

Manchester Live: Why Manchester July webinar transcript

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OK, so welcome to today. My name is Rebecca Moran, and I'm a UK Recruitment Officer here at the University of Manchester. So, that means I give a lot of advice out to students about the options available to them at higher education level.

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So, today, we're going to look at our Why Manchester presentation. So the things I'll cover today: information about the university, teaching and learning, the student experience that you can expect as a student here, and also, a little bit about the city of Manchester.

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So, hopefully, at the end of the session, you'll have an insight into the university, which will be able to help you make a decision about whether to come to study here.

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So firstly, just to look at the university itself, and a little bit about our history.

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So Manchester has contributed greatly to the heritage and history of the city of Manchester and also across the world. And we've got a few examples just coming up here on the slide. So our first one is Christabel Pankhurst, the co-founder of the leading Suffragette group. And she was born in Manchester and was the first woman to graduate in law from the university.

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We've also got Ernest Rutherford who worked as a physicist at the University and some of his work then led to the discovery of splitting of the atom here, and he received a Nobel Prize.

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Then moving on to the world's first stored program computer, which was built at the University of Manchester by Frederick Williams and Tom Kilburn back in 1948. And this was affectionately known as the Baby.

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Then, moving on to Bernard Lovell, who built the world's largest steerable radio telescope. And that's located at Jodrell Bank in Cheshire, so not too far from where the university is located.

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Then we've got a few others here on the slide as well. So some of them you may know, we've got Arthur Lewis, he was

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Britain's first black professor. And we've got Alan Turing who worked during the Second World War to decipher the Enigma Machines.

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We've got Brian Cox as well, who is a professor, still today, of particle physics and astronomy at the university. And he's quite well known in the UK for a lot of TV shows, such as Wonders of the Universe and associated series.

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Some other famous alumni that we've got, you've got Chrissie Wellington, four-time Iron Man Triathlon World Champion.

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Some of you then might recognize Benedict Cumberbatch, and he studied drama here at the University and went on to find fame in the BBC's Sherlock, but also in films, such as 12 Years a Slave, The Imitation Game, and in the Marvel universe as Doctor Strange. So there's a whole host of famous alumni that have graduated from the University.

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That's just to give you a background into the history of the University.

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So to look then at our rankings, and these are taken from the Shanghai Jiao Tong University rankings. So you can see there on the slide, kind of how we are placed internationally.

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And we're really proud of our reputation across the world.

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But just to bear in mind, when you are using rankings tables to base your decision on which uni, basically, to go for. Just bear in mind that they're not always like for like. So just have a look at the things that they're measuring. And you can check out the university's reputation as a whole, but also looking at the reputation of individual courses as well.

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Now, I'm going to look now at the research benefits that they bring to the students, as well. So we are a research intensive university. That means that students are being taught by world leaders in their field. And the connection between research and teaching really is a key feature of the University of Manchester.

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So staff will incorporate latest thinkings and discoveries into your courses.

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We also then have strong links with industry as well. And just to make sure that some of our courses are at the edge of industrial needs, as well some academic knowledge, as well. So that's kind of how research benefits you as a student and what coming into a research-led University means.

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In terms of the campus itself and kind of the investment that we're making in it, we've recently embarked on the one of the largest investment programs of any UK University. And we have just invest one billion pounds over 10 years to create a world-class campus, for both our staff and our students.

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Some recent additions include our Alliance Manchester Business School.

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This includes lots of great new teaching spaces, a library, lots of study areas for students, and also a retail development as well.

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We're also partway through building a new engineering campus with state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities, and this is what's pictured on the slide here. So this is an artist's impression of what it will look like when it's completed.

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And we've also recently developed a new park on campus. So a really nice green space for students and staff to enjoy and relax in as well. So we're always looking to improve the facilities, whether that's the buildings we've got, the facilities inside them as well, and all the spaces around campus.

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So, to look now kind of at our teaching and learning at University.

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So to start off with our courses, we have over 400 different degree programs at undergraduate level.

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And we have around 8.5 thousand places to 60,000 applications.

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We attract students from across the globe, as well, so we're a really international University. So that's what our students look like in terms of numbers.

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But in terms of what you can study, you may already have kind of an idea of what you want to, but you may also still be researching those options and seeing what's available to you.

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As you can see on this slide, these are just a couple of our courses that we offer. We offer many more, but you can see that there's lots of traditional subjects in there, but also things that you may not have had the opportunity to study before.

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You can study almost anything at the university except veterinary science, sports science, and fine arts. But most other areas, I think you'll find we've got a course that covers that.

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Now, each of our courses is structured quite differently.

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So, just to do some research yourself, I guess, about the contact time there is, how you'll be assessed, how it's taught, just so that you've got an idea of what to expect if you become a student here.

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Also, some courses may have modules that are mandatory, whereas others might be optional. So, do have a look on our course profile pages, just to see what kind of flexibility you have within the degree program that you're looking to study.

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Some of our courses are also accredited by governing bodies. So our Alliance Manchester Business School courses are triple accredited. Our psychology one is accredited by the British Psychological Society. So do have a look. There's lots of other ones that might have accreditations as well. So do have a look if that's something that's important for you moving on to your future career.

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And then linked to that is sort of the teaching methods, and we have a variety employed here at the University. And again, these will vary from course to course.

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So for our humanities degree programs, these would be conducted in large lecture theatres, with smaller seminar groups or tutorials, alongside those, just to discuss the ideas in a little bit more detail.

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For our science or engineering courses, there'll be extensive use of our labs on campus. And then for our health care programs, a lot of problem based learning, inquiry based learning. Some more practical ways of teaching. Just to prepare you to go into the careers associated with those courses.

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And you can see here on the slide some of the support that we offer at Manchester. So just to pick out a few of those.

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Every undergraduate student is assigned an academic advisor. So, a member of staff that is there to give you advice related to academic issues, maybe with the transition to university, but also to provide advice around course modules. Things that you should be choosing to reflect kind of, what you want to be learning.

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Many of our courses will also offer peer support. So this is where second and third year students will provide support to our incoming students in the first year. It is often pastoral, but it can focus on the academic side, as well. So they will facilitate group discussions to help you understand the academic content a little bit better as well.

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I guess what to take away from this is that we're here to support you during your studies with us, and there's lots of support that you can access as a student at Manchester.

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But as well as your course, there's lots of other ways that you can look at to broaden your knowledge. One of those is our University College for Interdisciplinary Learning.

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And this was created to give you the chance to study something outside of your degree program. And just to sort of enhance your learning experience, really. And most courses will allow students to take a module in this.

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Now these are just a few examples of modules you can study through the University College, and as you can see, they span from sort of humanities through to science and sustainability. So there's something there for everyone, really, just as something different to study as part of your academic course.

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Then many students ask us about the opportunities for work placements as part of their degree program.

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Some of our courses will offer work placements either in the UK and sometimes abroad, and these are built into the degree program. So you would be looking for courses that say, with industrial experience, or with work experience, if that's something that's important to you. And we've got dedicated staff within departments to help you with securing work placements with those courses.

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But all students can apply for extracurricular placements and internships outside of their degree programs, and to sort of boost employability after graduation. And again, the Career Service can help you with securing those, or signposting you to them. And the university itself has its own program of internships that students can apply for at the end of their second year. And they really do give you sort of an edge in the undergraduate market, having some of those employability skills alongside your degree when it comes to graduating.

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Another thing that we get asked a lot about is the opportunity to study abroad as part of your program.

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Most of our undergraduate courses allow you to participate in our study abroad program and spend time in one of our partner institutions outside the UK. Now this is normally just one semester in the second year.

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If you wanted to look at doing a whole year abroad, then, some of our courses such as languages would incorporate that as a compulsory element. But also, we have some courses which do say 'with international studies'. So again that would have a year built into the degree program.

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So do have a look at the course profile pages again, to see whether studying abroad is an option for you on your chosen course.

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There are a small number of cases where we can't allow study abroad. So just because there's sort of an accreditation to the course, and the way it's structured, and some examples of this are electrical engineering and pharmacy. So I said, do checkout the course profile pages on my website if you're thinking about going into study abroad.

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So we'll look now sort of more at the student experience that you could expect as a student at Manchester.

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So just to give you an idea of kind of what our student body is like, we have over 40,000 students registered at the University. So around 27,000 at undergraduate level and 13,000 at postgraduate level.

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And as I previously mentioned, we have over 400 different degree programs at undergraduate level, and one of the largest single-site universities in the UK.

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So that's just to give you an idea of the size of the University and the students that we have here.

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But we also have a lot of cultural institutions, as well, that are linked to the university. And there's a few pictured on this slide. So as I mentioned at the start, we've got the Jodrell Bank Observatory. So home to the Lovell telescope.

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And this is made use of by students study and astrophysics at the University. And it's also a world UNESCO Heritage site as well.

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Then, on the top right, we've got the Manchester Museum. And this is actually on the University campus itself. And that's got lots of archaeological collections, natural history ones, there's a vivarium as well. So there's loads that you can explore, whether that's related to your course or just whilst you're on campus maybe taking a break. And it's currently undergoing a huge refurbishment as well at the moment.

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And at the bottom right, we've got the word. So that's an art gallery that's located within a park that again is really close to campus. And then the middle right, we've got the John Rylands library. And this is in Manchester City Centre, but linked to the university. And it's a neo-gothic library which has loads of really unique collections of books and manuscripts. So, again, it's a really nice place to go and visit, regardless of whether it's kind of, linked to your course.

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So looking next, then, at student life.

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So firstly, looking at the students' union. This is one of the largest unions in the UK, and it has everything, lots of things going on, sort of open mic nights, drama festivals – there is really lucky to get involved in.

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It also administrate a huge range of different societies. So we've got things like Dodgeball, Circus skills and I think there's a Pirate Society. There's loads of different things that you can get involved in - some quite traditional societies that you might expect, as I mentioned. Some that may be a little bit different.

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And so we're saying that there's something for everyone. But if you can't find what you're looking for, then the union will help you set up your own society, if you can find 15 other people that would want to join it alongside you.

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They also have a radio, TV stations, newspapers as well, that you can get involved in if that's something that you'd like to sort of experience. But they also offer a lot of pastoral support as well, through counselling services as well.

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Sport, whilst we don't offer it as an undergraduate degree, is really important factor to the student experience at Manchester. And we have a huge range of different facilities, and they're listed on the slide here, the different sites that we've got.

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So we've got the Armitage Centre, which is located near our halls of residence in Fallowfield. The Sugden Centre, which is on campus. And then the Aquatic Centre, which has an Olympic size swimming pool, and again, that is right in the heart of campus. So there's lots of facilities spread across these different sites. So we've got by 5-a-side pitches, sports halls, fitness suites, as I mentioned, and 250 meter swimming pools. So there is something for everyone to get involved in, and it's really accessible, as well, with lots of quite cheap options to get involved in sport within the city.

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Just to mention, now, briefly, our student finance. The university wants to attract the best students regardless of economic background.

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And for this reason, we offer a range of bursaries to students.

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One of the big ones is our Undergraduate Access Scholarship, and this is for local students that have completed our Manchester Access program.

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Or for students under 25 who have been in care as well. So, there's some financial support available. So I would encourage you to look on our website at the bursaries and scholarship packages.

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But we also have bursaries for year in industry programs, for foundation year programs. So, as I said, do check out the website if you think you're eligible for any of these bursaries and support.

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So, moving on now to careers, and thinking next to what you'll do once you have your degree.

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Now, when you first come to Manchester, you may have no real career plan in mind, or you might know exactly what you want to do. Either way will give you everything you need to know to start building your future career, and putting you in the right direction.

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So all of our students are encouraged to use our career service from the first year at University. And that could be with finding part-time jobs, but also maybe identifying the career area you want to go into. Identifying the skills that you need for that, and helping you achieve those as well.

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You can also use this service up to two years after graduation as well, so if you do take a break after your studies, you can still come back to us and use our career service to help you find your graduate position afterwards.

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So on the slide you can see a number of the services we offer such as of CV advice and large-scale career fairs. So there's loads of support there for you.

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This means then that the University is one of the most targeted by the largest number of top employers.

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And we really do want to give our students the best career support possible, just to make sure that you've got an edge in the graduate market. 94% of our students, our graduates, are in employment, or further study, six months after graduation. And that's something that we're really proud of, that we're able to put our graduates into these jobs after finishing their studies with us.

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So, we may be a large institution with over 40,000 students, but our student services make sure that every individual gets all the support they need, and this is offered free and confidential

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At the point of access. We've got a number of specialized services available to our students, some of which are listed on this slide.

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All of this together means that you should always feel supported. We've got hundreds of trained staff on campus and in our halls of residence to support you, should you have any problems whilst you're a student here. And this would all be signposted to you as a student at the University.

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Alongside this, the University is very committed to promoting student well-being and encouraging students to sort of reflect on their emotional and social well-being, whilst they're studying with us.

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On this slide, you can see, these are our six ways to well-being. So the first one we've got is connect.

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So really, I guess, reaching out to people that maybe you haven't spoken to in a while, staying off your phone during conversations, just trying to kind of be present in conversations that you're having.

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We've got give, then, so this could include things like volunteering in the local community, but maybe also sort of making contact with a stranger or just saying hello to somebody in the street, as well.

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We've got take notice. So being aware of the world around you, looking at your surroundings. Be active, and be healthy. Trying to sort of have a good diet, sleeping well, making healthy choices. And then finally, learn and discover. So making time to try something new, or maybe just rediscovering an old hobby that you have. Or learning a foreign language, for example. But, these factors are really important to us at the University, and we really do encourage our students to reflect on these areas while they're studying with us. And to just get involved with things so that it's not just the studies, that developing lots of skills while you're here with us.

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So, we're going to look next, now, at accommodation. And the university offers students more accommodation options than virtually any other higher education institution in the UK.

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And each hall will have its own character, and you can learn more about these on the accommodation website.

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So, that's just www.manchester.ac.uk/accommodation.

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Now, we'd encourage all students to stay in a hall of residence in their first year, especially if you're going to be moving away from home for the first time.

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We guarantee accommodation to all new first years coming to Manchester alone. So, that means that, if you are coming with a family, for example, we can't guarantee that, when we only have a small number of those rooms available. But if you come alone, then we guarantee you a place in our halls of residence.

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For international students that's extended for the duration of your stay.

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This is quite a unique thing. Not a lot of universities can offer that. So we're really proud that we're able to offer that service to our students.

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Just to give you an idea, then, just some of the highlights. We have over 8000 rooms across 23 different halls of residence and these vary in style. So we have got some in our city area, so those are really close to the university campus.

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If that's important to you, then maybe look there. Then we've got Victoria Park and this is blended with the residential area in Manchester, it is quite leafy. Some of our more traditional halls are based there. And then we have Fallowfield which are furthest away from the teaching campus. But it's also our largest sites. So that's where most of our students would live and also where a lot of students live in private accommodation, sort of following on from that as well.

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And they range in size as well. So we'll have some that are quite small, maybe 100 students, to some with over a thousand students as part of them.

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We have ones with en suite facilities, some with shared bathrooms. We have self-catered halls which gives you that flexibility to prepare your own meals at the time that is suitable to you. But also catered halls bring a social benefit as well. So whilst you have set mealtimes, it is a great way to make friends when everybody comes together at mealtimes and you can sit with lots of different people.

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So there's pros and cons to both of those options. But all of our halls have a variety of facilities. So, student bars, sports facilities, laundrettes, but importantly, they all have a ResLife team.

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This is a group of postgrad students and academic staff that live in halls to support you with settling in, with any issues that you have. Whether it's that you've lost your key, for example, there is always somebody there on call to help you whilst you're living in the halls of residence.

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Then, after first year, as I said, many students will choose to move out into the private sector. And we have something called Manchester student homes, which helps students with that.

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So it's a free University-run housing service, combined with other Manchester-based universities. So this offers free housing advice, contract checking. It has a list of approved landlords, as well. And so, they are a really good resource to use if you are considering moving into the private sector.

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You can apply to stay on in halls, and, as I said, for international students, this is guaranteed. For UK students, you would need to apply. And they would see then whether they have any availability for you. So those are kind of your options after your first year.

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So we're coming to the end of the presentation now, so we are going to look next at the city of Manchester.

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And it really does have a lot to offer, both sort of the University of Manchester itself. But also the city is a really big draw for students coming here.

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There's loads going on, it has loads of museums, and theatres, lots of bars and cafes. There's green spaces, both within the city, large parks, just outside it.

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There's some great architecture, as well, blending really old with some really modern buildings. There's loads of shopping. There's lots and lots of sports. You can see Manchester United pictured on this slide. But we're also home to British cycling, as well. So there really is loads and loads of things to get involved in.

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And because we've got our university, but also we've got Manchester Metropolitan University, the College of Music and also Salford University. It means that students really do make up a huge proportion of the population of the city. So, it's a really student-friendly city.

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It's big, but it's quite compact to get around, so I think it does really offer a lot to our students. Just to give you an idea, then, of kind of where we're located as well. You can see there on the slide that the white outline is the university.

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Then the yellow is the city centre. So you can see that it sort of blends into each other, so we're lucky in that respect in that we're close to the city centre, but we're also a campus university as well. So, we're kind of a blend of a campus university in that all of our buildings are located together, but yet, we're very much part of the city as well.

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If city living gets too much, there's also areas of outstanding national beauty around. We've got the Lake District, and the Peak District, as well, that are not too far away. So I think both the University and the city really do have a lot to offer our students. So that brings me to the end of the session today. So, hopefully that has given you a chance to find out a little bit more about the university. We do have some more webinars coming up. So, do check out the website on this slide here, the Manchester Live website to see what we've got coming up in the future. And also, we're part of Unibuddy as well.

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So if you go to our homepage, you can connect there with students. So you can have chats with current students, whether that's based on their level of study, what they're studying, or the country that they come from, as well. So, that's a really good way to have some more informal chats, as well, with some of our current students.

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So, I'll leave the webinar open for now. And if you've got any questions, then, hopefully, you found the questions section in here, so you've been able to chat and ask any questions that you have. We'll leave that open until we've answered all of those questions. But otherwise, thank you very much for joining us today, and hope to see you again at a future webinar.

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Thank you.