City life

Our students always say how much they love the city of Bristol, from its friendly people and green spaces to its vibrant harbourside and city centre. Recently named the UK’s best place to live (Sunday Times, 2017), you’ll find Bristol the perfect size to explore and enjoy.

‘Bristol is amazing. I love the harbourside, the Clifton Suspension Bridge and all the beautiful parks – wherever you are, you’re never far from a green space.’
Zahra, LLB Law

‘Bristol has everything you could ever want in your university city. Being able to go and see Europe’s largest balloon festival over the summer was a great experience. My favourite view of the city is from the top of Cabot Tower, in Brandon Hill Park. You can see over the whole of Bristol!’
Lee, BSc Social Policy

‘I like everything about Bristol. The people are friendly, it has a vibrant culture and something to suit everyone. One thing that I truly appreciate is the music scene here, since it attracts the perfect balance between new talent and established artists.’
Alexandra, BA English

‘I like the size of the city; it’s neither too big nor too small. The night life is great, there’s always something to do.’
Marco, BSc Politics and International Relations

‘The city is extremely vibrant and full of different cultures meaning there is space for people from all different walks of life. There is always something exciting to get involved in. It is definitely an inclusive city.’
Leona, MBChB Medicine
City in our Garden

In case you don’t have time to look around the city while you’re visiting us, we’ll bring Bristol to you, through the City in our Garden event. Our student-led campus tours depart from here throughout the day.

We’ll treat you to some of the culture that Bristol has to offer, including scrumptious street food. Our Students’ Union and Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health will give you a taste of the extra-curricular activities you could get involved in. The event takes place in the picturesque surroundings of Royal Fort Gardens, right at the heart of the campus. City in our Garden runs all day, from 9:30 am to 4 pm.

Things to see

Brunel’s Clifton Suspension Bridge is one of Britain’s most iconic landmarks. To see it for yourself, continue past the Richmond Building (80) and through Clifton Village – allow another 20 minutes to walk there. Down at the harbourside, Pero’s bridge links the restaurants and attractions around Millennium Square to the cobbled Old City, home to Bristol Old Vic and leafy Queen Square. Cross the harbour to visit M-shed, Bristol’s museum telling the story of the city (open 10 am – 5 pm Tuesday to Friday and 10 am – 6 pm at weekends).

Arts and culture

Bristol Museum and Art Gallery is next door to our distinctive Wills Memorial Building (26), and open 10 am – 5 pm weekdays and 10 am – 6 pm at weekends. Meet the Bristol dinosaur, explore ancient and modern world cultures, and visit the art galleries featuring painters such as Constable and Pissarro and exquisite ceramics and glassware from around the world.

Arnolfini, one of Europe’s leading centres for the contemporary arts, is located off Prince Street and the harbourside. The Grade II-listed converted tea warehouse contains five exhibition spaces, a café bar and one of the country’s best arts bookshops; it’s open 11 am – 6 pm Tuesday to Sunday (extended opening in the café bar).

The best way to get a taste of Bristol is by open top bus. We’ve teamed up with Bristol Insight to offer a special deal to all open day visitors. Show your open day booking letter to the driver to claim your 2-4-1 tickets. Adult Explorer tickets are £15, concessions are £13 and children’s tickets are £9. Buses depart from on your map (p12).

bristol.ac.uk/citybristol

Student life in the city

Bristol has a massive selection of events throughout the year, from the International Balloon Fiesta and kite festival to music, food and street art festivals. Nightlife in Bristol offers something for everyone, ranging from small pub gigs to the O2 Academy, basement hip-hop bars to huge club venues, cider pubs to cocktail bars and everything in between.

Nearer to campus, you can find shops and restaurants for every taste, be it high-street chains or quirky boutiques. Either continue past the Richmond Building (80) to Clifton Village or stroll down Park Street between the campus and city centre, and perhaps carry on towards St Nicholas’ Market and Cabot Circus. If you’re using the Cribbs Causeway park and ride, you could visit The Mall before heading home.

A green city

Bristol was named European Green Capital 2015, the first UK city to win this award. As well as the Downs – Clifton Down and Durdham Down, two large historic green spaces of about 400 acres – Bristol has more than 450 parks and open spaces for you to enjoy.

Sport

Every September, Bristol hosts one of the UK’s most popular half-marathons, while the city is also home to two Football League clubs, Gloucestershire County Cricket Club and Bristol Rugby. In 2016, the penultimate stage of the Tour of Britain cycle race started and ended on the Downs.