

## Immigration & International Student Advice

### International Information Booklet

Welcome!

Dear Student,

We are very pleased to be able to welcome you to the University of South Wales to begin your studies with us. I hope very much that your time with us is going to be both fruitful and a lot of fun!

This booklet has been put together to try and provide you with information that you may need during your time with us and especially in the first few months whilst you settle in.

Don't forget that if you have any questions or worries you can call, email or pop in and chat with a member of Immigration & International Student Advice staff and we will do our very best to assist you. You can also chat to us live:

<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/ask-adviser/>

We hope that we will see you soon at one of our trips, events or on one of our projects. Make sure that you read this booklet carefully, **check your University email regularly** and visit our UniLife pages at <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk> to see how we can help to make your time with us here a very happy one.

Good luck and all the very best,

IISA Team

## Immigration & International Student Advice (IISA)

### Staff

Tim Goss	International Student Adviser
Kath Williams	International Student Adviser
Natalie Jones	International Student Adviser
Darren Avery	Assistant International Student Adviser

You can find the IISA contact details and opening hours on the back page of this leaflet.

### About the service

The IISA Team provide information and advice on all non-academic welfare-related matters, including immigration. 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 (OISC). Our full Statement of Service can be found at: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/about-service/>

What we offer:

- Arrival Services;
- Orientation and induction activities;
- Advice and information on certain aspects of immigration procedures;
- Help with police registration;
- 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;
- Global Ambassadors project;
- Social events and activities.

### Location

The IISA main office is located in The International Zone: Room H027 on the Treforest campus, which is located in Hirwaun (H) Block and is number 8 on the University Campus Map. The map can be found via the following link:

<https://www.southwales.ac.uk/about/location/treforest-pontypridd-campus/>

We also have a presence at Newport City campus and run regular surgeries at our Cardiff campus. Please check for location and opening hours of these on UniLife: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk>

### IISA Facilities

There is an information room within our main office (Treforest campus) which holds a variety of information leaflets, tourist information and a notice board where you can post items you think may be of relevance to other international students.

### Immigration

A wealth of information regarding student and post study immigration can be found on the IISA UniLife pages:

<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/immigration-advice-home/>

If you are a Tier 4 (General) 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, Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) 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 (for example, your overseas address, UK term address, phone number, email address, emergency 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 interrupt your studies or withdraw from your course;
- Leave the UK if you interrupt your studies or withdraw from your course;
- **Do not work** in the UK if you interrupt your studies or withdraw from your course
- **Make every effort to complete your course on time without any repeat or resits\***

\*Please check with IISA for current UKVI Rules

**The University's responsibilities** are to:

- Keep copies of passports and Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs) 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 Tier 4 Student Visa:
  - Do not enrol within the enrolment period (including not completing enrolment due to non-collection of BRP);
  - Enrol, but do not adhere to designated University attendance monitoring procedures;
  - Permanently or temporarily stop studying (including discontinuation/interruption/withdrawal 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.

**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 as such are non negotiable.**

Making a change to your studies

If you are considering making a change to your studies, i.e. by interrupting your studies or withdrawing from your course, or by transferring to a different course or institution, you **must seek advice from IISA 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.

**It is important to note that if you interrupt 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.**

Making a Tier 4 (General) student visa extension

If you need to extend your Tier 4 (General) student visa to start a new course, or to complete a course you have already started, IISA will assist you. You **may not be able to make this application in the UK**, so it is vital you seek early IISA advice. 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 Tier 4 financial requirements. For full, detailed information about extending your visa please visit our 'Extending your Tier 4 visa' pages on Unilife:  
<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/immigration-advice-home/extending-your-tier-4-visa/>

### Correct visa lengths

If you have a Tier 4 (General) 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 British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate in your country should comply with the following guidance:

<b>Type/length of course</b>	<b>Length of stay allowed</b>
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-sessional 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-sessional 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 and see us as soon as possible** so we can help with any corrections. To find out more please contact us immediately using the details at the back of this booklet.

### Police Registration

If your visa or visa letter states that you must register with the police then you must do so within 7 days of arriving in the UK. This will only affect nationals of certain countries – please check your visa to see whether this applies to you. For further information, please ask a member of IISA staff or check our Unilife page: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/immigration-advice-home/police-registration/>

### Working in the UK

#### Full European Economic Area (EEA) member state nationals

If you are a national of one of the full EEA member states or Switzerland, you do not need permission to work in the UK and there are no restrictions on the number of hours you can work. For more information please visit our Unilife pages at <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/working-uk/working-uk-during-your-studies/eu-students/>

#### Tier 4 (General) student visa holders

If you are a Tier 4 (General) student visa holder, you do not need to apply for special permission in order to work. Your employer can check with the Home Office that you are allowed to work by calling the employers' helpline on 0300 123 4699.

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 how many hours you are able to work during term time (usually 10 or 20 hours per week based on the

criteria above). There are 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 our website: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/working-uk/working-uk-during-your-studies/tier-4-students-working-rights/>

#### Tier 4 dependants

If your husband or wife 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):

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Dependants>

#### All other categories

If you do not fall into any of the categories above then please contact us using the details at the back of this booklet.

#### Careers & Employability Service

The Careers & Employability Service helps students and graduates with all aspects of their career planning. Services range from individual advice and guidance on career choice to postgraduate study, work experience, practical support with job hunting and preparing your CV, looking for work/study overseas and much more. For further information visit:

<https://careers.southwales.ac.uk/>

#### 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 your Campus Admin 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.

More information on opening a bank account if you're an International student can be found here: <https://www.bba.org.uk/publication/leaflets/international-students/>

#### Which bank should I go to?

There are lots of banks for students to choose from and a good way to find out which are the best for students is to ask other students who are already studying here. You should also look into what services they offer, any charges they make and what benefits that would bring you, before deciding which account suits you best. Choosing a local high street bank near to where you live may also be more convenient as it is often easier to communicate with people effectively face to

face. Make sure that the account you choose has internet banking and that you set this up. This can save you time and effort later if you need bank statements for immigration applications or other reasons.

#### Further helpful information

General independent information and tips on opening a bank account can be found on the UKCISA website at <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/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!

#### Accommodation

Hopefully you will already have found yourself a comfortable place to live, whether this is on one of the University campuses, at our linked housing in Cardiff/Newport or through a private landlord. If you have not yet found a place to live or need to find new accommodation when your current tenancy ends, there are people here to help you.

#### University Accommodation

The University has a wide range of accommodation available at the Treforest Campus, and in University administered housing in Cardiff and Newport. There is a huge amount of information to help you on the Accommodation Services web pages: <https://www.southwales.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation>

#### Private Accommodation

There is a lot of private accommodation to rent both in and around Treforest/Glyntaff, Newport and Cardiff.

Many local landlords advertise their properties via the University's Accommodation Services Student Pad. This is the best place to look as the landlords must apply to be accepted by the University and so the standard of accommodation is higher and any Accommodation Services can try and help resolve any problems. The website is <https://www.southwalesstudentpad.co.uk/Accommodation>

You could also try Student Letting which is situated in and affiliated to the Students' Union. There is one in the Treforest campus Students' Union building: [www.glamorganstudentletting.co.uk](http://www.glamorganstudentletting.co.uk) and one situated at Cardiff University Students' Union building (you can still use this one don't worry!): <https://www.cardiffstudentletting.com/students/looking>

**These should be the first places that you try for accommodation.** 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 private accommodation let by them.

You will also find helpful information about accommodation in the UK on the UKCISA website: <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Living-in-the-UK/Choosing-your-housing>

### Signing a contract

When choosing your accommodation, you should do so very carefully. A signed contract is **legally binding** in the UK. This means if you sign a contract for a number of months you must pay rent to the landlord for the number of months agreed. 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.

### 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.

## **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 University of South Wales 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. If your mother would not like the way you are acting towards people then do not do it!

Further information about community responsibilities can be found on UniLife: <http://unilife.southwales.ac.uk/pages/3011-neighbours-and-community-living?locale=en>

## 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!

## 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 behavior 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...

### 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:

<https://www.talktofrank.com>

### 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 and mobile phone shops can be found in the high streets of most towns including Pontypridd, Cardiff and Newport.

If your own telephone does not let you ring home, you may be able to access a free SIM card via IISA in H030. These SIM cards have special overseas rates though you might like to source your own one at a later date. Mobiles can be topped up in Asda, Tesco, Costcutter, the Post Office, the Students' Union shop or in any other shop that shows the top up symbol.

Some mobile phone shops will ask you to sign a contract. This means that 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 and you will still 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, if you watch or record live television programmes you will need a television license. This is the case whatever device you use, whether a laptop, PC, mobile phone, games console, digital box, VHS/DVD recorder or anything else. This also includes programmes you watch online at the same time as they're being shown on TV, for example live sport.

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 £154.50. There are a choice of ways to pay and you can buy a license using PayPoint at your local Post Office or any store where PayPoint is available. You can also buy online at: <https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/>. If you are found to be watching television without a license you could be breaking the law and could be fined £1000 – so make sure you are properly covered!

### Council Tax

Council Tax is a system of local taxation collected by local authorities. It is a tax on domestic property. Full time students who live only with other full time students or in halls of residence will not have to pay the 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).

The University can provide you with a Council Tax Exemption Certificate to use as evidence. Further information about Council Tax and how you access an Exemption Certificate can be found on UniLife: <http://unilife.southwales.ac.uk/pages/3002-council-tax/>

Please note that you stop being exempt from paying Council Tax as soon as you **complete your course** (for Tier 4 students, 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 visa is not considered as exemption as you must be actively engaged in full time study at that time (i.e. attending classes).

### 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 on UniLife. Make sure that you read those pages carefully to keep yourself informed and follow the guidance and instructions that are pointed out to you: <http://studentsafety.southwales.ac.uk/>

### Nightline

Cardiff or Newport Nightline is a fantastic confidential listening and information service which students from all University of South Wales campuses can use. It is run by students for students and is open every night of term from 8pm to 8am for phone calls or 8pm to 12am for their new instant messenger service.

They have dedicated, fully trained volunteers who are happy to take your phone call or message, should you need them for anything from a pizza number at 3am to discussing personal issues; no problem is too big or too small.

When you're alone and need someone to talk to, Nightline can help. Call 02920 870555 or visit their website: <https://cardiffnightline.co.uk/>

### 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. Some local supermarkets provide a weekly free bus from the Treforest campus.

### 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 Halal and vegetarian options. This is normally clearly marked but you can check by asking any of the catering assistants.

Opening times and daily changing menus can be found via the Campus Services UniLife pages at: <https://cateringservices.southwales.ac.uk/>

In addition the Students' Unions at both Treforest and Cardiff serve café and/or restaurant style food and drink. There is a shop on campus in the Treforest Students' Union which sells the basic essentials such as milk, bread and various ready prepared meals as well as a selection of ethnic and world foods. You can access information about Students' Union facilities at: <https://www.uswsu.com/> and then searching 'Shops & Places'.

### Supermarkets in Treforest and Glyntaff

There are several supermarkets near to the University:

#### Tesco Express

There is a small branch of Tesco within walking distance of the University campus, on Broadway between Treforest and Pontypridd. This is more expensive than a larger store and so is not recommended for large weekly or monthly shopping.

#### Tesco Upper Boat (bus service)

There is a free weekly bus which runs from Treforest to a larger Tesco at Upper Boat and back on Tuesdays. The timetable and pick up/drop off stops are as follows:

Wood Road (junction between Wood Rd & Tower St) 11.32am

Queen Street (Spar shop) 11.33am

King Street (bus stop) 11.34am

University Main Building 11.36am

The bus will arrive at Tesco at approximately 11.45am and will leave Tesco at 2.15pm to return to Treforest.

#### Asda (bus service)

There is a free weekly bus which runs from Treforest to Asda (in Coryton near Cardiff) and back on Thursdays. The timetable and pick up/drop off stops are as follows:

Otley Arms Pub 5.00pm

The bus will arrive at Asda at approximately 5.30pm and leave Asda at 7pm to return to Treforest.

**Please note that this service is run by the supermarket and the University has no control over timings or collection. For more information you can telephone NAT Group on 02920 442040.**

#### Aldi

There is an Aldi supermarket close to the large Tesco in Upper Boat, which is good value and also stocks a range of German products. You could walk to here from Tesco via the free weekly bus.

#### Lidl

There is a new Lidl supermarket at the former Millfield Depot on Rhondda Road, Pontypridd CF37 1HQ. It is 10 minutes' walk from Pontypridd Train Station.

There are also a further range of medium size supermarkets in Pontypridd town, which is a 20 minute walk from the Treforest campus or just one stop on the train (you catch the train on the University side of the train station). This is a better idea if you are carrying heavy bags on your way back.

### Supermarkets in Cardiff

As Cardiff is the capital city of Wales, students who live here will be close to branches of virtually every major supermarket in the UK (and if not, will be able to travel to one by bus); all of those listed above, plus Sainsbury's, Morrisons and more. Visit the relevant websites for details of the branches that are closest to you and the Cardiff Bus company website at <https://www.cardiffbus.com/> if you will need to use public transport to get there.

### Supermarkets in Newport

There is a good selection of major supermarkets, such as Sainsbury's and Asda within walking distance of City Campus, Newport. These are situated on a main bus route or a 10 minute walk from City Centre Campus.

### Lidl

There is a Lidl supermarket directly opposite City Campus, Newport, which is good value and offers a range of British and Continental products.

### Aldi

Within walking distance of City Campus, Newport Global Food Market is located just a few minutes' walk from City Campus, Newport.

### Markets

#### Pontypridd Market

Pontypridd is well-known as a market town. There is an indoor market, open every day except Sunday, with stalls offering fresh fruits, vegetables meat and fish. There are also outdoor markets held on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the centre of town (Taff Street) with stalls offering cheap clothes, materials and all sorts of gifts, hardware and crafts. Further information can be found on their website here: <https://www.pontypriddmarket.co.uk/>

#### Cardiff Market

Cardiff indoor Market is located in a central location on St Mary Street. There are various stalls, open every day except Sunday, selling a range of produce from fresh fish, meats, fruit and vegetables, crafts, materials and second hand records. Further information can be found here: <https://www.cardiffcouncilproperty.com/cardiff-market/>

#### Riverside and Roath Real Food Markets

The Riverside Real Food Market takes place on Fitzhammon Embankment, over the river from the Millennium Stadium, each Sunday between 10am-2pm. The Roath Real Food Market takes place every Saturday between 9.30am-1pm on Keppoch Street near Albany Road. These are specialist markets dealing in local, organic and wholefoods. Further information can be obtained from the Riverside Real Food Market website: [www.riversidemarket.org.uk/](http://www.riversidemarket.org.uk/)

### Newport Market

Newport Indoor Market is located right in the centre of the city's main shopping area just a few minutes from the City Campus. There is a good variety of stalls selling a range of local produce from fresh fish, meats, fruit and vegetables and crafts. Further information can be found here:

<http://www.newport.gov.uk/en/Leisure-Tourism/Shopping/Newport-market.aspx>

### Specialist and Ethnic Foods

People in the UK eat foods from all over the world. Do try and take the opportunity to sample as many of them as possible whilst you are here! Chinese and Indian food is particularly popular and most towns will have restaurants from 3 or 4 different countries. Do not be afraid to try different cuisines and if you are nervous about ordering, make sure you find a buddy from that country to go with you to shops or restaurants and advise you on what is good.

If you want to try and cook your own, 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 include City Road in Roath, Penarth Road in Grangetown and the Riverside area of Cardiff. There is also a Chinese Supermarket on Broadway in Treforest. The Pillgwenly area of Newport (known locally as 'Pill') hosts a variety of specialist food stores. The Global Food Market is situated on Commercial Road, Newport.

### Tips about 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') if they are suitable for vegetarians/vegans
- 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

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.

### Some ideas about ways to save money for 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

### 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 the limitations of a student kitchen. It's a great 'how to guide' for international students. Check the website out at: <http://www.studentcooking.tv/>

## **Travel**

### Getting about every day

The University has comprehensive information about getting around, whether this is by train, bus, bike or foot. If you live in Cardiff and need to travel to Treforest it is possible to access a yearly train pass at a 34% reduction in cost and other deals. A good way to find out what will be the best for you is by asking other students for their advice.

To see how to access the above travel deals, and for other general information about travelling please see the University web pages at:

<https://unilife.southwales.ac.uk/pages/3103-travelling-to-campus>

### Tourism and excursions

One of the most exciting things about studying in a foreign country is the opportunity to experience a different culture. If you would like to see more than just the direct area in which you live and study while you are here you need to visit the IISA Tourism and Excursions UniLife pages for some handy tips on travelling in the UK and Europe: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/life-uk-and-faqs/tourism-and-excursions/>

If you want to travel a bit further than the local area, you'll probably be looking for the most economical ways to travel within the UK. You will find useful links to help you find the ideal destination of your choice and handy guidance for making travel and accommodation arrangements on UniLife here:

<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/life-uk-and-faqs/tourism-and-excursions/travelling-within-uk/>

If you have the time, you may want to explore destinations in mainland Europe. The IISA Travelling to EU countries page is a helpful resource if you want to become a continental globetrotter: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/life-uk-and-faqs/tourism-and-excursions/travelling-eu-countries/>

If you have a visa for the UK you will probably need a visa to visit other countries in the European Union (this is called a Schengen Visa), so make sure you start to plan early (2-3 months before you wish to travel) and visit the IISA team for help and advice. More information can be found on the UniLife Schengen visa page here: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/immigration-advice-home/schengen-visas/>

#### 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 that 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.

**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 download the full information leaflet from the IISA UniLife page at: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/life-uk-and-faqs/driving-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 £60 parking fine. You can find instructions on travel, parking, and how to check and apply for a parking permit in your area by following these links:

Cardiff students: <http://cardiffcampus.southwales.ac.uk/car-parking-cardiff/index.html>

Treforest students: <http://treforestcampus.southwales.ac.uk/car-parking-treforest/index.html>

Newport students: <http://newportcitycampus.southwales.ac.uk/car-parking-newport/index.html>

#### Religion and Belief

The main traditional religion in the UK is Christianity but you may also find that lots of British people do not consider themselves as being of any particular faith at all. Some international students find this very strange especially if they come from a country where religion is a major part of everyday life. It is important to remember that as your beliefs will be respected, so you will be expected to respect the beliefs of others.

The University of South Wales has a Chaplaincy that has a presence on all campuses. It is open and inclusive and rejoices in the fact that people come to the University from a wide range of backgrounds. While rooted in the Christian tradition, all faiths are respected as well as the thinking and exploration of those who are not committed to any faith.

It is very important to remember this as the Chaplaincy are the correct people to help you to find local places to practice your own faith and have links in the community with many different places of worship. At the Chaplaincy you can find information about a variety of faith groups. The Chaplaincy is also a place to meet with friends. You are welcome to join in any of its seminars, discussions and social activities.

Whether you belong to a faith community or not, whoever you are and whatever you believe, you are welcome to talk confidentially with a Chaplain about any problems, ethical dilemmas, uncertainties or life questions you may have. There is no need to wait for a crisis to happen – go and have a chat at any time.

The home of Chaplaincy Services is The Meeting House, situated on the Treforest Campus. The Meeting House 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 be very welcome there.

Chaplaincy Services also includes a number of prayer rooms that can be found on Treforest, Caerleon, Newport City and Glyntaff campuses. The prayer rooms are available to anyone and all include prayer mats if required. The Treforest campus has separate male and female prayer rooms and also washing facilities (Wudu), Friday Prayers including a khutbah are observed every Friday.

For more information about Chaplaincy at USW, visit the website at: <https://chaplaincy.southwales.ac.uk> or if you are searching for a particular place of worship, go to <http://www.faithwales.org/>. You can also 'like' the Chaplaincy Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/southwaleschaplaincy](http://www.facebook.com/southwaleschaplaincy) or join the Meeting House group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/204338756294385>

### Sporting Activities

USW Sport is the name of the department that covers all sports and recreation activities at the University, offering a one-stop shop for sports courses, facilities and clubs.

The facilities at our Treforest campus is among the best of any university in Wales and hosts a wide range of activities. These include a large Sports Centre on the Treforest campus and 30 acres of playing fields at the Glamorgan Sport Park. This purpose-built playing area has five floodlit pitches and two all-weather pitches, with many professional teams regularly using them for training, such as the Wales National Football Team and Cardiff City Football Club, as well as the touring New Zealand and South African rugby teams.

Also very popular is the Treforest health and fitness programmes. You can choose from over 40 classes each week in term time, from squash and pilates to canoeing and climbing. USW Sport also embraces the different University sports teams that play in the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Leagues.

If you would like to represent one of the University Sports Teams please visit the following website for more information:

<https://www.southwales.ac.uk/sport/student-sport/sport-teams/>

For information on activities, classes and how you can get involved visit the Sports Centre UniLife pages at: <http://www.southwales.ac.uk/sport/>

### 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.

The Treforest SU building is very new and has lots of facilities for students such as café and bar spaces, a nightclub, a hairdresser, a shop, a student letting agency and a bank of computers where you can catch up with your emails. It's a really great place to hang out and meet friends. There is also a brand new SU building at Cardiff Campus and a new office at City Campus Newport.

The SU's website is also where you can find information 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 register and familiarise yourself with what they are all about at: <https://www.uswsu.com/>

### USW Global Ambassadors

IISA is pleased to be able to offer students the exciting opportunity to become a Global Ambassador (GA) under a volunteering and employability project in conjunction with the University's Grad Edge project.

The scheme will be relaunched for 2019 and further information will be published on UniLife in due course. In the meantime, if you would like to find out more or if you think you might be interested in becoming a GA, then please come and speak to the IISA team in H027.

### Health and Medical Services

We have a Health Centres located on the Treforest Campus and regular drop-in surgeries at Cardiff Campus. You should ensure that you register with the Health Centre at Treforest if you can, as staff can help allocate a doctor to you and ensure that you will have no problems accessing medical assistance.

Alternatively, if you are living and studying in Cardiff you can collect registration forms for the Cardiff Health Clinic from the Advice shop.

Don't wait until you are unwell. Visit the Health Centre on UniLife and find out how and when to register visit: <https://health.southwales.ac.uk/healthcare-international-students/>

## Helping you study

### Student Development & Study Skills Service (SDSSS)

This Service is dedicated to supporting students academically during their studies. They have offices on all campuses and offer workshops and tutorials on all aspects of studying in the UK as well as one-to-one appointments. They also have a comprehensive selection of downloadable and online study tools that you can access. Please visit their website to see exactly how they can help you and where they are situated: <https://studyskills.southwales.ac.uk/>

You can also find some helpful information about potential difference between studying in your home country and the UK on the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website: <http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Living-in-the-UK/Studying-in-the-UK-how-does-it-differ-from-home>

### 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 IISA 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 😊

## Immigration & International Student Advice (IISA)

### Contact Details

#### Main Office at Treforest

The International Zone: Room H027, Hirwaun Building  
Telephone: 01443 482083  
Ask an Adviser: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/>  
Email: [international.advice@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:international.advice@southwales.ac.uk)  
Drop in: 10am–12pm, 2pm–4pm: Monday-Friday  
(Closed Tuesday afternoons)

#### Other campuses

Telephone: 01443 482083  
Ask an Adviser: <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/>  
Email: [international.advice@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:international.advice@southwales.ac.uk)  
Drop-in & surgeries: Please check the link for details:  
<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/contact-us/>

### Appointments

You can make an appointment with an adviser by either visiting the International Zone in Treforest (H027) during one of the drop in sessions above or by emailing [international.advice@southwales.ac.uk](mailto:international.advice@southwales.ac.uk) with your name, the

campus you are based on, a brief outline of your query and a contact telephone number. An adviser will then email or ring you back with appropriate information or to arrange a convenient time for your appointment at the relevant campus.

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Drop-in & surgeries: Please check the link for details:  
<https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/contact-us/>

The information provided in this booklet is given in good faith and is correct at the time of publication (September 2019). The University of South Wales accepts no legal responsibility for its accuracy. Immigration law is subject to change. Please ensure that you have the most up to date advice by checking the websites provided in this booklet or speaking to a member of the IISA team.