

Staying safe in the UK

John Killeen

International Advice and Support Manager



University of Brighton

What we will cover....

- Arriving in the UK
- Protect your identity
- Frauds and Scams
- Looking after your personal possessions
- Staying safe at home
- Staying safe on the street
- Using public transport
- Laws in the UK
- How to report a crime
- Powers of arrest
- Hate Crime and Discrimination
- University Disclosure Response

This talk is informed by the British Council guide *Staying Safe in the UK*.



Arriving in the UK

It is easy to get distracted and misplace things when travelling:

- Keep your **passport, travel documents, and tickets** with you in a **safe place**.
- Before you travel take a photo of all the pages of your passport, including the front and back cover in case it is lost.
- If your passport is lost or stolen you must report this to the police and your Embassy.
- Make sure you make a note of the contact details for your Embassy in the UK before you travel.
- Make sure your phone is set up for roaming and you can make calls and access mobile data in the UK.



University of Brighton

Arriving in the UK

- Please do not bring large amounts of cash with you – max £250.
- Make sure you have a credit or debit card to use for the first few weeks until you can set up a UK bank account. This will be especially useful on campus as all food outlets are now cashless.
- **Carry cash and cards separately and in safe places** – ideally on your person in a money belt, an inside pocket, or a bag with a zip.
- If you are paying in cash do not get large amounts out in public – this could put you at risk of pick pockets.
- Label your luggage so it can be forwarded to you if it gets lost.



University of Brighton

Protect your identity

Identity theft/ fraud is rare but can happen. Fraudsters use your personal details to take out credit card or loans, or to purchase items online using your existing bank details.

- Only use secure websites when making purchases online – **https in the URL**
- Ensure your mobile, tablet and laptop are **password protected**.
- Beware of emails or texts from unknown senders – **do not click on links**.

More details of how to protect your identity and what to do if this happens

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk>

CREATE STRONG PASSWORDS

Make them long, include special characters, change often and don't use the same one for multiple accounts

KNOW WHAT INFO YOU SHARE



Know the personal information you're sharing on social media and manage your account's privacy settings

PROTECT YOUR SMARTPHONE



Don't keep any personal information on your phone, especially without a password lock



University of Brighton

Frauds and scams

While it is uncommon there are specific scams that target international students.

- **Property scams are becoming more common.** Adverts with photos of accommodation. Use a letting agent and always visit the property before paying a holding deposit.
- **Someone calling pretending to be from the UKVI.** They may ask for personal details like your passport number, or for payment (in money or vouchers) due to an 'issue' with your visa. Very sophisticated and number may look like it is the UKVI.
 - The UKVI will never call you and ask for payment. Do not give out your bank details or make any payments.
 - Contact [International Student Advice](#).
- **Under 30s being targeted by criminals as 'money mules'** are becoming increasingly common; using your bank account to receive funds. The consequence are very serious and can result in criminal charges. If you ever notice money being paid into and then withdrawn from your account contact your bank immediately.
- For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams>



Looking after your personal possessions

- You should take out insurance for your belongings in case of loss, theft or accidental damage. If you have taken out travel insurance for the UK check what is covered.
- [The UK's No. 1 Student Insurance Provider | Endsleigh](#)
- Register your electric equipment on <https://www.immobilise.com>. UK national property register. If an item is stolen you can report this, and if it is found by the Police they can reunite you with it.
- If you have a bike – make sure it is secured using a strong D lock.
- Do not leave personal possessions unattended in public, even for short periods.
- In your accommodation, do not leave valuable items or cash or credit/ debit cards so they are visible through your windows.



University of Brighton

Staying safe at home

- Most burglaries are committed during the day and access is usually gained through an open door or window.
- Burglary rates can rise during the summer months when homes are left empty during holidays and windows are left open and unlocked.
- Deterring would-be criminals is one of the most effective forms of crime prevention.
 - Remember to lock all outside windows and doors even when you are at home.
 - Check the identity of any unknown caller by calling the company they say they are from. If you are not sure who is at your door don't open it.
 - If you live in a flat or a house with an outside light and/or a burglar alarm, make sure you use them.
 - Every home should have at least one smoke alarm (preferably two), which should be tested regularly. They can be bought from hardware shops and other high street retailers, and are inexpensive.



University of Brighton

Staying safe at home

- If you live in a shared house, don't assume there is someone else in who will make it secure when you go out. Discuss security rules and make sure you all agree to always leave the house secure.
- If you are going away, tell someone you trust where you are going and when you will be back.
- Don't leave spare keys outside or in a garage or shed for burglars to find. Garages and sheds are often targeted for burglars looking for tools, so make sure they are locked.
- Leave keys in a safe place where you can find them easily in case you need to leave in a hurry, but don't keep them in sight near doors or windows.
- If you arrive home and do see signs of a break-in – smashed windows or open doors – don't go in. Go to a friend or neighbour's house and call the police. Do not touch anything



University of Brighton

Staying safe on the streets

The UK is general a safe place to live, and most students do not encounter any problems.

- When crossing the road please remember that cars drive on the left in the UK, so they will be coming towards you from the right.
- Cross the road at the marked crossings and only when the 'green man' symbol on the pedestrian crossing shows it is safe to do so.
- Be careful of cycling lanes – in Brighton there are a number that run behind bus stops, so you need to cross them to get to the pavement.



- When walking after dark try to stick to routes that are well lit and busy.
- Do not listen to music/ use headphones when walking late at night – make sure you are alert to your surroundings.
- Use public transport or a taxi to get home late at night if you can.



University of Brighton

Staying safe on the streets continued.

- You should **never accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended** in public places, as 'spiking' drinks with drugs or alcohol is on the increase.
- Avoid confrontation – it's better and safer to walk away if you are being provoked or hassled.
- Be aware of others around you at cash machines and try not to use cash machines at night or in poorly lit areas. If you must use one, go with a friend and leave as soon as you have your money.
- Always memorise your PIN (personal identification number) to access your money from a cash machine. Never write down your PIN or give it to anyone else.
- Have your keys ready well before you reach the door of your car or house.
- If you live in halls of residence, make sure no strangers follow you when you walk through the main entrance. This is important for your safety as well as others living there.



Think smart:
top tips for a
safe night out!




Avoid unknown
places


Eat before
you drink



- Plan your journey home
- Book a taxi in advance
- Only use licensed taxis
- Travel in groups



Make sure your
mobile phone
is charged and
is in credit



Stay together

Keep some
'emergency'
money separate



- Do not accept drinks from strangers
- Do not leave your drinks unattended
- Drink smaller drinks
- Pace yourself
- Know your limits

Avoid
hazardous
activities



Know the symptoms
of drink spiking



- Difficulty concentrating
- Blurred vision
- Memory loss
- Nausea / vomiting
- Paranoia
- Loss of consciousness

If you suspect your drink, or someone else's, has been spiked; tell someone you trust as soon as possible. Find a safe place together, and seek medical attention if your condition worsens.

Independent alcohol advice
and information:
www.drinkaware.co.uk



Avoid taking expensive
items which could be
easily lost or stolen

Using public transport

- If waiting for a bus, always put your hand out for the bus to stop for you.
- Arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop if you are travelling late and have a long way to walk.
- If you can, take a taxi rather than walk the streets with a smartphone's satellite navigation system or a road map and/or your luggage.
- If you travel by train or the Underground (the 'Tube'), try not to sit in an empty carriage. Try to sit near groups of people in a well-lit area.
- When you are on the train, store your luggage as close to your seat as possible or where you can easily see it. If you use a luggage rack, check your belongings regularly, especially when a train stops at a station.



University of Brighton

Using public transport

- Check the time of the last train, bus, tube or tram home to avoid being stranded at night. Think about texting a message about your travel arrangements to a friend.
- If you are lost or in need of assistance when travelling by train, find a member of staff or telephone the British Transport Police on freephone +44 (0)800 40 50 40 or you can text the British Transport Police on 61016 to tell them about non-emergency incidents.
- You must never cross or touch railway track/trainlines as they have a live electric current running through them. There are signs at all UK train stations to warn you of this.



Laws in the UK

- You must not carry illegal drugs or substances with you of any kind (unless prescribed by a doctor), or use or supply any illegal drugs, including cannabis, ecstasy, LSD and amphetamines.
- It is illegal to carry any sort of weapon including knives, self-defence CS gas sprays, guns and stun guns.
- You must be 18 and over to buy tobacco/ vaping products, and smoking/ vaping is prohibited in workplaces and substantially enclosed public places.
- It is an illegal offence for anyone under the age of 18 to purchase alcohol or to have alcohol purchased for them.
- Only people over 18 can drink in public, except in areas of towns where Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs) are in place.
- Never buy property that you think might be stolen, no matter how tempting a bargain it might seem. You can check the background history of any used electrical items at www.checkmend.com either by creating a single report or by SMS.



University of Brighton

How to report a crime

To report a non-emergency minor crime call **101**. You can also report minor crimes online [Report a crime | Sussex Police](#)

In an emergency, where there is a danger to life or a crime is in progress, you can contact the police, fire brigade or ambulance service by dialling **999** from any telephone. This call is free of charge but should be used only in an emergency.

Brighton is one of the safest cities in the UK but there are people in the city to help you should you need it.



University of Brighton

Powers of arrest

During your time in the UK, ensure you are aware of the local laws and guidance. As long as you follow local rules, you won't have any problems. However, the following information gives you an overview of what you need to know if you do run into any trouble with the police.

- Police officers in the UK have the power to arrest people who are suspected of having committed an offence. Arrests can also be made if you fail to pay a fine, fail to appear in court when asked to do so, or if you refuse to give your name and address to a police officer when asked.
- If you are stopped in the street by a police officer, you have the right to ask why you have been stopped. However, remember that the police may search you if they believe you are in possession of a controlled drug, offensive or sharp object, or stolen goods.



A police officer might stop you and ask:

1. what your name is
2. what you're doing in the area
3. where you're going

You don't have to stop or answer any questions. If you don't and there's no other reason to suspect you, then this alone can't be used as a reason to search or arrest you.



University of Brighton

Hate crime and discrimination

Hate crime is defined as any criminal offence which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by hostility or prejudice based on a person's disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or perceived disability, race, religion, sexual orientation or against a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.

Hate crime can take many forms, including:

1. Physical attacks
2. Damage to property, including offensive graffiti and arson
3. Abusive telephone calls, leaflets/posters, letters, emails or postings on social media
4. Verbal abuse, including abusive gestures.

Reporting makes a difference – to you, your friends and your community. [http://report-it.org.uk/report a hate crime](http://report-it.org.uk/report_a_hate_crime)

If you have been a victim of hate crime, **you should also report it to the university's disclosure response team.**



University of Brighton

University disclosure response

If you experience any form of harassment, discrimination, violence or abuse, please know that you do not need to suffer in silence.

You can disclose an incident to us, either with your name or anonymously. If you identify yourself, our **Disclosure Response Team** can then help you get the support you need. You can also disclose an incident that you have witnessed.

In an emergency, you should call the emergency services and our [on-site security](#) directly.

Contacting the [Disclosure Response Team](#) **does not** start a formal report or complaint to the university authorities. We will take you through your options so that you can make an informed decision.



University of Brighton

Emergency contacts

In a life-threatening medical emergency, a fire or a physical threat to life, first call the emergency services by dialling **999***.

*If you are dialling from a university landline you should dial 9 first to give you an outside line rather than the university switchboard.

Then call the university emergency number **01273 642222** to inform university site staff.

For callers outside the UK the emergency number is + 44 1273 64 2222.

Please use this number in the event that you experience any other emergency when you are in a university building. For example if you:

- need a first aider
- smell gas
- become trapped in a lift (please use the emergency bell)
- are locked in a building (after hours).

This number is staffed 24 hours a day.



University of Brighton