



UCLL
HOGESCHOOL

Welcome to UCLL!

#MOVINGMINDS



Welcome to Leuven

Population: ~100 000 people, about
45 000 students

Location: in Flanders (Dutch-speaking
part of Belgium), 25km from Brussels


Clean and safe city

In **Top 50** best student cities in the
world for international students

[European Capital of Innovation 2020](#)

Leuven is also home for KU Leuven –
big international university with a lot of
international students → Leuven is a
true student city





TODAY: all you
need to know at
the current stage
of your journey



Visa



Housing



Campus location
and transportation



Cost of living



Timeline



Homework for the
summer



Welcome word from
our current students



UCLL
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Visa (non-EEA nationals)*

It takes time to prepare the package of documents for your visa application (e.g., you may need to translate and apostile some documents) + it also takes time for the embassies to process your application during the busy summer period → in total the process may take several months → the right time to start preparations is **NOW!**

- 1) Check the location of [the closest Belgian embassy](#) or visa center (e.g., [VFS Global](#) or [TLS](#))
- 2) Check the list of documents you need to apply for a long-stay visa (type D, with multiple entries, at least for 180 days) on the website of the embassy or visa center
- 3) The documents you would need from UCLL to start your visa application: admissions letter and financial certificate (Blocked account or sponsorship), check our [student visa page](#) for more information

➔ **TIP:** Check also the [webpage](#) of KU Leuven, our partner university, to know more about entry documents



* EEA/Swiss nationals do not need a visa to enter Belgium



Housing

Residence Halls (20% of the housing market)

Admission requirements differ – check each of the 3 groups separately, more information [here](#)

More information about housing in Leuven [here](#) and [here](#)

Types of residence halls

Leuven

Managed by KU Leuven Central Services

50% of the rooms in these residence halls are reserved for international students.

[Read more](#)

Managed by KU Leuven Stuvo

KU Leuven Stuvo offers 3000 rooms, of which 600 are meant for international students, and 250 studios and apartments.

Are you looking to rent a room for a shorter period? Then, you can apply for a room through KU Leuven Stuvo.

[Read more](#)

In cooperation with KU Leuven

KU Leuven and the city of Leuven have established cooperation agreements with private investors who have built qualitative and durable student housing projects.

20% of the rooms are reserved for international students.

[Read more](#)

Questions? Doubts?

- Reach out to the [Housing Service](#)
- Reach out to the residence manager of the residence of your interest

Tip: *no available rooms at the moment? Check from residences directly from time to time since cancellations may occur.*



Housing

Private market offer (80% of the housing market)

Signing a contract from abroad

Where to find accommodation?

- Our trusted platform [Kotwijs](#) (verified accommodation, constantly updated, no scam)
- Real estate agencies
- Other sources (Facebook groups, google, etc.)

Important: be aware of a big number of scam offers on the Internet!

- Check how to recognize Internet fraud [here](#)
- If you find housing via other websites or social media (not via Kotwijs), please check with the KU Leuven [Housing Service](#) first to see whether there is a cooperation with this landlord to minimize the risk of internet fraud.

Tip: it is not possible to terminate the contract without financial sanctions. Inform yourself before signing a contract.

Looking for a place while in Leuven

“kot” – local name for a student room



[kotlabel](#) = verified accommodation
te huur = for rent

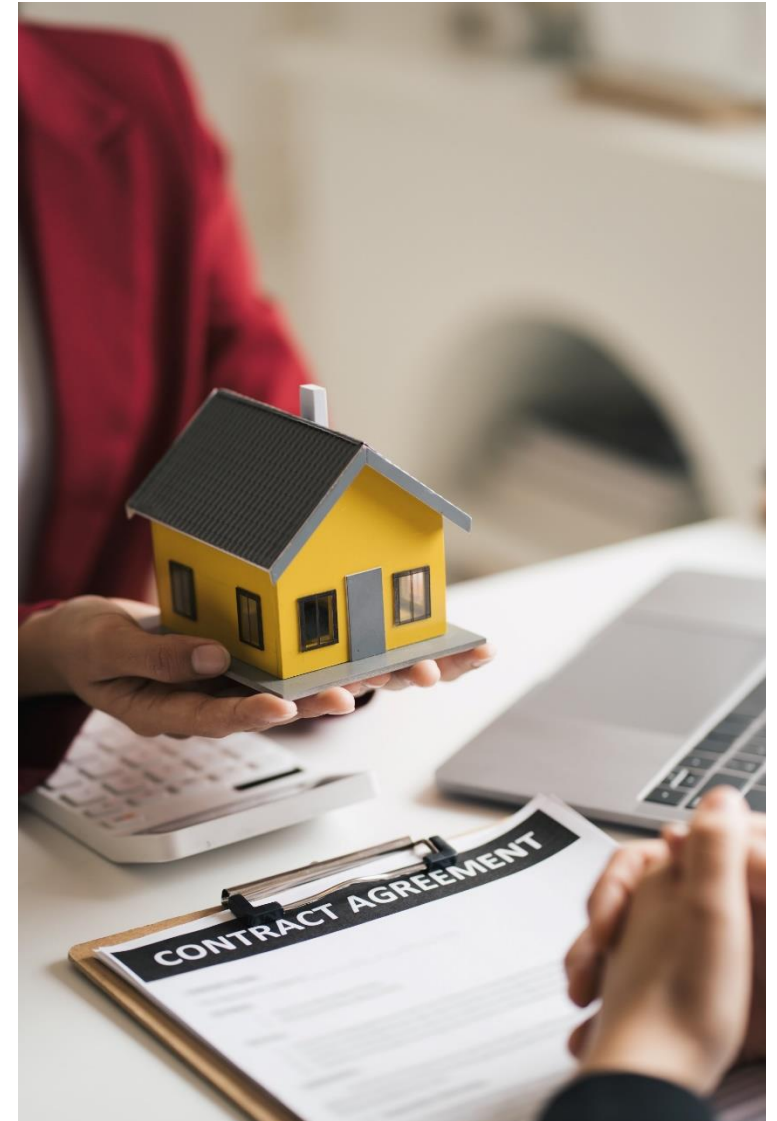
Important: there is a shortage of student housing in Leuven. We strongly recommend to secure accommodation before you arrive in Leuven!



Housing

What else do you need to consider?

- **Rental contracts** are mostly in Dutch, some landlords provide the English version for your information but you sign the Dutch copy.
- There is a **deposit** which usually equals 1-2 months rent price, the deposit cannot be used to pay for the last month of your stay.
- Pay attention to **what is included/not included** into the rental price (e.g., water & electricity can go on the top), also if your room is furnished or not ('gemeubileerd' in Dutch).
- Most contracts are for **12 months**. If you need a shorter option, negotiate with the landlord whether he is willing to shorten the rental period.

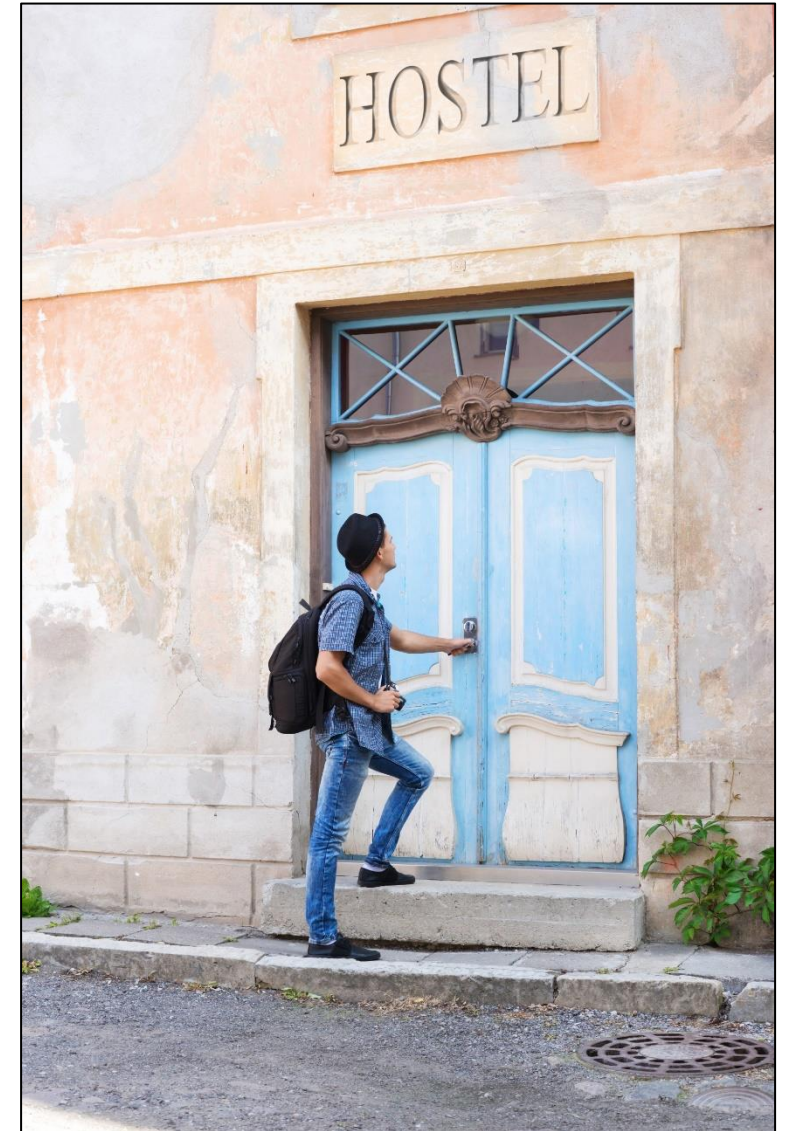




Housing

What else do you need to consider?

- Before signing a contract (if it is a private market offer), check if your accommodation has **domiciliation** (it means that you can register this address as your residence address in Belgium at the city hall). This is important for all non French, German, Dutch or Luxembourgish nationality, as **you are required to register your stay at the city hall upon arrival**. This is not a compulsory option for border students (those from France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg), who can retain their current home address and right of residence in these countries while studying in Leuven.
- Most rental contracts start in the middle of September. However, students arrive earlier to attend Welcome Days and do administrative procedures. You may need **a short term stay** option. **There is a shortage of short-term stay options in Leuven! Please, make sure you book far in advance.** You can check short term stay options, for example, [here](#) or [here](#). Some current students offer their rooms for a short term stay via Facebook communities (beware of [scam!](#)).

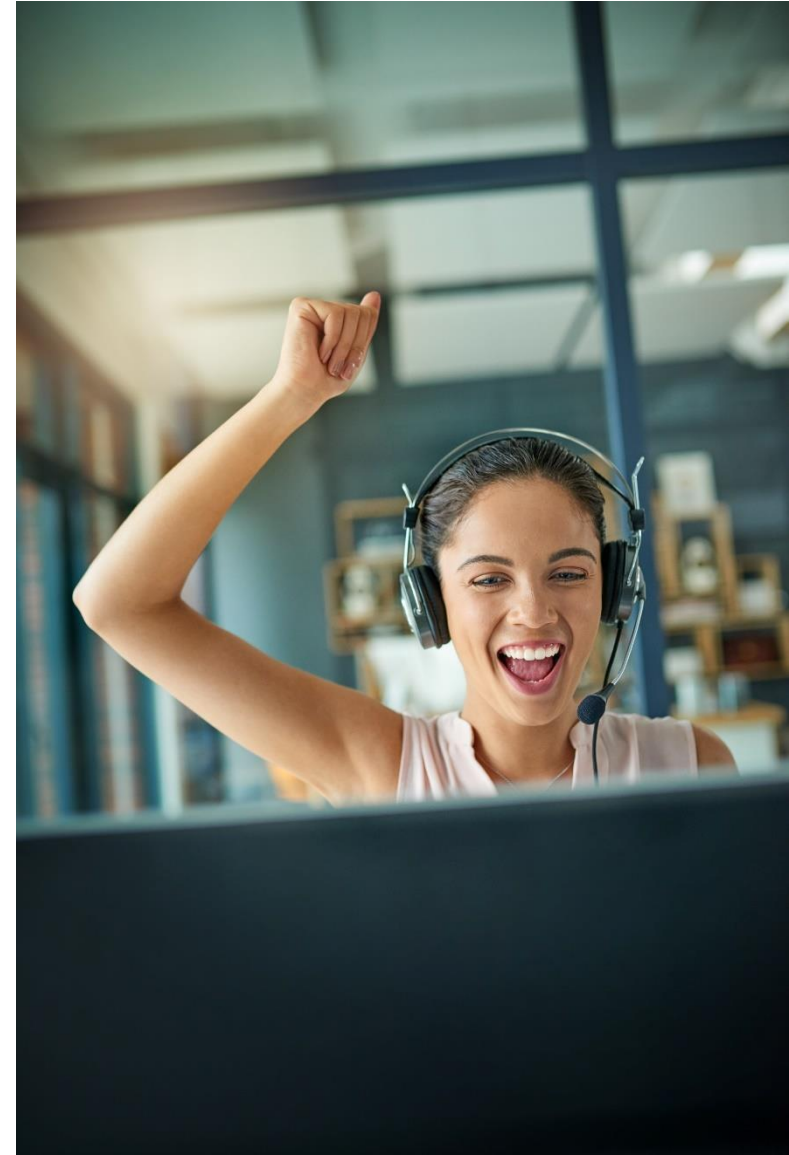




Housing

Need a helping hand?

- If you found a housing option not via [Kotwijs](#) or not in the [residence halls](#) you may need assistance:
 - to clarify something in your contract or have a connector between you and the landlord
 - to check if the property is a verified option in the university database (and it goes under the [kotlabel](#))
- Reach out to the [Housing Service](#)





Housing (tips from our students)

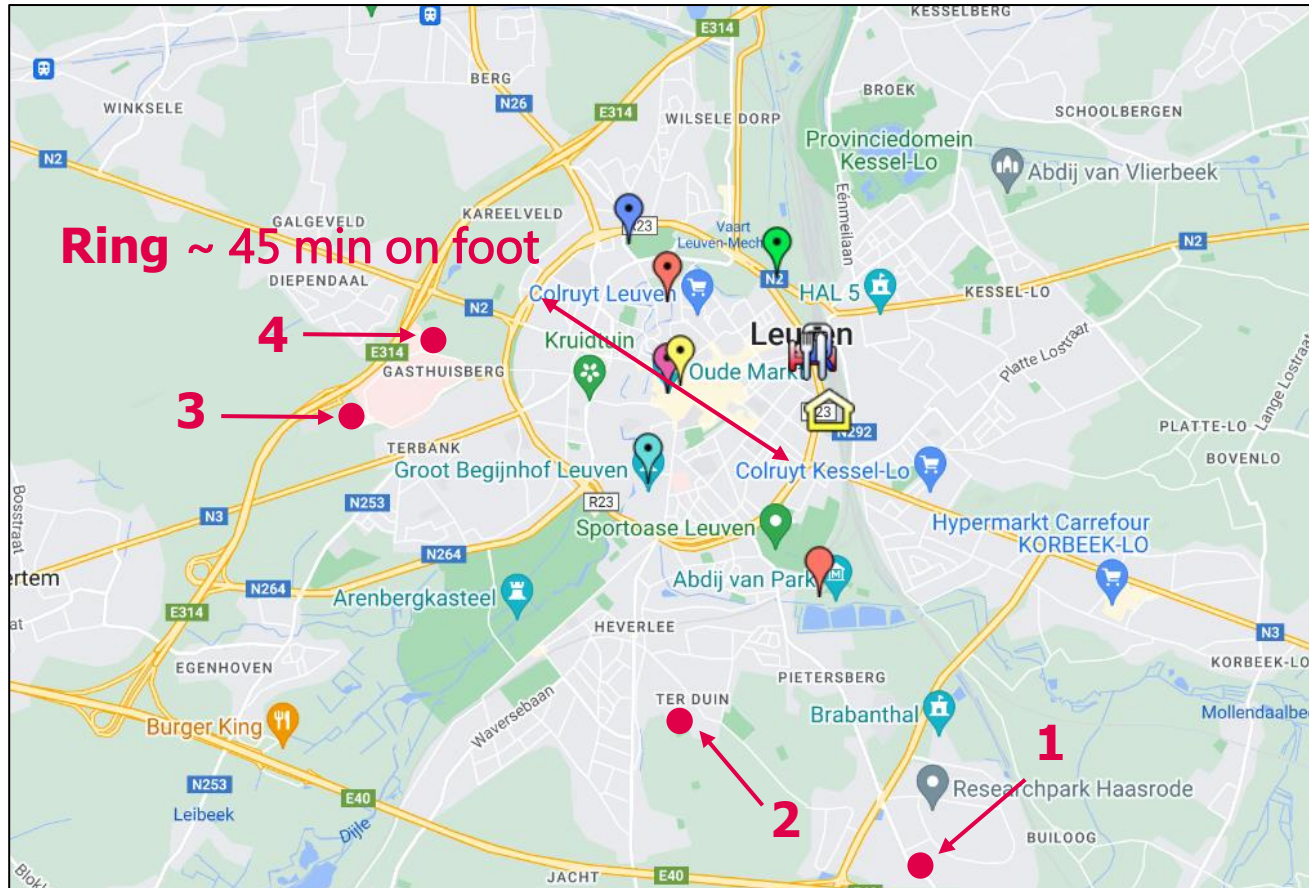
- start looking for housing early! monitor continuously! apply a lot!
- **be visible and active:** reach out to people as much as possible, indicate your need (not just scroll through the existing offers)
- via social media, try getting in **contact with the students** (of your nationality) who are currently in Leuven, ask for tips, ask for assistance (e.g., make a visit to the chosen room before signing a contract in case your room is not found via Kotwijs)
- don't be afraid to consider housing in the **neighbourhoods of Leuven** (e.g., Heverlee, Kessel-Lo, Wilsele, Wijgmaal), everything is quite close and accessible by bus/bike, [checking bus routes](#) between the campus and your accomodation in advance can be helpful (can be also checked via google)
- a **call to a landlord** would be more efficient than emailing (most of the landlords speak English)
- directly ask for a **video call** + tour with the person who is renting out
- check **student communities on social media:** student associations, groups of residence halls, groups of international students
- ask to read contracts in advance
- **don't be very picky** (there are not as many options as you may think)
- ask final-year students and make arrangement to take over when they leave
- educate yourself on [types of contracts](#) available
- check the frequency of buses to city center and your school from your nearest bus stop before finalizing your stay
- having as much as possible people aware of the fact that you're looking for a housing may help since they can refer you if anything comes up





Campus location and transportation

Good news: Leuven is small! Everything is close by! 🗺️



- 1. Campus Proximus (Geldenaaksebaan, 335)**
 - Bachelor International Business Management, Marketing (track in Belgium and track across Europe)
 - Bachelor Applied Computer Science
- 2. Campus Hertogstraat (Hertogstraat, 178)**
 - Postgraduate International Educating Class
 - Advanced Bachelor International Management (Design Thinking & Innovation and International Management tracks)
- 3. Campus Sociale School (Groeneweg, 151)**
 - Advanced Bachelor Global Citizenship & Development
- 4. Campus Gasthuisberg (Herestraat, 49)**
 - Exchange students in health care

Exchange students: your campus location will depend on the chosen courses (it may be the case that you will attend classes on different campuses).



Campus location and transportation

Rent a bike

- € 30/academic year for a second hand bike
- € 60/academic year for a UCLL bike
- + deposit

Leuven Student Bus Pass

- € 30/academic year
- Valid only in the [Leuven region](#)

[More information about bus & bike](#)

[More information about travelling by train](#)





Commuting from the airport

Commuting to Leuven from International Airport Zaventem:

- Buy your train ticket [online](#) or in the vending machine at Zaventem train station
- Buy your bus ticket [online](#) or in the bus (bank card, no cash)
- Bus and train tickets can be also bought in the apps of DeLijn (bus company) and SNCB (train company)

Commuting to Leuven from International Airport Charleroi:

- Go to Brussels [by bus](#) and then to Leuven [by train](#)
- Go to Fleurus or Charleroi Central train station [by bus](#) and then take [the train](#) to Leuven

! *Please, note that there are no intercity services of lowcoster taxis (e.g., Uber, Bolt)*





Cost of living

Cost of living in Belgium depends on your lifestyle and the cost of your housing.

Our current students report their monthly costs to be between **€ 700-1000**. Please consider that the cost of living highly depends on your personal lifestyle.



More information about cost of living [in Belgium](#) and [in Leuven](#)



Timeline

The online registration at UCLL for AY 2024-2025 for EEA students is open. Non-EEA students must register on campus in person. On Friday 20 December 2024, you received an email containing a weblink to book a registration timeslot. Please do so no later than Friday, 31 January.

Arrival to Leuven

All international students are expected to arrive for the **Welcome Days** which start on Tuesday, 7 February at Campus Proximus. More information can be found [here](#).



! Please, note that supermarkets and household goods shops in Belgium are closed on Sundays (it may be not the best day to arrive and start settling) **#MOVINGMINDS**



Timeline

Why is it important to arrive by the welcome activities?

- ◆ No hurry to settle down 🏠
- ◆ Socialization events (getting to know Leuven, UCLL, other international students) 🥳🥳🥳
- ◆ Important practicalities about living in Belgium and study environment !!!
- ◆ Late arrival = longer administrative procedures (due to the big number of students) → delay in issuing the residence permit 😬
- ◆ Late arrival = being overwhelmed with a lot of things at the same moment → unnecessary stress 😬

Start of the classes – **10 February**





Homework for the summer

Take your time to go through this information during the summer, it will help prepare your stay 😊

- ◆ make sure you check all links in this ppt
- ◆ [International Student Guide](#)
- ◆ **Health insurance** companies that work with international students: [CM](#) and [Helan](#). No need to start affiliation right now, you will do it upon arrival once you have the necessary document from the City Hall.

- ◆ For Non-EEA students: check **Belgian banks** to define where you would like to open an account upon arrival: ING, KBC, BNP Paribas Fortis, Argenta, etc. [This](#) can be interesting to read. KBC also offers the option of opening bank account from abroad (contact [the bank](#) for more information). [This information](#) can also be helpful.

- ◆ [Mobile operators](#) in Belgium
- ◆ [Working as a student](#) (you will be able to access the database once you get your student card)
- ◆ Language schools in Leuven: [CLT](#) and [ILT](#), [Dutch summer course](#) (best [NT-2](#) course in Leuven, in case you are here in summer)
- ◆ [Taxes](#) in Belgium
- ◆ [Studying with a recognized status](#)
- ◆ [Sports](#) and [culture](#)
- ◆ [International Student Associations](#) (please, note that some of them are specifically for KU Leuven students)



Answering some FAQs

- Future career opportunities in Belgium → check the [webpage of your programme](#) and [this webpage](#)
- How to pay housing while processing visa application? → We recommend not to pay any deposit before you have seen the room (in person or via a video call). In case you have paid a deposit and your visa is denied, you must end your contract. If the contract is ended within 3 months before the contract would enter into force, you will recover the deposit. Otherwise, please check the [Flemish rental decree](#) for the regulation.
- Can two people live together? → Check the description of the accommodation. If it says a room for 1 person, more people can't live in this room and use this address for registration at the City Hall. You can live with a student you know or find a co-housing buddy in student communities on social media (e.g., if you want to rent an apartment/house for several students → cheaper).
- I need to put address/point of contact in Belgium in my visa application, what do I need to write? → UC Leuven, Geldenaaksebaan 335, 3001 Heverlee (UCLL's address)
- [Application deadlines](#) for EEA and non-EEA students
- How to find affordable housing for 1 semester → Negotiate a shorter option with the landlord, ask for tips/help from current (exchange) students, contact [Housing Service](#) of KU Leuven for assistance.



? Answering some FAQs

- What shall I do if I can't be at UCLL by the beginning of the semester?
→ Last day to arrive and to register at UCLL is 1 March. However, we strongly recommend to arrive earlier (check slides 15-16 of this ppt).
- What is the deadline to submit the learning agreement (exchange students)? → Before arrival in Belgium, but we strongly advise to do so before 1 February.
- Can I divide the price for studies in smaller payments? → This option is not available for international students.
- I haven't received anything from student housing website. Should I be worried? → Students are responsible for looking for their accommodation themselves. [Student Housing Service](#) can answer the questions and assist in a particular situation, but they will not look for housing instead of a student. Please, note that it may take some time for them to answer your email due to a big number of international students' requests.
- Is it possible to switch between day/evening/part time schedule during the study? → Contact [the programme coordinator](#) to check the available options.
- Does UCLL provide any services for students that are helpful in our daily activities and travel? → check the webpage of [Student Services](#)
- How does it work with health insurance for students within EU? → check [this webpage](#), [the webpage](#) of KU Leuven (our partner university) and also have a look at slide 17 of this ppt.



Contact UCLL

Degree students

- Questions about visa/blocked account/admissions procedure-related documents/registration at UCLL: admissions office via chat box in [online application](#)
- Programme related questions (courses, schedules,...): [Faculty International Offices](#)

Exchange students

[Central International Office & Faculty International Offices](#)

Important: 15 July – 11 August is a closure period for UCLL. Please, make sure you send your questions **before 8 July** (we need a bit of time to process them 😊).



To sum up

Now:

- Focus on visa application (non-EEA students)
- Secure housing, don't hesitate to contact [Housing Service](#) for questions

Before arrival:

- Go through all links in this ppt → make yourself informationally prepared before arrival
- Don't hesitate to reach out to current students on social media to get some pre-arrival tips (bear in mind that students have exams in January and may not be very responsive during this period of time)

Upon arrival:

- You will get more information about your programme, administrative procedures, living in Belgium, educational system, etc. during [the Welcome Days](#).



Welcome to UCLL! See you in February!

