



Guide for staff joining from overseas

Welcome to Cranfield

As an international employee, working abroad is an exciting and challenging prospect.

This booklet has been written to help you adjust to living in the UK and to support you during your first few months at Cranfield University. It is intended to provide an overview and signpost you to other sources of information.

We look forward to welcoming you and hope that you settle in smoothly.

The Cranfield community	3
Working at Cranfield University	4
Staff profile: meet Dr Tosin Somorin	5
Living in the UK	6
Bringing your family	10
Healthcare in the UK	11
Travelling to the UK	12
Arriving in the UK	13
Cranfield campus	14
Cranfield: out and about	14
Shrivenham	16
Shrivenham: out and about	16
How to find us	17
Arrivals checklist	18
Useful contact details	19



The Cranfield community

Cranfield University is located across two sites: Cranfield near Bedford and Shrivenham near Swindon. We are a truly international community where staff and postgraduate students from all over the world come together.

Staff community

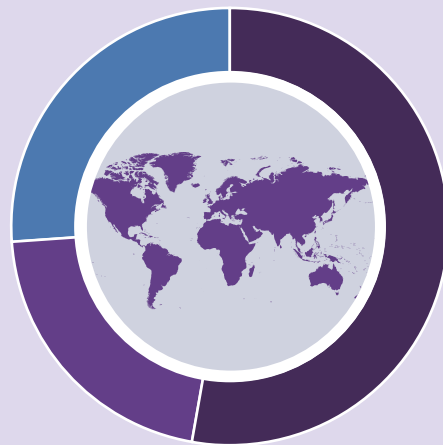
Our vibrant and diverse staff body represents more than 60 different nationalities.



- UK – 76%
- Europe – 15%
- Rest of world – 9%

Student community

Our students represent more than 100 different nationalities.



- UK – 53%
- Europe – 21%
- Rest of world – 26%



Working at Cranfield University

On your first day at Cranfield, you will be welcomed by the HR team and will meet your line manager. You will have various inductions during your first few weeks to help you settle in to your role and the University way of life. You will also have access to the University's intranet which provides lots of information to support you in your role.

Employee benefits

Cranfield offers generous salaries and associated benefits to attract, nurture and retain the best people, and provide a fulfilling, supportive working environment. You can read more about this on our [website](#).

Disability support

If you would like any information about the support available, Hiran Odedra, the University's Senior Diversity Inclusion Business Partner, will be more than happy to advise you before, or after your arrival. All enquiries are treated confidentially.

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E: h.odedra@cranfield.ac.uk

Explore Cranfield







Explore both of our locations and browse our industry-scale facilities and purpose-built resources through our [virtual tour](#).

Find out about our [international activities and reach](#).

Hear from some Cranfield colleagues about what it's like to work here – read their [blog posts](#) and watch their [videos](#). Perhaps you might like to share your experiences of joining Cranfield through a blog?

Connect with us

We have a number of official social media channels we encourage you to follow:

-  @cranfielduni
-  @cranfielduni
-  /cranfielduni
-  Cranfield University
-  CranfieldUni
-  cranfielduni

[Read our latest news stories](#)

Hear from our experts on a variety of topics on our [blogs page](#).



Meet Dr Tosin Somorin

“The Cranfield community is truly international and the environment is highly intellectual – it both challenges and motivates me.”

I feel really privileged to be part of a University-wide team developing the next generation of waterless toilet, potentially helping solve sanitation problems for the 2.5 billion people without access to clean and safe sanitation solutions.

My particular focus is developing the micro-gasifier that will reduce the potentially pathogenic human waste into harmless ash, and use faeces as the source of energy to power the toilet's other functions. Knowing that this work was one of the key projects that earned the University the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Further and Higher Education Awards for Water and Sanitation is extremely satisfying.

My work has helped build my confidence in developing my own ideas, engaging with others and in establishing my career path.

Alongside my research, I'm also involved in student supervision, thesis allocation and, more recently, teaching and research support. I organise Research 20:20, a monthly seminar and mentoring opportunity for Cranfield research students and, through this, I have the opportunity to share my experiences and help support others in developing their interests and research careers.

My passion for science also led me to become a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Ambassador, helping promote these disciplines to school-aged children in Milton Keynes and Northampton.

When I first arrived, I found the network of Nigerian staff, student and their families really supportive, they helped me to integrate into my new environment.

My involvement in the Cranfield women's network has provided me with a good platform for sharing ideas and contributing to the wider Cranfield community.



- **Nationality:** Nigerian
- **Job title:** Research Fellow in Energy Systems
- **Languages:** English, Yoruba
- **Achievements at Cranfield:** Being 'highly commended' in the Environment and Engineering category of the Milton Keynes Women Leaders Awards

“My message to anyone considering joining Cranfield from overseas is not to be apprehensive. Cranfield is very welcoming and there are many support systems in place to help you and your family settle in.”



Living in the UK

It is normal to experience 'culture shock' when you arrive in the UK. Here are some tips to help with the transition:

- speak to other international members of staff – HR can put you in touch with colleagues,
- get plenty of exercise, eat well and rest,
- keep treasured things around you such as photographs,
- find familiar foods – look in supermarkets and local specialist food stores,
- if you are finding the situation difficult, speak to your line manager or Senior HR Business Partner.

You may also find the UKCISA's [information on culture shock](#) useful.

UK culture

- Punctuality is valued in the UK so arriving on time to meetings and teaching sessions is expected.
- You are expected to queue, for example, when in a bank, shop or waiting for a bus.
- When you take a taxi or are in a restaurant you may wish to tip, 10-15% is normal.
- Smoke free: Since 2007, smoking has been banned in all workplaces, pubs and restaurants in the UK.
- Men and women have equal rights in the UK. It is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- Pub culture: 'Pub' is an abbreviation of 'Public house' - a popular place for people to spend an evening together. Many serve food and all offer both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks.

Climate and clothing

The climate in the UK is variable so you need clothes for warm and cold weather and an umbrella. You may find it cheaper to buy them in the UK when you arrive.

During the summer (May - September), the temperature can range from 10° to 30°C and during the winter (October - April), average temperatures are between 1° and 5°C. Daylight hours vary from a minimum of eight in winter to 17 in the summer.

Rainfall occurs throughout the year.

Driving in the UK

If you intend to drive in the UK, you may need to investigate how to obtain a UK driving licence if you live outside the EU. [Read more](#) about driving in the UK as a visitor or new resident.

Parking on both the Cranfield campus and Shrivenham site is free of charge, but a parking permit is required which you will be given on your first day.

Car sharing

The University also operates a car share scheme which may want to sign up to. As well as helping you make savings on fuel costs, it is a great way to get to know some Cranfield colleagues.



Accommodation

One of the most important things you will need to think about will be your accommodation.

Here are some useful websites for searching for properties to rent/buy:

- [Rightmove](#)
- [Zoopla](#)
- [Renting around Cranfield](#)
- [Renting around Shrivenham](#)

While the last two links are aimed at the student market, this website does have information about the villages surrounding both the Cranfield campus and Shrivenham that could help you in your property search.

Electrical equipment

Before packing electrical equipment, make sure it is compatible with UK standards: 240 volts, 50 cycles (50Hz), three-pin (square-pin) plugs. You may need an adaptor and perhaps a voltage converter – or you may prefer to buy electrical items after you arrive in the UK.

Living costs

It is difficult to estimate how much you will need to cover basic living expenses as these will differ based on your individual circumstances.

Goods such as alcohol, tobacco and petrol/diesel are subject to high tax rates and are likely to be more expensive than your home country.

What to calculate for

Private rented accommodation costs are likely to be your main expense and will vary considerably based on the area you live in and the type, size and standard of your accommodation.

Other key factors in living costs are:

- Food.
- Utility bills (electricity, gas, water, council tax, TV licence).
- Travel fares.
- Motoring costs.
- Clothing and footwear.
- Leisure activities (going to the cinema, eating out etc.).
- Childcare.
- Toiletries.

Banking and taxation

You are advised to open a UK bank account as soon as possible on arrival in the UK if you do not already have one. You can do this at any one of the UK banks in nearby towns.

You should be eligible for a basic bank account. They will require identification including your passport, staff ID and proof of your accommodation in the UK (you will be able to get a letter from Human Resources to confirm these details for the bank).

You may be able to gain access to your home bank account through cash dispensers in the UK if your card from home carries a sign such as 'Cirrus' or 'Maestro'.

Banks are normally open between 9:30 and 16:30, Monday to Friday and some open on a Saturday morning. Building Societies also open on Saturday mornings. You are recommended to visit a range to see which can offer the best service.

Tax and National Insurance

While working in the UK, your salary will be subject to income tax. This is deducted directly from your salary and is called 'Pay As You Earn' (PAYE). If you require more information on this you may find the following websites useful:

- www.hmrc.gov.uk
- www.adviceguide.org.uk

You will be required to pay National Insurance while working in the UK. This will be deducted directly from your salary each month. Employers and employees pay National Insurance contributions which fund certain state benefits, including the State Pension and National Health Service (NHS).

You pay National Insurance if you are:

- 16 or over; and
- an employee earning above £155 a week; or
- self-employed and making a profit of £5,965 or more a year.

When you arrive in the UK you will be required to apply for a National Insurance Number and we will provide you with a form to complete on your first day. You will then be entitled to use the NHS. The [UK Government website](http://www.gov.uk) is a useful resource for understanding National insurance.



Council Tax

Council Tax is set by local government authorities to help pay for the services they provide. It is based on the value of the house at which you live, with a personal element which takes into account the number and status of people resident in the property.

You will usually have to pay Council Tax if you're 18 or over and own or rent a home.

A full Council Tax bill is based on at least two adults living in a home. Spouses and partners who live together are jointly responsible for paying the bill.

You'll get 25% off your bill if you count as an adult for Council Tax and either:

- you live on your own,
- no-one else in your home counts as an adult.

We advise that you take council tax responsibilities into account when planning your move to the UK and ensure you promptly take the appropriate actions in contacting the local council to make arrangements for your council tax on entering the UK.

[Find out more.](#)

State benefits

As a UK tax payer, you may be entitled to some of the following benefits:

- [Child benefit/family allowance](#)
- Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits - see the [Department for Work & Pensions](#) and [Advice Guide](#) website for more information.

TV licences

Everyone who has a television or watches live TV through another device legally requires a [television licence](#). This allows the person named on it and any member of the household to use one or more television sets, tablets or compatible devices.

To purchase a licence you will need to complete a form and pay a fee at any post office or make payment online.



Bringing your family

Both the Cranfield campus and Cranfield University at Shrivenham provide close communities for families. We also have close links with local schools and early years providers.

Read more about childcare and education at [Shrivenham](#) and at [Cranfield](#).

If you would like more information about the education system in the UK, please visit www.adviceguide.org.uk and click the 'education' link.

Education at state schools is free, but there are also a number of public schools (fee paying) that you may decide to consider.

To find an independent School near you, please use this link: www.isi.net

Read more about education in [Bedfordshire](#), [Milton Keynes](#) and [Oxfordshire](#).



Healthcare in the UK

Free health treatment is available on the UK's [National Health Service \(NHS\)](#) to all staff working in the UK and any dependents (husband, wife or children aged up to 16, or up to 19 if in full-time education) for longer than six months, as well as to all citizens from EU countries and those with reciprocal health agreements.

Dentists, opticians and prescriptions will all incur additional charges.

Registering with a doctor or dentist

You are encouraged to register with an NHS medical practice as soon as possible and as close to the address at which you intend to live.

Depending on your visa type, you may need to pay the [Immigration Healthcare Surcharge](#) (IHS) as part of your visa application. If you choose to take out private medical insurance, you still need to pay this charge.

[Further information](#) about registering with a doctor.

[Further information](#) about registering with a dentist.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in any University buildings; indeed it is illegal to smoke in any enclosed public space. Even when you are outside, you will need to check whether you are in a no smoking zone as sometimes these are outside of buildings to protect people working inside.



Travelling to the UK

Before you arrive.

There are many things to think about when planning your travel to the UK.

The first thing is to check if you have a pre-existing right to live and work in the UK. If you do not have an existing right, you will need to gain a visa to enter and remain in the country for you and any dependants.

The type of visa will vary accordingly to your individual circumstances. The HR Compliance Team is happy to support you through this process.

Further information on eligibility to work and live in the UK can be found on the [UKVI website](#).

Take a look at the checklist on page 18 for the important things you need do before you arrive in the UK.

Keep all your original important documents and any valuable items in your hand luggage while in transit (and remember to stay within the airline cabin baggage weight limit). Bring sufficient money in Sterling for your first month.

Your official documents - considerations

On official documents, you may need to decide how you would like your name to be used. Make sure that, as far as possible, it is shown in the same way on all official documents.

In the UK it is very important to specify the day and month as well as the year of your birth. Make sure it is the same on all official documents. We write this in day/month/year order.



Arriving in the UK

At the airport.

When you arrive at the airport, you pass through immigration control before collecting your luggage.

Your passport and visa/entry clearance documents will be checked on arrival.

You should ensure you carry the following documents in your hand luggage, in paper form:

- evidence of your employment with Cranfield University,
- evidence of where you are going to stay,
- evidence of your right to work/permission to enter and live in the UK, this includes your passport and Biometrics card.

[Read more information about travelling to the UK.](#)

Registering with the police

It may be necessary for you to register with the police after arriving in the UK with a visa, or after getting permission to stay for longer in the UK.

If you applied outside the UK

- Check your visa 'vignette' (sticker in your passport). You must register if it has 'Police registration' or 'Register with police in 7 days of entry' on it.

If you applied inside the UK

- Check the letter you get from the Home Office when your application is approved. It will tell you if you must register.

If you are required to register but don't, your permission to stay might be shortened and you'll have to leave the UK. You can also be stopped from getting or extending a UK visa in future.

[Read more information on registering with the police.](#)



Cranfield campus

The Cranfield campus is situated in Wharley End, very close to Cranfield village, and is approximately ten minutes from the M1 motorway. It is also close to Milton Keynes and Bedford. There is rail and road access to most major airports as well as coach and train stations.

Sport

We have a modern sports centre, gym and excellent outdoor facilities.

Eat, drink and shop

- Coffee shops, bars and dining areas for all tastes and dietary requirements.
- General store, Post Office, Santander bank.
- Book, card and gift shop.

Religion

Cranfield employees are from many backgrounds, with some practising a particular faith and others who don't represent one in particular. At Cranfield you will be able to follow your beliefs in a welcoming and friendly community.

We have an ecumenical chapel where Christian groups meet and Roman Catholic mass is celebrated; a Mosque for daily and Friday prayer, Qur'an study, Eid and Ramadan observations; and close links with other local places of worship.

[Read more](#) on our website about health, wellbeing and worship at Cranfield University.

Out and about

Close to the rural open spaces around the Cranfield campus are many amenities and attractions to enjoy, including the busy towns of Milton Keynes and Bedford.

Bedford

There are plenty of things to see and do, from museums and ancient relics, to beautiful outdoor spaces, sports centres and brilliant late-night entertainment. Parking, shops, street markets and all styles of restaurants, cafés and bars are abundant.

The River Ouse runs through the centre of the town and supports many activities.

For more information, visit:

- www.lovebedford.co.uk
- www.bedford.gov.uk

Milton Keynes

Some of the most exciting activities and best entertainment experiences in the UK are on offer in this remarkable town. Shopping, cinemas, theatres, sports, the National Bowl for live music, festivals and the UK's largest indoor real-snow slopes are just a few of the attractions. Over 200 events and activities are organised by the Parks Trust each year.

For more information, visit:

- www.destinationmiltonkeynes.co.uk
- www.theparkstrust.com

Trains from Bedford to:

London Luton Airport – 25 mins.
London St Pancras – 40 mins.
London Gatwick – 1hr 40 mins.
Leicester – 45 mins.
Nottingham – 1hr 15 mins.
Sheffield – 2hr 10 mins.

Trains from Milton Keynes to:

London Euston – 35 mins.
Birmingham International Airport – 40 mins.
Manchester Piccadilly – 1hr 35 mins.

Buses

In partnership with Uno, we provide a dedicated, convenient and inexpensive bus service. This operates daily to and from Milton Keynes, Bedford and other towns and villages in the area until late in the evening. All the buses have free wifi and low-level entrances for pushchairs and wheelchairs.

For more information, visit:
www.unobus.info
E: unobus@cranfield.ac.uk



Shrivenham

Cranfield University is situated at the Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Shrivenham, which is a Ministry of Defence site.

Shrivenham itself lies in the picturesque Vale of the White Horse, close to the M4 motorway which links London and South Wales. It is seven miles from Swindon, the nearest town, which lies off the M4 at the hub of Britain's motorway network.

Bath, Cheltenham, Bristol and Oxford are all within an hour's drive and London less than two hours away by car.

All visitors must ensure that the person they are visiting has pre-registered them at reception.

Out and about

You could not wish to be in a more beautiful, safe and secluded area, providing plenty of opportunity for social activity and relaxation. There are a wide array of sights to see and places to visit.

Shrivenham

The site of military colleges since 1946 and famous for its thatched cottages, stone walls, historic pubs and a Norman parish church, it is a small village with shops, a bank, doctor's surgery and Post Office.

Swindon

The Shrivenham site is seven miles from Swindon, a 20-minute bus ride away. It offers all the trappings of a modern city: large supermarkets, shopping centre, designer outlet village, restaurants, cafés, live entertainment, museums and galleries. Parks, leisure centres and an international size ice-skating rink offer additional activities. To the north are the Cotswolds, an area of outstanding natural beauty.

For information about what to see and do in Swindon, visit: www.swindon.gov.uk

Oxford

Oxford is a city famous for its colleges, stone architecture and history. There are museums, shops, markets, theatres, restaurants, pubs and clubs - so there is plenty to see and do. The many parks and gardens are perfect for walks and the River Isis is ideal for punting, rowing and boat tours.

For information about what to see and do in Oxford, visit: www.experienceoxfordshire.org

Trains from Swindon to:

London Paddington – 50 mins.

Bristol – 25 mins.

Cardiff - 1hr 15mins.

Swansea - 2hrs.

Trains from Oxford to:

London Marylebone - 1hr 10mins.

Buses

From the Defence Academy, the local bus service (route 66) runs about twice every hour and takes around half an hour to Swindon bus station and an hour and a quarter to Oxford.

For more information, visit: www.stagecoachbus.com

How to find us

Cranfield MK43 0AL, UK

The Cranfield campus is located just outside the village of Cranfield on the Bedfordshire-Buckinghamshire border, between Milton Keynes and Bedford.

By air: London Luton is around 30 minutes drive, while London Heathrow, London Stansted, East Midlands and Birmingham airports can be reached in 90 minutes. The campus also has its own airport, used by private aircraft owners.

By rail: Direct trains from Bedford and Luton to London St Pancras International and fast trains from Milton Keynes to London Euston take under an hour.

By road: Located ten minutes from the M1 motorway and can be accessed from either junction 13 or 14 of the M1.



Shrivenham SN6 8LA, UK

Cranfield University at Shrivenham is located on the edge of Shrivenham village just off the A420 between Oxford and Swindon. Swindon is approximately 10km west of the site and Oxford is around 34km east.

By air: The major UK airports are easy and quick to reach – Heathrow is less than two hours by road along the M4, and the M25 from Gatwick. Bristol, Southampton and Cardiff airports are within easy reach.

By rail: Nearby Swindon is the best rail link to London (less than an hour); the Great Western Trains service also links Swindon with South Wales, and other services provide easy access to the Midlands and North.

By road: Located close to the M4 motorway, which links London and South Wales.

For more information, visit: www.cranfield.ac.uk/visit

Arrivals checklists

Some or all of these things will apply to you.

Before you arrive

- Accept your offer of employment.
- Satisfy conditions of your offer to include successfully obtaining the relevant right to work/live in the UK.
- Make sure you have a valid passport/correct right to work/live in the UK documents ready to travel.
- Find suitable accommodation.
- Ensure medical vaccinations are up-to-date/medical requirements have been met as part of your visa application (if applicable).
- Arrange travel insurance.
- Buy currency.
- Prepare any documents needed for yourself and if bringing your family.

When you arrive

- Collect your Biometric Residence Permit/Visa. Search www.gov.uk
- Register with the police (if applicable).
- Register with a doctor.
- Make arrangements to open a bank account - HR can provide a confirmation of employment letter to support your application.
- On your first day, please visit HR before commencing work to show your right to work documents (Biometrics card, Passport or birth certificate as appropriate) together with the following:
 - P45 form (supplied by previous employer or DSS).
 - National Insurance Number (if you have one according to your right to work status).
 - Completed bank account form.
 - Details of previous pensionable employment.
 - Your original qualification certificates.
- Attend welcome and induction sessions.
- Collect your staff ID card.
- Visit IT to collect system access details.



Useful contact details

University HR team

Cranfield campus

E: hr@cranfield.ac.uk

T: +44 (0)1234 750111

Cranfield University at Shrivenham

E: hr.shrivenham@cranfield.ac.uk

T: +44 (0)1793 785810

Accommodation/utilities

- [Rightmove](#)
- [Zoopla](#)
- [TV Licensing](#)

Health

- [National Health Service](#)
- Occupational Health provision
T: +44 (0)1234 754126

Working in the UK

- [Visa and immigration](#)
- [Working, jobs and pensions](#)
- [British Council Euraxess website for researchers](#)
- [British Council](#)

General

- [UK weather](#)
- [Citizens Advice Bureau](#)

This service helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice. Advice is available face-to-face and by telephone. Some also provide email advice.



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