University of Hertfordshire UH

Using Unibuddy:

What is Unibuddy?
- An online direct messaging chat platform, whereby prospective and applicant students can sign up to ask any questions and talk to our student ambassadors or staff unibuddies
- The platform also hosts vlogs and blogs submitted by our unibuddies, to share what it's like to study and/or live on campus

What are my main responsibilities?
- **Engage with our team:** Participate in monthly check-in workshops to stay aligned and supported.
- **Stay connected:** Download the community app to access all communications and updates.
- **Support prospective students:** Help build a welcoming and supportive community for future Herts students.
- **Dedicate your time:** Commit to 1 hour per week on the platform (paid) to connect with enquirers.
- **Answer questions:** Chat with prospective and applicant students and provide insights about life at the University.
- **Show your passion:** Share your enthusiasm for your course and the University of Hertfordshire to create excitement.
- **Create engaging content:** Write blogs or create vlogs showcasing your experience studying at Herts.
- **Be a resource:** If unsure about a question, redirect students to helpful web pages or direct them to ask@herts.ac.uk.
- **Represent Herts:** Act as a proud brand ambassador for the University, inspiring others with your journey.

Is there any training?
Yes, there's tailored training to help you get started with Unibuddy. The ambassador team will provide you with full details when onboarding, but you can expect:

- Online training hosted by Unibuddy
- An introduction document to Unibuddy and how to be a good Unibuddy
- Access to safety guidance and blog tips

Can I have 'refresher' training?
If you have had your initial Unibuddy training but would like a refresher training session then Unibuddy host these virtually, on a fortnightly basis. Find out more and book onto the repeat training at: https://help.unibuddy.co/en/articles/4171125-how-can-i-register-for-the-fortnightly-ambassador-training-webinar

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Where will my Unibuddy profile be featured and who will see it?

- Your Unibuddy profile will be accessible to prospective students and the public (for information on Unibuddy's Privacy Policy and how your information will be shared, please see here)
- Unibuddy is hosted on the Herts website and third-party websites we are in partnership with, including:
  - a landing page on the Herts website
  - as a pop-up widget across subject-specific courses – where appropriate your pop up will appear on the course page for the course you study, but you will also appear on any other course pages whereby our unibuddy pop-ups are randomised (this happens when we do not have a specific course representative available)
  - as a pop-up widget or carousel chat across other relevant pages on the Herts website
  - On third-party websites we are in partnership with, including:
    - Whatuni

Where will my Unibuddy blog/vlog contributions be seen and who will see them?

- Your Unibuddy blog/vlog content will be visible to all prospects, applicants and external members of the public who access your profile via the above channels
- Your blog/vlog content will also be showcased on the Herts website, including but not limited to the course page of your subject area
- Your Unibuddy blog/vlog content may also be sent out as part of our undergraduate student recruitment plan via the following channels:
  - University social media
  - Emails to enquirers and applicants

How do I set up my profile?

1) Receive an email invitation and follow the steps to creating your profile. The email will come from notifications@unibuddy.com - keep an eye out in your junk emails in case it goes in there initially. Then, on the email invitation, click the blue *'create my account'* button and follow the instructions to build your profile.
2) **Edit the custom welcome message:**

Custom welcome message:
Remove the current message on your profile and copy and paste in the below template message. Please ensure to fill out the sections in brackets with information that is specific to you, whilst keeping the rest of the fixed template as is:

*Hi! This is **[name]**. I'm happy to share my experiences about studying **[subject]** at Herts with you! I can tell you about the course structure and teaching styles, facilities on campus, and social activities. If your question is not about **[subject],** please choose the relevant buddy to speak to, or email ask@herts.ac.uk for more help. Please note, I am unable to help with the specifics of your application. Thanks!*

Top tips for your profile:

Please ensure the profile picture fits the entire circle frame, and is not cropped

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Once your profile is set up – write and submit your compulsory <u>introductory blog</u>

Once you have completed your profile, it is compulsory to write and upload an introductory blog, so that prospects can learn more about who they're speaking to. The requirements for this are:

- **About:** A blog that is an introduction to you and includes why you chose Herts and the subject you are studying
- **Header picture**: Use your own picture as the header where possible. If using a stock image, find one from a creative common's website (free of copyright)
- **Styling:** Break up the text with paragraphs, or even emojis!
- **Max word count**: 750
- Our **example blogs** will help you get started:
    - [Example blog one](#)
    - [Example blog two](#)
    - [Example blog three](#)

<u>General Tips and Advice</u>

- **Keep the conversation flowing:** Ask open-ended questions like, *"Is there anything else you'd like to know about life at university?"* or *"Would you like to hear more about my experiences at Herts?"*
- **Be relatable and approachable:** Share your own experiences to build a connection. For example, talk about your favourite campus spots, memorable events, or what surprised you most about university life.
- **Stay positive and supportive:** Remember, many students might feel nervous or unsure. Reassure them with encouraging words like, *"It's totally normal to have questions—I felt the same way when I was in your position!"*
- **Guide the conversation to their interests:** If they seem unsure, you can ask, *"Are you curious about accommodation, student societies, or how I balance my studies and social life?"*
- **Wrap up on a helpful note:** If they don't have more questions, end the chat with something warm and helpful, such as: *"I hope I was able to answer your questions! If anything, else comes up, don't hesitate to reach out. You can also find loads of useful information at <u>www.herts.ac.uk</u>. Best of luck with your journey to university!"*
- **Always be professional yet authentic:** Use proper grammar and friendly language but let your personality shine through.
- **Be proactive in offering resources:** For instance, if they mention being nervous about making friends, suggest student societies or events. If they're unsure about the application process, direct them to the right web pages or contacts like *<u>ask@herts.ac.uk</u>*.
- **Keep response times in mind:** Aim to reply promptly during your scheduled hours. A quick response can make a big difference in how supported they feel.
- **Enjoy the process:** Your enthusiasm can be infectious! Have fun sharing your Herts story and making a positive impact on future students.

<u>How will I know if I receive a message?</u>

Unibuddy will notify you by email. You also have the option to sign up for text notifications and these will come directly to your phone. You can also access via the webpage.

If you download the **mobile app**, you'll receive push notifications when new messages come through **(it is advised to download the app for a better experience and to keep on top of messages).**

How quickly do I need to reply?

We ask that you always aim to reply to messages within 24 hours. Timely communication helps us work efficiently and ensures everyone stays informed.

If you're unable to respond within this timeframe—such as when you're on holiday—please notify the Student Ambassador team in advance. You can reach us at **ambassadors@herts.ac.uk** or send a message through the app.

How do I transfer the chat to a student ambassador or another staff unibuddy?
If you feel that the prospect's question would be better directed at another student or a specific staff unibuddy, then you can redirect the prospect to another profile.
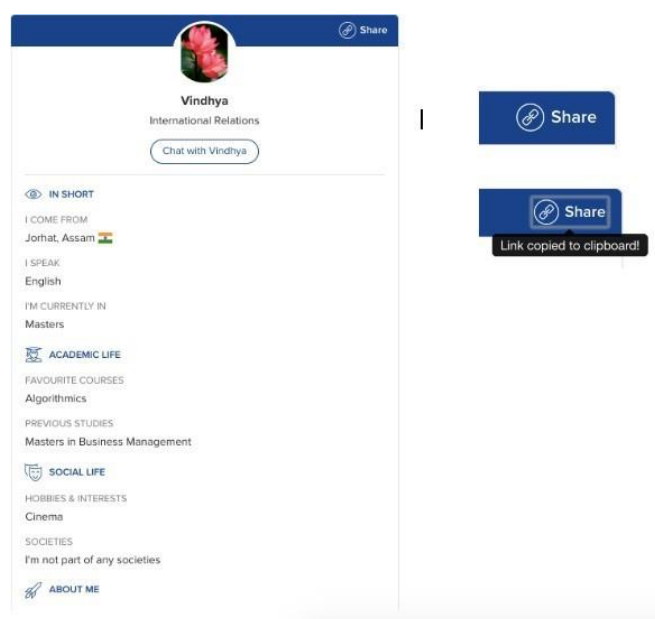
Step 1 - Find the person you wish to transfer the prospect/applicant to
Visit the university's main Unibuddy page and click on the staff, or student tab.

Consider the nature of the enquiry - for instance, if a prospect is asking what is best about the LLB Law degree, a student ambassador who studies Law, or a Law academic unibuddy, would be the best choice to redirect to.

Step 2 - Share their Profile link
Once you have found the right unibuddy click 'Read more' on their profile. Within their profile you will find a share icon in the top right corner - click here to copy the share link to your clipboard.
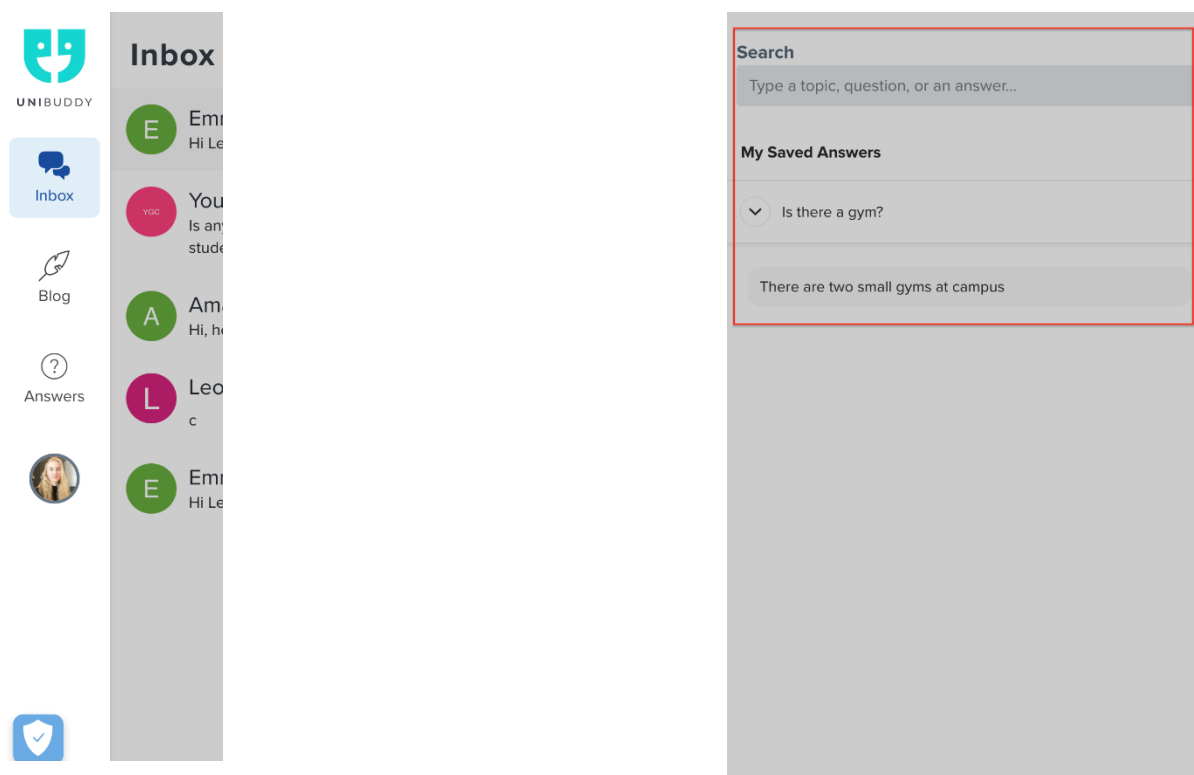
Step 3 - Paste it!

Paste the link into the chat you are having with the prospect/applicant. This link will take the prospect directly to the student or staff unibuddy you have chosen to transfer them to.

Can I save and re-use answers?

You can save and re-use answers, to use them as a template in future conversations. To do this:

1) Click on 'answers' on the left-hand side tab – this is below 'Inbox' and 'blog'. Create your answer and save for next time

2) The saved answer will then appear on the right-hand side tab (screenshots below) for you to use in future conversations.

I have received inappropriate messages; how do I respond?

If a prospect sends you a message that isn't appropriate - for example asking for personal information like your mobile number; you should remind them that the conversation should stay on the platform and stay on topic.

To help you, we've written a few template responses below that you can use and adapt, if you need to:

Social media/contact information request:

For safety reasons, I cannot share my personal or social media details on Unibuddy. However, if you do have any questions about university life then please don't hesitate to ask me on here.

Off-campus 1:1 meeting request:

For safety reasons, I am not able to meet with Unibuddy users outside of the campus. However, if you are planning to attend an open day or a campus tour then perhaps, we might meet on campus!

Off-topic, spam, or inappropriate question:

Sorry, it wouldn't be appropriate for me to answer that. Unibuddy is for us to talk about my experience as a student at university - so please try and keep your conversations on topic.

Persistent inappropriate messages from the same prospect or applicant:

You can report and request to block the prospect/applicant by pressing the (!) in the corner of the conversation. This will alert us of the chat, and we are able to block the prospect if necessary.

Conversation monitoring

Unibuddy is designed so that conversations between prospects and unibuddies can be accessed from the admin dashboard. This means that the Unibuddy University admin (responsible for overseeing the Unibuddy platform) can see the questions coming in, and the responses given out by buddies. Whilst the admin can't directly join the chat, having an overview of all conversations means that we can further help with the safety of Unibuddy, and they do have the ability to follow up on blocking requests (see above).

FAQ's and where to signpost UK enquirers:
I have made an <u>application</u> but haven't heard anything back.

Unfortunately, I won't be able to help you with that but please send an email to ask@herts.ac.uk so that the team can look for you.

Which course should I study?

I'm afraid I'm not best advised to encourage you to choose a particular course but can give you some top tips on how to narrow down your choices. You could think about:

- What subjects you enjoy the most?
- What subjects you are best at?
- What kind of job/career would you be interested in after graduation?

It's worth thinking about all these different factors and coming to a decision! If you need more information on the course, I'm studying, then I can certainly help with this.

I am applying for (any course), is there a list of books I need to get?

You can talk about the books that you have used personally, either recommended by lecturers or advised to get as part of the course material.

The list can change each year to keep the curriculum up to date so you will get more information during the Induction week.

Can I have a Campus Tour?
We have organised campus tours which run every fortnight. Book your place via
https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/open-days/take-a-campus-tour

Can you tell me about the fees for the course I would like to apply to?
You can find the latest course fees - https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding.

I do not have the grades to apply for an undergraduate course. Do you offer any foundation courses?
You can find out more about our foundation and extended degrees on our website - https://www.herts.ac.uk/courses/foundation-and-extended-degrees

I'd like to know more about what placement programmes there are.

If you can, talk about what placement opportunities are available and where current/previous students may have worked.

If your course does/doesn't offer a placement opportunity, then mention that. More information regarding placements can be found here - https://www.herts.ac.uk/life/careers- and-recruitment/work-placements

I want to apply for a PhD
It is great to hear that you are interested in doing a PhD! You can find out more on our website - https://www.herts.ac.uk/research/research-degrees-and-doctoral-college

Does the University offer scholarships?

We offer a range of scholarships; you can find out more on our website - https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/financial-support/scholarships-grants-bursaries

I need a copy of my transcripts (previous graduate).
You can request a copy of your transcripts by completing our online form here - https://www.herts.ac.uk/alumni/contact-alumni/requesting-your-transcripts

Can you tell me about the teaching quality?

Provide your own positive experience, be honest. Additionally, see a response below:

Our courses are career focused. You can also find our league table successes and accreditations on our website - https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/career-focused-teaching

FAQ's and where to signpost international enquirers:

If asked about sponsorship or credibility interviews:
You may be asked to complete a sponsorship interview (sometimes called a credibility interview) as part of your university application. If this is required as part of your application, the International Admissions Team will inform you via email and let you know what steps to take. They will also include a credibility guide in their invitation email to help you prepare and know what to expect. If you have further questions, you can also contact the team at international@herts.ac.uk

I am a deaf international student. Will the University offer me any additional support?

Yes, the University of Hertfordshire provides a British Sign Language Interpreter for international students who are deaf to support you with your studies. The interpreters are funded by the University.

Do you offer airport collection?

In previous years not affected by covid, the University has offered free Heathrow Airport collection for international undergraduate and postgraduate students joining the University. We are intending to continue with airport collection for future intakes now that restrictions have lifted in the UK! Collection is available from Heathrow airport only on the arrival dates listed on the arrival form which gets updated as we approach the start of term. You need to register for Airport Collection by completing our online pre-departure form. You can read more about this on our website (https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/new-international-students/coming-to-the-uk/international-student-pre-arrival-guide/ready-to-travel)

How do I apply as an international student?

To apply for an undergraduate course, you either need to apply via UCAS (http://www.ucas.com/) or via one of our overseas representatives (http://www.herts.ac.uk/international-students/regions-and-countries/home.cfm). To apply for a postgraduate course you can apply by completing our application form (https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/new-international-students/international-apply-now/make-an-application) or via one of our overseas representatives. Full details are available online (http://www.herts.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply).

I did not complete my studies at another University, but I am interested in applying to your university. Would Herts accept me?

The international admissions team will still be happy to review your application but before they give you an offer, they will ask you to provide more information regarding your previous studies to check that they are happy to proceed with your application. They will usually send you an email with some questions on and you will need to write your answers back to them. It will usually be questions like "Why don't you want to continue studying at your other University?", "Did the other University offer you any support with your studies?". They will send you the questions that you need to answer after they have received your completed application form.

I need the letter to set up a UK bank account.

Once you are registered at the University, you can complete the online form to request the letter you will need to set up a bank account - https://ask.herts.ac.uk/requesting-bank-letters-proof-of-study

I have done a degree outside of the UK but now I want to do a degree inside the UK, would I meet the entry requirements?

Have a look at the course website, depending on the course there might be something in the Entry Requirements section at the bottom of the page.

Contact international@herts.ac.uk for more information.

Where/when do I get my <u>Disclosure and Barring Checks</u> done?

Once you have arrived in the UK and registered at the University, you will be contacted by our Health and Well Being service who will decide with you to complete your Health Checks and Disclosure and Barring Service screening.

<u>Do you offer any discounts for paying early?</u>

If you pay your course fees in full before registration, you will be entitled to a £500 discount!

<u>If I don't meet the English language requirements, do you offer English language courses?</u>

We offer several courses for students who need to improve their English before coming to study with us. Pre-sessional English is offered before both of our main intakes (September and January). Pre-sessional English has different start dates depending on the level of English required for your main course, (standard if your course requires an IELTS 6.0, higher if your course requires an IELTS 6.5 and advanced if your course requires an IELTS 7.0). Pre- sessional English helps students who have an IELTS of 5.0, 5.5 or 6.0 already. Details can be found online (https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/entry-requirements/pre-sessional-and- preparatory-courses/pre-sessional-english/pre-sessional-english-routes).

To be offered a place on the Pre-Sessional English you must have applied to your degree level programme. It is not possible to study Pre-sessional English without intending to progress your academic level at the University.

<u>I am concerned about my English Skills. Do you offer any support?</u>

Every year the University accepts thousands of international students from all around the globe and they do their best to support them with their education.

If you ever find yourself in a situation, in which you may feel that you need a little bit of extra help with your English, the university offers Academic English and Study Skills Development workshops, in which you will be able to improve your academic English language skills. More information can be found on our website -https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/living-in- the-uk/academic-English-and-study-skills-support.

In addition to the English workshops, we also offer Maths support service (https://www.herts.ac.uk/study/schools-of-study/physics-astronomy-and- mathematics/about-the-school/maths-support-service).

Both of those programmes run throughout the academic year and are accessible to all students for free regardless of their English language skills.

What are your entry requirements including English language?

The general entry requirements for certain countries are available here -
http://www.herts.ac.uk/international/your-country (just select your country). The entry
requirements for each course are available on our course pages
(http://www.herts.ac.uk/courses). You will also be able to see the general English language
requirements on the country pages. Some courses will need a higher level of English, so be
sure to check the individual course page.

Would Herts accept final year entry to finish my degree? (International prospect)

It will depend on the current qualifications they have and what modules they have studied.
The tutor will want to see that they have studied similar subjects so that they don't struggle
on the course. Ask the prospect to check the country specific requirements here -
https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/new-international-students/find-your-region

I'm an EU national. Do I still need a visa?

From 31 December 2020 all international students, including EU, EEA and Swiss
nationals will need a valid immigration permission to study in the UK. To find visa
information for EU, EEA and Swiss nationals please visit the Home Office website. -
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-information-for-eu-
citizens?utm_source=d77361e8-090d-46b1-b9e0-
817f2363b224&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-
notifications&utm_content=daily The length of visa you require will depend on which
course you are looking to study. I would recommend you contact
international@herts.ac.uk so that the admissions team can discuss this further with you.

What is IELTS?

IELTS stands for the International English Language Testing System and is a
standardised test for English Language proficiency for non-native speaker. Most of our
International applicants will take an IELTS test but some can use their local English
Language tests. There are different types of IELTS test you can take. The University of
Hertfordshire accepts both IELTS UKVI Academic and IELTS Academic tests. We do not
accept IELTS General. For more specific information about entry requirements, please
contact international@herts.ac.uk.

Can you send me an International Guide (prospectus designed for international applicants)?

We do have some documents available for students to view online. Please follow this link
which will take you to the University of Hertfordshire website where you can find the
electronic version of our International Guide and International Course Guide-
https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/guides-and-prospectuses

Do I need to get my meningitis jab before I travel?

It is highly recommended that students be vaccinated at home by their GP before coming
to the University, however if you are unable to receive your vaccination at home, you can
have it in the UK instead when you register with a medical centre.

Where can I view my joining instructions to begin my Online Stage 1 Registration?

Once your CAS has been raised, you should receive an email inviting you to begin your
Stage 1 Registration. Please follow this link (https://joining.herts.ac.uk/) and put your

student ID onto the left-hand box to view your joining instructions. You can then log in with your username and password. You must complete your Online Stage 1 Registration before you arrive in the UK. Your Stage 2 In-Person Registration can also be completed online.

Do you have scholarships for international students?

The University does offer scholarships for study (not full ones, only partial ones up to the value of £4000). You need to have an offer to study at the University of Hertfordshire (either conditional or unconditional) before you can be considered for a scholarship. You will automatically be considered for all advertised scholarships when you apply for a place at the University. Please be aware these are merit-based awards, based on the academic and English language qualifications you apply to the University with - *https://www.herts.ac.uk/international/new-international-* *students/scholarships-and-fees/scholarships*

How do I get a student visa (previously called a Tier 4 visa)?

When you have met all the conditions of you offer to study with us, you will then be issued with a CAS (confirmation that you have been accepted to study at our university). You can then apply for your student visa using your CAS. The visa application is made up of 70 points and the CAS gives you 50 points towards your application. 10 points come from your English Language qualifications and the other 10 points come from you proving you have the finances available to support yourself while you are studying.

Can I work whilst I study?

If you are coming to the UK on a Student Visa, you will be able to work part-time. Please note that students studying at degree level or higher can work up to 20 hours per week (and full-time during holidays). Students studying at sub-degree level can work up to 10 hours per week.

For more information about working during your studies, please see the Conditions of Your Stay section of the UKBA website (http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/studying

<mark>Please do let us know if you receive any frequently asked questions that are missing from the above.</mark>