



In partnership with



Southampton
Solent University
Pathway

Parents and guardians' guide



MAKE
WAVES

qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway



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Welcome to Southampton

We're a city-centre campus, which means that everything Southampton has to offer is right on your doorstep. If you're looking for arts, culture, sports, or entertainment, then the South Coast's biggest city delivers it all – and it's one of the most affordable places to live in the south, too.

Solent University is wrapped up in the city, its people, and its events. We're an active part of Southampton's warm, welcoming, and diverse local community: working with our city partners and neighbours to celebrate Pride, supporting the local marathon, helping put on film and music festivals, and much more.

Southampton is a great place to launch your career. Whatever you're looking for, you'll find it here. We have close ties with businesses of all kinds, this helps us deliver the essential professional experience you'll need to kickstart your future.

Why Solent?



Gold-standard teaching

In the latest Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) review, we achieved triple-gold rating for our teaching - the only university on the South Coast to achieve this standard.



In the top 25% of UK universities for teaching quality, out of 130 institutions
(The Times Good University Guide, 2026)



In the top 25% of UK universities for sustained employment
(LEO 2025)



We've welcomed students of over 100 different nationalities and have a network of 75,000 alumni around the world.



Official university partner
of Southampton Football Club.





Pathway programmes

If your child is looking to study at Southampton Solent University and needs to build on their existing qualifications to meet entry requirements, our International Foundation and International Year One programmes are designed to do just that.

International Foundation

1 Business and management
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/ifp-bm

2 Creative industries
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/ifp-ci

3 STEM
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/ifp-stem

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International Year One

1 BSc (Hons) Business Management
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/iy1-bm

2 BSc (Hons) Computer Science
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/iy1-cs

Learn more about our courses
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/courses



Living in Southampton

Our campus is right in the heart of this exciting city, giving your child easy access to everything from food and drink, to culture and sport.

An affordable city: Southampton is known for its affordability compared to larger UK cities. From accommodation costs to going out, money stretches further here than London, Bristol, Portsmouth and other cities.

Campus life: just a five-minute walk through the park gives your child convenient access to shops, restaurants and bars as well as music and sport venues. Our campus and halls of residence are conveniently located nearby, ensuring they're always close to the best of what Southampton has to offer.



Getting to campus

Our campus is just a 10-15 minute walk from Southampton Central train station. The city offers a variety of transport options to ensure your child can reach our campus safely.

Find us:
solent.ac.uk/find-us

Plan your child's journey:
myjourneysouthampton.com



Studying in Southampton

We're a city right on the coast, less than an hour and a half away from London. Southampton is a well-connected city with a rich cultural identity that influences our food, music and community. There's a place for everyone here, and we guarantee you'll find yours. **Find out more:** solent.ac.uk/life-in-southampton



Campus facilities

On our campus, your child will benefit from a variety of study areas, including a five-floor library that is open 24/7, individual and group study rooms, as well as many comfortable breakout areas for a more relaxed study environment.

Find out more here:
solent.ac.uk/facilities



Live music venues

Southampton regularly plays host to the biggest names in music at its various venues and concert halls. The Joiners Arms is known for showcasing emerging artists on the brink of mainstream success, and the 1,750-capacity O2 Guildhall is a popular stop on national tours. Both of these venues are standout spots.



Day trips

The New Forest, London and other coastal towns are all easily accessible by car or public transport, and each offer their own unique take on life on the South Coast. Don't miss our advice on the best ways to travel and what to do when you arrive.



Dining out

With so much entertainment on offer in Southampton, it should come as no surprise that locals also enjoy access to a great selection of restaurants and eateries. Students who are looking for a quick bite need look no further than Westquay's enormous food court.



Accommodation

Our student residences

We understand that finding a safe place to live is a priority as a parent. We have over 1,200 single study bedrooms across four residences: David Moxon, Kimber, Deanary and Chantry, located across our campus to suit different budgets and needs. This accommodation is safe and secure, with a residence team available on site 24/7. Included in the rent is up to 100MB WiFi access, personal contents insurance, social rooms, cleaning of communal areas, and coverage for all utility bills.

We have a dedicated accommodation team at the university to support you with finding your child the perfect place to live. If your child is under 18, they will need ensuite accommodation (please remember to let the team know when you make enquiries).

You can contact our friendly team by emailing: accommodation@solent.ac.uk

You can find out more about the halls of residence by visiting: solent.ac.uk/accommodation

Take a virtual tour of the accommodation options: explore.solent.ac.uk

Private accommodation

If you would prefer something more private, away from campus, the Southampton Accreditation Scheme for Student Housing (SASSH) can provide more information about the options available to you. It is important to be aware that many private accommodation options are not available for students under the age of 18, or will require a guarantor.

You can find out more and contact SASSH by visiting: SASSH.co.uk

Student support

Students at Southampton Solent University have access to a range of specialist support services. International students often have specific questions, and our dedicated teams are always available to provide assistance.

International Foundation Programme team support

Our QA Higher Education Pathway staff will be on hand to support your child throughout their International Foundation Programme. Facilitating weekly check-ins with all under 18 students and undertaking enhanced attendance monitoring.

Student Hub

This is a central space where your child can access all of the guidance and support they may need during their time at Southampton Solent University. Under-18 students will be assigned a dedicated contact within the Hub. Your child will be able to book 30-minute face-to-face appointments with their contact via a booking system to discuss support and guidance.

The International Advice team

Your child will find the International Advice team within the university's Student Hub. They're here to support students throughout their studies and to help them get the most out of student life. They offer information, guidance, and advice on various issues, including: visas and immigration, life in the UK, and employment and careers. They are also available to help students if they have any questions prior to arriving in the UK.

Succeed@Solent

If your child requires further study advice and academic support, our Succeed@Solent team is here to help. They ensure students meet the high expectations for quality, structure, presentation, and content in assignments, essays, and projects required at degree level.

Find out more: solent.ac.uk/student-support

Learn more about the support available to international students: solent.ac.uk/international



Living in the UK

Depending on where in the world your child is arriving from, life in the UK may seem very different to what they are used to. This is a completely normal reaction to moving abroad.

Cultural differences

When your child arrives in England, they will undoubtedly encounter many new experiences. Even though things seem very similar, subtle differences can make everyday routines and simple actions challenging. If your child experiences loneliness or sadness, here are some helpful tips for managing cultural differences:

Accommodation

'Right to Rent' Act: since February 2016, international students renting privately must prove their immigration status to landlords to show their 'right to rent'.

Find out more about the right to rent act, and what this means here:

ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Looking-for-housing

Council tax

Council tax is a property-based tax set by local authorities (councils) in England, Scotland, and Wales to help fund services they provide, such as libraries, the police, and the fire brigade. If you live in university halls or a house occupied solely by full-time students, you'll be exempt from paying council tax. You can get a council tax exemption certificate from your school office once you have enrolled at the university.

Read more about council tax and international students here:

ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Fees-and-Money/Council-Tax

Banking

Banks are usually open 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, and some may open on a Saturday morning. They are closed on public holidays.

The major UK banks with branches in Southampton are:

Barclays Bank: barclays.co.uk

HSBC: hsbc.co.uk

NatWest Bank: natwest.com

TSB: tsb.co.uk

Halifax: halifax.co.uk

Lloyds Bank: lloydsbank.com

Royal Bank of Scotland: rbs.co.uk

Emergencies

In case of emergency where an immediate response is required, your child should dial 999. This is the UK's emergency number for the police, fire brigade or ambulance services. They can also dial 101 to contact the police in non-emergency situations, where immediate attendance is not required.

Healthcare

If your child is from within the EU/EEA, they should obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), as evidence that they are entitled to reciprocal healthcare provided by the NHS while studying in the UK. The EHIC will only cover them if it has been issued by the authorities in their country of residence, before they travel to the UK.

Read more about the EHIC here:
<https://bit.ly/3R49UBa>

Non EU/EEA nationals

If your child is from outside the EU/EEA and their course lasts for more than six months, they are entitled to full healthcare under the NHS from the beginning of their stay, as long as they have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of their student visa application. If your child's course lasts less than six months, they should take out private healthcare insurance (unless they are a national of a country that has a reciprocal health agreement with the UK).

Registering with a doctor

When your child has enrolled at the university, they will need to register with a doctor. This is a priority and should be completed within the first few weeks of arrival. Most students, if living in halls, choose to register with St Mary's Surgery. Visit their website for more information here: stmaryssurgery.nhs.uk. If they are in private accommodation, a list of other doctors willing to register students is available from the Student Hub.

Religion

Regardless of your child's faith, the university's multi-faith centre provides support to students in an inclusive and non-judgmental environment.

Read more about the multi-faith centre here: solent.ac.uk/studying-at-solent/student-support/spirituality-reflection

Retail opening hours

Most shops and retail outlets in Southampton are open between 9am and 5.30pm, Monday-Saturday, and until 9pm on Thursdays for 'late-night' shopping. Some are open on Sundays between 10am and 4pm. Supermarkets are usually open until 8pm but some larger stores are open 24 hours from Monday to Friday. Information on local supermarkets will be available to your child in the induction programme.

The University has its own on-campus newsagent that sells a range of soft drinks, confectionery, newspapers and magazines. Solent's student-run store, Re:So, sells clothing, accessories, art and gifts, designed and produced by students and graduates of the university.

Weather

The British weather is changeable, and the winter months can be very cold. Temperatures can vary considerably within a single day. In September, Southampton typically experiences temperatures ranging from 9°C to 22°C. Students are advised to bring warm, waterproof clothing, as many find the climate quite cold. However, warm clothing can also be purchased from a variety of stores. The coldest months are usually January and February, with average temperatures around 4°C, while July and August are the warmest, averaging 20°C.

Visiting other countries

If your child wishes to travel, they should check with the embassy or consulate of their destination country to see if a visa is required for their nationality. Obtaining a visa may be difficult if they apply towards the end of their studies in the UK. Many European embassies or consulates expect students to have between two and six months' leave to remain in the UK, beyond the date of their proposed trip. Therefore, it's advisable for them to travel during holidays, such as Christmas or Easter, before their course ends.

Transport and travel

Southampton Solent University is located in the heart of the city which makes it an ideal place to live. For that reason, your child may not need to use public transport very often while studying with us. However, if they do, there is one main bus company in Southampton:

Bluestar: www.bluestarbus.co.uk

If they decide to visit places outside of Southampton, they can either use South Western Railway: www.southwesternrailway.com or National Express coaches: www.nationalexpress.com/home

Students can buy rail and coach cards from local ticket offices. These cards enable them to save between 20% and 30% on adult fares.

Find out more about the railcard for 16-25 year olds at www.16-25railcard.co.uk

Find out more about the 16-26 Young Persons Coachcard at www.nationalexpress.com/en/offers/coachcards/young-person

International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

The International Student Identity Card can be purchased here: www.isic.org





Financial information

Living costs in Southampton

It is difficult to estimate an individual's living costs as we all have different lifestyle requirements and spending habits. As well as your child's study costs, they'll also need enough money to support themselves while they are at university.

To be able to create an accurate budget, you need to be aware of all the costs your child will incur over a year. Utilities are included in halls fees but are likely to be separate if they are in private rented accommodation, so ensure all bills are handled fairly and are paid on time. Also, remind them to budget for Christmas, birthdays and one-off events that happen throughout the year.

The following estimate does not include tuition fees and the costs of trips to and from home countries. It is important to remember, tuition fees are subject to increase year on year, and provisions should be made for any rise in costs. In the table below, we have given a general guide with an estimate of average costs for accommodation in university halls and living expenses, for a single student over a 40-week period. Remember, these figures can vary greatly depending on individual circumstances.

Expenditure	Average cost per week	Average cost per academic year
Food	£40 - £60	£1,600 - £2,400
Toiletries, laundry, etc	£12	£480
Books and other material	£10	£400
Leisure/social (entertainment, going out)	£40	£1,640
Mobile phone	£10	£400
Internet	£10	£400
Contents insurance	£2.50 - £4	£100 - £140
TV licence	£4.37	£174.50

For useful budgeting and financial information visit, the Money Saving Expert website: moneysavingexpert.com/students

Funding advice team

Any questions about student funding and fees should be directed to the Solent funding team. Find out more here: solent.ac.uk/studying-at-solent/student-support/funding-advice-team

If you have any questions regarding payment of your International Foundation Programme, please contact: pathways.finance@qa.com

Budgeting

Budgeting is an easy way to ensure your child stays on top of their finances whilst studying with us. This simple budget planner will give your child an idea of income and expenditure: qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/student-budget-calculator

Application information

How to apply

Applying to study with us is easy. Once your child decides it's the right course and location for them, it's time to start their application. We have set out all the information they need ahead of applying on our website.

We strongly recommend that students submit their application as early as possible to allow them to complete all the preparations needed to study in the UK.

Find out more about how to apply and what support information you need by visiting:
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/how-to-apply

UK agent guide

If your child is planning on applying through an agent, we recommend you first refer to the student guide for finding the right education agent from the British Council guide here:
<https://bit.ly/3X20uKi>

Trusted representatives

Discover our most trusted agent representatives somewhere near you, to make your child's application process a lot smoother.

Find out more here:
qa.highereducation.com/trusted-representatives

Visa process

Information about how to apply for a student visa, fees and how long the application process takes is available on the UK government website: gov.uk/student-visa/apply-online

Entry requirements

Entry requirements vary depending on the course. It is important that your child has the correct entry requirements (or equivalent) when applying for their chosen course. We have detailed all the entry requirements for our International Foundation Programmes, with country specific entry requirements broken down by region.

You can view this information here: qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway/entry-requirements

Our recruitment team

We have a dedicated team for each region, who are on hand to support you and your child and can answer any questions you may have.

Find out more here:
qa.highereducation.com/regional-teams

Guardianship

The UKVI require an original (not electronic) signature from a parent/legal guardian in order for students under the age of 18 to travel and study in the UK.

Our recruitment team will request this information before confirming your offer to commence your studies.

Top tips for parents

We have put together a list of our top tips, to help you ensure your child has a smooth transition to university life.

Access essential information

Make sure your child adds Solent University to their mobile phone contacts. This will ensure our emails don't disappear into their junk mailbox, and no key information is missed.

Before moving

Check what is provided in the chosen accommodation before buying some essential household items. Some items may come with the accommodation, and many can be bought on arrival into the UK.

What to bring

All rooms within the student residences are furnished with a bed, chairs, desk, wardrobe and bookshelf space. Find out what your child will need to bring with them here: solent.ac.uk/accommodation/moving-in/what-should-i-bring

Find out more about insurance, internet connections, TV licensing, and the university's smoking policy: solent.ac.uk/accommodation/moving-in/your-room

Helping with the move

If you plan to visit your child or assist with their move, please note that the Southampton International Boat Show typically occurs in mid-September. During this period, the city becomes quite busy, and hotel accommodations may be more challenging to book. For more information about events and hotel options in the city, visit the Southampton Tourist Information Centre at: www.visitsouthampton.co.uk





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For more information visit:
qa.solent.ac.uk/pathway

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