A guide for dependants, written by dependants
Introduction

Who is this guide for?

This guide was produced in 2013 as part of a project started by the International Student Adviser, who was interested in providing a resource aimed specifically at the spouses/partners of international students. The International Student Support team provides dependants of international students with a variety of support (please see page 21 for details) but the aim of this project was to provide information about life in the UK and Glasgow to help dependants prepare for their time here before they arrive. Our project group was formed and made up of the International Student Adviser as well as members of the International Family Network who were already living in Glasgow as spouses/partners of international students – and they were eager to share their experiences and first-hand information! The International Student Adviser updated the guide in 2017 and hopes it will continue to be of use to dependants.

What information does the guide contain?

We were lucky to have a very talented project group - with members who already had skills in photography, drawing and editing, so our guide contains a variety of information on the aspects of life in Glasgow which our group thought would be useful to know about in advance. For example, enrolling children in schools; healthcare provision for families; travelling in and around Glasgow and a quick introduction to the language used in Glasgow!

We hope that it will be accessible - with lots of photographs; sketches; and tips and suggestions from the project group throughout.

We hope you enjoy using the guide and find it useful in your preparations for coming to live with your spouse or partner while they study at University of Glasgow.
How can I find accommodation for my family?

Once your family has made the decision to move to Glasgow, you will probably find yourself with a long to-do list. One of the more important items to arrange will be accommodation. If you are intending to live in university accommodation, apply as early as possible as there may be many other families also interested in applying. If you’re looking to live in a privately rented flat, you should start contacting landlords at least 1 or 2 months before moving. If a property you’re interested in is not available before you move, a landlord may offer to reserve it for you if you sign a contract or lease.

University accommodation
If you would like to apply for one of the family flats provided by University of Glasgow, it is advisable to apply as early as possible once you have been notified that you have been made an offer - whether conditional or unconditional - and you have accepted that offer. You can find further information at this link: www.gla.ac.uk/postgraduate/accommodation/familyaccommodation

Private accommodation
Searching online for private accommodation
Here are a few search websites which will allow you to enter the details of the type of accommodation you would like and results will then be listed. The first website on the list below is a website run by five Glasgow higher education institutions (including University of Glasgow). The website is aimed at students who are looking for secure private accommodation in Glasgow.

www.glascowpad.org
www.citylets.co.uk
www.rightmove.co.uk/property-to-rent.html
www.s1rental.com

Letting Agencies
There are several letting agencies located close to the campus (on Byres Road, Dumbarton Road or Great Western Road) which usually have a list of available flats. Letting agencies usually don’t charge renters any commission, as this is paid by landlords.

All landlords in Glasgow must be registered with the Council but if you have concerns about a private landlord, you might feel safer renting through a letting agency.

Here are some letting agency websites:

www.acandco.com/property/search
www.belvoir.co.uk
www.cib-group.co.uk
www.clydeproperty.co.uk
www.countrywidescotland.co.uk
www.grantproperty.com/tenants
www.merchantlettings.com
www.rettie.co.uk

In which area should we live?
Before choosing an area in which to start your accommodation search, you might wish to consider some of these points.

How close do we need to be to the university?
Consider how often the student in your family has to be at the university and consider transport possibilities (see pages 15 and 16). A lot of places in the West End are very easy to reach on foot, although rent prices in the West End might be higher than in other areas.

How much rent can we afford?
Don’t forget to include rent and additional housing costs into your budget. In our experience, rent can be anything from around £400-£450 PCM (per calendar month) in Govan to £550-£650 PCM for a one bedroom flat in Hillhead. A two bedroom flat can cost around £550-£650 PCM in Govan or around £700-£750 PCM in Partick, for example.

Also, consider how many rooms you will need for children, office/study space etc. Studio apartments usually have a kitchen/bedroom/living room combination and a bathroom. Other flats have a kitchen, the given number of bedrooms, living spaces and bathrooms.

Additional costs can be approximately:
- Gas £40-£60 per month (dependant on usage/supplier)
- Electricity £40-£60 per month (dependant on usage/supplier)
- Internet / Telephone £30-40 per month
- TV license £147 per year
- Council tax (see page 14 for more information)

If you choose to rent private accommodation, remember that all private landlords (and their properties) must be registered with Glasgow City Council. The aim of this scheme is to ensure that minimum standards are met by landlords and to remove unfit landlords from the housing market. For more information, you can check this link (Jill Moore, International Student Adviser)

What if we come to Glasgow early to find accommodation?
If you come to Glasgow to look at accommodation in advance, you will need temporary accommodation. Here are some details of different types of temporary accommodation in Glasgow:

Glasgow Youth Hostel 8 Park Terrace
G3 6BY
Phone: +44 (0)141 332 3004
www.glasgowhostel.co.uk

Gee Hostel Glasgow 318 Clyde Street
G1 4NR
Phone: +44 (0)845 399 956
www.eurohostels.co.uk/glasgow

Other hostel booking sites are online and you can search for other hostels by typing ‘Glasgow, Scotland’ in the search box at www.hostelbookers.com and www.hostelworld.com

You can also search for temporary accommodation - whether it is a private room in a house or flat or an entire home/flat - at www.airbnb.co.uk
Useful accommodation vocabulary and tips:

**Deposit**
A deposit for your flat will be charged before you move in – it is a sum of money which the tenant pays to the landlord to guarantee against any damage that the tenant might do to the property or outstanding costs. For example, to cover any unpaid bills or any cleaning costs that the landlord may face upon the tenant moving out. Usually, the deposit is approximately 1-2 months’ rent and should be returned when you move out. For more information, see [www.glasgowstudent.net/advice/accommodation/deposits](http://www.glasgowstudent.net/advice/accommodation/deposits).

**Inventory**
An inventory is a list of the items in the property that you are renting. Make sure you get this list from your landlord or letting agency – check all the items on the list exist and are in good condition. At the end of your tenancy agreement, all items have to be in the same condition or the cost could be deducted from your deposit. A lot of flats are furnished with basics - if you're on a tight budget, there are several second hand/vintage shops on Byres Road and around the West End where you always can find additions to the existing furniture. There’s also an IKEA near Braehead Shopping Centre which can be easily reached by bus no.77. Bargains for kitchen and home supplies can also be found in the city centre at shops such as TK Maxx, Flying Tiger or in pound shops (where everything costs £1!).

**Letting agency**
A company that rents accommodation on behalf of the owner of that property - check beforehand if they charge any fees (for example, for credit checks).

**Landlord**
A person or organisation, usually the owner of the flat.

**Tenancy agreement/lease**
Contract with your landlord or letting agency for the time of your stay. Check for given dates, as you might have to renew your contract or have a certain notice period, if you need to leave earlier. Such agreements are typically made for 6 and 12 month periods.

**Tenant**
A person who pays rent for the use of land or a building – in other words, you!

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**What do current international students and their families say about the area in which they live?**

We asked current members of the International Family Network for their personal opinions about the area of Glasgow in which they and their family live:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things they like…</th>
<th>Things they don’t like…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anniesland</td>
<td>There is no halal butcher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The amenities are within the walking range. The bus stop and train station to city centre or to the university are also close.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govan</td>
<td>This area has one of the best location/rent ratio. It means that it is cheap and close enough to the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvingrove Park; short distance to groceries; facilities for prayers.</td>
<td>Competitive to get a place for child in local nursery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelvinbridge</td>
<td>Quiet and friendly neighbourhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None - only a bit far to uni.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Kelvinside</td>
<td>Nice environment. Close to good schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The back of the building faces Maryhill Road, which is sometimes noisy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partick</td>
<td>Very safe and well-located (close to subway, bus, train, grocery, pharmacy, University of Glasgow and gym).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The streets are a bit dirty with litter. At the weekends, it can be noisy at nighttime around Dumbarton Road.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you need further information, the university websites are a good starting point:

- **Accommodation Services:** [www.gla.ac.uk/services/accommodation](http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/accommodation)
- **Student Representative Council:** [www.glasgowstudent.net/advice/accommodation](http://www.glasgowstudent.net/advice/accommodation)
- **International Student Support:** [www.gla.ac.uk/international/support](http://www.gla.ac.uk/international/support)
How can my family and I stay healthy while we are in the UK?

Your family’s health will be a top priority wherever you are – Scotland has a National Health Service (NHS) which provides treatment to full-time students and their dependants. We had a chat with a local General Practitioner (GP) and have included some information that we thought might be useful to you. Firstly, here is some starter information about healthcare in Scotland.

Register with a GP as soon as you have accommodation in Glasgow

You will need to take your passport and proof of your UK address (e.g. your accommodation contract) to register. It is also useful to bring a medical record with you when you go to register because you have to fill out a questionnaire about yourself and your medical history. Keep your contact details (address, email address, phone number etc.) up-to-date so that your practice can stay in touch with you and so that you and your family can obtain an appointment as soon as possible, when required.

You can register at the Barclay Medical Practice at University of Glasgow (Fraser Building) or you can find your closest GP on the NHS website www.nhsinform.scot/national-service-directory

Medicine/prescriptions from a GP

Prescriptions for medication (given to you by your GP) are free in Scotland however some medication, such as that for cosmetic purposes, is not prescribed for free. Basic medication (such as Ibuprofen, Paracetamol etc.) can be purchased at supermarket or pharmacy without a prescription from the GP. For specialist medication, you could bring a specialist medication, you could bring a

Important numbers

If you or your family need access to health advice or information when your GP surgery is closed and you are too ill to wait until it re-opens, you can contact NHS24 by calling 111. The operator will ask you some questions about your symptoms to direct you to the appropriate health professional (e.g. a nurse, pharmacist or dental nurse). They might advise that you can treat yourself at home or they may refer you to see a health professional. For more information, see www.nhs24.com

If you are faced with a medical emergency, dial 999. The operator will ask you which emergency service you require (as this is the number for police, fire and medical emergencies). They will ask questions about your location and exactly what has happened. Please remember that this number is for situations when someone is seriously ill, injured or their life is at risk.

In these cases, we usually like to do annual check-ups but your Practice will organise these for you.

Q: Can I go to a pharmacy for health advice?

A: Your local pharmacist can also give advice about common conditions such as earache and sore throats, as well as information on healthy living such as stopping smoking. You should contact NHS 24 (call 111) if you or a family member falls ill in the evening or at the weekend and you feel it cannot wait until your GP surgery is open again. NHS 24 will either give you advice over the phone or will arrange for you to be seen by a GP. For a medical emergency, you should dial 999.

Q: Are there one-off check-up appointments that you are supposed to have regularly?

A: Women in Scotland aged 25-49 are recommended to have a cervical smear every 3 years, and every 5 years if aged 50-64.

Q: Is there anything I could prepare at home in Glasgow to help?

A: It may be helpful to have a list of useful contact numbers such as your GP surgery, dentist, health visitor etc which are easy to find when you need them.

Q: Can I go to a pharmacy for health advice?

A: Your local pharmacist can also give advice about common conditions such as earache and sore throats, as well as information on healthy living such as stopping smoking. You do not need an appointment to see them. The drug treatment which you can buy over the counter or you may be eligible to sign up for their Minor Ailments Scheme, where certain medicines are free.

Q: Can I go to a specialist (e.g. a dermatologist) directly?

A: No, all referrals to specialists are made by your GP if they feel it is necessary.

Q: Should I schedule regular general check-ups at the GP practice (e.g. each year)?

A: This is not usually necessary unless you have a chronic health condition such as asthma or high blood pressure.
Can my children go to school in Glasgow?

We understand that education systems can differ from country to country and that enrolling your children at school is an important step in their new life in Glasgow. To help you prepare for your children going to school in Glasgow, we met with the Head of English as an Additional Language Service. We have included some of the details from our meeting as a Q&A which we hope will answer some common questions.

**Q: Are all children (of all different nationalities) eligible to attend schools in Scotland?**

A: It depends on what UK visa your child has. All children who come from overseas whether on a Dependent visa, as an asylum seeker or as a refugee are entitled to attend public schools in Scotland with one exception - children who come to Scotland on a Child Visitor visa are not entitled to education in public schools in Scotland. Please note that this doesn't apply to children who are EU (European Union) nationals.

**Q: Do I need to contact schools before arriving in Glasgow to enrol my child/children?**

A: No, you don’t need to do this. In fact, the child must be present in the UK at the time of registration and cannot be enrolled before arriving.

**Q: What documents are needed for the registration into a public school?**

A: This depends on whether the children are from the European Union or are nationals of other countries. For children who are EU nationals, you will need to provide the birth certificate. Children who are nationals of non-EU countries will need:

- birth certificate (preferably translated into English)
- proof of address (which could be a copy of your lease for your accommodation in Glasgow or a recent bill with the name of the parent/carer applying on behalf of the child/children.
- any document that shows the relationship between the child being enrolled and the parent/carer applying for that child.
- passport(s) showing the child’s and parent’s/carer’s visas.

**Q: Do my children need any school documents from our home country to be enrolled in school in Glasgow?**

A: No documents are required, but if you do have documents with you, these could be helpful to identify the child’s achievements.

**Q: What if my documents are not translated into English?**

A: It is preferred that parents get the required documents translated in their home country before they arrive in Glasgow to enrol their children in school. There is no translation service available in schools and translation services in other companies in the UK are chargeable. There are often language interpreters in schools to interpret what the document says or the parent of the child might be asked to translate it and pass on the information.

No official translation of your child’s records/marks is required and the information can be shared with the school by the parents.

**Q: Is there any standard procedure to register children in schools in Glasgow?**


**Q: How do I find out which school my child should attend?**

A: Once you are in Glasgow and you are settled down in a temporary or permanent address, you can go to the Glasgow City Council website and click the “Near My Property” link on the left of the page. You can find your local school by typing in your postcode or you could go to the nearest school in your area and ask for advice there.

**Q: What is there any transport support for children to get to school?**

A: Normally, if your child is registered to attend their nearest local school, there will be no need for any transportation means and your child could walk to school or be taken by their parents. However, if your child is assessed as needing specialist provision or if there are medical grounds necessitating transport, they may be eligible for free school transport. For more information about who is eligible for free school transport, visit www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=17882

**Q: What charges/fees should I expect when enrolling my child in the school?**

A: The cost of books and day-to-day educational needs (including stationary) are all covered by the school/council. You will need to pay for your child’s uniform and a PE (Physical Education) kit which are usually quite cheap and easy to find in local shops or supermarkets. School lunches are free for all primary 1-3 children in Glasgow schools but you will need to pay for your child’s lunches at a cost of £1.90 per day from primary 4 onwards (or you can simply provide your child with a packed lunch which can be sent with the child from home). You will have to pay for any school trips, which are usually optional.

**Q: Will my children continue in the same class that they were in at home or will they follow the Scottish education curriculum?**

A: Children will follow the Scottish education rules according to their age. An exception to this would be children who are older and arrive in the “exam year”. In this case, it might be better for these children to join a lower class if they don’t have a good knowledge of English language, in order to give them time to prepare for the exam.

**Q: Is there a fixed curriculum in all Scottish schools?**

A: Yes, it is called the “Curriculum for Excellence”. Curriculum for Excellence gives experience and outcomes but not fixed content – different schools can choose different content. So it can be quite flexible from school to school.

**Q: Do my children have to sit any English language exams in order to be enrolled in the school?**

A: No, there aren’t any “English language” requirements for children enrolling in schools in Glasgow.

**Q: What if my child/children has/have NO English background?**

A: EAL (English as an additional language) service supports kids who are not native English speakers who attend educational establishments in Glasgow by many different means.
Q: What is the most important message to give people coming to Glasgow in terms of preparing their children for school in Scotland?

A: “The most important thing is to tell their children that they are going to enjoy school and not to worry about it and get them excited about going to school, and assure them that it’s going to be a great opportunity for them to make new friends, learn new things; learn a new language; learn about new culture and a new country and they are going to have a great time because school in Scotland is about having fun and learning through enjoyment and fun. I think that it’s the most important message to get people really positive about it and that it’s not something to worry about because this is something children will love and they are going to gain a lot from being here as we will also gain a lot from them, so don’t be afraid” (Maria Walker, Head of English as an Additional Language Service, Glasgow)

Q: Does the EAL service offer special English lessons for children?

A: The EAL service does not offer separate English classes but the EAL teachers spread all around Glasgow schools will be helping the children during their schooling in the following ways:

• Helping children/students with ‘survival English’ in their classes

• Offering support to students who are familiar with English but need to improve their level of English

• Encouraging them to maintain their first language by giving them the chance to buddy up with children who share the same first language.

In general, EAL encourages bilingualism and supports pupils in expressing themselves using their first language.

Q: Are nursery education and childcare also free?

A: Children in Glasgow are eligible for up to 16 hours per week of free early years education from the start of the term when the child has his/her third birthday. Some children are eligible for free places when they are two. You can have longer hours or places for younger children if you pay a charge.

Here are some useful links about education in Glasgow:


Religious Observance Policy: www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=12233&ps=0

Q: What is the most important message to give people coming to Glasgow in terms of preparing their children for school in Scotland?

A: “The most important thing is to tell their children that they are going to enjoy school and not to worry about it and get them excited about going to school, and assure them that it’s going to be a great opportunity for them to make new friends, learn new things; learn a new language; learn about new culture and a new country and they are going to have a great time because school in Scotland is about having fun and learning through enjoyment and fun. I think that it’s the most important message to get people really positive about it and that it’s not something to worry about because this is something children will love and they are going to gain a lot from being here as we will also gain a lot from them, so don’t be afraid” (Maria Walker, Head of English as an Additional Language Service, Glasgow)

How can I open a UK bank account as a dependant of an international student?

When you start your new life in the UK, you will soon have to cover expenses such as rent, utility bills and internet costs. To pay these bills, a bank account can be either very convenient (or very necessary), so opening a bank account should be one of your first goals once you have moved to Glasgow. It’s best to contact banks soon after your arrival because setting up a bank account can sometimes take time.

There are many different banks in the UK including Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale Bank, Lloyds TSB, Santander and Royal Bank of Scotland. Different banks have different policies for international students and families, so it’s best to speak with each bank individually to see what will be most suitable for you. However, here are a few tips which might help:

• Most banks will require you to make an appointment to open a bank account. If you arrive on a Thursday or Friday, your appointment may not be until the following week.

• It is usually easier for the student (rather than the dependant) to open the bank account. As dependants will probably not have a job before moving to Glasgow, they will not have a source of income - until they do, many banks will not let them open an account for themselves.

• Some banks only offer a single account for students and will not add dependants to that account as a joint account holder. The first question you should ask a bank employee when your spouse/partner opens their student account is whether or not you can be included as a joint account holder. If you can’t, you may wish to try another bank.

Once you decide which bank you would like to join and have booked an appointment with them, you should take documents with you to your appointment.

You will need:

• identity documents (e.g. passport, national ID card, visa)

• proof of income or funds (if you have any)

• proof of your UK address

Remember that documents should have your name and UK address on them to be acceptable. Tenancy/ accommodation contracts, utility bills (e.g. gas, telephone/broadband or electricity bills) or Council Tax letters posted to your UK address are all examples of documents you could use. And remember - if you change your UK address, don’t forget to let your bank know the details of your new address!
What is Council Tax and do I have to pay it as a dependant of an international student?

Council Tax is a tax that is paid by the occupants of each home. Unlike other taxes, it is collected not by the national government, but by the local administrations (councils) in the UK and its aim is to provide the local councils with a greater financial autonomy. This system offers local authorities the chance to get extra funding to manage their needs. Council Tax covers the expenses related to street lighting, refuse collection, education and local police services, to name a few.

Am I eligible for a discount or exemption from Council Tax?
A dwelling is exempted from Council Tax payment if all occupants fall under any of several categories, e.g. children, full-time students, mentally impaired and carers. This also includes spouses/partners of full-time students, but only if they are from outside the European Union, as the exemption is designed for those who can’t access public funds in the UK.

Who can I contact if I need more information?
If any of your circumstances change (e.g. a change of address or in student status) or if you have any enquiries about Council Tax, it is very important to contact the council immediately. You can do that by visiting the Glasgow City Council Council Tax office at 45 John Street, Glasgow, G1 1JE in person from 9am-5pm Monday to Friday, or by contacting them by phone or by using the online enquiry form given on their website.

How do I pay Council Tax?
If you are required to pay it, the Council Tax amount for each home varies since it is based on the value of the property. Therefore, different houses fall into different bands, defined by the local property tax assessor. To find out about the specific band for your flat/house, you can contact the local council or go to the Scottish Assessors Association website (www.saa.gov.uk), where you can look it up.

Council Tax can be paid in full by card (online or by phone). Also, if you open a UK bank account, you can set up direct debit instalments - you can choose to make direct debit payments on either the 1st, 8th, 15th or 22nd of each month or every two or four weeks. Many people choose to pay in 10 monthly instalments per year (there are none for the months of February and March, the last two months of the fiscal year).

For more information on exemptions and discounts, visit the Glasgow Council website www.glasgow.gov.uk/ct.

What is the public transport like in Glasgow?

There are lots of methods of public transport in Glasgow if you don't want to walk or if you don't have a car. Here are some facts and tips about the transport systems available in Glasgow.

The subway
The subway/underground in Glasgow is the third-oldest underground metro system in the world. It is an easy means of transportation throughout the city. There are fifteen stations and it takes approximately 24 minutes to do a full circuit.

“Did you know that children aged under 5 travel for free on the subway if travelling with a fare-paying adult?” (Jill, International Student Adviser)

The subway usually runs from 06:30-23:40, Monday-Saturday and 10:00-18:12 on Sundays. At peak times, it runs every four minutes, with a longer wait at off-peak times.

Paper tickets are sold at the subway station and the prices differ depending on whether you are considered an adult, a child or a concession. Prices for paper tickets in 2017 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ticket</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Concession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>£1.65</td>
<td>£0.70</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return</td>
<td>£3.10</td>
<td>£1.35</td>
<td>£1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All day</td>
<td>£4.00</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prices as at July 2017

You can also register for a free Smartcard online, then you would be eligible for tickets at a discounted price.

“On days when there are rugby or football games taking place in Glasgow, the subway can be very busy and you should take care with children. In the stations, there will usually be signs displayed to let you know if there is a match taking place that day.” (Inge, Germany)

The closest station to the University is either Hillhead (closest to campus buildings nearest Byres Road) or Kelvinbridge (closest to the gym in the Stevenson Building and campus buildings nearest Gibson St).

Buses
There is a large bus network in Glasgow. To buy tickets, you need to pay directly to the driver on the bus itself. You can usually only pay in cash – many companies cannot provide change so ensure that you have the exact amount of money ready. There are special discounted multi-journey tickets, for example a one day or one week ticket.

“Travelling by bus in Glasgow is easy and fun as you can see the streets around you! It’s also easier for parents with pushchairs as there are special spaces on most buses for them.” (Ala’a, Jordan)

Here are some of the main websites useful for planning your journey in advance of travelling, so that you can check the number of the bus that you need and where the bus stop will be:

www.travelinescotland.com/its/#travelinfo
www.firstgroup.com/greater-glasgow
www.maps.google.co.uk

In my opinion, the ticket prices for the bus are reasonable and the buses are reliable. There are also many bus stops - you don’t need to walk far to reach one. Glasgow buses will not stop unless there is a passenger who wants to get off or unless you hold out your arm to indicate that you would like the driver to stop for you – if you don’t, the driver may drive past your bus stop!” (Bartosz, Poland)

Trains

The rail system operates across the city and we find it comfortable, fast and reliable. In general, we have found it an easy way to travel with children.

“It is so easy to travel by train with your kids. Always ask for the best deal for you at the tickets office, as kids can travel for free (depending on your ticket). Return tickets are generally cheaper. And look for the carriage for disabled travellers and with space for bikes to find a space for your buggy (pushchair) – or just simply ask for help!” (Ala’a, Jordan)
If you are bringing your bicycle with you, there are special bicycle racks/stands on many trains—and your bike travels for free! Usually if you buy your ticket in advance (instead of at the station on the day of travel), you can find cheaper tickets.

There are two large stations in Glasgow—Queen Street station and Central station. They are both found in the city centre and you can travel by train to other cities in the UK from both of those stations.

“Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street serve two different areas of Scotland, so it’s important to know which station to wait at. Trains from Central Station usually travel west and south; trains from Queen Street usually go east and north. Tickets purchased from one station may not explain which trains you can catch from another.”

For some journey planners and to find cheaper tickets, you could check the websites below:

- www.scotrail.co.uk
- www.nationalrail.co.uk

If you have a disability, taxi drivers are trained to give assistance in getting on and off the taxi as well as ensuring wheelchair users are properly secured before setting off. All Glasgow Taxis are wheelchair accessible.

Private hire taxis

Private hire taxis look like normal cars, however they should display a local authority plate on the front and back of the car with a private hire car licence number on it (and a rear windscreen sticker showing the company name) to show that it is a licensed taxi. There are often no taxi meters in private hire taxis, but the driver will give you the price at the end of the journey. Police Scotland has these useful tips about staying safe when travelling by taxi:

- When booking a private hire car, ask the company to text you when the taxi has arrived. This means you can avoid waiting in the street and will have your own journey record. Consider choosing a company which offers this service.
- If you’ve ordered a private hire car, make sure the one that arrives is yours - have the driver confirm the details to you.
- When you arrive home, ask the driver to wait until you get safely into your house before they drive away.

(Source: www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/personal-safety-on-the-move accessed on 30/05/2017)

How can I book a taxi?

If you would like a taxi to collect you from your accommodation, you can call to reserve a taxi either well in advance or shortly before-hand. You will usually have to give your name, telephone number, the address from where you would like to be collected and the destination. Many companies will call you as the taxi is arriving – some may send a text message.

If you are not at home and you need a taxi, you can ‘hail’ (signal to a taxi that you would like to stop) to collect you. If you’re ready to find work, there are several more things to arrange.

You will need to establish your right to work in the UK first. You can make an appointment with an International Student Adviser to discuss your individual work permissions or you could visit the JobCentre Plus (20 Benader Street, Glasgow, G11 6DN) to get help from one of the members of staff there. They can explain the JobCentre services, help you search for work and give you information about accessing their services online or by phone.

After you have established your right to work, it is also helpful to apply for a National Insurance number. You can call the NI Number application line on 0345 600 0643 to request an NI number. Keep in mind that phone numbers beginning with 0345 may cost more than other local calls if you are using a mobile phone. Also, calling during the busy daytime hours (10:00-16:00) might mean longer waiting times.

Another task for jobseekers after arriving in Glasgow is to update or write their CV (or résumé). Once you have decided that you are ready to begin your search, you have many different options to choose in order to start looking for a job. You can apply in person, through staffing agencies or online.

Finding work in a new city or country can be difficult - and it can be tricky in Glasgow too, especially if you do not fluently speak Scottish English! However, don’t worry - even dependants from English-speaking countries can have difficulty finding work at first, so it’s important to remain positive. If you are not confident with your English, then register to join the free language classes available to spouses/partners of international students as soon as you can. If you’re ready to find work, there are several more things to arrange.

Employment agencies

You can also register with employment agencies to try to find work. Employment (or temp) agencies work for companies to find both temporary and permanent workers and this can be a good way to find work at first. Even if a job contract is only for a few months, agencies are happy to find good workers and will often try to find you more work when other contracts end.

There are many staffing agencies in Glasgow - you can get a list of them printed out by someone at JobCentre Plus or you can search their job offers online. A few places to begin your search include

- www.bluearrow.co.uk
- www.stafffinders.co.uk
- www.pertemps.co.uk

Online

Here are some websites which you may find helpful as a start to your online job search

- www.reed.co.uk
- www.gla.ac.uk/about/jobs
- www.scotcareers.co.uk
- www.jobs.com
- www.monster.co.uk

When applying to jobs listed online, it’s important to carefully read and customise your CV and cover letter to each job listing.

Volunteering

If you are still searching for work but would like something to do in the meantime, you can always try volunteering - try asking local churches, community centres, charity shops (there are many on Byres Road or Dumbarton Road) or even university tutors or employers if they would wish to engage a volunteer. There are many things you can do as a volunteer and you never know when you might meet someone who can offer you a job.

If a company asks you for an interview, great! This means that someone feels that you could be a good employee. Make sure you prepare for an interview and dress professionally. If you don’t get the position, don’t be frustrated; it does not mean that you are not qualified or a company did not like you. It can often just be the case that someone else was more qualified on that occasion. Keep trying and you might be luckier the next time.

Remember that the best you can do is to remain positive and that you never know where (or when) a job offer can come from. Good luck!
How can I keep in touch with my family and friends when I arrive?

Moving to a new country can be a challenge when it comes to keeping in touch with the world. One of the first things you would want to do would be to get in touch with your family and friends back home by phone or through the internet. Here are some tips to help you get started...

Whether you have a landline or not, keep in mind that in order to sign a contract with an ISP, you will first need to have a UK bank account.

Also, not all providers have physical offices in Glasgow and some can be contacted only by phone or on the internet. Here are links to some of the websites of internet service providers in the UK so that you can do some research ahead of travelling to Glasgow:

www.bt.com
www.plus.net
www.sky.com
www.virginmedia.com
www.talktalk.co.uk

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are a necessity today and getting a contract from a mobile operator is quite easy. One benefit is that, often, when you sign a contract for a set period of time, you get a new handset for free.

Again, to sign a contract, you will need a UK bank account, which will take some time to arrange. In that case, you could look into getting a pre-paid plan from a mobile phone company and then, when you have a bank account, ask them to transfer your phone number to link to a new contract. A pre-paid plan is extremely easy to get, as you don't need to register your name or address and it is as simple as going into the company's shop and buying a SIM card. Pre-paid plans are very convenient, as some are especially designed for cheap calls to places outside the UK.

“Even before you arrive, it’s best to prepare yourselves by doing a bit of online research about the different mobile service providers and their various offers. Then you could simply go to the company you choose and get a pre-paid SIM card in less than half an hour, as a start. In our case that was the O2 Unlimited plan that offers inexpensive international calls.”

Stan (Bulgaria)

For more information here are links to the websites some of the main mobile companies in the UK:

www.vodafone.co.uk
www.o2.co.uk
www.ee.co.uk
www.three.co.uk
www.giffgaff.com

Public wi-fi

Nowadays, most people possess a device that enables them to wirelessly access the internet and could be looking for a place where they could use a wi-fi connection immediately upon arriving in Glasgow. The best and easiest option for this would be many of the numerous cafés in Glasgow.

However, not all establishments offer free access to the internet (including some of the international chains). Our tip is to ask the staff first - “Is there free Wi-Fi here?” Often, they will then provide you with a password so that you can then access the Wi-Fi.

“Libraries in Glasgow offer free internet to members. I first registered to join the library online and I could then start borrowing e-books immediately but you need to bring your proof of address into the library within a set period of time in order to complete your membership.”

Svetlana (Russia)

“Even if you don’t have any proof of address, you can show your ID to join the library and get temporary membership which gives you access to the library’s computers and Wi-Fi.”

Bartosz (Poland)

Internet access at home

Getting an internet connection at home can take comparatively longer than what you may be used to. The reason for this is that many internet service providers (ISPs) offer access to the internet only if it is coupled with a landline (telephone).

If your flat does not have a landline, the ISP might then have to install it and this may take as long as a month. However, some ISPs, like Virgin Media, can connect you to the internet without a landline and, in our experience, you could start browsing and using Skype at home within around 7-10 days.

“Even if you don’t have any proof of address, you can show your ID to join the library and get temporary membership which gives you access to the library’s computers and Wi-Fi.”

Bartosz (Poland)
What shops are available in Glasgow?

Shopping is one of the most popular activities in Glasgow - you can usually find whatever you are looking for in your local area. Here is some information about the different types of shops available in the city.

Shopping for fun
Glasgow has malls, independent boutiques, designer stores and one-off speciality shops including: Buchanan Quarter (the city’s latest new retail quarter), Buchanan Galleries, St Enoch Centre, John Lewis, House of Fraser, Princes Square, Hamleys and Argyll Arcade. All of these malls are in the city centre and the most important street for this activity is the famous Buchanan Street!

Food shopping
For groceries, there are many options ranging from the convenience store on the corner of your street to big supermarket stores, like ASDA, Tesco, Sainsbury’s, LIDL, Morrisons, etc. Some supermarkets are open 24 hours a day (e.g. Tesco in Maryhill and Asda in Govan) and sell household items, clothes and shoes as well as food, drink and toiletries. Many of the supermarkets will also have smaller stores in local areas too.

Online shopping
It is also very common to do online shopping in the UK - Amazon and eBay are popular sites for doing this and you can find pretty much everything you need at attractive prices but remember you might need to wait for some time (perhaps around a week) for products to be delivered within the UK.

Major supermarkets also have special sites for online shopping and they will deliver your groceries on an arranged date at a time of your choice - usually within two or three working days.

Second-hand shopping
In case you are interested in second-hand shopping, there are also a lot of charity shops in Glasgow where you can find furniture, clothes, shoes, electronics, household appliances, jewellery and music (cds, vinyl, cassettes, musical instruments). There are also second-hand bookshops where you can find very interesting items and if you are lucky enough you can even find excellent textbooks for a good price! You could also use www.gumtree.com/glasgow for larger items.

How can my family and I get advice and information while we are in Glasgow?

When you first come to Glasgow, you may not have your usual support network of family and friends around you. The International Student Advisers at University of Glasgow understand this and provide support for spouses, partners and children of international students in the following ways:

1-1 appointments
The International Student Advisers are happy to meet with dependants of international students for a 1-1 appointment to discuss any matters of concern, for example queries on work permissions, schools and nurseries, accommodation or other welfare issues.

To book an appointment, dependants can come in to the Student Services Enquiry Desk on level 2 of the Fraser Building and the staff at the desk will book the appointment for you.

International family lunches
Every Wednesday during term-time, international students, their spouses/partners and children are welcome to come along to this group to enjoy a free light lunch and to take the opportunity to meet other families. Staff also attend each lunch.

International family day trips and events
International Student Support runs day trips approximately twice per term, to allow families the opportunity to travel together and see different places of interest around Scotland. There are small charges for these trips but the cost is minimised as much as possible.

International Student Support also organises special events throughout the year (for example, our annual Children’s Christmas Party)

English classes for spouses and partners
If you are interested in improving your English to help you while you are living in the UK, spouses and partners of international students are welcome to sign up for International Student Support’s English classes which take place each week during term-time.

There are three 10-week blocks of English language classes which are specifically designed for spouses/partners of international students. There will be a small administration fee charged for each of the three blocks of English classes.

English language classes
International Student Support’s English classes are designed to improve your English in a fun and friendly atmosphere. Attendance at these classes is not a requirement for your student visa, but they can help you to be more confident with using English. Classes are provided at two levels: Lower level: Monday & Wednesday Higher level: Thursday

Classes are provided at two levels:
• Lower level: Monday & Wednesday
• Higher level: Thursday

The classes are friendly and informal. It’s a chance to meet people from different countries, and share experiences of living in Glasgow. There are lots of opportunities in class to practice your English, and expand your vocabulary...with the emphasis on becoming more confident at speaking out.” (Esther Quinn, English language classes tutor)

Join the International Family Network
For more information about the International Family Network or to sign up to receive e-mails about upcoming events, please e-mail internationalstudentsupport@glasgow.ac.uk or see our webpage: www.gla.ac.uk/international/support/after/family/
Case study - interview with Kanon Islam

Kanon Islam, from Bangladesh, moved to Glasgow with her husband in September 2010. They considered many cities for the next step in his education, but ultimately their choice was made when he was offered a scholarship at the University of Glasgow. “When we reached Glasgow, it was gloomy, rainy, everything that everyone says,” she laughed. But they found Glasgow’s welcoming side soon thereafter, when they were met by other students to be taken to their new residence at the university. “When we came here, I met so many nice people,” she said, “the people are very friendly here.”

Language
Choosing to live in university accommodation saved them the difficulty of finding a home after moving to Glasgow, but it didn’t solve all of their challenges. “We knew we wouldn’t know anybody in Glasgow and the accent is different — the language barrier was probably our biggest difficulty.” So Kanon enrolled in the free English classes offered through the university’s International Student Support team.

“My husband received an email from [International Student Support about] the family programme that said I could take an English course, which was so helpful for me. We’re from Bangladesh and not used to speaking English.

It was a great opportunity, because at the time we couldn’t provide the money and we did not need to pay.” As she became more comfortable with her English, she found herself amongst a circle of new friends. “After we came here, I made so many friends through the family programme. They were all from different countries but they were all my classmates, too.”

Shopping
The day after their arrival, Kanon and her husband quickly found it necessary to explore the city and begin their lives in Glasgow - and their first priority was food. They didn’t know what the grocery stores were like, so on the second day they went out in the evening and asked someone. “The person asked what we were shopping for and she gave us directions to the stores. And another time we were trying to find a store and the man we asked for directions actually took us there.”

At first, some of the food items they found were unfamiliar to them, but after exploring Glasgow’s many ethnic food markets, they were able to find food which reminded them of home. “The good thing is that if you go to a Halal shop, you can find Bangladeshi items.”

Money
Other challenges took some time to work out. As an international student, Kanon’s husband was able to open a bank account for himself, but Kanon needed a bill with her name and local address on it before she could open an account for herself. “I later used an energy bill we had put my name on.”

Work
Kanon started work six months after arriving in Glasgow. It was volunteer work in a local community that involved teaching children to speak English. After that, she did volunteer work at other places too. “If you want to get a paying job, it helps to have volunteer experience”, she says.

Her first paying job was a seasonal temporary position. “When I came here, I found a volunteer job quickly, but if you want to find a paid job it’s still difficult”. She registered with several websites that send her emails with information about jobs. “If I still receive them, but it’s never easy to find full-time work not at minimum wage.”

Travel
It can be difficult to afford the costs of travelling to go sightseeing around the country, but Kanon thinks that she is lucky because, through the university’s International Family Network, it is easy to see many nice areas around Scotland for a low cost. “They subsidise prices and we just need to pay for travel expenses.” Through the International Family Network, she has seen many places in Scotland such as Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Inverness, the Highlands and Balmoral Castle. “If you don’t have a car, it can be difficult to travel inexpensively, so the university family programme arranges travel and admission to some really nice places around Scotland.” Sometimes Kanon and her husband travel independently of the International Family Network too. “We’ve also seen the Isles of Arran and Bute. It’s useful to check train or bus prices ahead of time, because prices can vary based on which days of the week you are travelling on”. She also enjoys using buses - “they will drop you right at your destination, so sometimes the bus can be more convenient even though it may take a little longer”. She likes the extensive transport system in Scotland and the ability to travel without a car.

Over the past two and a half years, Kanon and her husband have enjoyed their time in Glasgow. Moving to a new country can bring challenges to students and their families but they have learned a few things along the way.

When asked what her single most important piece of advice to incoming international families would be, Kanon offered this:

“Language can be a big barrier, so learn what you can before moving to Glasgow and then enroll in courses as soon as you arrive. There are many opportunities available here for international students and their families. There are many courses in the family program and elsewhere, too. I have done some training courses as well, because I was interested and I wanted to create more opportunities for myself. It takes time, but it all helps.”

Kanon Islam, Shan Harney and Dan Meyer
The wee glossary

Since we came to Glasgow, we have found that there are lots of words which people use here every day, but which we have never heard before! If you study our wee (little!) glossary, we hope it will give you a good introduction to Scottish phrases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scottish English</th>
<th>British English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ah (dinnae) ken!</em></td>
<td><em>I (don't) know!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aye</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birl</td>
<td>to spin round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chap</td>
<td>boy / man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Cheers!&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Thanks!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>crabbit</td>
<td>grumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreich</td>
<td>dreary/bleak weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fluke</td>
<td>an unlikely chance occurrence, especially a surprising piece of luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gallus</td>
<td>bold/cheeky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>glaikit</td>
<td>stupid/foolish/thoughtless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hen</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lassie</td>
<td>girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>messages</td>
<td>shopping/groceries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nae bother!</em></td>
<td><em>No problem!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>piece</td>
<td>sandwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;See you after / later!&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;See you later&quot; / &quot;Goodbye&quot; (used even when you will not see that person later!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stookie</td>
<td>plaster cast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wabbit</td>
<td>exhausted or slightly unwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wean</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wee</td>
<td>small/little</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What should I pack for myself and my family before coming to Glasgow?

Packing your suitcases is a job that might take a bit of time and thought – especially as you may find that your airline has a weight limit on the luggage that you check in. Here are some suggestions of things that we think would be useful…

**What to pack**

You will probably already know that the weather in Glasgow is very changeable and therefore the weather is a popular discussion topic! So, here are some suggestions for weather-related packing…

- Gloves
- Scarves
- A waterproof coat or jacket
- Good shoes for walking in rain, snow and cold weather

Here are some other non-weather-related packing suggestions…

- Cash (for initial taxis or transport to your accommodation)
- Travellers cheques or bank draft to cover accommodation deposits
- Copies of your visas and passports
- Small gifts from your country that would be nice for friends you get to know
- Power adaptor for electronic items so that you can use the plugs here
- Medical records or vaccination records (especially for children)
- Birth certificates for children (for enrolling in schools) - translated into English, if possible
- Medicines that you or your family frequently use (check first if a letter from your doctor or a license is needed)

**What we think you will not need!**

There are some things that you can easily buy here in Glasgow and that we think that you would not need to pack…

- Umbrellas
- Duvets/sheets
- Cooking/kitchen equipment
- Sunglasses 😎

*You might wish to travel with a note of the International Student Support team’s contact details in your hand luggage. If you face any issues on arrival in the UK, you could then contact the International Student Advisers for advice*. (Jill Moore, International Student Adviser)
What can my family and I do in our free time in Glasgow?

Glasgow is a lively city with lots of activities and events happening throughout the year. There are lots of brochures available in libraries, cinemas and theatres – the ‘What’s On’ brochure is a particularly useful one. There are also many interesting places to visit not far from Glasgow. Here are some suggestions of social activities and trips that we have been on, which you and your family might find interesting…

Activities and events in and around Glasgow

Glasgow libraries
Joining the library is especially useful for children - even babies a few months old! There are free children’s ‘Bounce and Rhyme’ sessions held there on a weekly basis and lots of other activities. Here is the website for more details: www.glasgowlife.org.uk

Glasgow Museums
We are all agreed that Glasgow Museums are a great place to spend a day. They are great fun for families with children and they also have lots of child-friendly activities all year round. One of our favourite places is the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum which has a large and diverse collection of art, archaeological objects and natural history. They also offer a variety of activities - they currently offer ‘Toddler Time’ sessions every Friday at 11:30am for families with young children; organ recitals every day on the impressive Kelvingrove Organ; and daily tours of the gallery. Another of our favourites is The Riverside Museum which is all about transport history with a huge collection of trains, bicycles, ships and cars.

Don’t forget - Glasgow Museums are free to visit!

Glasgow Kidz card
This is a free card for children aged 5-11 years who live or attend school in Glasgow with free or discounted prices for sport and leisure activities (e.g. swimming), entertainment (e.g. free entry to children’s films at some cinemas) and other activities (e.g. the Loch Lomond Aquarium Sea Life Centre). You can find more information on the card here.

Bookbug sessions
Bookbug sessions run in Princes Square in the city centre and are aimed at children aged 0-4 years to enjoy stories, songs and rhymes. Sessions do not require booking in advance and are free. They currently run every fortnight on a Thursday morning during term time. For more information, see www.scottishbooktrust.com/bookbug

City Sightseeing bus tour - one of our group’s top recommendations to do when you arrive in Glasgow!

Parks
Glasgow is a very green city! Some of our favourite parks and gardens are the Botanic Gardens, Kelvingrove Park, Victoria Park and Queen’s Park.

University of Glasgow main building
We think you’ll be impressed with the beautiful architecture and you can visit the Hunterian Museum or the Hunterian Art Gallery as well.

Places to visit outwith Glasgow

A day trip to Inverkip and Largs
Inverkip is a village on the west coast of Scotland. You can travel there by train from Glasgow Central station. A nice and fairly easy walking route (although it would take about 4 hours) is to take the path from Inverkip to Greenock Cut Visitor Centre and then to Largs.

How to get there: By train from Glasgow Central station
Travel time: 45 minutes approximately.

Largs is a small town which is also situated on the west coast of Scotland, south of Inverkip. A popular seaside resort with a pier, the town markets itself on its historic links with the Vikings and an annual festival is held each year in early September. In 1263, it was the site of the Battle of Largs between the Norwegian and the Scottish armies.

Largs is well-known for its ice-cream - why not see for yourself?!

A day trip to Ayr
Ayr is a town located south west of Glasgow. There are some golf courses on the way to Ayr so a trip for a game of golf is a good way to spend a day! If you are travelling by train, the coastal scenery on the way is really beautiful.

How to get there: By train from Glasgow Central station
Travel time: 50 minutes approximately.
A day trip to Balmaha and the Loch Lomond area
This area has beautiful scenery and amazing views! It is great for a picnic lunch. There are lots of opportunities to do some walking and hiking – at Balloch there is the loch shore walk (1-2 hours); on Inchcailloch island, which is a national nature reserve (2-3 hour walks); on Conic Hill (2-3 hour walks); and Ben Lomond is a 5-6 hour walk for more experienced walkers! At the National Park Visitor Centre in Balloch there is lots of information about the Park and the surrounding area with free maps and leaflets.

Our tips about this trip: don’t forget to check the weather forecast and don’t forget your camera!

How to get there: By train from Glasgow Queen Street station to Balloch. Then from Balloch to Balmaha by bus.
Travel time: 50 minutes approximately by train. Then 35 minutes approximately by bus.

A day trip to Linlithgow
Linlithgow is a historic Royal Burgh situated between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Linlithgow is highly recommended by our group as it is a lovely place with its town centre, County Buildings, the Cross Well, the Burgh Halls, the Kirkgate, Linlithgow Palace and St Michael’s Parish Church. A walk around the wonderful Linlithgow Loch will make you feel energised!

Our tips about this trip: Don’t miss the Linlithgow Canal Centre. It is worth paying a visit to the small museum and stopping at the tearooms – we met some lovely people there!

How to get there: By train from Queen Street station. There are usually trains every 30 minutes but it is better to check the train timetable in case they are running a reduced service at the weekend or in winter time. By bus - the main bus stop is The Cross.
Travel time: 30 minutes approximately by train.

A day trip or longer trip to Oban
Oban is a wee seaside town and there are lots of activities which you could do while you are there. Places to visit include the Sea Life Sanctuary, a distillery and there are three castles in the area. If you like the outdoors, you can go hiking, fishing, kayaking, cycling, rock-climbing or river-rafting! You can also catch ferries to Mull and Iona. The fresh seafood is especially tasty!

How to get there: By train from Glasgow Queen Street station
Travel time: 3 hours approximately.

Dependants’ top tips

Here are the top tips and suggestions from our project group who all lived in Glasgow as dependants of international students.

*Use every opportunity to meet people. The more you do it, the sooner you will feel at home.* Stanislav Tarnev (Bulgaria)

*Attend the International Student Support free English classes for spouses and partners of international students (even if you think you don’t need it).* Ala’a Sheeshani (Jordan)

*Research the types of bank accounts available to you and the necessary documents for an account before moving and make appointments (if possible) before moving to save yourself waiting time once arriving in Glasgow.* Don Meyer (USA)

*It is difficult to live without access to the internet nowadays. So, when we arrived in Glasgow, we visited the library. We used the internet there to order ‘pay-as-you-go’ (without a contract, you can top it up by credit card) SIM cards. Now we can use this SIM card to access the internet on our smartphones – remember these must be unlocked before coming to the UK!* Bartosz Hankus (Poland)

*Bring some foods, ingredients, teas, medicines or toiletries you really like and make you feel good, that might not be available here, or different or it just takes some time to find them (for me that is Nutella hazelnut chocolate spread, a certain kind of Haribo gummy bears and handkerchiefs by Tempo, a certain brand of Chai tea, and marmelade from an Austrian company). And find things to do on your own, try to make your own friends, there’s so much to do here in Glasgow and all of Scotland, join a group on www.meetup.com, a hiking club /www.ramblers.org.uk or volunteer at a shop, national park or other organisation.* Inge Brown (Germany)

*The Bike Station at 65 Haugh Road is a source of secondhand bikes (all bikes come with a 3 month warranty). They also do ‘fix your own bike’ sessions for a student price of only £3.* Svetlana Poselentseva (Russia)

*There is always somebody who can help you in this city, they are really friendly. In time, you will feel like you are at home.* Juan Pablo Cabbada Bergez (Chile)

*When doing the grocery shopping it is very common that big supermarkets will offer you to join some sort of loyalty programme. Always accept the offer (it’s free) and take advantage of the many rewards.* Veronica Montiel (Mexico)
The Tall Ship & Riverside Museum

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum

Gallery of Modern Art

Mryhill Canal