Opening a Bank Account

Opening a bank account is one of the first things which many International Students need to organise upon arrival in the UK, and there are a number of banks in the South Kensington area which are able to assist with this. This information sheet is designed to provide International Students with guidance about how to open a UK bank account as well as the locations of local bank branches.

More information about opening a bank account can be found on our website: www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/visas-and-immigration/before-and-after-arrival

How do I choose which bank to open an account with?

As a starting point, we recommend that students do their own research into which particular bank they would like to use. This is because the types of accounts offered vary greatly.

Many banks offer an International Student Account designed specifically for International Students, and some banks impose a monthly charge for this type of account. A summary of accounts provided for international students by some of the major UK banks can be viewed on our website under the tab ‘Opening a bank account’: www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/visas-and-immigration/before-and-after-arrival

It is really important that International Students make their own decision about which bank and bank account is best for them - a map of local bank branches is provided on the back of this sheet and we recommend that students either visit the branches or look on the bank websites to help them make a decision.

How do I open a bank account?

Opening a bank account is a relatively simple, but sometimes quite time-consuming process. Please be aware that in peak times it can take up to two weeks to open an account, so please make sure you arrive in the UK with adequate funds to support yourself for the first few weeks.

STEP ONE: Do your research – choose the bank with which you would like to open an account.

STEP TWO: Make sure the address you have entered under the ‘Addresses’ section of your student e-service account is up to date with your term-time address in London.

STEP THREE: Request a Bank Letter from the Student Hub (Level 3, Sherfield Building). Make sure you tell the Student Hub the name of the bank with which you would like to open an account, because the letter needs to be addressed to this specific bank. Please be aware that Imperial College can only issue one bank letter per student for the duration of your studies, so you need to do your research and make a final decision about which bank you would like to open an account with before requesting your Bank Letter.

STEP FOUR: Take your Bank Letter together with your Passport and Visa to one of the local bank branches listed overleaf. Staff at the bank will be able to assist you with opening a bank account.

Please note: If you are a non EU student we strongly recommend that when you open your account, you request paper bank statements that are posted to you each month rather than online statements (and that you keep them somewhere safe!). This will make it much easier for you to extend/change your UK visa in the future.
Local banks

Below is a map and a list of addresses of banks which have branches in the local area. Santander is the only bank which has a branch on campus. Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds TSB and NatWest all have branches which are within a 10 minute walk of Imperial College’s South Kensington Campus.

**Santander**
Located on the Walkway
Level 2, Sherfield Building
South Kensington Campus
London SW7 2AZ

**Opening hours**
Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 10:00 – 18:00
Wed: 10:00 – 17:00

**Barclays**
132-134 Kensington High Street
London W8 7RP

**Opening hours**
Mon – Fri: 09:00 - 17:00
Sat: 10:00 - 16:00

**HSBC**
92 Kensington High Street
London W8 4SH

**Opening hours**
Mon, Wed, Fri: 09:00 - 17:00
Tues: 09:30 - 17:00
Thurs: 09:00 – 19:00
Sat 10:00 - 15:00

**Lloyds TSB**
112 Kensington High Street
London W8 4SN

**Opening hours**
Mon, Tues, Fri: 09:00 - 17:00
Wed: 09:30 – 17:00
Thurs: 09:00 – 19:00
Sat: 09:00 – 16:00

**NatWest**
Kensington Royal Garden
55 High Street Kensington
London W8 5EQ

**Opening hours**
Mon - Fri: 09:00 – 17:00
Sat: 10:00 - 14:00