



Pre-Arrival Information: Edinburgh College

Accredited by the
 **BRITISH
COUNCIL**
for the teaching
of English in the UK

For more information please contact:

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www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk/international

Welcome to Scotland!

We are delighted that you have decided to study with us and look forward to welcoming you to Edinburgh College and Scotland!

The information in this document aims to give you with a good understanding of what to expect when you arrive in Edinburgh.

Please make sure you read this information carefully before you leave home.

In this document you will find information about:

1. [Scotland, Edinburgh and Edinburgh College](#)
2. [Accommodation, Food and Transport](#)
3. [Practical Information](#)

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

Best wishes,

The Edinburgh College International Team



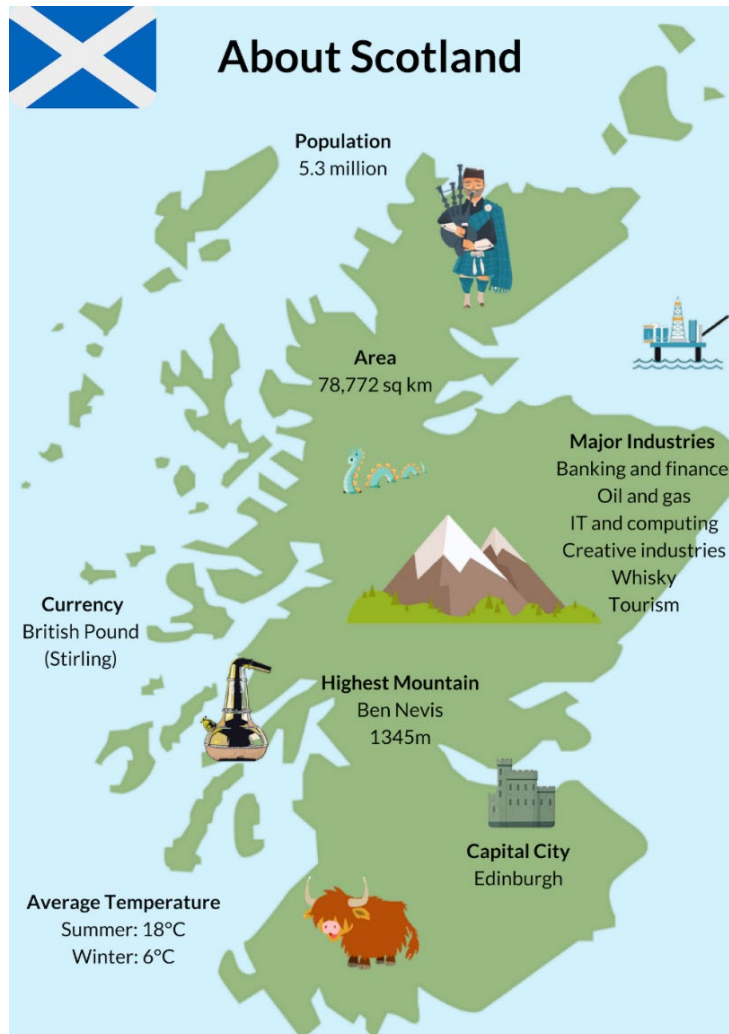
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About Scotland, Edinburgh and Edinburgh College

Scotland

Scotland is a country with a great sense of history and a long tradition of learning and innovation. Over the years, Scots have led the way in many areas of philosophy, education, medicine, technology and science. The Scottish education system has an excellent reputation world-wide: thousands of overseas students come to study here every year.



There are lots of websites you can use to find out more about Scotland and our city before you arrive. Here are just a few:

Scotland's Official Tourist Board
Scotland – General Information
(places to visit, history, key facts, etc.)

Scottish Food
Local Weather
History of Edinburgh
Edinburgh Festivals
Events Guide
Art Galleries
Museums

www.visitscotland.com
www.scotland.org/about-scotland
www.scotlandinfo.eu/about-scotland/
www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/
www.taste-of-scotland.com/
www.bbc.co.uk/weather/2650225
www.introducingedinburgh.com/history
www.edinburghfestivalcity.com/
www.list.co.uk/
www.nationalgalleries.org/
www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/

Edinburgh

Edinburgh, the ancient and beautiful capital of Scotland, is a vibrant and cosmopolitan city. It has a rich academic history and is today home to four universities as well as Edinburgh College. It has a relatively small city (population: 489,000) but is well known for its cultural richness and diversity. It has excellent nightlife, international cuisine, historic monuments, museums, and the world-famous Edinburgh International Festival – all of which make Edinburgh an exciting place to visit and study.



WHY EDINBURGH?

- Voted best place to live and study in the UK (Royal Mail 2018)
- Edinburgh rated the second best city in the world for excellent quality of life (The Financial Times, 2017).
- Event and Festival Destination of the year (Luxury Travel Guide Awards, 2017).
- Edinburgh is the greenest city in the UK with 49.1% of the city is green space (The Guardian, 2017).
- Edinburgh named UK's most walkable city (Living Streets, 2017).



This city is so beautiful and so interesting. And people are so kind.

I love this city!

YUKA YAGI | AUGUST 2018

Edinburgh is a paradise. Friendly people, excellent transport, amazing views.

NICOLE WEST | AUGUST 2018

Edinburgh is beautiful, historic and easy to get around.

MANNY LY | AUGUST 2018



Edinburgh College

Edinburgh College is one of the largest and leading publicly-funded Further Education colleges in the UK. We welcome around 26,000 students every year to our four campuses in the city: Sighthill, Granton, Milton Road and Midlothian. Edinburgh College is accredited by the British Council for the teaching of English in the UK, and we welcome around 1,000 full and part-time ESOL students each year along with many specialised English language and teacher training groups from around the world.

We offer many different courses within the faculties of:

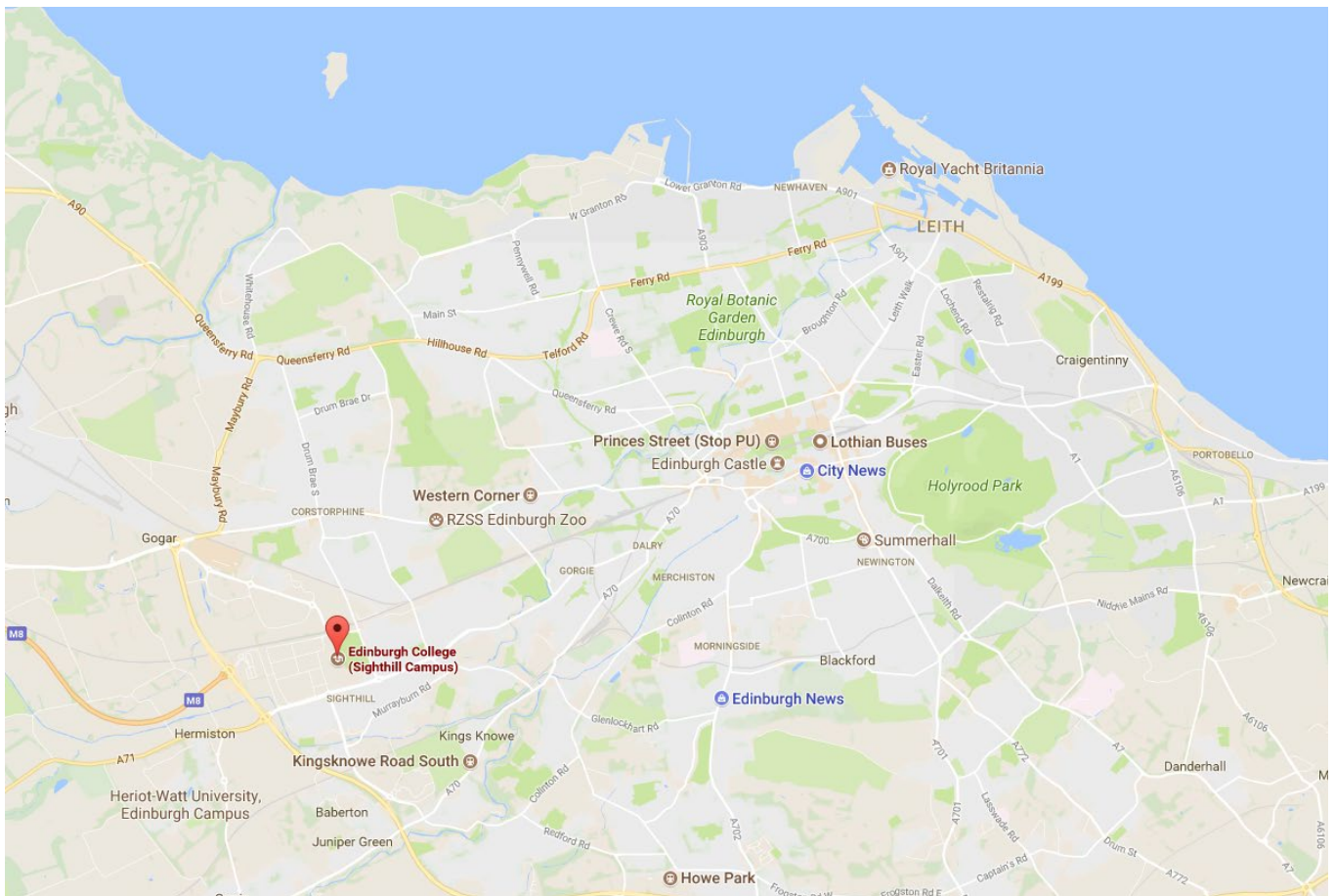
- Creative Industries
- Engineering and Built Environment
- Health, Wellbeing and Social Sciences
- Tourism, Hospitality and Business

Many of our students come from Edinburgh and the surrounding area. However, we also have a large number of international students from all over the world.

Sighthill Campus

Your classes will take place at **Sighthill Campus**, located in the west of the city. Facilities within the Sighthill Campus include a library, café, gym, music centre, prayer room, computer room and campus-wide Wi-Fi access.

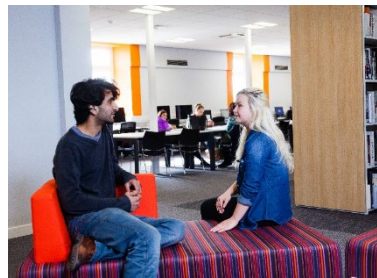
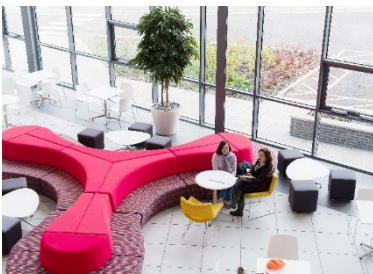
For more details about Sighthill Campus, visit: www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk/Welcome/Our-Campuses/Sighthill



Social Media

A good way to find out more about Edinburgh College before you arrive is to look at our social media channels. Here we post details of what our students have been doing, including their trips around Scotland! Follow us on:

Facebook www.facebook.com/EdinburghCollegeInternational
Instagram www.instagram.com/edinburghcollege_international
Twitter www.twitter.com/EdinCollege_Int



Arrival in Edinburgh

Please make sure you have a valid passport to enter the UK. You cannot use a national identity card from an EU country, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein to enter the UK. Please see more details about Entering the UK in the [government website](#).

When you arrive in Edinburgh, please make your own way to your chosen accommodation (unless you have pre-booked our airport pickup service). Edinburgh Airport is around 11km west of the city centre, or 6.5 km from our Sighthill campus. There are a number of ways to travel between the airport and your chosen accommodation:

Pick-Up Service	This service is only available if you are staying in our homestay accommodation. College staff can meet you in the Arrivals area of the airport and take you to your homestay by taxi. If you would like to book this service, please contact College staff as soon as you know your arrival details. This service costs £65.
Bus	<p>The Airlink 100 bus offers fast and frequent transfers to the city centre and other areas of the city. Buses depart every 12 minutes during the day and also run less frequently overnight. The Skylink 200 and 300 buses also offer airport transfers to other areas of the city.</p> <p>A one-way ticket costs £5.50 and a return ticket costs £8.00. Buy your tickets at the airport from the bus driver. You can use cash or card (contactless). You can also buy tickets in advance using the Transport for Edinburgh m-tickets app: m-tickets - Lothian Buses</p> <p>For more information see here: https://www.lothianbuses.com/our-services/airport-buses/</p>
Tram	<p>Trams offer an easy transfer from the airport to the city centre. They depart every 7-10 minutes but <u>do not</u> run during the night. Our Sighthill campus is also located close to Bankhead tram stop.</p> <p>A single airport transfer costs £7.50, whilst a return costs £9.50. Tickets must be bought <u>before</u> boarding the tram using the ticket vending machines at each tram stop, or using the Transport for Edinburgh app: https://edinburghtrams.com/m-tickets</p>
Taxi	Taxis are available from outside the Arrivals area. The taxis are official “black cabs” and are safe to use. There is a meter inside which will tell you the cost of the journey. The trip from the airport to the city centre will cost approximately £15-£25. Most taxis accept cash or card payments.

Your first day in college

Please make your own way to Edinburgh College Sighthill campus. A member of the International Team will meet you at 8:30am at the main reception of Sighthill campus to welcome you to the college. We will give a brief tour of the campus and show you to your classroom for the start of your course at 9:00am.

If you have any issues during your stay, please contact our 24-hour emergency phone number:
+44 (0) 7876 873 319

Accommodation

There are many accommodation options available in Edinburgh. Below are some of the options available for you:

Homestay

Homestay gives you the chance to live as part of a Scottish family and immerse yourself in the English language. Our homestay hosts are located close to Sighthill campus and can offer half-board (breakfast and dinner included) or self-catering options.

Homestay accommodation must be booked and paid for at least 2 weeks in advance of your arrival date through Edinburgh College. Prices range from £170-£200 per week. For more information, please contact: accommodation@edinburghcollege.ac.uk

Hotels (close to Sighthill campus)

If you would like to stay in a hotel close to our Sighthill college campus, you can use the address of our Sighthill campus (see above) to check that the hotel is close. Nearby hotels include Premier Inn Edinburgh Park, Hotel Novotel Edinburgh Park and Travelodge Edinburgh Park, all within around 20-minutes walking distance of Sighthill campus.

You must make bookings for hotels yourself.

Hotels (in the city centre)

If you would like to explore the city centre in the evenings / days off during your stay, you may wish to book a hotel in the city centre. If this is your preferred option, we recommend booking a hotel close to a tram stop, as our Sighthill campus is conveniently located close to a Bankhead tram stop. A tram journey from Princes Street (city centre) to Bankhead takes around 16 minutes. An adult day return ticket costs £3.80.

You must make bookings for hotels yourself.

If you choose to live in accommodation which is not organised by the College, please be aware that you do so at your own risk. Please be wary of paying money to external providers in advance and be sure to get a receipt for any payments you make. When you arrive in your accommodation, check where the fire escapes are and get a key for your own use.

Please email accommodation@edinburghcollege.ac.uk if you need any further advice before making accommodation bookings. If you wish to stay with one of our homestay families, please let us know asap so we can make suitable arrangements for you.

Food and Meals

Meals are not included in your programme (unless you are staying in our half-board homestay accommodation). You will need to buy your own food and drinks throughout your stay.

Depending on where you choose to stay, you will have different options for breakfast and dinner during your stay.



For lunch at the College (Monday – Friday), there is a café on-site at Sighthill campus, and a cafeteria where you can buy a range of hot and cold meals, sandwiches, soups, snacks, hot and cold drinks. You will be provided with hot drinks in your classrooms during the course. Water fountains are readily available across the college, we recommend you bring a refillable water bottle to use during your stay.

You are sure to want to try some traditional Scottish foods while you are in Edinburgh. You'll find a wide variety of fresh ingredients and lots of Scottish specialities in the shops. If you plan to eat out sometimes, Edinburgh has a huge number of fantastic restaurants – from cheap to very expensive! For more information about Scottish food and restaurants, visit: www.visitscotland.com/see-do/food-drink/

Transport and Travel

Public Transport in Edinburgh

Edinburgh has very good public transport – buses and trams are very frequent and go to all parts of the city. Depending on the location of your accommodation, you may need to get a bus or tram to College.



The easiest way to use the public transport in Edinburgh is to use your usual maps app, or download the *Transport for Edinburgh* app. This will show you route maps, plan your journey for you, and show live departure times. It will even tell you when to get off the bus! You can download the app from: www.tfeapp.com

You can also see route maps and a journey planner at: www.lothianbuses.com

Ticket Type	What it gets you	Price	How to Buy
Single	One journey on a Lothian bus or tram	£2.00	Bus: Buy from the bus driver. You must have exact change (or you can pay by card).
Day Ticket	Unlimited travel on Lothian buses or trams for <u>one day</u>	£5.00	Tram: Buy from the machine on the platform.
Ridacard	Unlimited travel on Lothian buses or trams for one week	£25 Includes a £3 card deposit	Buy from the Lothian Travelshop on Waverley Bridge in the city centre.

Contactless card payments are the most convenient and cost-effective way to pay for travel on Lothian Buses. Use the same contactless card to make payments for each journey, and the total you pay is automatically capped at £4.80 per day and £22 per week.

Contactless capping only applies for Lothian buses, not trams. However, day tickets can be used on both trams and Lothian buses.

In the evening, buses and trams run as normal until around 11:30pm. After this, there are night buses which run on specific routes once an hour. If you plan to be out at night, plan how you will get home in advance.

Taxis are safe to use in Edinburgh. They can be cheap if you share them with friends. Metered black cabs (similar to those in London) are the most common kind of taxi but you can also book private hire cars.



Practical Information

Insurance & Medical Attention

You must arrange your own travel and medical insurance before travelling to Edinburgh.

If you are ill during your stay and need to see a doctor, you can contact the International Team at the College for assistance. You should carry a **European Health Insurance Card**, which will enable you to access the National Health Service. You should also have travel insurance and contact your insurance company in the event that you require medical treatment. College staff can help you with this.

If you are seriously ill, or have had a serious accident, you should go to the nearest hospital, or dial 999 immediately for the emergency services. If you are currently taking a prescribed medicine, you should bring enough for your stay.

Health

If you have any health conditions that we should know about, please let us know in advance. If you are taking any medication, please bring enough for the duration of your stay.

We hope that you will be healthy during your stay in Edinburgh. However, we will be able to assist you and provide more information about what to do if you are ill after you arrive in Edinburgh.

If you fall ill during your stay:

If you fall ill during your stay, please contact a member of the International Team as soon as possible. We will discuss with you individually any support you may need. Students must take full responsibility for any additional costs incurred as a result of ill health (e.g. flight rebooking, extending accommodation bookings, etc.)

Banks and Money

There are ATMs located across the city where you can withdraw cash (please note that this depends on your bank and card – please check with your bank in advance). Credit and debit cards (e.g. Visa, MasterCard, American Express, etc) are widely accepted. However, you may be charged a fee to use them overseas. Check with your bank for further information about any fees and charges for using your credit/debit card overseas. Check xe.com for up to date exchange rates. If you wish to change money, there are many places you can do this in Edinburgh city. However, as you are in Edinburgh for a short time, we recommend that you change money before you travel to the UK.

Both Scottish and English bank notes are used in Scotland. Please be aware that **older paper £20, £10 and £5 notes, as well as older £1 coins are no longer accepted.**

Electrical Equipment

The standard voltage throughout the UK is 240V AC, and plugs have three square pins and **are different to mainland Europe**. If you are bringing electrical equipment from home, you will need to bring an electrical adaptor or buy one in Edinburgh.

Phones and Internet Access

You will have Wi-Fi available at the College. Please check with your accommodation provider if you will have access to Wi-Fi there. Some European mobile providers give customers access to free roaming using your German phone and SIM card. Please check with your mobile provider in advance of your trip if you are unsure.

Safety & Emergencies

Edinburgh is generally a safe city, even at night, with well-lit streets and CCTV in many parts. However, like all cities, always take sensible precautions – for example, don't carry large amounts of money with you; walk home with a friend or take a taxi / bus.

If there is an emergency, you can call the emergency services (Fire, Police or Ambulance) on any phone by **dialling 999**.

If you are the victim of a minor crime, call your local police station to report the problem. The police are here to help you and you should never feel afraid to speak to a police officer if you have any concerns about your safety or are lost. If you need to contact the police in a non-emergency situation, **call 101**.

In case of any emergency or crime, please also call the 24-hour College emergency number on **+44 7876 873 319** as soon as you can.

Scottish Weather and Clothing

'Unpredictable' best describes the Scottish weather! The weather can change dramatically from one day to the next (sometimes even one hour to the next), so be prepared!

It's a good idea to bring warm clothes, a waterproof jacket and shoes that are good for outdoor activities.

The average maximum daytime temperature in Edinburgh in March is around 8°C, in September is around 16°C and in November is around 10°C.

