



Information for candidates



Welcome

from Professor Aleks Subic
Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive



Dear applicant

Thank you for your interest in Aston University.

Aston University is a mid-sized dual intensive university ranked in the top 25 universities in the United Kingdom. We are an agile and innovative organisation that thrives on collaboration and partnerships with industry, businesses and the community. Our integrated placement year, our applied high-impact research, and our commitment to achieving best in sector employability and social mobility outcomes for our students, all help to make Aston University distinct both nationally and internationally.

We launched our new 2030 Strategy last year, an ambitious, game changing strategy focused on creating a new model of university for our changing world. We have defined Aston as a university that is inclusive, entrepreneurial and transformational, measured by the positive impact we create for our students and the communities we serve.

We are co-creating with our partners a world class innovation ecosystem here in the centre of Birmingham - the Birmingham Innovation Quarter and new UK Investment Zone, focusing on digital tech innovation, health tech and med tech, that will bring together the most creative minds, entrepreneurs and businesses, to drive socio-economic transformation and inclusive growth.

This is an exciting time at Aston!

In 2023 Aston University was awarded Triple Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the only University in Birmingham to achieve this highest possible ranking. Aston was also named runner up University of the Year for Graduate Employment in The Times and Sunday Times University Guide 2024, and The Guardian University of the Year 2020, and Entrepreneurial University of the Year 2020.

Our students rate their experience at Aston highly, with more than three quarters of respondents to the 2022 National Student Survey indicating their overall satisfaction, and more than 80% confirming high satisfaction levels for learning resources and staff support. We take great pride in our teaching quality and excellent student experience at Aston University.

Employability is embedded into everything we do at Aston University. We have an award-winning Careers and Placements team, who were named the Best University Placement Service in the UK at the 2022 National Undergraduate Employability Awards. Our staff are committed to doing all they can to meet the needs of students and to assisting them to achieve their career ambitions on graduation.

The most recent Research Excellence Framework (REF) assessments published in May 2022, ranked 79% of Aston University research as 'world leading' (4*) or 'internationally excellent' (3*). We are building on our world-class research capability to help transform industries, support economic growth and improve lives. Our research is organised within comprehensive interdisciplinary University Research Institutes and across a wide range of outstanding research centres and research groups.

We have much to offer our staff, students and partners at Aston and strive to make our university a friendly and inspiring place, that encourages and supports ambition, collaboration, inclusion, innovation and integrity.

We very much look forward to receiving your application to join Team Aston.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aleks Subic', written in a cursive style.

Professor Aleks Subic
Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive

About Aston University

Founded in 1895 and a University since 1966, Aston is a long established research-led university known for its world-class teaching quality and strong links to business and the professions. Aston University's enduring purpose has been to make our world a better place through education, research and innovation, by enabling our students to succeed in work and life, and by supporting our communities to thrive economically, socially and culturally.

The university was awarded Triple Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework, 2023, due to Aston University's student experience and outcomes being typically outstanding.

Aston University has been placed in the top 25 of UK universities by The Guardian's annual league table. The rankings also place the University as 22nd in the UK for students' career prospects following graduation and we are ranked in the national top 25% for continuation rates and the value-added category, which assess support given to students towards achieving good grades. Furthermore, Aston University was named the Sunday Times University of the Year Runner-up for Graduate Employment, and we have made a significant improvement in QS world university rankings.

These rankings are a result of exceptional work and dedication of Aston University staff and their exceptional support of our students both during their studies and after they have graduated. The primary drivers of these rankings are an improvement in a number of areas, including teaching excellence, student satisfaction, employment outcomes and progression.



Overall: **Gold**

Student experience: **Gold**

Student outcomes: **Gold**

Teaching Excellence Framework

Aston University has achieved Triple Gold, the best possible rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework, 2023.

RUNNER UP FOR GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

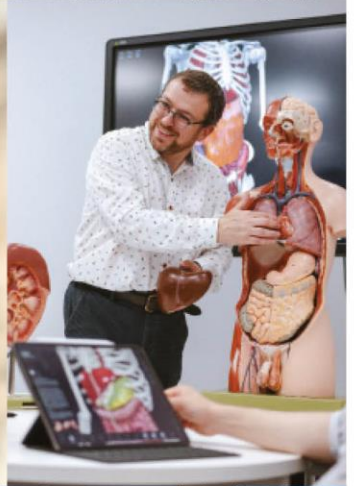
The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024

TOP 25 UK UNIVERSITY

Guardian University Guide 2024



OUR CAMPUS IN THE HEART OF BIRMINGHAM



Outstanding graduate employability

Ranked 18th for Graduate Prospects and named runner-up in the University of the Year for Graduate Employment Award (Times and Sunday Times University Guide, 2024), Aston University has been a leading university for graduate employment success. With placements integrated into our degree programmes, students develop essential work skills, build industry connections and a professional profile. We have strong relationships with national and international graduate employers, as well as smaller and local employers. These relationships are extremely important and make a real contribution to graduate employability.

Career focused programmes

Close and established links with business, the public sector and the professions ensure that our career focused degree programmes are inspiring, challenging, and constantly updated to equip students with essential work-related skills and experiences.

Excellence in teaching and research

Shortlisted for Business School of the Year in the THE Awards 2023, we are committed to high quality teaching and academic excellence, ensuring we provide the highest standard of education to our students. Aston University has an excellent reputation for research which shapes and improves lives. We're proud of the quality of our research and the real world applications developed as a result – it makes a substantial and beneficial difference to people, organisations and society.

The 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF) assessments, undertaken every seven years, were published in May 2022. Aston University took an inclusive approach to its REF return, with a 100% submission of eligible staff across seven REF assessment units and more than doubling its 'research power' since REF 2014. REF 2021 rated 79% of Aston University research as 'world leading' (4*) or 'internationally excellent' (3*).

International

Placed in the Global Top 30% (QS rankings 2024), Aston University is a popular choice for international students. We recognise and welcome the important academic contribution and cultural diversity international students bring to our university environment. Students from over 120 countries study at Aston University choose to study at Aston University each year.

Birmingham – one of Europe's liveliest cities

Birmingham has a rich history which makes the city a unique and inspiring place to visit. It is recognised as a leader in leisure, entertainment, shopping and sport and is an international centre for business, commerce and industry. Birmingham is home to world-class companies, innovative entrepreneurs and has one of the youngest populations in Europe. It is a dynamic, business-focused region that is well connected and centrally located in the UK.

A green, sustainable campus

Located in the centre of Birmingham our green, 40 acre campus houses all the University's academic, social and accommodation facilities for our students. All staff have the opportunity to contribute to our sustainability agenda and practices. The university is ranked in the Top 30 for ethical and environmental performance by People & Planet (2022)

Academic colleges and schools

College of Business and Social Sciences (BSS)

- Aston Business School
- Aston Law School
- School of Social Sciences and Humanities

College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS)

- School of Informatics and Digital Engineering
- School of Infrastructure and Sustainable Engineering
- School of Engineering and Technology

College of Health and Life Sciences (HLS)

- Aston Medical School
- Aston Pharmacy School
- School of Biosciences
- School of Optometry
- School of Psychology

Our beneficiary groups

The University's beneficiaries are identified as three groups:



Students

The first and primary beneficiary of Aston University are the individuals who form our student body and who progress to become our alumni. Aston University places students at the heart of our academic and professional endeavour. Through our industry placements, students are at the coalface of our interaction with industry.

Business and Industry

Our strategy has an emphasis on the businesses and other external organisations who engage with us. Aston University is a market leader in industry-engaged research, as well as graduate employability. Our industry partners benefit from our work through our leading research and knowledge exchange, and from the quality of graduates we produce. Each student at Aston University is offered the opportunity for a year-long work placement; these placements not only cement our relationships with industry but ensure businesses have access to work-ready graduates.

Region and Society

We are committed to having a positive and transformative impact on Birmingham and the West Midlands. Birmingham is one of the youngest cities in Europe and Aston University plays an important civic role by educating the leaders of the future. By emphasising research that has a regional impact, engaging with local businesses to develop a strong economy and educating top graduates, we are helping to shape our society around us.



Our Vision, Purpose and Values

- **Our Vision** is to be a leading university of science, technology and enterprise, measured by the positive transformational impact we achieve for our people, students, businesses and the communities we serve.
- **Our Purpose** is to make our world a better place through education, research and innovation, by enabling our students to succeed in work and life, and by supporting our communities to thrive economically, socially and culturally.

→ **Our Values**

- > **AMBITION:** Our ambition drives us to advance and accomplish our goals, strive for excellence and impact, and create value for our beneficiaries and communities.
- > **COLLABORATION:** We believe in the value of working together for a shared purpose, by engaging and collaborating across our teams and disciplines, as well as with our beneficiaries.
- > **INCLUSION:** We provide an inclusive, caring and empowering environment for all and respect and support the values that diversity and inclusion bring to our whole community.
- > **INNOVATION:** We nurture an innovative environment that values new ideas, seeks diverse perspectives and pursue game-changing innovations that make a positive impact.
- > **INTEGRITY:** By valuing honesty, trust, fairness and ethical behaviour we always act with integrity and hold ourselves and others accountable.

An inclusive university

Inclusion and diversity are essential values and go right to the heart of who we are as a university. Each and every one of us at Aston University is unique with different backgrounds and cultures, different experiences, skills and ideas. Our central location in Birmingham is a welcoming, diverse and inclusive city.

An entrepreneurial university

We've made significant strides in almost every field driven in particular by science, technology and digital transformation. Creating the Birmingham Innovation Quarter (B-IQ) with our partners Bruntwood SciTech, Birmingham City Council and others, redefines Aston University as an enterprising university. We are co-creating an innovation ecosystem of global significance to enable innovation at scale and pace, to attract enterprising talent, and create enterprising graduates, our future leaders of innovation and change.

A transformational university

Being transformational means embedding professional practice in all our courses to drive employability and social mobility; encouraging interdisciplinary teaching and challenge based research; developing entrepreneurs internally and externally to drive innovation and inclusive growth; facilitating a collaborative co-creation approach with industry and business focused on value realisation, embedding industry teams and professionals within the university environment; fostering lifelong connectivity with our students and expanding our international collaborations.

University values

All staff are expected to demonstrate/promote the University's values and expectations, which are an integral part of our strategy and underpin the culture of the University. In addition, our leaders are expected to be accountable, help to execute strategic visions of the University and share and set clear expectations that inspire those around them.

Our commitment to you

Our Commitment to You weaves through everything we do at Aston University. This provides a consistent approach and a common language across the university when interacting with others, and is shared internally and externally so people can see our pledge and know what to expect when they interact with us.

The commitment includes four statements of intent that outline the beneficiary and customer experience we strive to deliver:

Listening to you

We listen to you and take action to deliver the best experience by:

- Actively listening when in conversation.
- Asking for your feedback to understand how to improve your service experience.
- Responding to your feedback by sharing expectations of if and when we can meet your needs.
- Putting ourselves in your shoes and seeing the situation from your perspective.
- Acting in your best interests by putting you at the heart of what we do.

Meeting your needs

We keep things simple in order to deliver the right outcomes for you by:

- Explaining information clearly.
- Getting the basics right, from your first interaction with us through to your last and beyond.
- Keeping you informed along the way and doing what we say we will do.
- Challenging our policies and processes, and exploring innovative ways to improve the service we provide to you.

Taking responsibility

We take responsibility for our actions and manage your expectations by:

- Working with our colleagues across the University to find the best outcome for you first time round.
- Using our initiative when problems arise, making appropriate decisions and providing the right solutions for you.
- Apologising sincerely when we are wrong.
- Being honest and inclusive, treating you fairly and with respect.
- Challenging ourselves so we can continue to deliver on our promises.

Easy and welcoming

We make it easy and engaging when you interact with us by:

- Making you feel welcome and getting to know you.
- Showing genuine interest in you and being fully engaged as we interact.
- Empathising and acknowledging challenges you may be facing, making it easy for you to interact with us by removing barriers that are in the way of meeting your service needs.
- Always being professional with you and creating a positive lasting impression so you look forward to interacting with us.

Benefits and rewards

We focus time, energy and resources on making this a great place to work. To recognise the contribution of our outstanding people, we have developed a comprehensive reward and benefits package for you.

At Aston University, the future's always front and centre. The work we do here is positively affecting lives across the UK and beyond. And it's why we focus time, energy and resources on making this a great place to work. Because we recognise that none of this can be done without our outstanding people, across all areas of our organisation.

The size and scope of the university means that the opportunities on offer are as diverse as the people who work here. From a generous annual leave scheme, gym membership, on-site nursery and flexible working to opportunities to volunteer in the community, there is something for everyone.

To find out more, visit: www.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/Benefits-and-Rewards

Professional Services

Campus Safety

The Campus Safety department at Aston University ensure that the campus estate and our community are as safe as possible. The Campus Safety team are equipped with a range of innovative technology, systems and skills, along with significant experience of working not only in security and protection, but also in higher education.

Going to university is an incredibly rewarding and enjoyable experience. For some, it can be a daunting experience and the team offer help and assistance, so students, staff and visitors have a safe and enjoyable experience. Campus Safety protect one of the most multicultural and diverse communities in the UK and welcome students from over 120 countries every year. Security and safety have different meanings depending on where our students originate therefore different approaches will be required to build trust and confidence with these students.

Being positioned in the centre of Birmingham provides opportunities to support Aston's beneficiaries and key stakeholders. Campus Safety are members of the Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO) and have superb relationships with the police, neighbouring education providers, Birmingham City Council and other key stakeholders.



Conference Aston

Conference Aston operate as a commercial arm of Aston University, providing hotel, conference, banqueting and hospitality venues and services to both internal University departments and external private and public sector organisations.

Located on the University Campus in Birmingham city centre, Conference Aston's facilities include a four-star standard 163-bedroom conference hotel, with 19 conference suites and meeting/training rooms to accommodate four up to 222 delegates, a large modern restaurant catering for up to 450 and a choice of private dining rooms for up to 150 diners. The hotel also offers large delegate breakout lounges, a hotel bar and landscaped central courtyard area which is perfect for outdoor summer events.

The hotel and conference centre operates year-round with a diverse mix of customers across business sectors including construction, healthcare, government, financial services, certification bodies, charitable trusts and associations.

During the summer vacation period for Aston University, Conference Aston also manage larger conferences, events and summer schools that utilise the impressive choice of teaching and student accommodation facilities between July and September, where residential conferences for up to 650 and large association events are the core business.

The hotel also welcomes a variety of transient guests through corporate accommodation agreements, international group accommodation and domestic business and leisure accommodation.

Conference Aston was the first academic venue in the UK to achieve the ISO14001 accreditation for environmental management and continues to hold this as part of the Aston University accreditation. Sustainability is at the heart of the organisation with the venue holding the Green Tourism Silver Award and two stars from the Sustainable Restaurant Association.

The venue carries the Meeting Industry Association 'Accredited in Meetings Secure' standard and holds the BDRC Venue Verdict Gold Standard for 2020 based on consistent high scoring via an external post-event feedback programme.

Conference Aston enjoys a high level of repeat business, exceeding 60% and strives for exceptional, first-class customer service, where the team adopt a creative approach to operate with integrity and honesty with the aim of each customer leaving with a wish to return. Customer feedback is at the heart of the business and drives continuous development of the team, services and facilities to create an event environment that exceeds expectations.

The Education Department

The Education Department provides leadership in all aspects of learning and teaching, academic support, and quality assurance and enhancement, across the University. It is comprised of the following teams:

- **Academic Practice**
- **Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL)**
- **Academic Quality**
- **Library**
- **Learning Development Centre (LDC)**
- **Centre for English Language & Communication at Aston (CELCA).**

The Academic Practice and TEL teams work with academic staff to develop, enhance and innovate their pedagogic practice. This is achieved through a range of activities which include a suite of postgraduate programmes in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education accredited by Advance HE; a central CPD programme; and bespoke work with colleges, programme teams and individual members of staff.

The Academic Quality team has responsibility for quality assurance and enhancement across the University; and the Library team provides support to both staff and students for learning, teaching and research activities.

The LDC and CELCA work mostly with students. The LDC helps students with all aspects of their academic study skills, and CELCA provides support for international students in improving their English language and communication skills and becoming more confident about studying in another country.

TEF - support for academic staff in curriculum development and review; the sharing of good practice; reward and recognition for excellence in learning and teaching; and the creation of institutional policies and strategies designed to enhance the Aston student learning experience are other key responsibilities for the department.

Estates and Capital Development

Led by the Director of Estates and Capital Development, Ian Oldacre, Estates are responsible for delivering the redevelopment programme as well as the daily maintenance of the campus.

The department is made up of a number of specialist teams and covers a wide range of disciplines.

Space and capital projects

Manages small to medium sized capital projects on campus, delivering cost effective, efficient, accessible and aesthetically motivational learning and working environments, considerate of all user needs and enhancing the University experience.

A dedicated Space Management team is responsible for ensuring all current and future spaces are designed in line with University policy and best practice. In addition, the team manages the record drawings and space management database, containing details on all space uses and occupiers, for the entire property portfolio.

Estate's maintenance

Ensures that the site infrastructure is maintained and developed to ensure maximum efficiency and availability. This includes a district heating system and private high voltage and water distribution systems. The team includes Electrical Engineering and Building Services specialists, and heating and ventilation systems are controlled by two building energy management systems.

In addition, day-to-day maintenance of buildings and services are maintained through a dedicated maintenance team including electrical and mechanical tradesman, carpenters and decorators. The team provides a reactive and planned maintenance service, all of which is coordinated by specialist supervisors.

Environment and sustainability

The environment is at the forefront of everything we do at Aston University and we have a dedicated Environmental and Sustainability team who actively seek to reduce energy emissions and improve our carbon footprint year on year.

Aston University aspires to maintain an exemplar role in this area within the higher education and local community and is proud to have maintained an impressive high position in the People and Planet Green League since 2010.

Safety

Safety is coordinated by a dedicated Health and Safety advisor within the Estates team ensuring compliance with all relevant statutory requirements. Gardens and grounds are maintained to a high standard by a specialist team who report directly to the Maintenance Officer.

For more information, visit our website www.aston.ac.uk/estates

Library and Information Services

The Library focusses on providing excellent customer service, a range of learning environments, access to high quality scholarly information resources, and support for all students and staff to develop their skills and enhance their research. The Library has held the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award since 2012.

The Library staff complement currently comprises professional staff and support staff organised into four teams:

The Information Resources team manage the purchase and access to all print and electronic resources and manage the associated library systems.

The Information Services team work closely with the Colleges to ensure library services and resources meet the needs of their students and staff, as well as providing support for information and research skills within programmes.

The Research Services team support staff and researchers with advice on topics including Open Access publishing, research data management, research indicators, and enhancing research profiles.

The Public Services team manage the learning environment within the Library building on campus, run the library's enquiry services in person and online via email and LiveChat, and support the lending and circulation of library material.

The Library is a member of the Mercian Collaboration of libraries in the region, and the national body for academic libraries, SCONUL with many staff involved in regional and national special interest groups, sector developments, and initiatives.

The four-storey Library building can accommodate 1200 users with space for individual and group study, workshops, and bookable rooms.

The ground floor is a group learning space incorporating a café, PCs, loanable laptops, group study rooms and a variety of furniture to facilitate group study.

The first floor incorporates the library staff area, print journal stock, single study spaces and the Learning Development Centre which brings together learning support initiatives for academic skills and mathematics.

The second and third floors house the printed book stock, the Library workshop room, and further study spaces for single and group study. The Library has flexible opening hours throughout the year with extended opening during exams and through vacation periods.

For more information, visit: www.aston.ac.uk/library

IT and Digital Services

Digital technology and support are constantly improving digital accessibility, systems and service delivery to support our students and staff. The Helpdesk on the ground floor by The Hub

Digital Services offer Blackboard (our VLE) is available 24/7 via MAP where students can access modules, lectures, slides, notes, read course announcements, complete assignments, and connect and collaborate with fellow students.

My Aston Portal (MAP) is a secure single point of contact for many of the digital services used by students, including teaching timetables and the modules they are studying.

WiFi Study Spaces around campus and support is available for those studying remotely. This includes a virtual desktop infrastructure and the ability to connect to a virtual Aston PC that is powerful enough to run dedicated academic applications.

Digital Services have extensive IT facilities with over 1,500 desktop computers specifically for student use, offering a range of networked software packages, database systems, modelling tools and computer aided learning.

Catering – food and drink on campus

Several cafés on campus serve a wide choice of food, snacks and drinks. With Costa coffees, cold drinks, hot meals, sandwiches, wraps, cakes, vegan and vegetarian options for staff and students.

Café Libro, Eros Café and Tierra Food Court (including Costa Coffee), are all on campus.



**Where change
gets real.**