Guide for International Students 2009–2010



UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

www.hi.is



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Address by the Rector



Dear Student

Welcome to the University of Iceland

Embarking on a university education is a milestone in every student's life – whether he or she is studying at home or abroad. University education is challenging and calls for independent working practices and initiative. It is essential, therefore, for students to be unafraid to ask questions and seek advice at the outset. The University of Iceland endeavors to support its students in every respect.

The University of Iceland is a part of a global network of learning. It is both a laboratory of knowledge and a dynamic energy centre that acts as a generator in the creation of a modern and progressive Icelandic society. Since its founding in 1911 the University has enjoyed constant growth and development, and has made an important contribution to the advance of the Icelandic society. This brochure contains information that I trust will prove useful, about the academic community, its activities and the various services on offer for students. Global diversity adds depth, character and stimulation to our academic environment and is much appreciated.

I sincerely hope that you enjoy your time at the University of Iceland and that your education serves you well in the future.

Kristín Ingólfsdóttir, Rector / President



Introduction

The University of Iceland – International and unique

The University of Iceland is a progressive educational and scientific institution, renowned in the global scientific community for its research. It is a state university, situated in the heart of Reykjavík, the capital of Iceland. A modern, diversified and rapidly developing institution, the University of Iceland offers opportunities for study and research in almost 300 programmes spanning most fields of science and scholarship: Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Humanities, Education, Natural Sciences and Engineering.

Some of the resources available at the University are uniquely Icelandic. These include the manuscripts preserved in the Árni Magnússon Institute, Icelandic census records dating from 1703, exceptionally complete genealogical data and climatological, glaciological, seismic and geothermal records. The University of Iceland holds a leading role internationally in renewable energy and environmental research.

Extensive and diverse

The University of Iceland has five schools and 25 faculties, offering hundreds of different courses of study. Various types of learning are provided at all higher education levels, through flexible programmes that meet today's demands for an extensive and practical education. The University of Iceland is the only university in Iceland offering undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in all major academic fields.

Leading academics

The University of Iceland employs a large number of highly educated and qualified academics. The vast majority of our permanent academic staff hold doctorate degrees and have studied and participated in research at respected foreign universities. Consequently, academics at the University of Iceland are part of a strong and far-reaching global network, and many of them are leaders in their respective fields within the international scientific community.

An international university

The University of Iceland collaborates with hundreds of international universities and research institutes in student exchanges, research, faculty exchanges and more. All of the University's



students have the option of taking part of their degree at universities overseas. Hundreds of international students are enrolled at the University of Iceland during a given academic year, and their number is growing. The University employs numerous international guest professors and scientists and brings in lecturers from abroad almost on a daily basis. Hence, the University is made up of a vibrant and multi-dimensional community of people.

Growing and prosperous

At the University of Iceland, we are in the midst of a vigorous period of growth. Research, scientific work and teaching at all levels are thriving, while remarkable achievements are attained on a regular basis with regards to improved facilities at the school. Recent and current undertakings serve to vastly enhance scientific activities and instruction at the University of Iceland and to improve facilities and opportunities for its students.

Planning Your Study Abroad

At the University of Iceland, we are receiving a growing number of international students every year. All of them have found the opportunity of studying in the capital of Iceland attractive for many reasons, as we hope you will too.

Embarking on studies at a foreign university is a milestone in every student's life. It can also raise many questions, many of which will be addressed in this brochure. We urge you to read through it carefully so that your stay at the University of Iceland may be as enjoyable as possible, right from the outset.

The University website provides most answers concerning education, services and social activities, either on the websites of individual faculties, in the general section of the web, or on Uglan, the University's intranet.

For further information or advice, feel free to contact the staff at the university.

Application deadlines and the academic year

The academic year is divided into two semesters, fall and spring, each semester lasting thirteen weeks. The academic calendar varies somewhat from one faculty to another. Generally the fall semester begins in early September with examinations in December, while the spring semester begins in early January with examinations completed by the middle of May. Some faculties start their courses the last week of August. The academic calendar can be accessed on www.hi.is.

International degree seeking students

Information for international degree seeking students and an application for admission can be found online at www.hi.is. The application deadline for international students is 15 March of the year they commence their studies. Students from the Nordic countries should apply before 5 June unless applying to study Icelandic for international students; in that case, Nordic students should apply before 15 March.

Exchange students

All prospective exchange students should begin the process of enrolment by contacting their home university. The student's status must be recognised by the home institution and the University of Iceland.

The deadline to apply as an exchange student is 1 May for the fall semester or a full academic year and 1 October for the spring semester only. Application forms are made available to students after they have been officially nominated by their home university. After filling in the online application, students must have the printed version signed by the home exchange co-ordinator and send it by mail to the Office of International Education along with the accompanying documents. Further information on that process can be found on www.hi.is.

Fall 2009

20 Aug–3 Sept	Fall semester classes start
28 or 31 August	Orientation meeting for international students (date to be announced)
4 September	Student Day – the University Council requests that there be no classes after noon
10 September	Last day to review fall semester course registration
15 September	General application deadline for Master's and Doctoral programmes starting spring semester 2010
1 October	Application deadline for exchange students for spring semester 2010
10 October	Fall semester examination schedule published
19 November	Last day to withdraw from fall semester courses
28 Nov–9 Dec	End of fall semester classes
10–21 December	Fall semester examination period
22 Dec–6 Jan	Christmas holiday

Spring 2010

7–15 January	Spring semester classes start
5 or 6 January	Orientation meeting for international students (date to be announced)
12–25 January	Makeup/resit exams
21 January	Last day to review spring semester course registration
27 February	Graduation Ceremony (preliminary date)
28 February	Spring semester examination schedule published
15 March	Application deadline for international degree seeking students
22–26 March	Registration for fall and spring semesters 2010–2011
31 March–6 April	Easter holiday
10 April	Last day to withdraw from spring semester courses
15 April	General application deadline for Masters and Doctoral programmes starting fall semester 2010
11–25 April	Last day of spring semester classes
22 April	First day of Summer (public holiday)
29 April–15 May	Spring semester examination period
1 May	Application deadline for exchange students for 2010–2011
5 June	Application deadline for new (Icelandic/Nordic) students for 2010–2011
10–20 June	Makeup/resit examination
12 June	Graduation Ceremony (preliminary date)

Course catalogue

The course catalogue (i. *kennsluskrá*) is published each academic year in Icelandic and in a shorter version in English. It contains detailed information about courses and programmes and may be accessed online. Final registration for courses takes place after arrival in Iceland.

In addition to the above, the course catalogue provides information about the University's administration and faculties, the academic year, registration, fees, examinations, and various other issues of concern to students.

Students are urged to familiarise themselves with key information provided in the course catalogue, as well as with the University's academic calendar.

Subjects and credits

Exchange students may take a combination of courses and subjects from different departments. Lectures, seminars and required reading material / curriculum will prepare the student for examinations in a subject at different levels.

Since 1 July 2008, the University of Iceland has used study ECTS credits. This means that 60 credits amount to one year of full-time study (instead of 30 credits before) – and 30 credits (instead of 15 before) constitute one semester's full-time study.

Grading system

Grades are awarded on a scale of 0.0–10.0 in steps of 0.5.

5.0 to 5.99	Third class
6.0 to 7.24	Second class
7.25 to 8.99	First class
9.0 to 10.0	First class with distinction

Language of instruction

The principal language of instruction at the University is Icelandic, but most faculties give courses in English as well. Various programmes are now taught entirely in English. Examples of these are Medieval Studies, studies in Environment and Natural Resources, studies in Renewable Energy Engineering, International Studies in Education and an international L.L.M. programme.

Icelandic language courses

School of Humanities, Faculty of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies

The Faculty of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies offers a full degree programme in Icelandic for international students. Students can choose two academic routes:

- » BA degree in Icelandic studies for international students. Access to this route is through a qualifying examination held at the beginning of the fall semester. Requirements for ability are similar to those on the open educational website Icelandic Online. There are no optional courses offered here.
- » Practical Icelandic for foreign students, one year and no qualifying examination necessary to participate. This course route is intended for, among others, exchange students that can take one or more courses.
- » A free online course can be found on the following website: www.icelandic.hi.is.

Intensive language preparation course in Icelandic for exchange students

This course, organized by the Office of International Education, is held in August each year and is free of charge for Erasmus and Nordplus exchange students. The cost for other exchange students is ISK 500 EUR. The course is a mixture of language and culture. For further information and registration: www.ask.hi.is/page/ilpc.

Summer courses in Icelandic at the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies

The Árni Magnússon Institute of Icelandic Studies, Sigurður Nordal Office, organises summer courses in Icelandic language and Icelandic studies in collaboration with the University of Iceland, School of Humanities. For further information, contact the Institute. Note that applicants' residence must be outside of Iceland.

Student residency- and work permits

All citizens except Nordic citizens who come to Iceland for the purpose of study need a student residence permit if staying longer than three months in Iceland. Some need to obtain the residence permit before arriving; some can apply after they arrive.

Citizens of an EEA country who plan to study in Iceland have to register at the National Registry (i. *Þjóðskrá*), www.thjodskra.is, Borgartún 24, 150 Reykjavík, tel. +354 569 2900, upon arrival in Iceland. A citizen of an EEA country may stay and work in Iceland without a permit for up to three months from his arrival in the country, or stay for up to six months if he is seeking employ his right to residency with the National Registry, (i. *Þjóðskrá*), Residence in another Nordic country is not deducted from the residency period. Nordic citizens do not need a work permit.

Citizens of countries other than EU and EEA must obtain a student residency permit before entering Iceland. The deadline to submit an application with the Directorate of Immigration (i. *Útlendingastofnun*), is July 15th for the fall semester and November 15th for the spring semester.

Some nationals outside EU and EEA are exempted from the obligation to carry a visa on arrival in Iceland for a stay of up to a total of three months within the Schengen area. The total stay within the Schengen area must not exceed three months in any period of six months. (See website www. utl.is, which countries are part of the Schengen agreement).

If a student permit is granted, the applicant shall, upon arrival in Iceland, register his domicile with the National Registry and get his picture taken at the Directorate of Immigration. All citizens should bring a passport which is valid at least three months after the scheduled departure, and some students are required to get a health check (see: Health Issues).

Health issues

European citizens

European students must bring the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This is proof that you are entitled to health insurance at home. For further information or if in doubt, see the website of the State Social Security Institute, www.tr.is.

Citizens of countries other than EU and EEA

Students from non-EU/EEA/Nordic countries should have health insurance from an insurance company in their country that is licensed to operate in Iceland, or buy insurance from an Icelandic insurance company. The cost of insurance is approximately ISK 15,000. Applicants for a student permit coming from Central and South America, including Mexico, non-EEA European countries, Asia or Africa must undergo a medical examination with respect to infectious diseases. If the applicant, in the opinion of a physician, has a valid medical certificate from the applicant's home country, which has been issued less than three months before, the applicant concerned does not have to undergo a medical examination. People coming from the EEA (other than Romania and Bulgaria), Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, the USA and Canada do not have to submit such a medical certificate, see www.landlaeknir.is.

Students in need of a health check should go to the Health Centre, at Álfaabakki 16, 109 Reykjavík. The purpose of the visit is a blood test and tuberculosis test. The result of these tests are then sent directly to the Directorate of Immigration. The cost varies depending on where you are from: ISK 9,700–28,400, and you need to make an appointment by calling: +354 585 1390 (open on weekdays 08:20–16:15).

Accommodation

While it is, of course, best to secure accommodation before you move to Iceland, this may not always be possible. If you need a temporary accommodation during your first days in Iceland, a guesthouse or youth hostel may be the best short-term solution while you are looking for more permanent housing. For a list of hotels and guesthouses in Iceland, go to www.gisting.is or www.visitreykjavik.is.

The Icelandic market for privately owned homes and apartment flats is large, around 75–85% of the housing stock. The market for rentals is therefore limited. Rent in Reykjavík and the capital area is generally more expensive than in other areas.

You should expect to pay approximately ISK 40,000–50.000 a month for renting a single room with access to a kitchen and bathroom. For a small apartment, you pay at least ISK 70,000– 80,000 a month.

When renting a flat or a room, it is usual to pay a month in advance and a security deposit. You should always have a written, signed lease. For more information on leases or to print out a lease in English, Polish or Icelandic, go to http://.eng. felagsmalaraduneyti.is/forms/.

Rental housing for exchange students

The Office of International Education assists accepted exchange students in finding housing for the academic year/semester (1 September–15 May). Students will be given access to a database with available accommodation. Students can therefore choose the accommodation they prefer from that list and contact the chosen landlord directly. All accepted students will get access to this website at that same date.

Students rent the rooms on their own responsibility, and once you have confirmed the room to your given landlord, the contract is binding, so it is important to have all the information necessary before confirming the room. Upon arrival, or during the stay in Iceland, if you reject the room, you must find other accommodation on your own. If a student has to leave earlier than planned, the owner of the rented property must be notified as early as possible, at least one month in advance, and students cannot expect to get their insurance payment back.

Rental housing for international degree seeking students

To find an apartment you may want to use some or all of the tips below.

- Student housing offers students at the University of Iceland convenient, well-located housing to rent at a fair price. The dwellings are of varied sizes and types: rooms and apartments for individuals, apartments for two persons or couples and two-, three- and fourroom family apartments. For more information, consult the website www.studentagardar.is.
- » Advertise you can put up an ad saying that you are looking for a flat on billboards of uni-

versities, supermarkets, local kiosks, community centres, health care clinics and any other public notice boards. In addition, read the advertisements there and see if there is any accommodation available. For a small fee, you may place an ad in one of the newspapers saying that you are looking for a room or an apartment.

- » Word-of-mouth Tell everyone you know that you are looking for an apartment. Often apartments for rent are not advertised in the papers, as they are rented through acquaintances before people get the chance to advertise them.
- » Use the Internet The following websites have listings that are updated daily. These ads are all in Icelandic. Look for "Húsnæði í boði" on the following sites: www.studentamidlun.is/ husnaedi, www.visir.is, www.mbl.is and www. husaleiga.is.

You could also check these websites which are available in English: www.keilir.net, www.casaswap.com, www.leigulistinn.is.

» Use online rental agencies – www.leiga.is, www.rentus.is and www.leiguskra.com. Note that all these websites are in Icelandic.

Buddy system

To help exchange students get a good start, the University of Iceland has a well-organised buddy system. The main task of the buddy person is to provide the student with practical information about the University of Iceland and Icelandic society, as well as to introduce him/her to the students and student life in general. The extent of your relationship beyond this depends on how well you get along. We try our best to provide all students with a buddy; if you do not wish to get a buddy, please inform the Student Council at your earliest convenience.

What to pack

The climate in Iceland varies, and the daily weather is often unpredictable. It can be very windy and wet, even during summer, when the temperature is generally $10-12C^{\circ}$. Autumn and winter are windy, dark seasons, usually cold during the day and at times below freezing. You will need warm clothing – a warm coat and waterproof shoes or boots are advisable. In Iceland, we can never trust the weather.

Remember to pack

» Tickets, insurance papers and other documents required for the residence permit, i.e. documentary evidence that you have enough money to support yourself while studying in Iceland (a recent bank statement or proof of scholarship)

- Passport (check that the passport is valid for three months more than your expected stay in Iceland)
- » Acceptance letter from the University of Iceland and other relevant documents, i.e. this brochure
- » Cash and/or credit card
- » Adaptor for electrical appliances (220V, frequency 50Hz)
- » Sheets, blankets, duvet and towels (check with your landlord what is included in your housing)
- » Camera
- » Personal items that will help you feel at home

Cancellation of stay

Exchange students should notify the Office of International Education immediately, if for whatever reason, he/she may not be able to come to the University of Iceland after having been admitted.

International degree seeking students should know that registration fees are by law non refundable.



Arriving in Reykjavík

We recommend that you arrive in Reykjavík a few days prior to commencing your studies. This will give you time to settle in, and to get acquainted with the city before starting classes.

The international airport is located in Keflavík, a 45-minute drive from Reykjavík. The fly bus runs in connection with flights to the bus terminal, BSÍ, see schedule at www.re.is. From there, you can take a bus or a taxi to your destination. You will need Icelandic currency to pay for the bus and taxi. Do not change all your money into Icelandic currency at the airport, as the exchange rate is the most expensive there.

Orientation meeting

An orientation meeting for international students at the University of Iceland is held at the beginning of each semester. The aim of the meeting is to introduce the practicalities of studying at the University of Iceland.

At the meeting, representatives from various service institutions at the University give presentations on the services offered to students as well as information on what is expected of them. The meeting should give international students a good vision of what to expect at the University and of life in Iceland. After the meeting Icelandic students usually take international students on a walk around the campus.

Exchange students are required to attend the meeting; others are strongly advised to do so.

Timetable

Timetables are made available on the websites of each individual faculty. Students' timetables are also available on their individual home pages on Uglan, the intranet. If you need help on this matter, contact the faculty office concerned. If you have questions concerning your courses, the most accurate and up-to-date information is to be found at your faculty office. You need to have a complete list of your selected courses ready at that time.

ID number

All international students need to apply for an Icelandic personal identification number upon arrival (i. *kennitala*). This is a ten-digit number issued by the National Registry (i. *Þjóðskrá*), www.thjodskra. is, Borgartún 24a, 105 Reykjavík. You need to bring your passport and acceptance letter from the University of Iceland. The ID number is necessary to register for courses, have a scholarship paid, open up a bank account, get a tax card, etc. The ID number is usually faxed to the Service Desk in Háskólatorg.

Registration

You need to register at the Service Desk in Háskólatorg as soon as you have your Icelandic ID number. Bring with you your letter of acceptance from the University of Iceland and identification (e.g. passport). You will be asked to fill out a registration form as well as a course request form. Allow up to three days for the registration to be confirmed before you go back to the Service Desk to be provided with your username and password for the University web system, Uglan. Next, you can get help with your new e-mail account and get your computer registered in the University's wireless network from the University Computing Services, also located at the Service Desk.

Computer facilities and e-mail

All faculties at UI have study facilities, a library and numerous computer labs. Moreover, the National and University Library of Iceland offer excellent services for students and instructors.

International degree seeking students embarking on studies at the University of Iceland receive a webkey with which they can obtain a user name and password. If the webkey is lost, or if it is not available for some reason, students may obtain a user name and password from the Student Registry. Exchange students get access to the computer facilities upon arrival, after registration. It is essential that as soon as you get your e-mail address, you start checking it frequently so that you will not miss any important messages.

The Uglan intranet

All students at the University of Iceland are allocated a home page on the University web, as well as access to Uglan, the University's intranet. Uglan is a powerful network of information, instruction and services available to UI students and staff, and serves as one of their primary working tools. It is moreover a lively, secure online community. Students and academics can upload content, announcements or projects onto the network, and enjoy interactive communication, for example in discussion forums. Students can access their Uglan home pages and the information contained there from any computer that is connected to the Internet.

Uglan provides students with pertinent information concerning their grades, progress, courses, status in relation to other students, and more. Through the network, they can also perform a variety of actions, such as access their e-mail, buy printing quotas, stipulate whether or not they wish to receive grades via text message, and more.

Information regarding examination locations and seats for individual students on examination days is uploaded onto the Uglan network. Students can

view their course timetables on their individual home pages, and register and de-register for courses on Uglan.

Academics and administrators at the University presume that students use Uglan and read their e-mail regularly; consequently, most announcements are sent out electronically. Access and the dissemination of information is linked to each student's registration; therefore, providing the right information and registering at the correct time is vital.

Introduction to Iceland

"Introduction to Iceland" is a recreational programme organised by the Office of International Education (OIE) for international students and visiting teachers at Icelandic institutions of higher education. The aim of the programme is to give visitors a taste of Icelandic history, culture and daily life through excursions to interesting sites, lectures by prominent individuals in their fields and visits to cultural institutions.

The programme traditionally includes a day excursion to the southern part of the island to monitor the annual sheep round-up, a day excursion to the historic Borgarfjörður, horseback riding tours, lectures on Icelandic topics and site visits. For further information, please see the following website: www.ask.hi.is.





Student Services & Student Life

Living and studying away from home can be a challenging experience, particularly in the beginning of your stay. The staff at the University of Iceland is happy to help you, or to point you in the right direction to where you can get help.

Service desk in Háskólatorg

The Service Desk at Háskólatorg offers students information and first service on behalf of the Registry Office, the Counselling Centre, the Office of International Education, the Student Council and the Student Service Centre.

At the Service Desk, students obtain diverse services, including transcripts, printing quotas, user names and passwords to access Uglan, as well as various required documents, such as certificates required for rent subsidies, childbirth subsidies, holidays, and more.

Office of international education

The Office of International Education (OIE) plays an extensive role in the University's international cooperation. It disseminates information and assists students, professors and the university administration with relation to the University's participation in multinational co-operation. such as in Erasmus, Nordplus, ISEP, MAUI and CREPUQ, in addition to various bilateral agreements. The office serves both Icelandic and international students.

Student registry

The University of Iceland's Student Registry keeps a record of all students, their course selection and their study progress. The records also contain the sources on which the arrangement of instruction and examinations are based. UI students should register with the office annually while studying at the school.

The Student Registry provides diverse services for students, including maintaining an overview of their grades, study progress and courses.

School and faculty offices

Individual school and faculty offices provide all necessary information about the organisation and arrangement of different programmes, including information on timetables, regulations concerning the arrangement of study, individual courses, examinations, projects, submissions, regulations concerning the faculty, and foreign exchanges. They also offer assistance with course selection. Further information about faculty offices and their operations and services can be found on the websites of the individual faculties (see phone directory).

National and university library of Iceland

Students at the University of Iceland have access to the most extensive and comprehensive library in the country – the National and University Library of Iceland. Students receive a library card free of charge, which grants them access to electronic data banks that the library owns or subscribes to, all final theses submitted by students at the University, and more.

The National and University Library operates an information service, a user service and a stationery shop. It also sells photocopying cards. Over 400 study desks are available to users, as are numerous seats at computers, microimage readers, and in the Audiovisual Department. The Library also operates a number of branches and specialised libraries on campus.

University computing services

University Computing Services (i. *Reiknistofnun*) maintains and supervises the University's computer systems. It services, installs and operates computer networks and servers, and looks after Internet connections for the University's students and staff. University Computing Services operates a telephone service and help desk in the Service Desk in Háskólatorg.

University counselling and career centre

One of the main goals of counselling in general is to assist, encourage and support the university student in seeking opportunities and realising goals that will enhance his/her personal, academic and professional life in a life-long learning context.

The primary role of University Counselling and Career Centre (i. *Náms- og starfsráðgjöf Háskóla Íslands*) is to provide academic counselling and career counselling to students thus promoting personal academic and career growth.

The University Student Counselling & Career Services regularly offers workshops on a variety of topics of interest to students, including study techniques, exam preparation, goal-setting and time management strategies. They also offer disability services.

Students at the University can meet with counsellors during walk in hours, book appointments or submit online enquiries.

Icelandic student services

Icelandic Student Services (i. *Félagsstofnun Stúdenta*) is primarily a service company for students at the University of Iceland, with the main goal of offering students at UI good service on good terms, while ensuring that the institution has a dependable operational foundation.

The University Book Store provides students with educational materials and other supplies for their studies. Booklists can be accessed at the store's website and orders made directly from the lists. The University Book Store is located in Háskólatorg, at Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík, and at the website www.boksala.is.

Icelandic Student Services preschools are located in the Student Housing area. Sólgarður, solgardur@fs.is, and Leikgardur, leikgardur@fs.is, are for children aged six months to two years, and Mánagardur, managardur@fs.is, is for children aged one to six years.

Student Cafés are located in six buildings on campus. Háma is a new restaurant and bar, located in Háskólatorg.

The Student Agency is a resource for students seeking jobs: summer, part-time and temporary jobs. The Student Agency also offers a housing agency. The Student Agency is on the internet, www.studentamidlun.is.

Student council

The role of the Student Council (i. *Stúdentaráð Háskóla íslands* – *SHÍ*) is to protect and promote the interests of students at the University of Iceland and to be their advocate both within and outside the University. Student Council representatives hold seats on all significant councils and committees within the school, so students are involved in all major decisions concerning University operations. The Student Council deals with a variety of issues and provides students with assistance and information about most things that concern them, on request.

A chairman, managing director, student loan representative and international representative are all based at the Student Council offices, as is the Student Magazine.

The Student Council operates a **Rights Office** that applies itself on behalf of students that feel they have been treated unjustly within the academic community.

A part of the services the Student Council offers is directed towards the needs of international students. The aim is to make international students feel welcome and to help them to adjust to student life in Iceland. An **international officer** acts as a service agent for international students at the University of Iceland. Students can seek advice from the officer regarding their studies at the University, as well as other matters concerning their stay in Iceland.

Student Cards – All students at UI can apply for a student card. The cards are, first of all, access cards to the university buildings. The University's buildings are open at various times, and the student card grants access to many of them around the clock. The card also serves as an ID card providing various student discounts. University of Iceland students can obtain the card free of charge. Further information and card applications may be found on www.studentakort.is.

Student associations

Student associations are responsible for social activities and happenings for students throughout the academic year, as are various related associations, such as the Association of Gay Students and the Association of Christian Students. There is also a Student Theatre Group, University Choir and many more fun groups that students can take part in. The Student Fund supports cultural and social activities at the various UI faculties and provides grants to faculty associations and other associations within the school. Individual students can also apply for grants from the fund.

Participation of international students in various student associations has proven one of the best ways to integrate with Icelandic students. A list of

most of the student associations can be found on www.student.is.

ESN Reykjavík

ESN Reykjavík is a part of a European network called ESN (Erasmus Student Network); despite its name, all international students (not only Erasmus) are welcome to become members. With more than 280 local sections in 34 countries, ESN offers services to over 150,000 students. The benefits from belonging to such a huge network are numerous for both the sections and its members, e.g. members get a membership card (ESN Card) which they can use for discounts and events in all active ESN countries.

ESN Reykjavík focuses mainly on making the experience of international students more fun and exciting. ESN hosts parties throughout the semester and organises trips. For more information, see www.esnreykjavik.com.

University sports centre

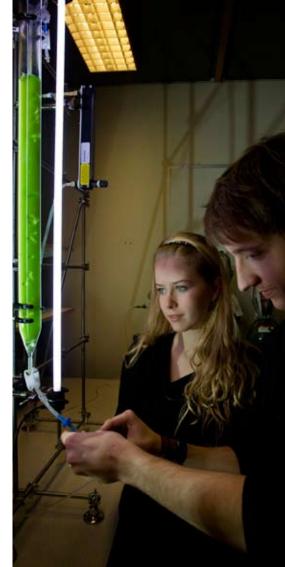
All students at the University of Iceland may use the University Sports Centre for a nominal fee. A regular programme of gym classes, strengthening exercises and aerobics is offered. Students may also reserve the Sports Centre for their own use. The weightlifting room is open all day, every day, and there is a sauna on the premises.

University cinema

UI students receive a 50% discount off the first film screenings each day, upon presentation of their student cards. For more information, see www.haskolabio.is.

Open university

Lectures, symposiums, conferences and other events under the auspices of the University are open to the public year-round. A lot of these events are in English, and students are especially invited to take part. A list of events is available at www.hi.is.





Living in Iceland

Iceland – New and different

Iceland is an island of 103,000 km² (39,756 sq. miles), about one-third larger than Scotland or Ireland. Its highest peak, Hvannadalshnjúkur, rises to 2,109 m, and over 11 percent of the country is covered by glaciers, including Vatnajökull, the largest in Europe.

Iceland means new and different things for you to see and do, whatever the season. Every part of the year has its own special attractions, character and charm. And don't let the name deceive you – Iceland can be very warm in summer when the sun shines virtually round the clock, while January temperatures are around 0°C.

Situated on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, Iceland is a hot spot of volcanic and geothermal activity; 30 post-glacial volcanoes have erupted in the past two centuries, and natural hot water supplies much of the population with cheap, pollution-free heating. Rivers, too, are harnessed to provide inexpensive hydroelectric power.

Reykjavík – Pure energy

Shaped by the energy of the earth, bustling with the energy of a cosmopolitan capital, surrounded by the pure unpolluted energy of nature, Reykjavík is a city of striking contrasts where international influences mingle with Icelandic national traditions. A unique culture where old embraces new.

Whatever your interests, Reykjavík has something to offer. Whether you are seeking the bustling energy of a cosmopolitan city, the thundering thermal energy in the ground beneath your feet or the quiet green energy of the landscape surrounding the city, Reykjavík promises a memorable visit.

One way to soak up Reykjavík's pure energy is to visit one of the many thermal swimming pools or spas. Whether you go for a swim, take a healing soak in a hot tub, or indulge in a thermal steam bath, you will leave feeling relaxed and re-energised. Going to the pool is also very much a way of life for Reykjavík's residents and thus an ideal way to meet local people.

Time

Iceland is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) throughout the year and does not go on daylight savings time. When it is noon in Reykjavík during the summer, it is 08:00 in New York City, 13:00 in London, 14:00 in Paris, 14:00 in Oslo, 14:00 in Luxembourg, 14:00 in Rome and 21:00 in Tokyo.

Public holidays

- 1 January, New Year's Day
- Maundy/Holy Thursday
- Good Friday

Easter Sunday

Easter Monday

First day of summer, usually the third Thursday in April

1 May, Labour Day

Ascension Day

Whit Sunday

Whit Monday

17 June, National/Independence Day

First Monday in August, Commerce Day (Bank Holiday)

24 December, Christmas Eve, from noon

25 December, Christmas Day

26 December, Boxing Day

31 December, New Year's Eve, from noon

Currency and banks

The unit of currency used in Iceland is the króna, abbreviated ISK. You can check the rate of the ISK at www.sedlabanki.is. All banks will exchange the most common currencies, and it is a good idea to change your currency, as there are very few shops in Iceland that accept foreign currency. Most shops and businesses accept all major credit cards, even taxis. Credit and debit cards are commonly used in Iceland, even for very small transactions.

Most banks are open weekdays from 09:15–16:00, but some of them have branches with longer opening hours. Please note that all banks are closed on 2 January.

Cost of living

The estimated cost of living in Iceland for a single person is ISK 115,567 per month (minimal support guidelines set by the municipalities).

Bus fare from Keflavík Airport to Reykjavík	ISK 1700
Overnight stay at a hostel	ISK 3000
Rent for a single room	ISK 40–50,000+
Access to a swimming pool	ISK 360
Movie ticket	ISK 1000
Theatre	ISK 3000+
Daily newspaper	ISK 250+
Public bus ticket	ISK 280
Bus card valid for a month in Reykjavík	ISK 5600
1 loaf of bread	ISK 300
1 litre of milk	ISK 100
Glass of beer (0.5l)	ISK 750
Bottle of wine	ISK 1500+
Lunch at a restaurant	ISK 1500+
Dinner at a restaurant	ISK 2500+
1 litre of petrol/gasoline	ISK 150

Health care and emergency services

Iceland is divided into health care regions, each with their own primary health care centres, some of which are run jointly with the local community hospital. The primary health care centres are responsible for general treatment and care, examination, home nursing as well as preventive measures such as family planning, maternity care and child health care and school health care. The health care centres are open from 08:00–16:00 Monday to Friday for those who have made an appointment. From 16:00–18:00, doctors are available for consultation without an appointment, but you can expect a somewhat higher fee. This service is open to all regardless of insurance.

Those that can not show proof of insurance, though, will pay higher fees. To find the health care centre closest to your home, look for "Heilsugæslustöð" in the phonebook.

For medical problems that arise after the closing time of the health care centres, you can use the health care service "Læknavakt", located at Smáratorg 1 in Kópavogur – call 1770. The service charges a higher fee for its service than the health care centres, as it is an after-hours service.

Telephone lines are open for advice between 17:00–08:00 on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends and holidays. House call requests are available during the same hours. Emergency and trauma services (i. *Slysa- og bráðamóttaka*) are located at the National University Hospital (i. *Landspítali-háskólasjúkrahús*) in Fossvogur, just off Bústaðarvegur in 108 Reykjavík. If you are not sure if your injury is an emergency, you may call the hospital, tel. 543 2000, and ask them for advice. **If you need immediate assistance or an ambulance, call 112**. Be prepared to state your name, what the problem is and your location.

Health Centre for uninsured immigrants

The Health Centre (i. *Heilsuvernd ehf.*) is open to all uninsured foreigners; insured foreigners will not be turned away, but they pay the same rate.

All uninsured individuals staying in Iceland without having gained the right to health insurance can come to the Health Centre. All who have resided in Iceland for over 6 months are insured, excluding citizens of the EEA states, since they are insured in another EEA state according their E-104 certificate.

Payment for the service is ISK 3.500. The rate charged for tests and other medical service is in accordance with the charge rate of the Ministry of Health.

For police, ambulance or fire, call 112

Shops

Food in supermarkets is generally cheaper than food sold in the smaller local shops. The main supermarkets are Bónus, Hagkaup, Nettó, 10-11, Krónan, and 11-11. General shopping hours on weekdays are from 09:00/10:00–18:00, and on Saturdays from 10:00–14:00/16:00. Some shops are also open on Sundays and a few are open 24/7. Wine, liquor and beer can be bought only at the state liquor outlets called Vínbúðin. They are open on weekdays from 10:00–18:00, and some are also open on Saturdays from 10:00–16:00. There is one in the City Centre in Austurstræti and also in Kringlan and Smáralind, among others.

Buses

The most economical way to travel around Reykjavík is by bus. Reykjavík's buses, yellow in colour, can be caught at bus stops, marked with the logo "S" for "Strætó bs.". You can buy a Green Card (Græna kortið) which gives the holder 30 days of unlimited travel. The card can be bought at Strætó terminals and Kringlan shopping mall. If you use coins, you must have the exact fare (280 ISK) because the driver is not permitted to give change.

Telephones and post offices

Phone call charges vary depending on the time of day, the day of the week and the distance of your call. To call from Iceland, dial 00 (or use the "+" sign) for an international line, then the country code followed by the area code and finally the phone number. The country code for Iceland is 354. No area code is necessary, as all domestic calls are local.

If you want to use your cell phone during your stay, it is best for you to buy an Icelandic phone card. There are four cell phone companies in Iceland: Nova, OgVodafone, Síminn and Tal. They all offer various services including prepaid phone cards, which can be the best solution if you are only staying for a few months. You can buy a SIM card in various shops and tourist information centres.

Post Offices are open on weekdays 8:30–16:30, although some are open until 18:00.

Working in Iceland

Work permit

Individuals with a student residence permit do not automatically have the right to work in Iceland, although there are certain situations where an individual may be able to apply for a work permit. Contact the Directorate of Labour (i. *Vinnumálastofnun*), Tryggvagata 17, vinnumalastofnun@vmst.is, 515-4800 for further information.

Income tax

Everyone working in Iceland must pay taxes. The taxation system in Iceland is a PAYE system (Pay-As-You-Earn). Employers are required to calculate and deduct taxes from all salaries and wages paid out to employees. There is one main income tax bracket, which in Reykjavík is now 37.02%. Income under the limit of ISK 113.455 a month is free from income tax. To receive a tax card, go to your local or inland tax office. You can find their addresses at the Internal Revenue Office (i. *Rikisskattstjóri*) website: www.rsk.is.

Applicants must have an Icelandic ID number (i. *kennitala*), and be prepared to show personal identification with a picture. In order to have the right amount of tax deducted, you have to give your employer the tax card. The student is obliged to file a tax return with the IRO, which must be done not less than one week before the student's departure. For further information on this matter, contact the Directorate of Labour.



Going Back Home

At the end of your stay, there are a few things that need your attention before you go back home.

Transcript of records

Exchange students get one copy of their transcript of academic records free of charge. If you leave Iceland before all your grades are in, you must go to the Service Desk in Háskólatorg before leaving Iceland and give them your home address or the address of your home university's co-ordinator if they require a copy. Please note that transcripts or certificates are only given to the student himself or to a third person if he/she has a written permission from the student.

Signatures

Exchange students should also remember to get a signature at the Office of International Education on papers required of their home universities, e.g. departure documents and learning agreements, before departure.

Final report

Exchange students will be sent a final report to be filled out at the end of their stay.

Inform the National Registry of your departure

All international students need to go the National Registry (where you applied for your Icelandic ID number) before leaving Iceland with the form Notification of Change of Address in Iceland, which can be downloaded from www.thjodskra.is. Do not worry that the form indicates a change of address in Iceland; there is no form yet available for people moving from Iceland. You can also fax this form to +354 569 2949 after leaving Iceland, but it is advised to do this before leaving.

Accommodation

Students are advised to clean their rooms and to arrange for inspection of the room with the landlord. This should be done prior to departure in order to ensure the return of the deposit. This is a way of avoiding any misunderstandings regarding cleaning or decoration of your room, which might otherwise result in extra bills after your departure.

Important Contacts

University offices

School of Social Sciences

(i. Félagsvísindasvið)
gimli.info@hi.is
Gimli, Sæmundargata 10, 101 Reykjavík
Contacts for international students:
Social and Human Sciences: Sigrún Jónsdóttir, sj@ hi.is
Social Work: Ásdís Ýr Arnardóttir, aya@hi.is
Economics and Business Administration: Kristín
Guðmundsdóttir, kristin@hi.is
Law: Stella Vestmann, stellav@hi.is
Political Science: Elva Ellertsdóttir, elva@hi.is

School of Health Sciences

(i. Heilbrigðisvísindasvið)
Læknagarður, Vatnsmýrarvegur 16,
101 Reykjavík
hvs@hi.is
Contacts for international students:
Nursing: general address for the faculty, hjukrun@
hi.is
Pharmacy: general address for the faculty,
lyf@hi.is
Medicine: Þuríður Pálsdóttir, thpals@hi.is
Posychology: Ingiríður Þórisdóttir, ingirid@hi.is
Food Science and Nutrition, Odontology: Guðrún Ívars. givars@hi.is

School of Humanities

(i. *Hugvísindasvið*) Aðalbygging, Sæmundargata 2, 101 Reykjavík hug@hi.is Contact for international students: Guðrún Birgisdóttir, gb@hi.is

School of Education

(i. Menntavísindasvið) menntavisindasvid@hi.is Stakkahlíð, 105 Reykjavík Contact for international students: Guðrún Sóley Guðjónsdóttir, gsoley@hi.is School of Engineering and Natural Sciences (i. Verkfræði- og Náttúruvísindasvið) verkognatt@hi.is VR II, Hjarðarhagi 2-6, 107 Reykjavík and Askja, Sturlugata 3, 101 Revkiavík Contacts for international students: Undergraduate studies in Engineering and Physical Sciences: Guðrún Helga Agnarsdóttir, ulla@hi.is Undergraduate studies in Earth Sciences and Life and Environmental Sciences: Ragnhildur Skjaldardóttir, rask@hi.is All graduate studies: Hafdís Eyjólfsdóttir, hafdisey@hi.is

The offices are open at various times. See the websites of individual Schools for more information.

Service Desk in Háskólatorg

(i. *Þjónustuborð*) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 5800 - Fax: +354 525 5802 haskolatorg@hi.is Winter opening hours: Mon–Fri 8:30–18:00 Summer opening hours: Mon–Fri: 8:30–16:30

Office of International Education

(i. *Alþjóðaskrifstofa háskólastigsins*) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4311 - Fax: +354 525 5850 - ask@ hi.is

Contact for exchange students: Erla Björk Atladóttir, ebjork@hi.is, incoming@hi.is Contact for international degree seeking students: Gísli Fannberg, gf@hi.is (not located at OIE) Opening hours: Mon–Fri 10:00–12:00 and 12:30–16:00 Drop-in hours for exchange students are on Mondays and Thursdays

Student Registry

(i. Nemendaskrá) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4309 - Fax: +354 525 4317 - nemskra@hi.is Opening hours: Mon–Fri 8:30–12 and 12:30-15:00

National and University Library of Iceland

(i. Landsbókasafn Íslands Háksólabókasafn) Arngrímsgata 3, 107 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 5600 - Fax: +354 525 5615 - Ibs@ bok.hi.is www.bok.hi.is Winter opening hours: Mon–Thurs 8:15–22:00, Fri 8:15–19:00, Sat 10:00– 17:00, Sun 11:00–17:00 Summer opening hours: Mon–Thurs 9:00–17:00, Fri 9:00–17:00, Sat 10:00–14:00, Sun closed

University Computing Services

(i. *Reiknistofnun*) Tæknigarður, Dunhagi 5, 107 Reykjavík An officer is also located at the Service desk in Háskólatorg. Tel: +354 525 4222 - Fax: +354 525 8801 - help@hi.is - www.rhi.hi.is Opening hours: Mon – Fri 8:00 – 16:00 and at the Service Desk's opening hours

University Counselling and Career Centre

(i. Náms- og starfsráðgjöf Háskóla íslands) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4315 - radgjof@hi.is Opening hours: Mon–Fri, 9:00–12:00 and 13:00–16:00. Open counselling hours: Mon–Thurs 13:00–16:00. Students can also book an appointment via e-mail.

Icelandic Student Services

(i. Félagsstofnun Stúdenta) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 570 0700 - fs@fs.is - www.fs.is Opening hours: Mon–Thurs 9:00–16:00, Fri 9:00–15:00

University Book Store

(i. *Bóksala stúdenta*) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 570 0777 - Fax: +354 570 0778 - boksala@boksala.is - www.boksala.is Winter opening hours: Mon–Fri 9:00–18:00. Summer opening hours: Mon–Fri 9:00–17:00

Student Council

(i. *Stúdentaráð háskóla Íslands*) Háskólatorg, Sæmundargata 4, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 570 0850 - shi@hi.is www.student.is Opening hours: Mon–Fri 9:00–17:00

The Árni Magnússon Institute of Icelandic Studies

(i. Stofnun Árna Magnússonar) Árnagarður, Sturlugata 1, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4010 - Fax: +354 525 4035 - arnastofnun@hi.is - www.am.hi.is

The Vigdís Finnbogadóttir Institute of Foreign Languages

(i. Stofnun Vigdísar Finnbogadóttur í erlendum tungumálum)

Gimli, Sæmundargata 10, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4191 - Fax: +354 525 4410 infovigdis@hi.is - www.vigdis.hi.is

Nordic Volcanological Centre

(i. *Norræna Eldfjallasetrið*) Askja, Sturlugata 7, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 525 4492 - Fax: +354 562 9767

Other important contacts in Iceland

Police, ambulance & fire alarm: 112

Primary Health Care of the Capital Area

(i. *Heilsugæsla höfuðborgarsvæðisins*) Álfabakka 16, 109 Reykjavík Tel: +354 585 1300 - heilsa@stj.hg.is www.heilsugaeslan.is

Health Care Service

(i. Læknavakt)
Smáratorg 1, 201 Kópavogur
Tel: 1770 - www.heilsugaeslan.is
Opening hours: on a walk-in basis. Mon–Fri
17:00–23:30,
Sat–Sun and holidays
09:00–23:30.
Telephone lines are open for advice between
17:00–08:00 on weekdays and 24 hours on weekends and holidays.
House call requests are available during the same hours.

Health Centre for Uninsured Immigrants

(i. *Heilsuvernd ehf.*) Holtasmára 1, 7th floor, 201 Kópavogur Tel: +354 510 6500 - www.hv.is Opening hours: on a walk-in basis. Mon–Fri 9:00–12:00 and 16:00-20:00

Directorate of Immigration

(i. *Útlendingastofnun*) Skógarhlíð 6, 105 Reykjavík Tel: +354 510 5400 - Fax: +354 552 5405 - utl@ utl.is - www.utl.is

National Registry

(i. *Hagstofa Íslands*) Borgartún 24, 150 Reykjavík Tel: +354 569 2950 - Fax: +354 569 2949 - thjodskra@thjodskra.is - www.thjodskra.is

The Intercultural Centre

(i. *Alþjóðahús*) Laugavegi 37, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 530 9300 - Fax: +354 530 9301 info@ahus.is - www.ahus.is

Directorate of Labour

(i. *Vinnumálastofnun*) Hafnarhúsinu, Tryggvagötu 17, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 515 4800 - Fax: +354 511 2520 www.vinnumalastofnun.is

EURES European Employment Services

(i. *Evrópsk Vinnumiðlun*) Borgartúni 7b, 105 Reykjavík Tel: +354 554 7600 - eures@vmst.is www.eures.is

Foreign embassies and consulates accredited to Iceland

www.mfa.is/diplomatic-missions/foreign-missions/ nr/1808

Foreningen Norden i Island

(i. Norræna félagið) Óðinsgata 7, 101 Reykjavík Tel: +354 551 0165 - norden@norden.is www.norden.is

Useful websites

ESN Reykjavík – International Student Association www.esnreykjavik.com

Strætó bs. – Public transportation in Reykjavík www.bus.is

BSÍ – Bus tours in Iceland www.bsi.is

Reykjavík – Practical information and events www.visitreykjavik.is

Icelandic Tourist Board www.icetourist.is

Iceland Review www.icelandreview.com

Weather forecast for Iceland www.vedur.is





Schools and Faculties

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

- » Faculty of Education Studies
- » Faculty of Sport Sciences, Social Education and Leisure Studies
- » Faculty of Teacher Education

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND SCIENCES

- » Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering
- » Faculty of Earth Sciences
- » Faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- » Faculty of Industrial Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science
- » Faculty of Life & Environmental Sciences
- » Faculty of Physical Sciences

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES

- » Faculty of Food Scienece & Nutrition
- » Faculty of Medicine
- » Faculty of Nursing
- » Faculty of Odontology
- » Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Faculty of Psychology

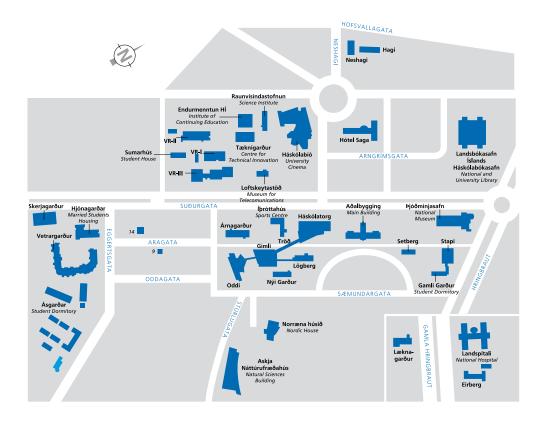
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES

- » Faculty of Foreign Languages, Literature and Linguistics
- » Faculty of History and Philosophy
- » Faculty of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies
- » Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

- » Faculty of Business Administration
- » Faculty of Economics
- » Faculty of Law
- » Faculty of Political Science
- » Faculty of Social & Human Sciences
- » Faculty of Social Work

Map of Campus



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UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND