Glossary of useful words

On this page you will find some commonly used words and phrases which are used on our website and relate to your studies at a British university.

- **pre-sessional**
  A pre-sessional or *pre-sessional course* is an academic English and study skills course designed to help you to develop the necessary English language and study skills you will need when studying at a university.

- **in-sessional**
  An *in-sessional course* is an academic English and study skills course designed to help you to develop your English language and academic study skills. The course is taught while you are enrolled on a degree programme at a British university.

- **pathway**
  This word means to lead towards something. For example, a pre-sessional course can be a pathway to a degree programme.

- **undergraduate**
  the level of study, when you study for a first degree in a particular subject

- **postgraduate**
  the level of study (e.g. Masters), when you have a degree in a subject and you study for a higher degree in that subject

- **taught degree**
  undergraduate and Masters degrees are taught, this means you will attend lectures, seminars, tutorials, laboratory work, etc

- **research degree**
  research degrees (MPhil and PhD, for example) are studied through research. Students do not necessarily attend classes.

- **Masters degree**
  a taught postgraduate level degree

- **PhD**
  a research postgraduate level degree

- **MA / MSc / MEng**
  Master of Arts / Master of Science / Master of Engineering are the qualifications you will obtain after studying a one year Masters degree in the UK

- **BA / BSc**
  Bachelor of Arts / Bachelor of Science are the qualifications you will obtain after studying a three year undergraduate degree at a British university
- **conditional offer**
  An offer of a place at a university, which is conditional on fulfilling a condition, for example, providing evidence of a minimum level of proficiency in English.

- **unconditional offer**
  An offer of a place at a university, where there are no conditions attached to the offer.

- **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)**
  This is an electronic document, which is produced by the UK Border Agency, to confirm that a student has been accepted to join a course in the UK.

- **General Student Visa**
  A long-term visa, international students require this type of visa to study in the UK for more than 12 months.

- **Student Visitor Visa**
  A short-term visa for students wishing to study in the UK for periods of up to 6 months.

- **Extended Student Visitor Visa**
  A visa for students wishing to study in the UK on course of between 6 and 11 months in length.

- **seminar**
  An academic discussion held between a group of students and their tutor with the purpose of discussing aspects of a topic, which the students have previously researched.

- **assignment**
  An essay, which is a written piece of work and is part of a student’s coursework.

- **dissertation**
  A long piece of writing, which is part of a student’s coursework normally at the end of a degree programme.