

The south of England

Comprising seaside resorts, busy university towns and sites of historical interest, southern England provides international students with many leisure opportunities.

Agent comments

'I strongly recommend the south of England to study. [Everything there] seems to be great, the seaside, the forest, the excellent life at night and the sunny weather. In general, students think only of places like London, Cambridge or Oxford. But there are places in the south of England like Bournemouth where young or adult students can live [in] an atmosphere of friendship, pleasure and leisure.'

Lidia Matheos, Cadi, Argentina

'I like [the south of England]. I am fond of the cosy beaches, sandy or pebbly. I love the small quiet towns and villages with cordial, friendly people. I usually suggest [to students] that they go to [experience] the nature of Devon and Sussex. There are beautiful places in other parts of England but my heart definitely belongs to Devon and Cornwall.'

Elena Linkova, Firm Efes, Russia

'We get many enquiries for the south of England. Destinations such as Bournemouth, Brighton, Ramsgate and Portsmouth are very well known and there are many tourist attractions nearby. [Students enjoy] activities near the sea in summertime and trips to nearby destinations and mainland Europe.'

Deniz Akar, Global Visions Education, Turkey

The capital city of London -containing all the attractions associated with being Europe's largest city and accommodating 20 million visitors each year -is within easy reach of much of southern England, and many towns and cities are influenced by its young and vibrant image. 'Students like the buzz of the south coast -the attractions of London but in a manageable size,' says Rebecca Foreman at City College Brighton and Hove in Brighton.

Students studying in Brighton, which is a one-hour train journey from London and a popular weekend retreat for those who live and work in the capital, can 'go shopping, [visit] museums and theatres, [go to one of Brighton's many] tourist attractions, [visit] heritage sites, clubs, pubs and restaurants', says Foreman. Brighton is well known for its vibrant nightlife which is heavily supported by the city's large local and international student population.

Elsewhere, many colleges and universities with international students take advantage of the activities London and other cities have to offer. 'The college arranges activities and visits for sightseeing, shopping and visiting historical places of interest such as [trips to] Canterbury, London, Cambridge, Dover Castle and Hampton Court Palace,' says Tamasyn Baker, International Relations Officer at Thanet College in Broadstairs. Baker points out what is one of the advantages of studying outside London itself. 'Broadstairs provides a quiet, safe and clean environment -perfect for studying.'

Students at Thanet College also have the chance to get involved in an unusual cultural event which takes place annually in this small seaside town on the east coast, where the author, Charles Dickens, wrote his novel *Bleak House*. 'The local residents still celebrate every year with the Charles Dickens festival,' says Baker. 'The townsfolk dress up in costume of the period and we have torch-lit processions through the streets to mark the start and end of Folk Week.'

Southern England's rich history means that often students do not need to travel far to see cultural and historical sites of interest. 'Winchester has its own unique and important history,' says Dave Alderson at Sparsholt College, who adds, 'It has

Selection of education institutions in the south of England

	Location	Use agents?	No. of students	% int. students
Bournemouth and Poole College	Bournemouth	✓	27,000	1
Bracknell and Wokingham College	Wokingham	✓	1,000	10
City College Brighton and Hove	Brighton	✓	1,200	20
City of Bath College	Bath	✓	9,000	8
Filton College	Bristol	✓	2,000	7
Plymouth College of FE	Plymouth	✓	100	50
Sparsholt College	Winchester		1,150	1
Thanet College	Broadstairs	✓	6,000	5
University of Portsmouth	Portsmouth	✓	18,000	10

many overseas students and is a great centre from which to see the rest of the south.'

The city of Winchester is overlooked by an iron-age hill fort and the remains of a Roman defensive wall can still be seen today. King Alfred the Great and many of his successors made Winchester their capital and it was here that William the Conqueror claimed the crown of England in 1066.

The historic city of Bath is another popular city with international students, according to Alderson. Students studying in or visiting this old Roman spa town can visit the Roman Baths and the Pump Room, and view the impressive Georgian architecture typified by the Royal Crescent.

The south of England is a popular area with tourists in general due to its beaches and warm climate, compared with the rest of the country, and this contributes to a friendly, bustling atmosphere. Gill Godfrey at Plymouth College of Further Education says, 'International students like the fact that Plymouth is near the sea and is a holiday area. It is a big centre with lots of leisure activities and the nightlife is very lively.'

Annette Farley, International Marketing Coordinator at Bournemouth and Poole College, underlines that international students studying in the south are likely to receive a warm welcome from the local population. '[There are many opportunities to mix with locals] as international students studying full-time can now work part-time and [their] accommodation is [often] with British families,' she says. 'The highlight of [the students'] stay here is the landscape and the friends they make.'