

Arriving and living in the United Kingdom

NHS

Professionals

International



We are excited to welcome you to the United Kingdom (UK). As you begin your journey as a healthcare professional here, this document provides invaluable insights and resources to help you adjust to life in the UK.

Please note: The companies, attractions, locations, and information contained within this document are intended to be used as generic guidance and information only, which has been sourced on or around the date of publication of this guide (produced in March 2024).

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Arriving in the UK

International healthcare professionals moving to the UK will be sent an email a few days prior to travelling. This email will contain vital information regarding your arrival in the UK, such as the designated contact from NHS Professionals International who will meet you at the airport, relevant timings, and guidance on how to get ready for your journey.

Depending on the location of the Trust you will be working for, you will arrive in one of the following UK airports:

South of England – Heathrow or Gatwick

Heathrow airport

- This airport has four terminals: Terminal 2, 3, 4, and 5. Find out how to navigate the airport here [heathrow.com](https://www.heathrow.com)
- The general meeting point will be by the WHSmith store which is located inside the arrival hall of your landing terminal. If this meeting point changes, you will be notified

Gatwick airport

- This airport has two terminals: North and South. Find out how to navigate the airport here [gatwickairport.com](https://www.gatwickairport.com)
- meeting point will be shared with you closer to the date of your arrival

Midlands – Birmingham

Birmingham airport

- This airport has one arrival terminal. Find out how to navigate the airport here [birminghamairport.co.uk](https://www.birminghamairport.co.uk)
- The general meeting point will be by the Costa Coffee shop. If this meeting point changes, you will be notified

North of England – Manchester or Newcastle

Manchester airport

- This airport has three terminals. Find out how to navigate the airport here [manchester-airport-guide.co.uk](https://www.manchester-airport-guide.co.uk)
- meeting point will be shared with you closer to the date of your arrival

Newcastle airport

- This airport has one terminal. Find out how to navigate the airport here [newcastle-airport-guide.co.uk](https://www.newcastle-airport-guide.co.uk)
- A meeting point will be shared with you closer to the date of your arrival

Important points to consider for your arrival date

- You will be added to a WhatsApp group, or sent the link to join the group yourself
- There may be occasions where you will be greeted at the airport by the transport driver instead of an NHS Professionals International Coordinator. We will notify you if this happens
- Please update us on your journey progress via WhatsApp, including when you have landed, cleared immigration, and claimed your luggage. This information allows the person meeting you know when to expect you at the meeting point
- When you arrive at the meeting point, the NHS Professionals International Coordinator may ask to take photos to celebrate your arrival. This will only be conducted with your consent, and you have the right to decline
- Our Coordinators are happy to answer any questions or queries before escorting you to the pre-booked transportation that will lead you to your accommodation

Getting settled in the UK

Registering with a Doctor

Once you have arrived and have settled in your new home, we recommend registering with your local Doctor (also known as a General Practitioner or GP). You can find your local GP surgery here [nhs.uk/nhs-services](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services)

Registering with a Dentist

We recommend registering with an NHS Dentist as soon as possible, due to long waiting lists. You can check your eligibility and find your local Dentist here [nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists](https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists)

The NHS website is very useful for finding other local healthcare services you may need.

For information on additional funding and benefits, please visit here [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Foreign Embassies in the UK

The London Diplomatic List contains the addresses and contact details of all embassies and high commissions. To find your local embassy, please visit here [gov.uk/government](https://www.gov.uk/government)

Citizens Advice

Citizen's advice England is an organization that provides free and confidential advice to everyone on various topics such as bills, benefits, grants, and compensation. To find out more, please visit here [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

Living in the UK

Discovering accommodation in the UK, managing bills, navigating supermarkets, and mastering other shopping essentials are key aspects of settling into life in the UK.

Examples of where to search for accommodation:

- Rightmove – [rightmove.co.uk](https://www.rightmove.co.uk)
- Zoopla – [zoopla.co.uk](https://www.zoopla.co.uk)
- Local estate agents. These can be found either online or on your local high street

Example utility bills you will have to pay when living in the UK:

- **Council Tax**

This is an annual fee you pay to your local council. To find out how much you will have to pay, visit here [gov.uk/pay-council-tax](https://www.gov.uk/pay-council-tax)

- **Water bill**

You are required to pay for your water and sewage services each year. Please check your own local provider as this will vary, depending on where you live. You should automatically receive a letter when you move to your new property with all the relevant information to pay

- **Gas and electric bills**

You are required to pay for your electricity and gas services each year. Please check your current supplier at the property. You should automatically receive a letter when you move to your new property with all the relevant information to pay

- **TV license**

You are required to pay for a TV license to watch, or record, live programmes on a TV, computer, or another device. You are also required to pay if you watch on-demand BBC programmes

Visit [tvlicensing.co.uk](https://www.tvlicensing.co.uk) to find out more and to pay either yearly or monthly

- **Broadband**

There are various companies available to suit your needs

Visit [Compare our Best Broadband Deals \(uswitch.com\)](https://www.uswitch.com) to find relevant deals

- **Mobile phone**

There are various companies available to suit your needs

Visit [Mobile Phone Deals: Compare Contracts in March 2024 - Uswitch](https://www.uswitch.com) to find relevant deals

Living in the UK

Examples of supermarkets in the UK:

- Asda – [asda.com](https://www.asda.com)
- Tesco – [tesco.com](https://www.tesco.com)
- Aldi – [aldi.co.uk](https://www.aldi.co.uk)
- Lidl – [lidl.co.uk](https://www.lidl.co.uk)
- Marks and Spencer – [marksandspencer.com](https://www.marksandspencer.com)
- Morrisons – [groceries.morrisons.com](https://www.groceries.morrisons.com)
- Sainsbury's – [sainsburys.co.uk](https://www.sainsburys.co.uk)
- Co-op – [coop.co.uk](https://www.coop.co.uk)
- Iceland – [iceland.co.uk](https://www.iceland.co.uk)
- Waitrose – [waitrose.com](https://www.waitrose.com)

These supermarkets mentioned above usually have a world food aisle where you can buy certain items.

For specialist shops, we recommend checking online to find what shops are in your local area.

Below are websites for online specialist food orders:

- Indian online food website – [vbwholefoods.co.uk](https://www.vbwholefoods.co.uk)
- Asian online food website – [adastrapacific.co.uk](https://www.adastrapacific.co.uk)

Examples of food delivery companies:

- Just Eat – [just-eat.co.uk](https://www.just-eat.co.uk)
- Uber Eats – [ubereats.com/gb](https://www.ubereats.com/gb)
- Deliveroo – [deliveroo.co.uk](https://www.deliveroo.co.uk)

Examples of home, decorating, garden and furniture shops:

- B&Q – [diy.com](https://www.diy.com)
- Homebase – [homebase.co.uk](https://www.homebase.co.uk)
- Wickes – [wickes.co.uk](https://www.wickes.co.uk)
- Tool Station – [toolstation.com](https://www.toolstation.com)
- Wilko – [wilko.com](https://www.wilko.com)
- Ikea – [ikea.com/gb/en](https://www.ikea.com/gb/en)

Public Transport

Navigating public transport is an important part to getting around your new town efficiently and travelling to work. Below are examples of the different types of public transport you may find in the UK.

Buses

Most UK towns/cities offer regular bus services. There are various ways of paying for a bus ticket, for example buying directly from the driver on the bus with cash or card, buying online or by using an oyster card/bus pass. To find your local bus schedule, you can search the bus company online.

Large areas, like the West Midlands and Greater Manchester, have their own regional travelcards which are valid on all public transport within the area.

Oyster cards

Oyster cards are electronic smartcards for public transport in London. To use your card, tap it on yellow card readers, at the start and end of your journey (this may vary depending on the type of transport you are using). Oyster cards can be used on underground trains, overground trains, buses, and tram link.

For more information visit [Oyster online - Transport for London](#)

Trains

Trains are a popular way of travelling around the UK. There are useful websites and applications such as Trainline to help compare train times and prices. You may be eligible to purchase a railcard which could save you money when travelling by train.

Find out more about railcards here [thetrainline.com](https://www.thetrainline.com)

Trams

There are tram services in areas such as Edinburgh, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Newcastle, and Nottingham. You can purchase tram tickets either with an on-board Conductor, from a ticket machine or by tapping your bank card on a contactless area before and after your travel. Below are useful websites, depending on the area you live in:

- Manchester - **Bee Network**
- West Midlands - **West Midlands Metro**
- Nottingham - **thetram.net**
- Newcastle - **Newcastle Buses, Timetables & Routes**

Coach

Travelling by coach is a great alternative to a train or car, although journey times can be longer. If you have any travel plans to visit more of the UK, we recommend planning and booking your coach tickets in advance. Examples of where you can buy tickets is through **National Express** and **Megabus**.

Taxis

Taxis and minicabs are available in most cities and towns across the UK. Taxi ranks can usually be found just outside train stations or in the city centre. You can also phone local taxi companies to pick you up from a particular location. As well as this, companies like Uber or Bolt are also very popular services and can be found in many of the major towns and cities.

Navigation

An application that specialises in navigation is **moovitapp.com**. Offering various travel choices and directions tailored to your specific journey, this company assists users in finding the quickest and cheapest journey.

Selecting a school for your children

Depending on your school requirements, information may vary. Below are important things to note about schools in the UK:

State funded schools are free to attend and funded by the government

Example of school types, based on age:

- Primary schools (ages 4-11)
- Secondary schools (ages 11-16/18)

Things to consider when reviewing a school:

- Academic performance (test scores)
- Extracurricular activities offered (sports, clubs etc.)
- Special programmes (gifted education, vocational training)
- School size and environment (urban, rural, religious affiliation)
- Location and commute time

Additional resources for choosing a school:

- Government websites – [gov.uk/schools-admissions](https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions)
- Ofsted reports – reports.ofsted.gov.uk
- School review websites – [goodschoolsguide.co.uk](https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk)
- Talking to current parents and teachers

School schedule:

- Typical school hours are between 8:30am to 3:30pm, with breaks throughout the day
- A school week runs from Monday to Friday

Assessment and Exams:

- Schools use tests and assignments to assess student progress
- Students take exams at certain grade levels

School Uniforms:

- Schools require students to wear uniforms. The school will provide further information on how to acquire uniforms

The above information is a general overview. Specific details will vary depending on the location and the type of school you're interested in.

Additional points to note

NHS discount

Blue Light Card

- As an NHS employee, you can sign-up for a Blue Light card. With this card, you can receive discounts on a variety of products and companies include restaurants, travel, and retail shopping

Important points to note about Blue Light card:

- To sign-up, you must prove you work for the NHS. Examples of identification are a photo of your NHS ID card or a payslip (within the last 3 months) showing your name, job title and your Trust
- To apply for the card, you must pay a fee of £4.99 which last two-years
- Visit here to find out more bluelightcard.co.uk

Health service discounts

- This company is free to use for all NHS and healthcare workers. It provides deals and discounts across many industries
- Visit here to find out more healthservicediscounts.com

Heating tips for your home

Adjusting to the temperature in the UK can take some time. Below are different ways to keep warm at home:

- Electric heater
- Fireplace (wood or gas)
- Hot water bottle
- Heated blanket
- Central heating. Below are examples of different heating mechanisms that may be in your accommodation:



Digital thermostat



Manual radiator valve



Room thermostat