

ROYAUME-UNI – University College Birmingham

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¹ To update the agenda just click right on your moose

I. Your overall feeling after your semester abroad

Help : How was your experience abroad? If you could go back I time, would you go to this university and why ?

II. Before the travel

A. Preparation

1. Visa

Help : Do I need a visa ? If yes, what is the process ?

The Visa is not necessary for a duration under 6 months. However, without Visa, you can't stay more than 6 months, and you can't work, even voluntarily. There are not many hours of classes, which leaves a lot of time to have a part-time job, which is why having a visa can be interesting.

2. The flight

Help : what flight did you take (the company name, airport etc.) and when did you take your flight ticket

I took a flight from Paris to Birmingham with Air France for 250€ (with two luggage). It is more expensive than low-cost companies, but the price of the luggage is lower, you have more options, and it was the only direct flight.

3. My luggage

Help : what to not forget in the luggage (what was useful and what you would like to have taken)

I had two big suitcases (whose 1 was included in the fees). You can bring in the plane with you 1 small suitcase and 1 backpack.

If you live in the Maltings residence, you should know that nothing is provided. You will need to either bring or buy sheets, a duvet, a pillow, hangers, and all your dishes.

The university has a partnership with UniKitOut which allows you to buy kits with kitchen and bedroom items which will be delivered directly to the residence.

4. Bank account

Help : did you have to change bank? To respect some amount requirement on the bank account etc.

My current French bank had a lot of fees when I was paying with my card or when I needed to withdraw cash. So I opened an account on Revolut. There is a charge for the card but no fees afterwards.

5. Insurance

Help : What insurance did you subscribe to ?

I ordered an European Card of Insurance Health which is still valid in UK even with the Brexit. In addition, I took an assurance at Travel Allianz which covered urgent medical and hospitalisation costs abroad, travel assistance, sanitary repatriation, Responsabilité civile privée, interruption des études and dommage aux bagages. It costs around 150€ for 5 months.

B. Housing

1. Where to live

Help : Do a google maps capture and circle the area you recommend to live in (and the one you do not recommend)

I lived in the Maltings, which is one of the two houses on campus. The other is Cambrian Hall. The Maltings campus is a 20-minute walk from the university, while Cambrian Hall is closer (5 minutes). Maltings is larger than Cambrian Hall and there are many students (English and Erasmus).

There is a sports hall with many sports on offer (cheerleading, volleyball, badminton, basketball,...), games rooms, rooms with sofas and TVs for everyone to meet in the residence, which encourages socialising.

There are also two laundries on campus, very easy to use (about £5 for washing and drying).

There are several types of rooms: twin rooms, ensuite rooms, and standard rooms. I had a standard room, I paid less but I had to share the bathroom and the toilets.

The residence is very well located. It is along the canal, close to the supermarkets, 10min walk from the city centre. If you like to party, the aperitifs are almost always in the maltings and it is quite close to the street where all the bars and nightclubs are.

2. Find a flat or a room

Help : How did you find your flat? Do you have any recommendation

As said above, I found my accommodation thanks to the university because it is the university residence. I recommend living in this residence because, even if you can find cheaper flats or flat-shares elsewhere, there is a really good atmosphere, and it is much easier to integrate.

If you really want to find a flat share or flat elsewhere, you can join various accommodation Facebook groups where there are many rental offers.

3. Cost

Help : How much should I plan for a room?

I paid £575, the equivalent of 690€ for a room with shared kitchen, bathroom, and toilet. I think the ensuite rooms are £630.

III. When I arrive at the university

A. Inscription at the university

Help : How was the process, what did you have to do?

The whole process is explained by the university either on the website or in the various emails you receive.

B. Information on the university

1. Courses

Help : List the different courses, and for each course, describe the format, the content, the exam, what did you like and not like, would you recommend it for the next student?

- **Enterprise Start-up Studies** : This module provides an insight into the key issues required in setting up and running a small business enterprise. It is an interesting and interactive class where you don't really have theoretical courses but practical. You will have one hour of lecture and two hours in computers room each week. Concerning the exams, we had to do an infographic presenting the start-up (which counted for 50%) and the second assignment was to create a video explaining the marketing method used to launch our business. I would recommend this course if you already have a business concept. This course can help you to create it.
- **Business Communications**: This module allows us to develop a range of creative design skills needed to provide solutions for industry client problems and encourages fluency across a range of mediums. It was mainly English students (few Erasmus students), and it was a very interactive course, which requires a good expression in English. This course is 3 hours a week. Concerning the exams, we had to do a press release, a newsletter and a short course description for the first one, and the second assignment was to create a portfolio with static poster, social media graphic and a storyboard). If you are interested in business communication, I would recommend this module because the teacher is skillful and the course interesting.
- **Digital Marketing Planning**: This module aims to explore digital marketing planning from the perspective of a digital marketing manager. Knowledge and skills will be developed in order to allow for the effective use and control of the digital marketing planning function. This module is 3 hours each week. Concerning the exam, you have to write a digital marketing plan and agency brief for a campaign (3,000-words). I would recommend this module if you are interested in marketing even if it is a bit repetitive with the first semester courses at MOMA.

2. Advice on "contrat d'étude"

Help : would you recommend for a student when picking its courses

I had chosen several courses, but I couldn't get the ones I wanted, either due to lack of space or they didn't exist anymore for that semester.

So when you make your study contract, look at the other courses to make sure that there are others that could potentially interest you.

I would advise you to read the brochure and the course descriptions carefully.

You have to know that only the Level 5 courses are available for us.

IV. When I live there

A. Safety

Help : Is it safe? Is there areas or times I should avoid

If you listen to what the internet says, Birmingham is the most dangerous city in the UK. But I've never had a problem there, even alone in the middle of the night. I find the brummies very friendly, and I've always been helped when I've had problems. Nevertheless, it's like everywhere, you always have to be careful.

B. Phone and Internet

Help : How to be able to call and have internet

I have a B&You package, with which I can call from abroad and I have 30GB of internet abroad. However, there is plenty of free Wi-Fi in the UK, so it's easy to access the internet.

C. Events

Help : How to know about the events?

I advise you to follow the various social networks of the university, because most of the events are announced there. Otherwise, there are often posters displayed in the residence or the university.

D. Sports

Help : What sport can I do ? and how?

There are many sports offered by the university such as basketball, cheerleading, football, jiu jitsu, netball, rugby, volleyball, badminton. Some of these take place in the Maltings residence.

There is also a fitness room at Maltings, and a larger one in one of the university buildings. Within the first few days of your arrival, there is an introductory day for all the societies at the university, where you can sign up.

E. Eating

Help : Any recommendation? Or good tips (e.g. an international house buffet)

There is a restaurant and several food outlets in the different buildings of the university. I would also advise you to look at the social networks of the university or the different departments, especially "UCB food and hospitality", as they often organise events where they offer food.

F. Go to the university : bus, car, bike

Help : How did you get access to the bus, car or bike

The university is 15-minute walk away. I have never used any other means of transport.

G. Travels

Help : What do you recommend and what do you not recommend

Erasmus is an opportunity to discover not only Birmingham but also the UK. There are many places to discover. I would advise you to travel by bus as it is much cheaper than by train or plane.

Ireland is also easily accessible from Birmingham airport. You can go there for 30€ return (I recommend you to go to Dublin for St Patrick's Day 😊)

H. Any other information you would have liked to know about

Help : What would I liked to know if I could have gone back in time

Enjoy every moment, because it goes by really fast...

V. Photos





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MONTPELLIER MANAGEMENT - Espace Richter - Rue Vendémiaire - Bât. B - CS 19519 - 34960 MONTPELLIER Cedex 2 - Tél. : 04 34 43 20 00





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