Postgraduate student life at City

This Online Chat session is for prospective postgraduate students interested in finding out more about student life at City.

Welcome to this Online chat session which is dedicated to the Postgraduate Student Life online event at City, University of London.

My name is Mai and I work in the City's Marketing and External relations team - looking forward to answering your questions!

Hi, I’m Jasmine and I’m a postgraduate student on the MSc Library & Information Science course. I’m a native Londoner and a mature student, so ask me questions about our lovely city, coming back to uni after a break or anything else that pops into your head!

Hello! My name is Jasveen and I am an International student, studying MSc Artificial Intelligence at City. You can ask me anything about the life at City for an international student, questions related to courses or accommodation.

Hi! This is X from India. I have received a conditional offer (subject to meeting IELTS requirements) from City for the MA Culture, Policy & Management course. By when do I need to submit my English test results?

Hi X. Congratulations on your offer. It may be best to direct this question to our colleagues in the admissions office. Please email them on SASS- enquiries@city.ac.uk

Okay, I’ll do that. Also, how is the postgraduate life in general, especially for international students?

Hi Jasmine. How did you cope going to uni as a mature student?

what do you do in your free time as a student? Do you get much time to enjoy london as a student?

Hi Jasmine. How did you cope going to uni as a mature student?

Hi X. Well it’s been a bit of an adjustment.

The biggest thing (and many mature students on my course have thought this- we’ve had conversations) is fighting the feeling that studying doesn’t count as REAL work. What we’ve had drummed into us in years of life in the “real world”, that going to work is about making money. And acknowledging to yourself that no, studying is work too is not simple. And some others (friends or family) might make comments along those lines (e.g. “oh, you’re not working at the moment?”). You just have to be prepared for it, I think.

Along those lines, if you’re not working a part-time job as well, remember that you have to budget sensibly!

I do also spend a fair amount of each day on campus feeling quite old (all those 18 year old undergrads roaming the halls!). But lots of postgrad students at City are mature, so you’ll find a gang :)}
Hi X. When it comes to life as an International student, there are different aspects that you might want to look at. If it’s about making friends and adjusting yourself in the new environment, then it is not at all difficult. If you stay at a student accommodation, then you find mostly Masters students there which makes it easier to study and as well as have fun. If you stay in private accommodation then you can easily find new people at City’s events for freshers. When it comes to courses and studies, then my advice would be not to procrastinate things and stay updated with what is going on in the lectures so that you do not feel left behind.

what do you do in your free time as a student? Do you get much time to enjoy London as a student?

If you want to get involved in university societies and things there are some great groups- choir is a fun one, with a good age range.

I’m in a funny position as I already lived in London (just down the road from City, in fact) so I’ve kept doing the same social things I did before, as well as gaining new friends and new experiences. My coursemates who moved from elsewhere all now have a thriving social life. It will vary, depending on the time demands of your course, but for LIS we have the flexibility to explore London- I think I’ve been to more museums, galleries and theatrical experiences in the past 4 months than I had in years (and don’t forget student discount!).

What course are you thinking of doing?

I second the advice not to procrastinate! Easier said than done though. ;-)

I would like to know, from current students as yourselves, how challenging it is to keep up the academic work while having very few lecture classes so to speak during the week. How many hours you’d spend in the library, in group discussions and so forth?

Hi! It really depends on the course- what are you thinking of studying?

Additionally, what areas would you recommend that I focus on within my SOP to improve my chances of getting an admit... I’ve heard from some students that having clarity on my thesis title would help immensely, but part of why I’m considering studying is to be open to new opportunities that might present themselves during my study year, which I might not be aware of now.

Thanks Jasmine. I am thinking of studying Data Science.

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Ooh, interesting! Yes, that does look pretty light on the contact time.

I would say that it's a good idea to find a group of likeminded coursemates and make an informal study group. Even if you just sit together in the library's silent study areas and do your own work, the sense of community really helps you get work done.

Personally, I spent a few hours per week in the library the first few weeks of term 1 and gradually ramped it up, basically spending every waking moment there the few days before assignments were due (the library is open 24 hours the first few weeks in January).

I would like to know, from current students as yourselves, how challenging it is to keep up the academic work while having very few lecture classes so to speak during the week. How many hours would you spend in the library, in group discussions and so forth?

Hi Xi! The lectures are sufficient to gain knowledge of the course, but obviously to do the assignments and coursework you need to put in extra efforts and more if you wish to get distinction. It will always be helpful to find a topic for your research project and to gain more knowledge about the subject.

For your SOP, there is nothing about having the clarity on your thesis topic because after studying your first term, you might get better ideas and want to change the topic. At City, they consider the overall profile of a student. For a good SOP, you need to be clear about why you are doing the course and your future plans in relation to the course.

Thanks Jasmine. I am thinking of studying Data Science.

Ah, so you'll have a fair amount of lab time. From what I've heard (I know a couple of Computer Science people), it's intense, what with getting to grips with programming languages and things, but you'll have plenty of time to have a social life and experience London to the fullest!
Thanks Jasmine. I am thinking of studying Data Science.

Hi X, I am currently studying AI, and yes the Masters course are quite intense specially Computer Science field but if you know how to maintain balance between studies and having fun, then everything would be too easy for you! :)

One last question. How often do students across courses and departments collaborate on specific projects

On Library & Information Science we’ve got a few (more technical) electives that overlap with other courses, but, other than that, there’s no official overlap.

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You can always be friends with students across courses through events, accommodation and societies. For projects related to your course, you generally work with students of the same course.

There are 5 minutes left of this chat session. Please post any further questions now.

This session has now ended. Thank you for joining us for today’s chat. If you have any questions, please email pgenguiries@city.ac.uk