

INTERNATIONAL LIFE AT LEEDS

University of Leeds Lifestyle Magazine
International Student Issue

5

First Look

Life as an International Student in Leeds

Home From Home

Making the right choice about accommodation

Money Matters

An insight into the cost of living in Leeds

Life After Leeds

A Leeds graduate talks about her life after Leeds



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Get your career off to a flying start with a qualification from a world class university. Discover a new country and make lots of new friends



We would like to thank all the students, alumni and members of staff who have contributed to the magazine.

In particular we would like to thank the following:
Abigail, Asad, Benita, Gillian, Hussein, Jen, Junko, Ka Ha To, Katundu, Kelechi, Mai, Mayuresh, Meghan, Mirra, Mustafa, Myriam, Paweena, Shu-Chien, Varun and Yang.

Copyright © The University of Leeds 2008.

Opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the University of Leeds and the University does not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information.

Editorial

Amaan Al-Afandi

Photography

Justin Slee, Simon x 2

Design

Conor Walsh

contents

- 4 **Welcome to Leeds**
- 5 **First Look**
- 8 **Home from Home**
- 12 **Balancing Study and Social Life**
- 14 **Money Matters**
- 16 **The Leeds Experience**
- 18 **Sport**
- 19 **Life After Leeds**
- 20 **Top Tips**



What is life as an international student in Leeds really like? Recently we talked to some students to find out what they thought of Leeds, making friends and living away from home.

welcome to leeds

Paweena
Thailand



Paweena is currently a fourth year PhD student in the Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies. This year she joined the Meet and Greet Team to welcome new students. She got involved in lots of different activities, taking on three separate roles!

I really enjoyed working as one of the Meet and Greet team! I met many people, made a lot of new friends, and it was such great fun. It was definitely one of my most enjoyable working experiences.

I started off as an information assistant based at the International Student Office, giving arrival briefings to new students – we are there to give as much information and support to the new arrivals as possible. I then took on the role of social assistant, which essentially meant organising and running social activities at various locations, for example, an afternoon tea party at the International Student Office and a drink at the Terrace Bar in the Student Union. My final and favourite role was tour assistant, in which I gave groups of students guided tours around the campus and the city centre – I had so much to tell them!

When not on duty I joined in the International Welcome Week activities as much as I could. There were so many fun and interesting activities, for example, karaoke, a salsa night, and a British dance evening.

Having been on the other side of the Welcome Week as a worker, I can now certainly appreciate all the hard work the Welcome Team put into making sure new students have the best possible experience in settling into Leeds. All the new students I've talked to have positive comments about their experiences during the start of their time in Leeds. I think we did a great job!

I advise all international students to make the most of their time here, get out there and have fun! Keep your eyes open for all events and activities around the University. Making friends is easy; I like to go to the Global Café at the International Student Office on Monday evening, and the International Student Club on Wednesday evening. Both are great places to meet international and British students in a friendly atmosphere.

Free Meet and Greet Service

This service runs from 12th to 22nd September 2008 and gives you the opportunity to be met at your arrival point in Leeds. You will be transported to your first night's accommodation, and friendly staff will be able to help you with any questions you may have.

International Student Welcome Team

The Team are available from 12th to 22nd September 2008. Our assistants are available to answer any questions you may have, including questions about accommodation, social activities, how to open a bank account, the city, finding your way around the University, and more.

International Welcome Week

This programme runs from 15th to 22nd September 2008, and includes a range of activities, from social events to an international orientation fair. A detailed Welcome Week timetable will be available online from July, visit www.leeds.ac.uk/international

Abigail
BA Management
Kenya



“Settling in is easy because everyone here at the University is so friendly and helpful.”

first look

Some international students tell us why they chose to come to Leeds, and share their first impressions with us

Benita
MSc Food Science
India



“My advice would be to get involved - especially in the activities for students at the beginning of term.”

I attended a British curriculum school in Kenya, so we were lucky to have lots of UK universities visit the school. The University of Leeds was one of them; I was immediately interested, and then my conversation with the spokesperson got me hooked. The Business School is highly ranked and the course is great!

I really like my course because a lot of it involves student interaction and team working. Working together gives us lots of different opinions, and makes classes really lively and challenging, and of course fun.

One of the best things I would have to say about Leeds is the multicultural student population and the opportunities to get involved in various activities. I have met students from all over the world. There are so many Kenyans here; it's good having a bit of home so far away from home. I have joined the Leeds University Model United Nations Association. In high school I took part in a similar programme, and so I was more than delighted to find it here too!

I chose Leeds straight away when I decided I wanted to do postgraduate studies – the Department of Food Science was awarded the top 5* in the latest RAE (Research Assessment Exercise).

International Orientation Week was really good; I was involved in so many activities organised by the International Centre and made lots of friends, some international, some European, and some British. It is wonderful having a mix of friends, we learn so much from each other. I live with other international students in my residence, so at the start we helped each other a lot in finding the different buildings on campus, and various places in the city. Also, because we are all from different countries, I have tried many different cuisines in my time here so far... and if we want a break from cooking we go out to the many restaurants nearby.



Shu-Chien
BA Italian and Japanese
Taiwan

The Department of Modern Languages' reputation was why I chose to study at Leeds. I read that the number of programmes at the University of Leeds involving modern languages is probably greater than anywhere else in the UK, and that explains why Leeds has more language undergraduates than any other UK university.

Coming to the UK for a degree is a big investment, and I set myself targets of achievement from the start – but then when I came I found that there is so much more to Leeds than just studying. Of course I still study a lot but also make time to have fun.

There are lots of places to see and things to do. Something I particularly enjoy is going to see plays at the West Yorkshire Playhouse in Leeds. There are so many events throughout the year for students to get involved in. There is the German Christmas market, the real ice-rink created in the city centre, the Valentines Fair and much more.

Everyone is so supportive and friendly in the University, I am really enjoying my time here and hope to stay and work in the UK when I finish my degree.

“My course is very challenging; my lecturers are very capable and well respected in the field.”



Gillian
LLM Law
Zimbabwe

“I had a great time at the social events and met lots of people who I am still in touch with.”



Ka Ha To
BSc Accounting and Finance
China

Before starting my undergraduate degree I read that the University of Leeds has an outstanding reputation many times, and that graduates of the University are highly employable across the globe. Now in my third year while I apply for jobs I am glad I chose such a reputable university because securing employment at the end is very important to me.

I was nervous about coming to a country so different to my own, but was also very excited at the prospect of learning and trying new things, and being completely independent. I have achieved so much in such little time. Academically my course allowed me to choose modules from other courses, and so I was able to take up a new language. The many societies on offer encouraged me to take up hiking, something I have continued to do since joining in the first year.

It's quite funny how much I have absorbed from the British culture; now one of my favourite foods is fish and chips, the traditional English dish.

My father did his masters here many years ago, and I have never stopped hearing about it from him! He has such good memories of being here, that I came in hope of enjoying a similar experience.

Because my father spoke a lot about the University and the city of Leeds, I had read about them both many years before I was even old enough to study at university. Coming to see the University and city for myself has been quite a magical experience already.



Meghan

MA International Communications
USA

I decided that I wanted to do my masters in England but was offered a vast range of different universities to choose from, so a lot of research was involved before making my choice. Leeds offered a top rate course, in a well-known university and a vibrant city.

I am having a great time enjoying the differences between the UK and US. I really like getting into dialogue about global affairs with students from around the world and getting different perspectives, something I would not have got in the US.

From the start, I knew it would be really different to being at home, so I am finding ways to embrace these differences with travel being one. A big advantage of living in Leeds is that it is practically at the centre of the UK, so I am able to travel around the UK and see it properly during the year I am here. The distances aren't far, and so my friends and I have been on many one day adventures as well as long weekends and week long trips. You can experience as much as a beach, countryside and cliff side views all in one weekend in the UK!



Asad
MBA
Pakistan

There were three areas that attracted me to Leeds: the ranking of the Business School, the scholarship on offer, and the city of Leeds.

The University's facilities are all very good, particularly the libraries. I always find the book that I need by looking it up on the online database before locating it on the shelf; and if I ever do find myself needing some help, there are some friendly staff always available to ask. I highly rate the technology aspect at the University too. There are computer rooms in all the buildings, and some of them stay open 24 hours a day.

This is very convenient because sometimes when I have some important work to finish, I prefer to work in the quiet of the University in an evening rather than go home and get distracted by my flatmates.

Being at a university in a non-Muslim country worried me a little before I came, but all my worries disappeared after a few days when I discovered the halal shops and restaurants, the many mosques, and made friends with other Muslims. I also like having British friends too, because I can practise my English while learning from their culture.

I regularly call my father to tell him how I have seen the buildings he described to me, and he often says "it's opposite..." and "is the ...still there?" The city has drastically changed since he was here, I read that the city has become the capital of the North, and being here I can see why. The city has really advanced since my father's pictures, but the mix of old and new adds to it's charm. I hope my father will come visit me soon.

Finding the accommodation that is best for your needs is very important. Would you like to live near campus, would you prefer to cook for yourself or be in catered accommodation? Are en-suite facilities important to you?

Here, some current Leeds students talk about their experience of finding accommodation and give some helpful advice to anyone thinking about coming to study and live in Leeds.

4 home

Catered or self-catered

Kelechi, Nigeria – I wanted to live in catered halls of residence as I was told by friends that it's an excellent way to meet lots of people new to the University. Also, I didn't want to cook for myself every day and I wanted to be near the campus and the city centre. The University has lots of halls, some on campus or nearby and others situated in Headingley which is a very popular area with students.

My hall of residence is actually on campus, so it's very easy for me to get to my lectures. The social life in halls is very good and I have met lots of people from all sorts of backgrounds. The other big advantage of halls whether catered or self-catered is that there are wardens and subwardens and lots of staff to help students get settled in and help with any problems that might arise. The staff in my halls were very helpful and supportive which was important in my first few weeks. I really liked the fact that they were on hand and only having one bill to pay for all my accommodation and meals makes budgeting easy.

Mayuresh, India – Like Kelechi I wanted accommodation near to campus. I also wanted the support of the warden system but didn't want catered accommodation as I prefer the flexibility of self-catered accommodation and like cooking. I chose a flat shared with other students in a large complex owned by the University.

Budgeting is OK as all my utility bills are included in the rent and I decide how much I want to spend on food and entertainment. Shopping in Leeds is very easy as there are large supermarkets close to the University as well as the more specialist stores which cater for international students. I also like to go out with friends and there are plenty of cafes and restaurants to choose from, whether you want a quick cheap filler or want to treat yourself for a special evening.

Making friends

Hussein, Kenya – I'm in my third year and wanted the independence that living in a flat with friends gives. I agree that halls are a great way to meet lots of people in your first few weeks, but there are lots of opportunities to meet people and make friends even if you choose not to live in a large hall of residence. There are lots of student societies to join and departments run induction events where you can get to know your fellow classmates. My advice is don't hold back – join a club or society and get talking to people. I think a good way to get to know people on your course is to suggest going for a coffee or snack after lectures.

Yang, China – The Global Café run by the International Student Office is a good place for meeting people from all over the world and as Hussein says, joining one of the societies is one of the best ways to meet people with similar tastes and

interests. But also take advantage of the day trips organised by the International Student Office. They are an affordable way to see more of the country around Leeds and to meet people. The International Student Office also organise events for the families of international students to help everyone feel at home in Leeds.

Myriam, Mexico – Remember it's important to talk to everyone you can. Don't be shy, we are all in the same position and someone has to take the first step. Be open-minded and take the opportunity to learn about other cultures. I have joined the Spanish, Latin American and Portuguese Society (SLAPSoc), and I also go to the sports centre for yoga and pilates, meeting lots of new friends along the way.

Location and facilities

Mayuresh, India – Where you live is very important. My flat is just 10 minutes walk from the campus and 15 from the city centre. It means that I can walk most of the time and don't have any transport costs.

Myriam, Mexico – I'm in the same complex as Mayuresh and I love it. I have my own bedroom and bathroom, get to meet lots of interesting people and have a beautiful view of the city from my window. I chose it because of the location and the fact that I wanted my own bathroom.

Hussein, Kenya – Location and facilities are important factors but so is cost. In Leeds there is lots of choice in the housing market and plenty of advice on offer. I would recommend using Unipol, a charity, established in 1975 in Leeds, which helps students find the best housing they can and is dedicated to promoting high quality student accommodation that's affordable. But don't rush into making a choice. Draw up a list of features that you want and what your budget is. Don't be afraid to ask questions and look at the University and Unipol websites.

Yang, China – It is very convenient being near to the University campus but some people prefer to live in Headingley which is very popular with students and has lots of facilities for us. The city buses are very frequent and affordable and in the good weather its nice to walk or cycle and learn more about where you live. My house is about 20 minutes walk away from the University campus in a lovely leafy suburb with a fabulous garden.

Kelechi, Nigeria – I'm glad I decided to live on campus – I can get to lectures and the library really quickly and I can stay in the library or the computer clusters to work after lectures knowing that my room and the dining room are just around the corner.

tips

- * Be prepared – keep an open mind
- * Stay healthy – eat well
- * Keep in contact with your family and friends back home
- * Get out and join one of the student societies or clubs
- * Have fun
- * Arrive in plenty of time to open bank accounts and get settled into your accommodation before term starts
- * Talk to everyone – don't be afraid and you will make friends from all over the world
- * Take the opportunity to travel around Britain - it's a beautiful place
- * Ask questions - be interested
- * Make full use of the facilities
- * Visit the International Office

from home





Q & A

?



KELECHI
BSc ENGINEERING
NIGERIA



HUSSEIN
BA ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE
KENYA

What sort of accommodation do you live in?

Catered University halls of residence

Private flat

Where is it?

On campus

Near the University

Why did you choose to live there?

It's a great place to make friends

Good price and near the University

How much does it cost?

£80 a week and food

£70.00 per week plus grocery shopping

What is your top money-saving tip?

Hide your credit cards

Draw up a budget and try to keep to it

Best place to relax?

Sports Centre

The Students' Union

One word to describe Leeds?

Impressive

Amazing

If I was in Leeds for one day what should I see?

The University itself

The Parkinson Building on campus

If you could have any job what would it be?

Serving the community in some way

International finance



MYRIAM
MA EDUCATION
MEXICO



YANG
PhD MATERIALS SCIENCE
CHINA



MAYURESH
MSc FOOD SCIENCE
INDIA

University self-catered flat

University family house

University self-catered flat

10 minutes walk from campus

20 minutes walk from campus

10 minutes walk from campus

I wanted en-suite facilities

Its spacious and in a quiet area with a lovely garden

It had great facilities and was near campus

£90.00 a week and my food costs

£90.00 per week plus food bills

£95.00 a week plus my food

Walk when you can and eat at home

Learn to cook

Think before you shop

Viva Cuba restaurant

My local bar

Tiger Tiger bar and restaurant

Lovely

Lively

Exciting

The Royal Armouries Museum

Temple Newsam house and gardens

The shopping

Educational Psychologist

University lecturer or engineer

Work in the food industry

MAI
JORDAN



Spending three years in the UK for my undergraduate degree is an excellent opportunity for me. I had to really consider all aspects of university life when choosing where to go. The University of Leeds having an amazing reputation for law and the city boasting an extensive social scene made Leeds my number one choice.

I am very dedicated to my studies because I know that obtaining a UK degree is a great achievement, and I want to do my best, but it is also important to make it into a thoroughly enjoyable experience, which it has been so far! There is plenty to do when not in lectures and studying. In between lectures I meet friends— there are plenty of places on campus or just

next to the University campus to meet for a coffee or something to eat. After university I try to get some of my work done so that I can socialise with friends. On a university evening I prefer to go to my friends' places to chill out. It is a good time to catch up on what has been happening with them. We sometimes go to International Student Office activities which are great because they are a comfortable way to make new friends, and a good opportunity to practise your English.

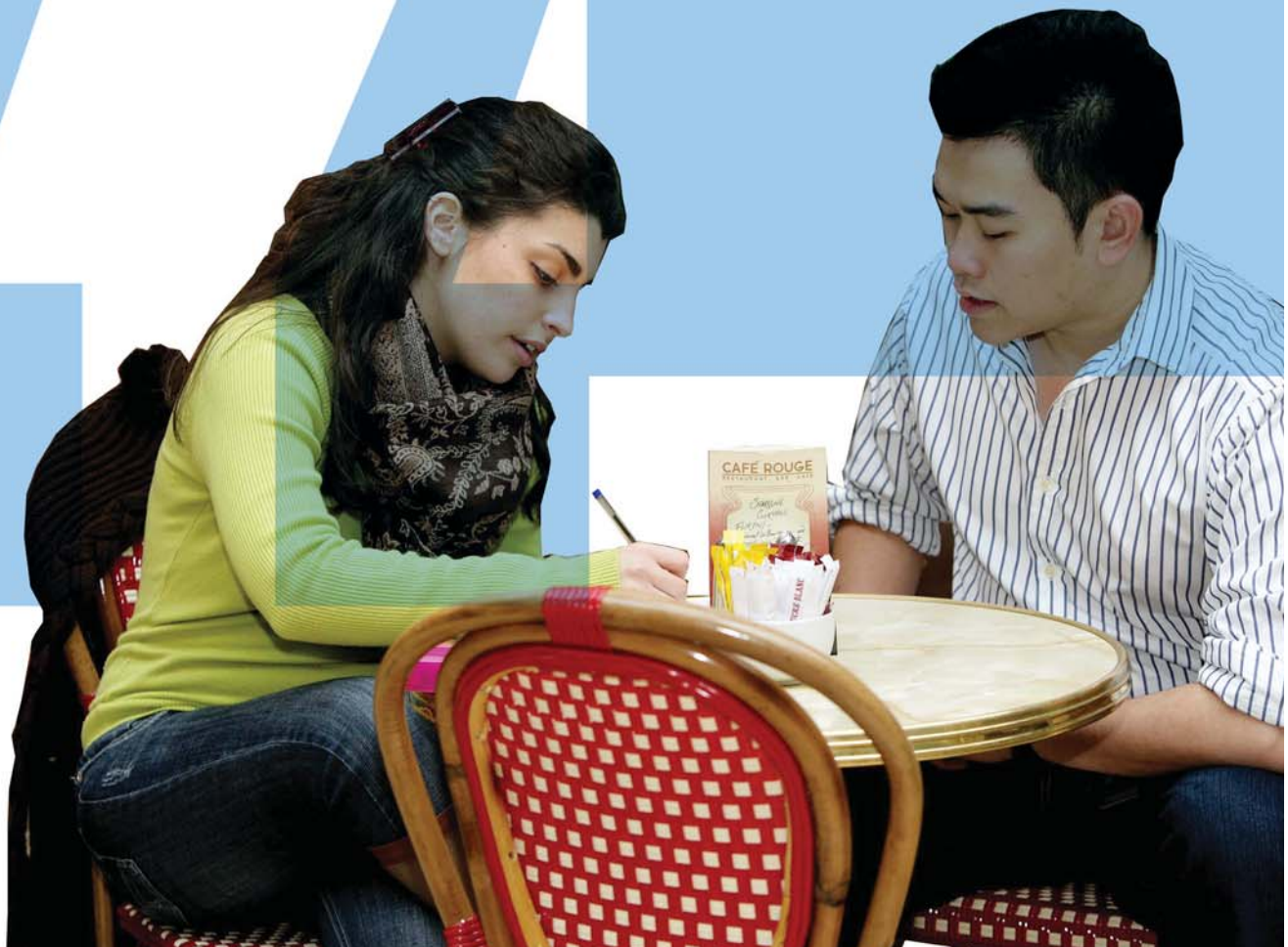
On weekends I like to fit in as much as I can. I do my grocery shopping one day - Leeds has Europe's largest indoor market, and go clothes shopping the next - the city centre has two miles of traffic-free shopping! Leeds city centre has so much to offer, I always feel spoilt for choice. I like to go to the shops we also have in Jordan but at the same time I enjoy trying out the boutiques and other places unique to Leeds and the UK. At night I like to go out with my friends. Again there is so

much to choose from, and with my friends I like to try something different every weekend if I can.

One of the things I love most about Leeds is that all the places you may be interested in visiting while you are here are accessible. The 'Give it a Go' programme offers students the chance to see various places in the UK, which is an excellent opportunity to see the UK while you are here to study as you may never get this chance again. It's about a 2 ½ hour train ride to Edinburgh or London, both of which you must visit while you're in the UK. If you like travelling on your own or with a small group of friends, I would definitely recommend a young person's railcard! For a small cost you get 1/3 off your train tickets, making travel more affordable.

My time here so far has been such an incredible experience that I am considering doing my postgraduate studies in Leeds too.

balancing study &



JEN
USA



The Students' Union is a treasure chest of activities. As I looked through the list of upcoming activities, I saw everything from a bike maintenance class to a cheese society! Societies allow students to connect with new people from their course or from around the University while having fun with new and old hobbies.

I belong to the Broadcast Journalism Society, Leeds Student Radio, Leeds Student Television, the Classics Society and the Christian Union.

I joined the Broadcast Journalism Society because I was keen to meet students from the second and third year as well as getting to know my fellow first years better. Plus, they plan activities that are particularly beneficial to Broadcast Journalism (BJ) students. They do quizzes

designed especially for the BJ students, so there are questions about some of our lecturers that are quite funny. They often book guest speakers too.

As a Broadcast Journalist, I thought that it would be important to join a few of the media societies, so I joined Leeds Student Radio and Leeds Student Television (LSTV). I used to work at a radio station back home as a weekend news anchor and loved it, so I get to continue that work here. I would like to be a News Presenter one day, for the BBC would be ideal; LSTV is a good way for me to practise the things I am being taught in my classes. So far, I've done a bit of news reading in the afternoon, but I hope to do more. Plus, it's a fabulous group of people!

I chose to become a member of the Classics Society so that I could travel to Athens with them in March. I love to travel, so this was another avenue to do so. I'm probably most excited about going to the National Archaeology Museum because I've learned about several pieces that are housed there. I remember a year

ago when I was taking an Art-History class wondering if I would ever be able to see these ancient treasures. This trip is truly making one of my dreams come true.

One of the most important things about moving away from home, no matter how close or far away that is, is to establish yourself. As a Christian, the best way for me to establish myself was to find a church and meet fellow Christians. That's where the Christian Union (CU) comes in. The CU puts on so many events each week! They do the Global Café for international students, prayer meetings several mornings a week, cell groups for all the different residence halls (or one big one for the on-campus residences), and so much more. It's a fun way to get to know fellow Christians or just to relax.

I absolutely love the University of Leeds – I am having such a good time here already so can't help but smile as I walk to class. After I graduate, I would love to get my MA in International Journalism from Leeds as well.

social life

Being an international student can be a completely new experience, so learning as much as you can about being an international student in Leeds is very useful. Mai and Jen give us a brief insight into how they spend their free time.

**MUSTAFA
KENYA**



Mustafa is in his fourth year of a Medicine degree.

Accommodation

1. **Where do you live?** A shared house in Burley
2. **How much does this cost a month?** £63
3. **How do you get to the University?** Walk/Bus
4. **How much does it cost a month?** £30
5. **How long does it take you to get to the University?** 20 minutes
6. **How much do you spend on energy bills a month?** £30
7. **How much do you spend on food a month?** £60

Books and equipment

1. **How much will you be spending during the year on books and equipment?** £50
2. **Do you know of anywhere you can buy university textbooks cheaply?** Blackwells opposite the University. I advise you to find a friend who you can share library books with

Social life

1. **How much do you spend on social activities a month?** £100
2. **Where do you go to socialise during the day on campus?** Level 7 café in my department

3. **Where do you go to socialise during the day in Leeds?**

A number of coffee houses in the city centre

4. **Where do you socialise in the evenings?**

I like to go the gym and cinema

5. **When you are living on a budget in Leeds, what are the best places for:**

Clothes shopping

H&M because it is stylish and cheap

Food shopping

Morrisons, they always have lots of offers

A take-away

Anything open after 1am, because when you're hungry, everything tastes good!

A sit-down meal

Nandos, especially because I receive NHS discount

La Cafetiere, nice atmosphere

A night out on the town

Call Lane because there is so much to choose from on one road

What are your budget tips for new students?

Try to keep track of how much you spend a month. As long as you have an approximate budget for a month it makes things much easier. You will find yourself in a more comfortable situation and make less calls abroad asking for money!

money matters

The University of Leeds recommends that students budget between £600 and £700 a month for living expenses. However, the cost of living in Leeds will depend on your lifestyle - where you live, what facilities you want, and how much you spend on food and socialising. Mustafa and Junko explain what they spend each month.

**JUNKO
JAPAN**



Junko is studying Conference Interpreting at masters level.

Accommodation

1. Where do you live?

Leodis Residences (University accommodation)

2. How much does this cost a month? £400

3. How do you get to the University? On foot

4. How much does it cost a month? zero

5. How long does it take you to get to the University? 10 minutes

6. How much do you spend on energy bills a month?

Included in the rent

7. How much do you spend on food a month?

Between £100 and £150

Books and equipment

1. How much will you be spending during the year on books and equipment? I usually borrow books from the library so I will just spend £20 for stationery

2. Do you know of anywhere you can buy university textbooks cheaply? The Union book shop

Social life

1. How much do you spend on social activities a month?

£50 to £80

2. Where do you go to socialise during the day on campus?

Parkinson café

3. Where do you go to socialise during the day in Leeds?

The city centre with my friends

4. Where do you socialise in the evenings? Students' Union has many social activities so I often go there with my flat mate, friends, and classmates.

5. When you are living on a budget in Leeds, what are the best places for:

Clothes shopping

Primark, you can find fashionable but cheap clothes there!

Food shopping

The open market, you can get cheap fresh fruits and vegetables there, and I also enjoy the lively atmosphere

A take-away

Ainsleys, you can have a handy hot snack when you don't have time to make it yourself

A sit-down meal

Red Chili is the best Chinese restaurant in Leeds!

Chilling out

Opposite café (which is actually opposite the University). I recommend the muffins there, they are just one pound each, and large and tasty

A night out on the town

The many pubs/clubs Leeds has to offer. You can never get bored here.

What are your budget tips for new students?

Keeping a record of how much you spend is a good idea. Another money saving tip is to cook instead of eating out everyday, if you cook with your friends you can eat different food and learn new recipes at the same time.



the leeds experience

Each year over 5,000 international students from countries across the globe arrive in Leeds to study.

We recently caught up with two of our international students to find out why they had come to Leeds and what they thought about their experience so far.

**MYRIAM
MEXICO**



Myriam Mojica Martinez from Mexico is studying an MA in Special Educational Needs having completed her undergraduate degree in Psychology at Universidad Intercontinental in Mexico.

Choosing a university for study can be difficult so it is important to do lots of research. The University of Leeds is ranked as one of the best universities in the area of Education, so this was definitely something I wanted to look into further. The department's staff were really kind to me during the application process; I received a lot of important information when requested and a scholarship from Leeds before any other university offered me one.

Before coming to the UK to do a Masters, I was working for a company researching the influence of body language in down-syndrome children and so was keen to be able to continue researching in this area. This is something Leeds has been able to help me with.

In the School of Education we have an academic tutor and a personal tutor too. This is a very important way of supporting students, something I think works really well. There are a few other international students on my course. In some sessions we give presentations about our countries; I have learnt a lot about the education systems of England and of other countries too. The library is amazing, I do not need to buy any books because it has a lot of copies of the same book and you can find books online, so that can be from the comfort of your bedroom!

I think the most important thing while being a student is that you take advantage of the help on offer. For example I am taking the English course in the Language Centre, which is helping me improve my English, and the Skills Centre can help you with assignment technique.

I love to travel so it's very good for me that the University has a lot of events in which you can travel. In only 3 months I have visited York, Liverpool, Lake District, Blackpool, Birmingham, London, Crawley, Brighton and Edinburgh. Most of the trips were organised by the Students' Union, the International Student Office or the School of Education, so it has been a great way of seeing the UK without having to do any organising myself.

Leeds is one of the biggest cities in England with a lot to offer. I have been to some very diverse places, including Temple Newsam, which is a beautiful old mansion with a lake and gardens, and to the Leeds International Film Festival that takes place every year. At the same time, Leeds is a lively night city that offers a lot of different kinds of restaurants, pubs, music and other ways to have fun.

Enjoy every minute that you are in Leeds; it is one of the most amazing experiences that you can have in your life. You learn a lot about your topic but with different points of view, and meet a lot of new cultures. It is really important that you enjoy your studies; writing assignments in a second language is not easy but is not impossible, so you have to work hard. Studying in the UK has definitely opened up my mind to a lot, particularly new ways of doing things. I also like that it has made me more independent.

When I finish my Masters, I would like to go back to my country to work as a Educational Psychologist in a mainstream school that includes children with special educational needs, because I feel that all the knowledge I am learning here will be really helpful for the children in my country.



**VARUN
INDIA**



Varun Sanam has come from India to study an MSc in International Finance, having completed his undergraduate degree in Business Studies back home in India.

The academic reputation of Leeds was an important factor for me in choosing what university I would like to study at in the UK, but there were also lots of other reasons that attracted me to Leeds. The facilities in terms of sport, libraries and just having a good time on campus are phenomenal. My course seemed most relevant in terms of the exposure I'd get to back up other work experience and the qualifications I already hold. I secured an academic scholarship from the Business School toward my postgraduate study.

I also really liked Leeds. The city is bright and vibrant, and boasts a large and diverse student atmosphere. Also Leeds is fast emerging as the most important financial hub in the UK. Its proximity to London can help towards any professional experience I could gain during the year I am here.

Even though I am a very competitive individual, I believe our academic experiences are not just about the grades we score at the end of the year. I think university is about having a great time, finding a balance between work and social life, and developing as individuals - the good grades will follow.

The method of teaching is different to that back home; there is more toward understanding and applicability here. Critique and questioning of what we learn is actively promoted. The lecturers bring class room learning and past industry experience together making the context very relevant.

The facilities at the University are world class and easy to use. The library has a vast amount of books to offer and the support there is particularly impressive. In addition, the Careers Centre gives you everything you need to make that next decisive move after university; with a chance to meet prospective employers, advising on interviews and assessments and how to stand out from the crowd.

The International Student Office provides great support over the entire length of the course, be it settling in comfortably or problems of any nature that may arise.

There are plenty of opportunities to take part in non-university related activities on campus, including sport. I spend a lot of time at the Sports Centre, and the facilities available there are impressive. As part of the Postgrad Business School football team I spend all my free time on the field.

I am also a member of the International Students Society. I heard about it during the Introweek and decided it would be a great platform to make friends from all around the world. There is so much to learn about different cultures, and so much to appreciate. The Society brought people together. A big bonus of being in Leeds is that it is well located for weekend trips to other parts of the UK with friends.

My advice to all international students is try everything new and exciting, keeping an open mind and having fun. As you have chosen to make a valuable investment in yourself and your professional progression, take advantage of the facilities on offer and make your time here count.

I hope to take the skill and knowledge, the ability to work in multicultural teams, and a global mindset to fulfil a career in the international banking sector.

The University's excellent sport facilities provide opportunities to keep healthy and get active whether you want to participate for fun, at club level or elite level.

44 sport

A £20 million spending plan is currently in operation to add exciting sports facilities to the University of Leeds. A 25m, 8 lane swimming pool and a 200 station health and fitness centre will open in September 2009. Alongside this, facilities at the on-campus Sports Centre include a brand new climbing wall, 3 large multi-use sports halls, squash courts, table tennis room and fitness studio.

In addition to the impressive on-site facilities, the extensive playing fields (both grass and artificial) have recently seen an investment providing first-class outdoor facilities which include a 3G rubber crumb pitch, 2 sand dressed artificial pitches, cricket squares and 32 grass pitches.

The University provides excellent opportunities to keep healthy and get active whether you want to participate for fun, at club level or elite level. You could get involved with the Intra Mural (recreational sport) programme which is one of the largest of any higher education institution, join one of the 60 sports clubs which range from Aikido to Sub Aqua, or learn a new activity such as salsa aerobics. A large number of events and tournaments are organised for international students through the Intra Mural programme.

"I think the Intra Mural programme is special because it allows our international community to integrate not only with each other but also with UK students. It also provides our international students with a structure for developing their physical activity while studying at Leeds."

Patrick Craig, Sports Development Officer

The University also supports over 40 world class athletes in their academic and sporting lives through the Performance Sport programme. Current scholars on the programme include international squash player Saurav Ghosal and Olympic Triathlon prospect Alistair Brownlee.

"I have been a sports member for two years, and am really enjoying it. I joined for a number of reasons; firstly, I strongly believe that sports introduce an individual to many people, some whom eventually become very good friends. Secondly, because I enjoy playing basketball, I wanted to be able to play whenever I could. Finally, I joined the Sports Centre because it is first-class; I have access to all the facilities and clubs, I really like the strength and conditioning room, the workout facilities and using the badminton and basketball courts, to name a few."

**Katundu, BSc Pharmacology
Zambia**



MIRRA
INDIA



Mirra Sondhi from India graduated from the University of Leeds in 2007 with a degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering. She now works as an IT Analyst at KPMG (one of the big four financial companies in the world); and is part of the IT advisory group of the financial services branch.

I chose to study at the University of Leeds because it is one of the premier league universities of the UK. The teaching is of a very high standard and as a university it is over 100 years old, a very established institution. There is always research going on in conjunction with other elite universities and Leeds is amongst the best in sports and other extra-curricular activities as well.

Leeds has a very strong international student population and a highly active student union that boasts of holding the best events through various societies. Leeds as a city is called the London of the north and is soon becoming the e-capital of the UK.

life
after

leeds

During my 'A' levels I was quite interested in Physics and especially optical fibre communications and so Electronics and Communication engineering combined both my interests. It is one of the engineering courses that covers a lot of other modules which are seen in electrical, mechanical and computer engineering. Thus the course gives a very wide range to develop your knowledge. I did a lot of programming and wiring in my first and second years and in the third we mainly concentrated on the communication modules.

As part of my role as an IT Analyst, I get to work on a variety of projects. These can involve anything from doing an IT audit for our audit clients, advising IT strategies for improving performance of the company, or giving project assurance for companies implementing new IT systems. Our clients range from investment banks to companies in the media and communications industry.

A technical degree put me in a good position when applying for any kind of job because of the strong mathematical and analytical skills engineers possess. Having a degree from a well established, reputable university like Leeds has

benefited me greatly. The city and the University have played a big role in my personal and professional growth.

My advice to all international students is to come with an open mind, ready to learn and absorb different cultures and societies. Studying in the UK is a unique opportunity to enjoy and appreciate a truly international student experience. Leeds has got a great student life and after only one year in Leeds, it will become a second home. I made great friends from all over the world during my time at Leeds, and I still keep in contact with many of them.

The University of Leeds gave me a truly international exposure that I had always wanted and so much more.



top TIPS

1 Read the University of Leeds Pre-arrival Guide for international students

This booklet explains in detail all the things you need to do before you come to Leeds. It's the essential guide for getting ready. If you haven't received a copy through the post yet you can download a copy from www.leeds.ac.uk/international/brochures.htm

2 Confirm your place at Leeds

If you are unsure about how to do this read the Pre-arrival Guide. It will explain the steps you need to take.

3 Apply for a visa in plenty of time (if you need one)

Again, if you are unsure about what you need to do, the Pre-arrival Guide has a section on immigration. You can also read www.ukvisas.gov.uk

4 Work out your budget

You need to think carefully about your budget. For estimated living and accommodation costs, as well as special information for students accompanied by families, see the Pre-arrival Guide. More information is also available from the Student Advice Centre www.luuonline.com/advice/money.html

5 Apply for a scholarship

Check the University of Leeds database of scholarships for international students on www.leeds.ac.uk/international/costs.htm

6 Improve your English (if you need to)

The University of Leeds Language Centre runs special pre-sessional English language courses for students who would like to feel more confident in their written and spoken English. For more information www.leeds.ac.uk/languages/lc_home.html

7 Arrange accommodation

The Pre-arrival Guide has lots of information about organising accommodation. If you can't move into your new home straight away you can also find information on temporary accommodation. More information is available at www.leeds.ac.uk/accommodation/

8 Learn about life in the UK

Find out about Leeds and the UK before you come. It may not prevent culture shock, but it will make your first few weeks in Leeds easier. A useful starting point is www.leeds.ac.uk and www.ukcisa.org.uk/files/pdf/info_sheets/culture_shock.pdf

9 Make your travel arrangements

To get a flight on the date you want, at a reasonable price, book your flights well in advance. Try to arrive in time to take part in the International Welcome Programme. (Leeds is connected to all the major European hubs via Leeds/Bradford airport).

10 September Meet and Greet service - book your place

The September Meet and Greet Service is designed to help international students when they first arrive in Leeds. To ensure that you are met you should reserve your place. Please read the Pre-arrival Guide for details and conditions.

11 Check if you need health care cover

If you are coming to Leeds for less than six months and your country has not got a reciprocal health agreement with the UK you will need to get health insurance. See the Pre-arrival Guide for more details.

12 Pack your suitcase...and get on that plane

Details of what you can and cannot take through UK customs can be found on www.hmrc.gov.uk

