WELCOME TO ASTON
PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE
Welcome to all students joining Aston University, a diverse and inclusive University where students reach and exceed their potential. Our ambition is one of our greatest strengths!

Balraj Purewal
President of Aston Students’ Union

"Thank you for choosing Aston University and congratulations on achieving a place with us. We look forward to you joining our Aston community this September and the Aston team have been working hard to make sure the campus is as safe as possible for your arrival this term. By choosing to study at Aston University you have made a great investment in your future. Enjoy your studies, and on behalf everyone at Aston we look forward to meeting you soon."

Professor Alec Cameron
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

"Welcome to all students joining Aston University, a diverse and inclusive University where students reach and exceed their potential. Our ambition is one of our greatest strengths!"
We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Aston University. This guide provides you with all the information you need to know to make your enrolment a smooth process.

We can’t wait to welcome you to the University of the Year. Our support staff and lecturers are gearing up to support you every step of the way and will help you make the most your life at Aston University.

Click here to visit our FAQ webpage for the latest pre-arrival news and updates.

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Key dates*

WELCOME WEEK
20 September 2021

TEACHING STARTS
27 September 2021

SECOND TERM
10 January 2022 to 2 April 2022

THIRD TERM
25 April 2022 to 11 June 2022

*Please note that whilst term dates are correct at the time of publication they may be subject to change.

Find information here

We’re proud of our Aston University community and how we look after each other. Help us to help each other by being considerate to others and behaving appropriately at all times. By working together we can all help to make Aston a safer place.

Together, we ask that you:

👉 Be respectful
Show consideration towards other students, staff and visitors. Respect those whose personal circumstances differ from yours, and who may need to adopt different safety measures.

👉 Be kind
Show empathy towards others and be supportive to those in need. Offer friendship, be inclusive, and speak out to a member of the Aston team if you think someone needs assistance.

👉 Be observant
Follow guidance on health and safety measures, and adhere to signage and instructions around campus to maximise the safety of yourself and others who are sharing space with you.

Latest news and guidance
Our website is the best place to find the most current information about our response to Covid-19, including the University’s work with partners locally and around the world to assist students, staff and healthcare professionals to respond to the crisis.

See more online.
**Enrol online**
You will need to complete your enrolment online before arriving at the University. You will be contacted by email with a university username and password and instructions on how to enrol online.

**What is needed for enrolment?**
- Passport
- Visa documents, if applicable
- Original qualification documents

Further information for enrolment can be found [here](#).

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**How to enrol**

Click [here](#) for the latest arrival and Welcome Week information.

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**My Engagement Platform**

During your time at Aston University, the MyEngagement platform will enable you to take more control of your studies. The platform allows you to see your current engagement level and the steps you can take to improve it.

MyEngagement is Aston’s Learner Analytics system. It draws information from a variety of sources including on-campus and online teaching activities, your use of our Blackboard learning environment, access to on campus study spaces and use of other resources. It generates an ‘engagement score’ that allows you to make informed choices about actions to improve your learning experience.

You can watch a short video introduction to the platform [here](#).

To find out your engagement level, visit MyEngagement and log in to your account using your university credentials.

To find more information about the system, please visit our online FAQ page.

The MyEngagement webpage includes lots of tips for improving your engagement score, if you feel the need to do so. You can also use your engagement information as a basis for discussions with university staff, such as your lecturers and personal tutor. If you need to talk to someone in a safe and confidential environment, you can arrange to see one of our counsellors or psychotherapists by emailing The Hub or contacting us on 0121 204 4007.

Please note: Aston University takes your privacy seriously and your data will not be shared externally or with anyone at Aston who does not need it. Your personal tutor will be able to see your engagement score and will use it to inform conversations with you when you meet. Your Module Leader, Programme Director and key Student Support Staff can also see your data.
Campus accommodation

What's included
All campus accommodation contains:
- Fridges and freezers
- Ovens and hobs
- Kettles or water boilers
- Microwaves
- Toasters
- Tables and chairs
- Cupboards
- Waste and recycling bins
- A bed and mattress
- Desk and chair
- Wardrobe/storage
- Curtains
- Desk lighting
- Shelving

If your room is ensuite, you will also have:
- A shower and/or bath
- Toilet
- Sink
- A mirror

What to bring to your accommodation
- Crockery and cutlery
- Saucepans and a frying pan
- Kitchen utensils such as a cheese grater and a tin opener
- Tea towels, oven gloves and a dish cloth
- Toilet roll
- Toiletries such as shampoo, conditioner and shower gel
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- A mattress cover, bed linen and pillows
- A laundry basket or bag
- Coat hangers
- Mobile phone charger and laptop charger
- Extension cable
- Umbrella

Find out more information here

Read about safety measures in place at Unite Accommodation

What not to bring to your accommodation
- Large items or lots of stuff: storage space is limited so don’t bring large TVs, your own furniture or lots of personal belongings
- Candles, burners and fairy lights: don’t bring anything that could be a fire hazard, eg. oil burners, a chip pan or portable heaters
- Ashtrays: smoking is not allowed in campus accommodation

Unite Students
We provide award-winning accommodation on our friendly city centre campus in partnership with Unite Students.

All new undergraduate students who meet our criteria are guaranteed a room in Aston Student Village. Off-campus accommodation is organised through Aston Students’ Union, who will help you find recommended rental spaces across the city.

Get Ahead at Aston
We want to ensure that all new students have a smooth transition into university life. Our Get Ahead programme is an engaging learning platform that helps new students orientate to life at Aston University.

As a new student you will automatically be enrolled on the Get Ahead programme and will receive information on how to access our virtual learning environment ‘Blackboard’ for the first time. The course offers a blend of on-campus and online support to ensure that you are prepared for the change in learning style from school or college to university.

The programme will support you with your academic transition by providing information on:
- How university differs from school or college
- How to make the most of the blended combination of online and on-campus learning
- Understanding your timetable
- Being an independent learner
- Essay writing and referencing in essays
- Time management techniques
- Maths at university
- Finding your voice in class
- Getting the most from working with your personal tutor
- Connecting with others through peer mentoring
- Looking after your health and wellbeing and student support services
- Finding your way around our city centre campus

Find out more information here.
Aston University has a great location in the centre of Birmingham, one of the UK’s most vibrant cities. You’ll have so much to see and do here, experience unrivalled culture, amazing performances, competitive sport, outstanding shopping, delicious dining and much more.

**Music and Entertainment**
Whatever type of music you like, you’ll find something in one of the many bars, clubs and pubs. Birmingham’s eclectic mix of music venues host live music events. Or, for a night out with a difference, Ghetto Golf combines crazy golf, graffiti, cocktails, street food and DJs.

**Open Spaces**
Birmingham has 100s of parks and green spaces for you to discover. In addition, the city’s network of canals offer scenic routes for walking, running and cycling, while Edgbaston Reservoir has 2.5km of shoreline for you to explore.

**Ultimate Shopping Experience**
With over 200 shops across the Bullring and Grand Central, Birmingham is a shopper’s paradise and is home to the world’s biggest Primark! The Mailbox is the ultimate location for designer brands and Selfridges is one of the city’s most distinctive landmarks with luxury designer brands and a global restaurant offering.

**Sporting Action**
The city has some of the most exciting venues for watching or participating in sport including Arena Birmingham, Resorts World Arena, the Alexander Stadium for athletics and the Edgbaston Stadium for cricket.

We are also very excited that Birmingham is preparing to host the Commonwealth Games starting in July 2022. For more information visit [Birmingham2022.com](http://Birmingham2022.com).

**Fantastic Food**
From Michelin-starred restaurants, the Chinese quarter, street dining, Digbeth Dining Club, farmers’ markets, high street chains to independents, halal, vegetarian and vegan food – Birmingham has it all. The world famous Balti Triangle offers fantastic food from award-winning restaurants to authentic family-run establishments.

We also have some wonderful places to drink in Birmingham, with craft beers, real ales, cocktail bars or good old fashioned pubs. And if you love chocolate, be sure to visit Cadbury World!!

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**Key locations on campus**

**Library**
You’ll find common study spaces on the ground floor, quiet spaces on the first and second floor, an extensive collection of books and journals. You can also loan laptops, and get expert support from our Information Specialists. Our library services are also available online.

**Campus Food and Drink**
Cafes on campus serve a wide range of hot and cold food, including vegan and vegetarian options; snacks and drinks, plus an on-campus Costa Coffee.

The Aston Meal Plan is a prepaid, inclusive dining package that allows students living on campus to eat at Cafe Libro, Eros Cafe and Tierra Food Court, without the need for cash. Also on campus is a Tesco Express, Greggs, Wok and Go and Ryman Stationery.

**Sir Doug Ellis Woodcock Sports Centre**
Our on-campus Sir Doug Ellis Woodcock Sport Centre offers a range of different sport and leisure activities including:
- Gym
- Swimming pool
- Sauna and steam rooms
- Fitness and yoga classes
- Badminton courts
- Squash courts
- Sport halls
- Football pitches

Sport Aston provides high quality sports facilities all on campus.
The myAston app is your indispensable guide to studying at Aston and living in Birmingham.

**Features:**
- Check your timetable
- Access your university email
- Search for buildings and locations on and off campus
- Find computer lab availability, check on printer status and see what is closest using GPS
- View, renew and reserve library resources
- Access BlackBoard, our Virtual Learning Environment
- Search for friends, colleagues or lecturers using the contact directory. Call or email contacts and add them directly to your address book
- Receive the latest news and events from the University and the Students’ Union
- Live public transport timetables and updates
- View assessment results.

**Connect with Aston**
Follow Aston on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn for updates, news and notifications.

Facebook: /astonuniversity/
Twitter: /AstonUniversity
Instagram: /aston-university/
LinkedIn: /astonuniversity/

Aston Students’ Union is at the heart of the student experience. The building, which opened in 2019, has received a ‘Buildings That Inspire’ award from The Guardian 2020 and forms the focal point for the events, activities, activism and representation that our Students’ Union provides.

More than 130 clubs, teams and societies are organised by the Students’ Union, as well as a whole range of support and advice services run by students for students.

Find out more [here](#).
Counselling and mental wellbeing
Starting university is a big step. It can take time to settle into your new life. This may be your first time away from home and family and friends. It may be the first time that you have had to live independently and take care of yourself.

Our Counselling and Mental Wellbeing Service has counsellors and practitioners offering online and in-person appointments to support you throughout your time at Aston University.

See our Health and Wellbeing pages for more information.

Students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties
We welcome students with disabilities or long-term medical conditions.

All teaching is carried out on our single campus, where Aston Student Village is located. We have access to a number of specially adapted rooms on campus and accommodation may be guaranteed for the duration of your course if your individual circumstances warrant this. Rooms are available with ground floor/ lift access, larger floor space, ensuite bathrooms, vibrating alert/doorbell systems, shower seats, grab rails etc. To help you plan and prepare for university life, the Enabling Team can provide advice and support on a confidential basis.

See our enabling team page for more information.

Togetherall
Togetherall is a safe on-line space to talk, share and support others like you. It provides a vibrant online community where members can support each other anonymously moderated by trained professionals who are available 24/7.

- Access 24 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Self-assessments and recommended resources
- Creative tools to help express how you are feeling
- A wide range of self-guided courses to do at your own pace. These include managing depression, social anxiety and self-harm.

You can sign up for free under ‘organisation’ using your Aston student email address.

Covid-19 vaccinations
We encourage all our students, in the UK or overseas, to take up the vaccine through the National Booking Service or in your home country.

Campus Safety
Our fully-trained and friendly security staff help to keep our campus safe and secure for you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In an emergency, Campus Safety can be contacted on 0121 359 2922 or email campussafety@aston.ac.uk.

Campus Safety is located in the Main Building, to the right of the main university reception.

SafeZone
SafeZone is a safety and security app designed to keep students and staff safe around campus.

The app is available for Android or iOS and enables you to be easily connected with our Campus Safety team to enhance your personal safety, security and wellbeing.

SafeZone
Learning Development Centre (LDC)
The LDC brings together services including advice on writing for assignments and research, a maths support centre, programming support and general study skills guidance, covering exam and revision techniques, presentations, working in groups and much more.

Peer mentoring
We offer mentoring from our current students, from pre-arrival right through your degree programme. Find further information here.

Student Representatives
Student Reps are empowered to represent your academic interests to the University and the Students’ Union. You can volunteer to be a Student Rep from the start of the academic year. Find more information here.

Advice and Representation Centre (ARC)
The Students’ Union representation centre offers free, confidential advice and representation, independent of the university.

Student Support Services, Main Building
The Hub is a central location which brings together all of Aston University’s key student support services. It offers a friendly and welcoming environment where you can get the help and advice you need. If you’re studying online, it’s easy to access support from The Hub.

The Hub offers advice on legal issues, student finance, managing your money, social security benefits and student hardship funds.

You can also access our Counselling and Wellbeing Services and our Disability and Enabling Teams, who are on hand to support with any mental health or disability queries.

TV licence
If you plan on watching television while you are at university, you will need to purchase a TV licence. This will allow you to watch or record live TV, download or watch programmes on BBC iPlayer. Even if you do not watch programmes on a television but use another device (e.g. a laptop or tablet), you will still need to purchase a TV licence. This also applies to any online TV service you use, such as Now TV, Apple TV, YouTube and Amazon Instant Video.

A standard one-year colour TV licence currently costs £159, it can be paid in monthly payments and can be purchased from www.tvlicensing.co.uk

Register to vote
If you are eligible to vote in the UK please register at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Proof of age
You may find when buying age-restricted products such as alcohol or tobacco, going to a bar, club or to the cinema, that you are asked to provide proof of your age. Your passport or driving licence can be used for this.

Safety
Birmingham is generally a safe place to live. There are however, a few precautions you should take as you would in most major cities. Do not display any valuables, keep purses and wallets securely hidden from view and avoid walking down dimly or unlit streets at night. If you can, walk in a group at night time.

If you do need the police or other emergency services, call 999 from any phone (including mobiles). The 999 number is for emergencies only. If you need to speak to the police in a non-emergency situation, you can dial 101 and you will be asked which police force you would like to be connected to (for Birmingham, ask for the West Midlands Police).

Birmingham Clean Air Zone
Birmingham has launched a Clean Air Zone, charging the owners of the most polluting vehicles to drive through the central areas of the city.

This operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Charges are applied daily. A non-compliant vehicle driving in the Zone will pay once for the day, then may drive in the area without limit on that day.

If your vehicle meets certain emission standards you will not need to pay the daily charge. Find out more information here.
SEE YOU SOON!

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