Get ready for Essex!

Welcoming international students to our Colchester Campus

Video transcript – March 2014

Whatever country you’re coming from
And whatever you’ll be studying
Thank you for choosing Essex and becoming a member of our University community
It’s a really friendly place
You will already have read some important and useful information in our International Prospectus – about immigration advice, fees and funding, and your health and welfare...
...but before you leave there are some very important things you must do…
Make sure you have all the correct documents you will need to enter the UK and study at the University of Essex – including a valid passport and visa.
For more information visit www.essex.ac.uk/immigration
In addition to UKBA health requirements, we recommend you have the appropriate vaccinations before setting off. And, if your course is for less than six months, make sure you have health insurance.
Also bring original evidence of your qualifications – you will need this.
Have you booked your flight? You can also book your coach journey online. Full details are at: www.essex.ac.uk/welcome
If you have received details by e-mail before you leave – make sure you pre-register online to access your university e-mail account, and upload your photo.
Make sure you book your accommodation before you leave during July or August – as it’s difficult to find you accommodation when you arrive – you can do this in the My Essex applicant portal.

The weather can sometimes be cold and wet in October in the UK – so bring some warm clothes!

But, you won’t need to bring all your bedding, kitchen or electrical goods with you – you can pre-order them online or buy them here – including safe UK electricity adaptors – and if you order online they’ll be here in your room when you arrive! Go to Your Essentials at: www.essex.ac.uk/welcome

Money for your first week… we use British pounds sterling in the UK – we recommend you bring around £500 in cash, as it can take up to two weeks to open a UK bank account – and be careful to look after your cash.

Be aware, that if you bring large amounts of cash you may have to declare it on arrival in the UK.

You will need to pay at least the first term’s instalment of your tuition fees in order to register for your course so either pre-pay or pay this online when you arrive

Familiarise yourself with your new surroundings… read the information we will be sending you so you are ready for when you get here – it’s all online too at: www.essex.ac.uk/welcome - and bring it with you!

Use the time before you travel to understand all the useful University services you can access:

Such as your Departmental website, Listen Again, Moodle, Find-your-way app, Library, University Skills Centre – as well as things like bus timetables and the London Underground app

…and lots more!

We hope you have a safe journey
When you arrive in the UK it’s useful to know what to expect

At the airport, you go through the UK border and passport control, and customs.

This is where you will need to show your passport and visa, plus any supporting documents including your Certificate of Acceptance for Studies, or CAS, as you may be asked questions about your studies, future plans, and what else you intend to do while you are in the UK.

At passport control there may be a separate queue for students.

And then collect your luggage and

If you have booked a place on one of the University coaches – make sure you get on the right one – there will be someone to greet you

And off to Colchester Campus – your new home!

If you’re using public transport – such as a bus or train – you can get a bus direct from the train station to campus, and there will be a minibus shuttle service from the station on arrivals day.

Alternatively, you may want to book your seat on the UK’s National Express coach service from Heathrow or Gatwick airports to Colchester bus station. Visit the website at: www.nationalexpress.com

Or, if you’re travelling here from Stansted airport, the 133 SXconnect coach service also comes to the University of Essex, and is operated by TGM, visit: www.tellingsgoldenmiller.co.uk

Colchester has two train stations – make sure you go to Colchester Station.

Full travel details will be on the Welcome website at www.essex.ac.uk/welcome

From the town centre, get a bus or a taxi to Colchester Campus, direction Wivenhoe. The campus is about 3 miles or 5 kilometres out of town.
When you get to our Colchester Campus you will be dropped off at the bus stop, or one of two taxi drop-off points.

The first thing to do is to collect your key, and find your accommodation. So make sure you are going to the correct collection point:

Check the information we have sent you so you know where to collect your key. It will be from one of these four offices:

- The main accommodation office, opposite Tawney Tower
- The north campus office, directly opposite the main office
- The south campus office to the side of Harwich Court next to House 23
- The Meadows which will be located in Arber House
- The Quays

There will be plenty of staff and student helpers around to help you – and if you’re not sure where to go – just ask!

Once you have settled into your accommodation – come and explore the campus.

There are lots of places on campus to get food and drink – and at least one will be open until midnight where you will be able to get a hot meal.

Your first days here will give you the chance to find your way around, and get to know the main buildings on campus – but don’t forget – if you get lost – just ask someone!

Here are the main campus buildings:

- The Albert Sloman Library
- The Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall – this is where you will need to attend your welcome talk
- The Lecture Theatre Building and seminar rooms
The Students’ Union
- The many places to eat on campus
- The IT helpdesk
- The Health Centre – you will need register here before you can see a doctor
- The Lakeside Theatre
- The Sports Centre – this is also where you will need to Register – check your day and time
- Squares 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5
- The Employability and Careers Centre
- The Campus Shop
- Student support
- the SU advice centre
- The Post Office
- The Mail room

…and lots, lots more – the words and maps in Your Campus Guide will help you – it’s also online at www.essex.ac.uk/welcome

Also this is when you can explore Colchester town, its castle, nearby shops and supermarkets, and swimming pool.

You must take part in welcome events and talks to help you get settled into University life.

This will vary depending on what time of the year you arrive – but you must:

- Register for your course
- Attend a welcome talk and a departmental welcome event
- Register with a doctor
- Register with the Police (if you need to)
- Take the English language assessment

And if you’re arriving at the start of the year, come along to:

- Welcome Village
- Freshers’ Fair
- Other social events

You should also:
- Set up your internet connection in your room
- Visit the IT helpdesk for help with wi-fi
- Find your way about
- Make sure you read about your own personal safety – and what to do in case of a fire
- Make new friends!

It's also useful to know a little bit about the way things work in the UK. Such as:

Using buses – make sure you use coins, not notes

You can also buy an annual bus pass, a one-off payment for the whole year – great idea if you'll be using buses regularly

Driving, walking or cycling – we drive on the left hand side of the road – so take care when you cross!

Saying please and thank you, and being punctual, is polite, and all part of the British culture

The UK Police are there to help as well as enforce the law, and are approachable and honest. So, if you need to register with the Police, or need to see the Police about any problem you have, don't worry.

We also have a special officer at Colchester Campus, who will be happy to help you.

There are lots of places where you can now get more help if you need it, about your visa, your studies, and what to expect when you live in the UK…

If you need help with any immigration enquiries
http://www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/contact.aspx

Pre-arrival guidance
Useful UK Government info
http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/

Useful information from the British Council www.educationuk.org

and from UKCISA www.ukcisa.org.uk/

UKBA channel on YouTube
This offers an animated guide to student VISAs in different languages – make sure you watch yours
http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_59292&feature=iv&src_vid=E0tmOTuj_hM&v=1eUe4pWFl5I#t=51s

And for some in-flight entertainment, check out the British Council videos to find out more about the UK!
http://www.youtube.com/user/britishcouncil/videos?sort=p&view=0&tag_id=

..and when you’re ready for Essex, remember – this is just the start of your journey!

We’re looking forward to welcoming you, and hope you’ve found this information useful.

…now show your friends and family where you’re coming! www.essex.ac.uk/explore