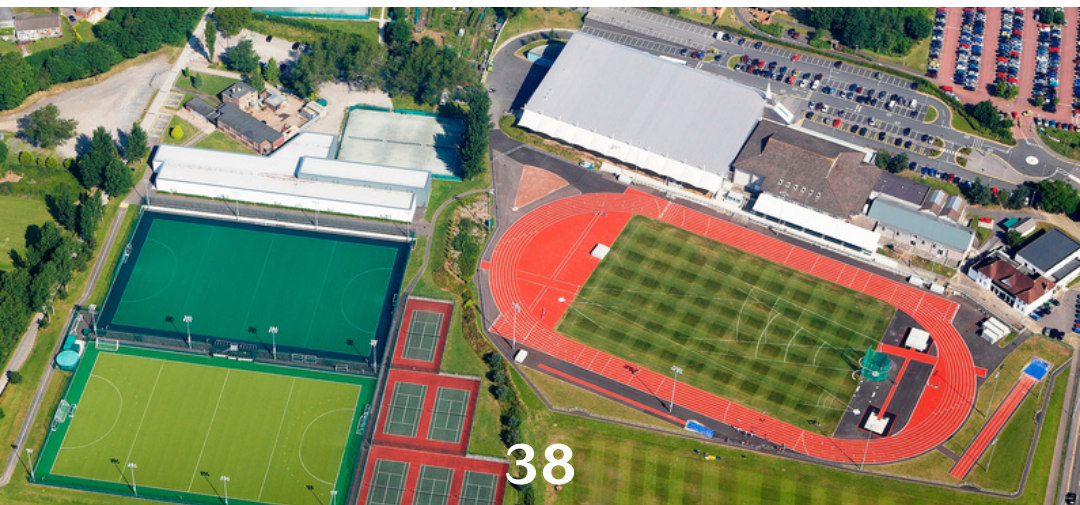
Sport Swansea is the name of the department that covers all sports and recreation activities at the University, offering a one-stop shop for all sports facilities and clubs. There are numerous student sports clubs available for you to join which cover a whole range of different activities so you're sure to find one that suits you. Sports clubs are a great way to socialise, make new friends and get involved with life in your new home!

Visit the website where you'll find a list of all the sports clubs plus information on the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) which is the national governing body for most sport in higher education across the UK. It provides extensive competition structures to gain BUCS points for individual and team performances in league, cup and tournaments, all collating into a final university league table: <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/sport/>

The sports facilities at Swansea University are among the best of any university in Wales and hosts a wide range of activities: <https://www.swanseabaysportspark.wales/>

Singleton Park Campus - Located beside the Singleton Park Campus, the International Sports Village features a range of training facilities for all levels, including pitches, running track, indoor athletics centre, gym, racquet courts, and 50m pool. The gem of the International Sports Village is the outdoor athletics track, where Swansea Harriers and other Swansea running clubs train. The Sports Village also offers a gym, state-of-the-art pitches and outdoor training space for a range of sports including rugby, football and hockey.

Bay Campus - Located on the newly developed Bay Campus, the facilities here are made to fit with the natural environment - with outdoor pitches along the beach perfect for playing your favourite sport. There are indoor facilities for weight training, cardio, and classes, and our Sports Hall is the perfect place to get involved with badminton, archery or basketball.



The Students' Union

The Students' Union (SU) plays an important role in the life of every student, whether new or in their final year of study. The SU is where you can seek representation, meet new friends, socialise during the day and night, find accommodation, and have your voice heard. The SU encourages every student to participate in the Union, whether it is as a member of Student Council, a member of a sports team or society, or as a volunteer.



**SWANSEA
UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS'
UNION**

**UNDEB
MYFYRWYR
PRIFYSGOL
ABERTAWE**

Swansea University SU offices are located on the ground floor of the Faraday Building on Singleton Park Campus and in the Student's Union Building on Bay Campus. The SU facilities include the food store Costcutter and the clothes shop Fulton Outfitters where you can purchase jumpers and t-shirts, as well as Swansea University gifts like graduation teddies, mugs and stationary.

The SU also run these lively student venues:

- **JC's in Singleton Campus** which is a café and bar selling coffee/tea, alcoholic drinks alongside cakes and hot food. They also hold regular open mic nights and pub quizzes!
- **Tafarn Tawe in Bay Campus** sells milkshakes and alcohol and serves hot fast-food. SU venue prices are usually very affordable and are a great place to hang out with friends.

Detailed information about these and other university venues can be found on the SU's website, which is also where you'll find out more about your SU representatives, which societies you can join, what services they can offer you and, of course, what social activities are going on! They will also send you electronic newsletters to keep you up to date with news and events.

Make sure you visit their website to familiarise yourself with what they are all about at:

www.swansea-union.co.uk/



Student Wellbeing and Personal Safety

Health

International students studying a course longer than six months will have paid an Immigration Health Surcharge as part of your visa application. This means you can access free National Health Service medical care while you are in the UK.

International students (including EU students **without EUSS**) studying in the UK for less than 6 months are strongly advised to take out private medical insurance to cover health care. You can check the NHS website for a country-by-country guide to reciprocal healthcare agreements: www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/healthcare-when-travelling-abroad/travelling-outside-the-european-economic-area-eea/

EU/EEA/Swiss students should continue to access an European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) before leaving their home country, if they can, as they may need this to not only access medical services smoothly, but also for future eligibility for some immigration routes (e.g. citizenship) and to apply for partial Immigration Health Surcharge refunds. EU/EEA and Swiss students **with EU Settled Status** can continue to access the NHS. An EHIC alone usually constitutes sufficient medical cover for those students who have settled or pre-settled status under the European Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

All students on a **Standard Visit visa** will need additional private healthcare insurance in order to access full medical services.

All students who apply to study in the UK under the **Student Route** will pay a mandatory Immigration Health Surcharge as part of the visa process and so will just need that (and the EHIC if from an EU/EEA country).

Register with a Doctor

You should register with a doctor or a General Practitioner (GP) soon after you arrive. You can register with a GP at the University Health Centre or with one closer to your accommodation.

University Health Centre
Penmaen Residence
Swansea University
Singleton Park
Swansea
SA2 8PG

Tel: +44 (0)1792 295321

If you got to the following website it will provide you with further information on registering with a GP and services provided including registering with a dentist:

www.swansea.ac.uk/study/student-life/health-and-welfare/health-centre/

Information for an Emergency

999

You should always call 999 when it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

When you require police or an ambulance on campus, you can call 333 from a Park campus landline and security will assist alternatively you can contact Bay security on 01792 606010

101

You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. For example, if:

- Your car has been stole
- Your property has been damaged
- You suspect drug use or dealing in your neighbourhood

Nearest Accident and Emergency Hospital

Morriston Hospital

Heol Maes Eglwys

Morriston, Swansea

SA6 6NL. Telephone

+44 (0)1792 702222

The department provides a 24 hour facility for the reception, assessment, examination, treatment, and referral of all accident victims, and patients with acute illnesses.

Minor Injury

For any minor injuries you can visit:

Neath Port Talbot Hospital,

Baglan Way, Port Talbot,

SA12 7BX

Opening hours: 8am - 9pm seven days a week

This service treats unexpected and urgent minor injuries or illness when you just can't wait to see your GP and can deal with conditions like:

- Grazes, wounds and minor burns
- Non-penetrating eye and ear injuries
- Head or face injuries (without loss of consciousness)
- Minor neck injuries (where patient is mobile and has no pins or needles in arms)
- Animal and human bites

NHS 111 Service

111 is the NHS non-emergency number. It's fast, easy and free. Call 111 and speak to a highly trained adviser, supported by healthcare professionals. They will ask you a series of questions to assess your symptoms and immediately direct you to the best medical care for you. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones. This is an out of hours GP service.

Personal Safety

By international standards the UK is a safe country, with low levels of violence and street crime. The British Council, the Home Office and the police all work together to make all students less vulnerable to crime while they are studying at school, college or university in the UK.

The University has comprehensive information about Student Safety and crime prevention. Make sure that you read those pages carefully to keep yourself informed and follow the guidance and instructions that are pointed out to you:

<https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/living-in-swansea/health-and-safety/>

and <https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/welfare/hate-crime/>

There is also further information and a free personal safety guide you can download here from the British Council:

https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/h009_study_uk_safety_guide_poster_final_web_v2.pdf

Togetherall

Togetherall is a digital mental health service freely available at togetherall.com. Using your University email address, you can anonymously access support 24/7 with trained clinicians online at all times, as well as a range of helpful tools and resources. It is a safe place online to get things off your chest, have conversations, express yourself creatively and learn how to manage your mental health.

Samaritans

If you want to talk to someone about how you are feeling or how to deal with someone else's behaviour, you can for further information and contact Samaritans who offer a 24-hour telephone helpline: <https://www.samaritans.org/wales/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

SAFEZONE APP

Swansea University has launched a free app service to help give round-the-clock safety reassurance to staff and students. The app offers immediate access to the on-campus security team and qualified first responders, through your mobile phone.

You can download the app by searching SafeZone in your mobile phone's App Store or visit: www.safezoneapp.com

If you need emergency assistance, you can follow the instructions on the app.

For further information for when you are feeling distressed or experiencing despair visit the getting help in a crisis page: <https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/student-support-services/help-in-a-crisis/>

Frauds and Scams

Some criminals specifically target international students, pretending to be from a legitimate organisation (such as the UK Home Office or an education agent). They demand money (calling it a "fine" for a non-existent immigration problem), and claim that if you do not pay them quickly, there will be damaging consequences (for example, deportation or cancelling your visa). They may also ask you to send them some sort of gift or money card in lieu of payment.

If you think you have been targeted then:

- Do not give the caller/sender any personal information, and do not confirm that any information they have is correct
- Do not make any payment. The UKVI does not issue financial penalties.
- Contact us and we can help you report to the police if you wish and to the UKVI

The link below will give you further information on the most common scams, how to spot them and how to stop them: <https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/finance/money-advice/scams/>

The most important things to remember are:

- **NEVER** give out your full password or pin code. No legitimate service will ever ask for it all.
- If something seems too good to be true, it probably is!
- If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank or building society immediately.

Culture Shock

Arriving at University can be a very exciting time. However, leaving home and studying in a new country can be a shock to the system. It's important to realise that culture shock is normal and the process of adapting to a new culture is difficult.

Culture shock can be described as, 'a mix of emotions when moving to a new cultural surrounding.' The feeling of sadness, loss, anger, confusion, stress and anxiety all comes from the challenge of new cultural surroundings.

For further information on culture shock go to:

<https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/welfare/hapus/>

If you want further support then you can contact us in VISA Advice:

<https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/international/visa-advice/>

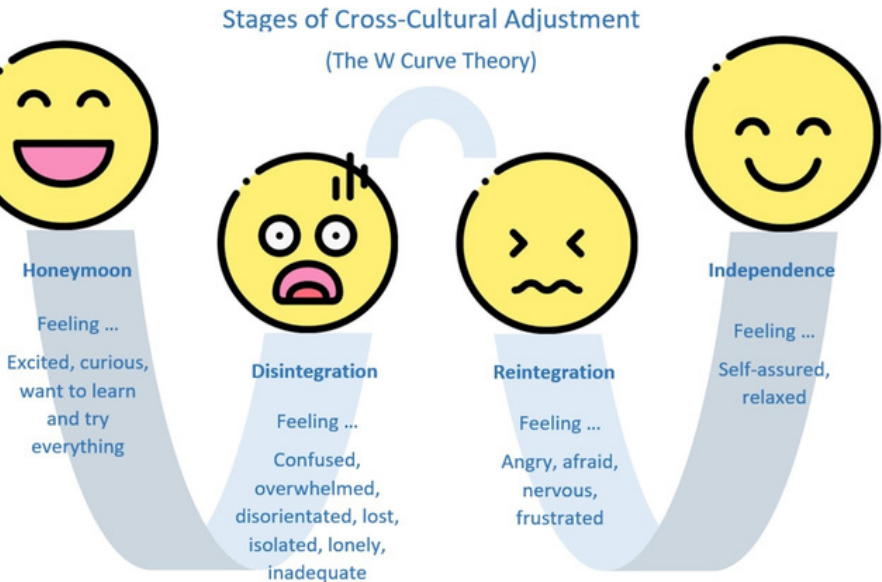
Email: VISA.Advice@swansea.ac.uk

We also have a **Welfare Team** available with further support:

<https://hwb.swansea.ac.uk/welfare/>

Email: welfare.campuslife@swansea.ac.uk

Student Life will be running lots of activities over the year to help you meet people which can help with integration, reducing the effects of culture shock. Try and join in everything you can!



Tips for dealing with culture Shock

Keep familiar things around you like ornaments and photographs.



Keep in touch with family and friends back home.



Integrate with students from the UK to adapt to the new culture but also make time to meet with other students who are in a similar situation.

Find time to exercise to keep yourself fit and healthy and take your mind off any worries.

Check out the University sports facilities –
<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/sport/>



Get involved with all the events and initiatives around the University, there is so much to do!

Check out our social media (@CampusLifeSU and our
ticketing website – <https://university-swansea.native.fm/group/5010/student-life-go>

Support During Your Studies

Wellbeing Service

Wellbeing is about feeling good about life, finding happiness and looking after your mental health. The Wellbeing Service wants to support you in getting the most from your studies and personal life – both whilst you're here and after you graduate. If you are finding things difficult, it is important to know that there are many options available to you. Wellbeing aims to support you by equipping you with the skills to improve your mental health and wellbeing and to help you seek help when you need it. They have a range of online self-help resources you can access or they have dedicated counsellors available for face-to-face appointments. Visit their webpages to find out more: www.swansea.ac.uk/wellbeing/

Student Support Services

Disabled students in the UK are treated equally to students without a disability, though some adjustments may be made to help them – never be afraid to ask for help if you need it. The Disability Office forms part of Inclusive Student Support Services. They aim to provide professional information and guidance services for disabled students, students with specific needs and/or medical conditions from the point of application to graduation. They work to eliminate discriminatory practices, ensure accessible facilities and provide flexible services to students who require support. These services are open to all International students – if you feel like you require their support, visit their website:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/student-support-services/>

Money Advice and Support: Money Advice

The University has a team of expert 'Money Doctors' available to advise students who may be experiencing financial difficulties. If you are worried about how to manage your money or if you find you are getting into debt, make an appointment to see an adviser as soon as possible. While there is very little extra funding available to international students, our staff will do their best to assist you and will help you to manage the funds that are available to you. For further information visit their website:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/money-advice/>

Welfare@CampusLife

Welfare@CampusLife are here to provide you with practical advice and support on many different welfare issues you may face during your time at Swansea University. We have a wide range of student resources online and run events and initiatives throughout the year. We will work together with you and your college to ensure you have the best possible Student experience. If you wish to seek support from the University, you will need to get in contact with your Faculty welfare contact in the first instance. For further information visit:

www.swansea.ac.uk/campuslife/welfare

Students' Union

The Students' Union is run mainly by students and provides the following services - a nursery, a radio station, a free newspaper, an entertainments programme, reprographic facilities, student bars and on-campus shops. The Union also provides advice and practical help on a wide range of subjects, including information on travel, insurance and other benefits available to students. For further information visit: www.swansea-union.co.uk

Student Advice and Support Centre

In addition, the Advice and Support Centre, located on the ground floor of Fulton House (west side entrance), is also part of the services offered by the Students' Union. You can get advice on legal issues, accommodation problems in the private sector and academic appeals. For further information visit: <https://www.swansea-union.co.uk/support/adviceandsupport/>

Academic Support

Centre of Academic Support

This Service is dedicated to supporting students academically during your studies to help you achieve your goals.

You can maximise your potential and develop confidence through a range of courses, workshops and one-to-one tutorials. The Academic can support with the following:

- Improve your writing
- Develop critical thinking
- Sharpen your communication skills
- Learn how to avoid Plagiarism

For further information visit: www.swansea.ac.uk/academic-success/



Faith and Spirituality

As a multi-faith society, students of all faiths can expect to feel welcome in the UK, along with plenty of places to practice their faith. With a history of multiculturalism dating back hundreds of years, we have well-established communities representing all major religions, and a deep commitment to supporting students' religious needs on campus.

The UK's official religion is Christianity, and churches of all denominations can be found throughout the UK, such as Catholic, Protestant, Baptist and Methodist. The main other religions are Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism. Information on UK faith organisations can be found on the British Council website:

<https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/living/religion>

We are proud to be a very tolerant society in every way, and it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of their race, nationality, or religion. This is one of the most influential reasons International Students from all over the world choose the UK for their studies.

Many people in the UK choose to wear their items of religious dress every day (such as turbans, hijabs and yarmulkes) and to observe religious festivals, such as Christmas, Eid, Diwali or Hanukkah. As a tolerant country you are free to choose exactly how you want to integrate your faith into your life.

Swansea University has a Multi-Faith Team and works across all campuses. It welcome people of all faith and no faith.

The **Multi FaithTeam** <https://www.swansea.ac.uk/campuslife/multifaith/>

are here to support and guide you and come from many different faith backgrounds. Whether you belong to a faith community or not, whoever you are and whatever you believe, you are welcome to talk confidentially with a member of the team about any problems, ethical dilemmas, uncertainties or life questions you may have. This can be accessed via the Listening Service and you will find details about that here:

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/campuslife/multifaith/the-listening-service/>

There is no need to wait for a crisis to happen - go and have a chat at any time.

Multifaith are lucky to have a special space called The Lighthouse on the ground floor of the Penmaen building on the Singleton Park Campus. On Bay Campus, they have The Haven, located next to the Sports Hall, previously the Students Union building). This is a place to relax, unwind, meet with friends and enjoy a cup of coffee. If you're looking for somewhere to escape from the stresses of university life, you will find a dedicated quiet room there and people to chat to. Further details can be found on the Chaplaincy web pages:<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/campuslife/multifaith/chaplaincy-centre/>

Chaplaincy Services also includes a Mosque on Singleton Park Campus (East side of the Library and Information Centre). The mosque has separate male and female prayer rooms and also washing facilities (Wudu), Friday Prayers including a khutbah are observed every Friday.

Please visit Multifaith's webpages for details of Worship and Prayer web resources and much more:
<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/campuslife/multifaith/>

Prayer facilities are also available on Bay Campus. For more information please contact Multifaith at:
faith.campuslife@swansea.ac.uk



Feedback

We hope that this booklet has been helpful to you. If you noticed that something helpful was missing, please let us know so we can add for future students.

If you have any questions that have not been answered, also feel free to contact the VISA Advice team who will do their best to answer.

Remember- there's no such thing as a stupid question and we are always happy to help!

Email: VISA.Advice@swansea.ac.uk

Contact VISA Advice

Email: VISA.Advice@swansea.ac.uk

Website: www.swansea.ac.uk/visa-advice/



Prifysgol
Abertawe
Swansea
University

Bywyd Myfyrwyr
Student Life