

BIM A+

European Master in
Building Information Modelling

Student's Guide

 University of Minho - Guimarães



Portugal  gal



Universidade do Minho



UNIVERZA
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Moving to a new city to pursue your studies requires a series of important steps. Applying for visas and finding proper accommodation are usually the initial steps.

This guide is intended to help with some of these steps. Just remember that the key to success is your agility and perseverance in making it happen!

Please note that all these processes are time-consuming, and you should start them as soon as possible.

For more advice and answers to your specific questions, please contact the BIM A+ secretariat at secretariatimaplus.org.

We wish you the best of luck!

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1 HOST COUNTRY AND CITY

1.1 Portugal

Portugal is one of the world's oldest countries. It became an independent nation in 1143 and has maintained its independence and national boundaries from the 13th century to this day, except for a brief period under Spanish domination between 1580 and 1640. Portugal became a republic on 5th October 1910 and is an established democracy today.



Portugal has a rich seafaring past, superb beach resorts, wistful towns and a landscape wreathed in olive groves, vineyards and wheat fields. Littered with UNESCO World Heritage sites and graced by one of Europe's most relaxed and attractive capitals, it also remains refreshingly affordable. Savouring life slowly is a Portuguese passion, and much of the best is humble - traditional folk festivals; simple, honest food drowning in olive oil; music that pulls at the heart strings, recalling past love and glories; and markets overflowing with fish, fruit and flowers.

Capital: Lisbon

Area: Total Area: 89,456 km²

Water territory: 400 km²

Coastline: 1,621 km

Population: 10,276,617 (2018 est.)



Religion: Roman Catholic 80%; Protestantism 2% (2021)

Location: South-Western of Spain and Europe, Iberia Peninsula. Borders the Atlantic Ocean on the western and southern coast. North of Morocco, North Africa.

Language: The official language is Portuguese.

Climate: Portugal has mild weather; winters are never too cold, and summers are always moderately hot. Lightweight clothing is suitable from June to September. A topcoat and umbrella are advisable for autumn and winter.

1.2 Guimarães



Guimarães, the city you will be living in, is located in north-western Portugal, approximately 350 km north of the capital, Lisbon, and about 50 km from the second largest city, Porto. In administrative terms, it is a municipality made up of 48 parishes, occupying an area of 241.3 km² and including about 160,000 inhabitants.

Guimarães was successively a “Citânia”, a Roman Village, a barbarian and Christian village up to the IX Century. In the X Century Mumadona, the King of Léon’s relative, created the double Monastery for Monks and Nuns of Santa Maria, S. Salvador e Todos-os-Santos.

Guimarães was born around this Monastery. After the Normans’ invasion in 996, Mumadona was also responsible for the building of the Keep, which still ornaments the Guimarães Castle nowadays. Soon after, there were

several events that would take place in Guimarães, which would have great importance in the birth of Portugal.

D. Afonso Henriques was born in 1111, and in 1125 he becomes a knight in the roman Cathedral of Zamora. In 1127 a siege was laid to Guimarães and on the 24th of June D. Afonso Henriques organised, in the North of the Castle, the battle of S. Mamede against his mother and foreign allies. The infant ended up victorious and there began his sovereignty at the head of the Portuguese Kingdom. Guimarães became the birthplace of the nation.

Guimarães has plenty of places to visit! In the urban centre, you can find colorful streets, historical buildings, big city squares and lots of stores, restaurants and bakeries.

Information about Guimarães: <https://www.visitguimaraes.travel/informacao-pratica>

1.2.1 How to arrive to UMinho - Guimarães

The Francisco Sá Carneiro International Airport is connected with the Porto railway central station (Campanhã) by metro line E (violet line) of “Metro do Porto” (<https://en.metrodoporto.pt/>). The travel takes 25 minutes.. Tickets can be purchased at the automatic ticket machines located in the Metro station or in the Airport information

desk. Tickets must be validated before travel by scanning them in front of the yellow machines located in the stations.

Airport Station is located just in front of the arrivals zone of the International Francisco Sá Carneiro Airport, in parallel with the two existing roadways. Nevertheless, the person's circulation between both the equipment is guaranteed by a proper underground passage. When arriving at the Airport Station, people only need to go down a floor and, in a little, less than 50 meters walking, they are inside of the Airport. Equally, the access to the Station from the interior of the Airport is extremely simple and practical, being fully signaled.

Motorways and railways are the most direct means of reaching Guimarães

By motorway: Using the current network of motorways, Guimarães can be reached from Oporto Airport in 40 minutes via the A3 and A7.

By bus: From the Francisco Sá Carneiro International Airport you may take a bus to Guimarães. Some companies such as Flixbus and Getbus also provide services to Porto-Guimarães. The journey takes approximately 50 min. Please check their website for additional information and to purchase the ticket.

By train: All-stop service between Porto and Guimarães takes approximately 60 minutes and costs around 4.00 €. From the centre of Porto you can catch a train to Guimarães at São Bento Station. Please check CP's website for more information: <https://www.cp.pt/passageiros/pt/consultar-horarios>

Once you arrive in Guimarães, it is better to take a taxi to your accommodation.

By taxi: If you wish to take a taxi from the Oporto airport to Braga or Guimarães: the journey takes approximately 45 min. and the fare is around 70€.

Car: We do NOT recommend bringing a car to Guimarães. It is a small city and the public transportation system is cheaper. Some general traffic rules:

- Seat belts must be used at all times, including rear seats, if equipped.
- Maximum speed: 90 km per hour, in all built-up areas 50 km per hour, motorways 120 km per hour.
- Motorways fees (paid by purchasing a window sticker - valid for 1 year).

Guimarães is a small city, and the public transportation system is cheap.
There are several transportation options in Guimarães.

Train: CP Comboios de Portugal is the main train company in Portugal. The Train station is near the Campus of Couros. We advise you to purchase your tickets at the reception

of the train station due to the language barrier of the machines. Ticket prices and schedules are available online: <https://www.cp.pt/passageiros/pt/comprar-bilhetes>

Taxi: You can hail a taxi in the street or take one from a taxi stand. The telephone taxi companies are honest. The driver may be polite and should give you a receipt for the ride. You can call a taxi at: 253 522 522. Bolt and UBER are usually available in the city.

Bus: Guimabus is the main bus company in Guimarães. Provides several schedules and lines to take you to every part of the city. It is also possible to buy a monthly pass that can make your travel cheaper. A single bus ticket costs from 1.50 € to 2.70 €. A monthly pass, commonly called “passe”, is valid for the urban network and costs around 25.00 € to 35.00 €. For more information: <https://guimabus.pt/titulos/>

Bike: If you are considering bringing your bike or motorbike to Guimarães, reconsider. The city simply isn't designed to safely accommodate bike riders.

2 BIM A+ EUROPEAN MASTER IN BUILDING INFORMATION MODELLING

BIM A+ is part of the Civil Engineering Department of the University of Minho.

The objective of BIM A+ is to offer an advanced education programme on BIM integrated design, construction, and operation processes, with a strong focus on the collaborative practices that are the cornerstone of such integration.

The Master combines the diversity of expertise at leading European universities in the relevant fields, offering education oriented to a multidisciplinary understanding of virtual construction through the involvement of experts from complementary fields (engineers, architects, programmers and others). Students gain top-level knowledge on BIM in a research-oriented environment, with close cooperation with the industry and with a strong focus on problem solving.

The course will combine the recent advances in research and development with practical activities applications. After successful completion of the BIM A+ a student will gain competences to compete in a highly demanding market as a BIM Manager/Coordinator/Specialist. Furthermore, students may consider engaging in a further degree of studies towards (PhD) research on the BIM proficiency level.

A brief list of the main learning outcomes follows below:

- Understand the role and potential of BIM for the industry;
- Be able to plan the use of BIM in Building projects and provide the right level of detail;
- Be able to comply legal and project collaboration requirements;
- Identify, describe and apply adequate modelling practices in view of intended uses for the models;
- Capability to understand and perform BIM models for the specialties of Architecture, Structural Engineering and MEP Engineering;
- Master the use of parametric approaches for advanced object creation;
- Be capable of advanced object use in BIM context through interactive editors and object libraries;
- Capability of applying scripting methodologies to extend the capacities of existing BIM platforms towards customized capacities;
- Be able to assess interoperability issues in BIM Exchange from the technical, semantic, and organizational point of view;
- Apply methods of development of schemata and databases that are relevant to BIM, as well as methods for exchange of building product specifications;
- Be capable of dealing successfully with interoperability issues in BIM-based exchange of project information in infrastructure and building projects;

- Detail and apply the business processes impacted by BIM 4D, 5D, and 6D and describe the digitalization approach in terms of workflows, data exchange mechanisms (incl. data management roles, data drops, and system interfaces);
- Understand how the Common Data Environment (as prescribed in European practices) can support other business processes such as contract management, tendering, and eProcurement, BIM to Field;
- Being able to adapt BIM 4D, 5D, and 6D to modelling and applications for the specialties of Architecture, Structural Engineering, and MEP Engineering;
- Capability of in-depth application of BIM in specific contexts of building rehabilitation and sustainability analysis/assessment.

Moreover, it is relevant to pinpoint the upcoming initiatives in the field of standardization, particularly in the US and Europe (CEN TC442 is set up and running to produce standards) which are strong influencers in the worldwide scenario. The learning and innovative outcomes will prepare the student to be qualified, with a broad mind, for participating in drawing new international Guidelines and standards, in a shared table with different experts.

You can find more information about the programme on our website:



www.bimaplus.org

2.1 Structure and content

The study programme is composed of seven units, being six courses/units of 5 ECTS (45 hours of lectures and 95 hours of independent/group student work) and one dissertation of 30 ECTS (30 tutorial hours and 558 hours of independent student work). Lectures are held from 9:30 to 12:30 and individual/group work is compulsory at University from 14:00 to 19:00.

The courses of 5 ECTS are given in 3.3 weeks without interruption. Each 5 ECTS course is divided in two modules with independent evaluation, when the lecturers are available for the students and provide extra tutorial as requested.

Therefore, each lecturer is typically involved two weeks in a single course. This allows foreign lecturers to deliver the module and is very beneficial for the students, as they have a lecturer almost full-time at their disposal for all the modules. The 5 ECTS courses

are arranged as a mix of theory and application, in a context of a project-led education, where a project is effectively run for the full duration of the course.

Finally, the Final Project/Dissertation (30 ECTS) is carried out in the final part of the MSc (last 14 weeks). This aims at developing research and/or professional competences in the field of Building Information Modelling. The dissertation can be carried out inside the Universities or in a private company, under university supervision. The general description of the course/units is as follows:

2.1.1 BIM A+1 Management of information and collaboration in BIM

Main learning objectives:

- Get an overview of BIM theory and standards;
- Understand the role and potential of BIM for the industry;
- Understand critical aspects in BIM implementation responding to project requirements;
- Be able to plan use of BIM in Building projects and provide the right level of detail;
- Be able to comply to legal and project collaboration requirements;
- Assess capacity and capability for BIM Implementations on specific project;
- Be able to put in place appropriate management procedures and BIM protocols.

2.1.2 BIM A+2 Modelling in Architecture and Engineering

Main learning objectives:

- Be able to differentiate the requisites and uses that are of interest for each construction specialty (Architecture and Engineering);
- Identify and describe adequate modelling practices in view of intended uses for the models;
- List, apply, and criticize the several modelling recommendations that exist at international level;
- Capability to understand and perform BIM models for the specialties of Architecture, Structural Engineering and MEP Engineering;
- Understand further particular cases of modelling, targeted for monitoring and management.

2.1.3 BIM A+3 Parametric Modelling in BIM

Main learning objectives:

- Being capable of fully understanding the underlying concepts of parametric modelling;
- Master the use of parametric approaches for advanced object creation;
- Be capable of advanced object use of in BIM context through interactive editors and object libraries;
- To be aware of scripting methodologies to extend the capacities of existing BIM platforms towards customized capacities.

2.1.4 BIM A+4 Advanced BIM data-systems and interoperability

Main learning objectives:

- Be able to assess interoperability issues in BIM Exchange from technical, semantic and organizational point of view;
- Methods of development of schemata and databases that are relevant to BIM;
- Methods for exchange building product specifications;
- Assessment procedures that are relevant for successful implementation of a project;
- Interoperability issues in BIM based exchange of project information in infrastructure and building projects.

2.1.5 BIM A+5 4D, 5D, 6D modelling and applications

Main learning objectives:

- Be able to understand the value of BIM and the impacts on the “more” managerial aspects of Design and Construction (ie. Business process management, construction project management, integrated project delivery);
- Be able to differentiate the requisites and uses that are of interest for dimension of BIM uses (ie. 4D programming, 5D estimating/accounting, 6D facility management);
- Be able to detail the business processes impacted by BIM 4D, 5D and 6D and describe the digitalization approach in terms of workflows, data exchange mechanisms;
- Provide references to practices that exist at international level;

- Understand how the Common Data Environment (as prescribed in European practices) can support other business processes such as contract management, tendering and eProcurement, BIM to Field;
- Understand how to adapt BIM 4D, 5D and 6D to modelling and applications for the specialties of Architecture, Structural Engineering and MEP Engineering.

2.1.6 BIM A+6 BIM based rehabilitation and sustainability analysis

Main learning objectives:

- Be able to organize and manage the various phases of the design, tender activity, construction and facility management of the retrofit of existing building;
- Be able to organize Tools, methods, and instruments for the survey of the existing buildings;
- The 3D modelling of the survey for the preliminary diagnosis of the damages and photorealistic reconstruction;
- The structural model and the coordination between the structural model and the architectural model;
- Model for the dynamic structural analysis of the building;
- The design of the rehabilitation and envelope of the construction details;
- Solutions for the reuse of existing buildings: Modelling, Budgeting, Estimating;
- The sustainable reuse with LEED rating system, use of Revit for the evaluation of LEED;
- MEP modelling, into the buildings and clash detection;
- BIM to BEM: Energy management and analysis;
- LCC in the construction and evaluation of the payback;
- The phases in the project of reuse of existing building, the model checking.

2.1.7 BIM A+7: Dissertation

Main learning objectives:

- Plan, develop and present the dissertation work.
- The Coursework and Dissertation will be held in Portugal and Slovenia. Each student spends 30 ECTS in one country and 30 ECTS in another country (or 60 in the same country). The students will indicate their preference and the Management Board will decide a final selection.

2.2 ECTS

The ECTS - European Credit Transfer System - was developed by the European Commission in order to provide common procedures to guarantee academic recognition of studies abroad. It provides a way of measuring and comparing learning achievements and transferring them from one institution to another.

The ECTS system is based on the principle of mutual trust and confidence between the participating higher education institutions. The few rules of ECTS, concerning the information on courses available (ECTS Information Package), the agreement between the home and host institutions establishing the programme of study to be taken (Learning Agreement), the use of credit units to indicate the student's workload (ECTS credits) and the use of a Transcript of Records, which shows the student's learning achievements in a way which is commonly understood and easily transferable from one institution to another, are set out to reinforce this mutual trust and confidence.

3 UNIVERSITY OF MINHO

Your new home of knowledge!

Universidade do Minho (<https://www.uminho.pt/>) is located in the centre of the Minho region, as a part of the Costa Verde (Green Coast) region, forming the NorthWest corner of Portugal. It is a public university with administrative and financial autonomy. It was founded in 1973 and started its academic activity in 1975/76.



Campus de Azurém



Campus de Couros

Universidade do Minho offers you an environment which is free from the strains of life in the big city. Its first-class and modern facilities include two main Campi (<https://whereis.uminho.pt/>), which provide a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere to study. Whilst *Universidade do Minho* (UMinho) is a young University, having been founded in 1973, it enjoys a very high reputation for its research and educational performance. It is a medium-sized university with approximately 20000 students. Presently, the courses in Architecture and Engineering are taught in Guimarães. The other courses are predominantly ministered in Braga.

MSc BIM A+ is taught in *Campus de Couros*. The Couros Campus is the city extension of the Azurém Campus, located between the city center and the train station. (<https://whereis.uminho.pt/CC.html>).

3.1 University Facilities and Services

3.1.1 International Relations Office (USAI)

The USAI of UMinho is the structure responsible for the co-ordination, monitoring and operational support to the development of all initiatives related to the internationalization of UM's teaching function, namely within the academic cooperation and mobility. It is located on the Campus of Gualtar and on the Campus of Azurém.

USAI operates directly under the Rectory member with delegated functions regarding internationalization.

The office is responsible for the reception, treatment, and dissemination of information concerning international cooperation programmes, and for receiving, sending and assisting students within the mobility programmes, namely, by helping them with the preparation of their study periods, with accommodation and social integration. Internationalization is undoubtedly one of the main quality criterium for UMinho!

For more information, check this link: <https://www.uminho.pt/PT/uminho/Orgaos-da-Universidade/Unidades-Servicos/Servicos-Especializados/Paginas/USAI.aspx>

3.1.2 UMinho Social Action Services (SASUM)

UMinho Social Action Services (SASUM) exists to improve your life! For this, they provide services in the areas of Accommodation, Food, Medical and Psychological Support, and Support to Sports and Cultural Activities, as well as other services.

- **Food:** is SASUM is responsible for managing UMinho's food units: restaurants, canteens and bars.
- **Medical and Psychological Support:** This service encompasses several valences: (1) Medical Support, preventive medicine service, (2) Psychological Support, and 3) Nursing.
- **Sports and Cultural Activities:** The Azurém Sports Complex presents all the needs for sports, both in gym sports and collective sports. It is located within the area of the University Campus of Azurém. It has special prizes for students.
- **Accommodation:** SASUM is responsible for managing UMinho residence halls.

More information available on the website: www.sas.uminho.pt

SASUM sometimes employs students to work on their services. Applications available on: <http://www.sas.uminho.pt>

3.1.2.1 Canteen

There are canteens and snack bars in all Campi of Braga and Guimarães. The cost of each meal in the canteens is 2.80 € (<https://www.sas.uminho.pt/alimentacao/tabelas-de-precos>). Tickets must be purchased in the app (<https://www.sas.uminho.pt/arquivo/47518>) except in the Bar Teatro Jordão (tickets for the canteen on the Teatro Jordão can be purchased in paper form from the bar on the premises the day before or on the same day until 9.30 am).

UMinho canteens are only open from Monday to Friday.

Other meals can be obtained in the various snack bars available throughout UM where full meals should not cost more than 8,00 € (Link for more information about the main UMinho Snack Bars in Guimarães: <https://www.sas.uminho.pt/alimentacao/bar-teatro-jordao> and <https://www.sas.uminho.pt/alimentacao/bar-de-engenharia-l>)

UMinho also has a Takeaway service:

<https://www.sas.uminho.pt/alimentacao/informacao>

There are other restaurants near UM as well. A low-cost meal will cost around 10,00€ to 15,00€.

Timetable of the Canteen in Azurém (Guimarães):

Lunch: 12h00 – 14h00

Dinner: 19h00 – 20h00

Bar Teatro Jordão (Guimarães):

Lunch: 12h00 – 14h00

This canteen only serves lunch.

3.1.2.2 Clinical Support

SASUM provides Clinical Support Services aimed at contributing to the general well-being of the academic community and promoting healthier behavior. To request a consultation, please follow the instructions on the websites:

<https://www.sas.uminho.pt/en/apoio-clinico>

<https://apsi.uminho.pt/pedido-de-consulta/>

3.1.2.3 Sports

UM enjoys first rate sports' facilities, with two sports pavilions, located in both Campi of the university. Students have access to a number of sports, and special student fees. For enrolment, you need to present some documents such as proof of enrolment at UMinho, fill in the registration form, and deliver it with one photograph at the front desk of the Sports Pavilion. For more information and enrolment you should go to the website: <https://www.sas.uminho.pt/desporto>

3.1.3 Students Union (AAUM)

The Students' Union of Universidade do Minho (AAUM) is run by students for students. This union which represents UM students, was created in 1977 to answer students' needs, in a fast-growing University.

The Students' Union also organises the famous Enterro da Gata Festivities which last a whole week in May, during which there are some free days from classes.

Universidade do Minho's Radio (RUM) is an autonomous organism of the Students' Union, which broadcasts 24 hours a day.

For more information, please check their website : <https://www.aaum.pt/en/intro-english/>

3.1.4 Transport

Students benefit from local transport discounts. They receive a document from the Academic Portal to be presented, along with a photograph, at the local transport services, in order to obtain the students' reduced tariff card.

There is also a bus service provided by UM, which runs daily at regular intervals, connecting the Campus of Gualtar and the Campus of Azurém. Each trip costs 1,60 €.

Following is the timetable of the buses connecting both campi, from Monday to Friday is available on the website: <https://www.aaum.pt/academia/transportes/>

During the month of Holidays and in the examinations period this timetable may suffer some changes.

3.1.5 *Recurso* Space

The *Recurso* Spaces, present in Braga and Guimarães, give you access to a set of services, such as:

- Buy tickets for AAUM Transport services;
- Buy products from AAUMinho and UMinho, such as sweaters, mugs, notepads, pins, and reusable bags, among others;
- Buy tickets for events.

For more information: <https://www.aaum.pt/academia/espaco-recurso/>

3.1.6 Libraries

The University has one main library in each campus: Braga and Guimarães. Students are granted access to it after confirmation of the registration at UMinho. To seek out the book you are looking for is quite easy since all documents are registered in a database you can check from one of the many computers at your disposal in the library. You can also have access to the database from outside the library through the Internet, at the following address: <http://www.sdum.uminho.pt>

3.1.7 Center for The Promotion of Inclusion, Development and Success of Students

The University of Minho supports students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) arising from clinical conditions related to disease or disability. For more information:

Website: www.usaae.uminho.pt

Email: inclusao@usaae.uminho.pt

3.1.8 BabeliUM

The BabeliUM (Centro de Línguas do Instituto de Letras e Ciências Humanas da Universidade do Minho) offers in the beginning of each semester an Intensive Portuguese Language Course of about 60 hours. It is aimed at providing the basic tools of the Portuguese language to make things easier in your daily life in Portugal.

For further information about courses and price table, you should contact the BabeliUM: <http://babelium.ilch.uminho.pt/en/>

4 STUDENT'S ACCOMMODATION

The ideal time to find accommodation is from July to mid-August. Housing options are scarcer at the beginning of the academic year.

Types of accommodation: There are two types of accommodation: private accommodation and accommodation in a UMinho Residence.

4.1 Accommodation in a UMinho residence

UMinho has Residence Halls in Guimarães. However, Portuguese students with grants based on household income are given priority. Therefore, other students are advised to find private accommodation. Information available on the website: <https://www.sas.uminho.pt/alojamento/alojamento-2>

4.2 Private accommodation

This accommodation type belongs to a private landlord who rents it out directly or through an estate agency. It can be furnished or unfurnished.

In Guimarães it is very usual to see rooms for rent. Some apartments are rented to only females, others to only males and others do not have any restrictions. Note that language can be a barrier to communicating with landlords, who mostly speak English, but not all.

The average prices are as follows:

- Single Room €300/ €400/month/person (plus electricity, gas and water)
- Apartment (1 Room) €700/ €900/month/apartment (plus electricity, gas and water)

During the contact and visit phase of private accommodation, we advise you to be lodged in a temporary accommodation. In order to look for private accommodation, we strongly advise you to arrive at least one week prior to the beginning of your study period.

You can check private accommodation listings at:

https://www.bquarto.pt/braga/apartamento_quarto_guimaraes

<https://www.idealista.pt/arrendar-quarto/braga/guimaraes/centro-da-cidade/>

4.3 Temporary accommodation

As a temporary accommodation you can find many hotels and hotels in the city center. Usually Booking. com is a good engine to search for these.

4.4 Youth Hostel

The youth Hostel HI Guimarães, located near the Campus of Couros, has special monthly fees for students. The Youth Hostel in Guimarães has two kinds of rooms:

- Double Rooms which cost 80,00€ -100,00€ per day, per person;
- Dormitories with six beds each, which costs 16,00€-50,00€ per day, per person.

Here you can find the contacts of the Youth Hostel:

<https://www.pousadasjuventude.pt/pt/pousadas/pousada-de-guimaraes/>

4.5 Advices

Calculating your budget for the rest of the year is very important: It is essential to know your budget and any other expenses to be paid each month in advance so you can choose accommodations compatible with your financial situation. Also, set aside enough money for temporary accommodation in case it is needed. List of probable expenses: rent, the security deposit, furniture (if needed), electricity/gas and internet bill and any other expenses that are not related to housing: studies, transport, food costs, recreation, etc

Housing location: The classroom is located in the Campus of Couros of the University of Minho, in the city of Guimarães. It is advisable that you find accommodation near the Campus de Couros. Although the train station is near the Campus and there are multiple bus stops are near the city, don't underestimate the time it will take to get from your home to where you study.

Be in contact with other selected students: Sharing tips and contacts can be useful in your accommodation search. It is also interesting to contact other alumni to ask for landlords' contacts and share experiences.

Be aware of scammers: Never accept the services of a person offering to sell you a "list of properties" in exchange for money, but with no guarantee of finding accommodation. Additionally, watch out for listings that seem too good to be true (rent that is too cheap for the area, perfect photos, etc.)

5 ENTRY AND RESIDENCE REGULATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to make the necessary steps to obtain the visa.

When you have received the Formal Admission Letter from us, you can apply for a visa at the relevant Portuguese Embassy/Consulate in your home country. If there is no Portuguese Embassy/Consulate in your country, you must contact the closest to your country.

For information about the visa type, visa request process, and documents to provide, you must contact the Agency for Integration, Migration, and Asylum (AIMA).

AIMA has an institutional portal, which can be consulted at: <https://aima.gov.pt/pt>

6 GENERAL INFORMATION

6.1 Finances

6.1.1 Currency

In the year 2000, Portugal joined the Monetary Union and the Euro (€). To get an idea of the exchange rate, we would like to inform you that one USD corresponds approximately to 1,09 €.

For more information about EURO, check this website: https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/euro_en

6.1.2 Exchanging Money

The best place to exchange money is in the main banks. The banks at the airport offer a reasonable rate, so change your money there.

6.1.3 Credit Cards

American Express, MasterCard, Maestro and VISA are increasingly widely accepted in Portugal.

6.1.4 Opening a bank account in Portugal

There are many bank branches in Portugal. In the centre of Guimarães it is possible to find several bank branches of different banks.

The bank most used by the students of Universidade do Minho is Caixa Geral de Depósitos. This bank has a special account for students of Universidade do Minho -> <https://sou.uminho.pt/pt/NovosEstudantes/Paginas/Cartao-Aluno.aspx>

Each branch is different, so we advise you to go directly to the bank to question. In Portuguese banks, accounts are open in-person, and not online. Usually, the documents requested are:

- Identity card (if you are an EU citizen) or passport
- NIF (tax number that you will have to obtain in Portugal on your arrival)
- Student number

- Sometimes, banks request proof of your address in Portugal and proof of your address in your home country.

There are other banks available such as *Novobanco* (<https://www.novobanco.pt/particulares>) and online banking options such as Revolut (<https://www.revolut.com>) that students also use because their process for opening a bank account seems to be easier than the Caixa Geral de Depositos.

It is also important that you find out in your home country about the most advantageous ways to handle your money in a foreign country.

6.2 Cost of living

Living expenses vary according to personal lifestyle and choice of housing. On average 800€ (euros) per month is required to face the basic expenses:

Expenses:

- Accommodation: 300,00€ to 400,00€/month
- Electricity, internet and water: around 100 Euros/month
- Meals: 200,00€/month
- Leisure: 70,00€/month
- University (books, etc): 50,00€/month
- Gym: 30,00€/month

Total: 750,00€ to 850,00€/month

For information only, we present some approximate costs:

- Canteen meal: 2,80€
- Economic restaurant meal: 10,00€-15,00€
- Milk: 0,90€/litre
- Bread: 0,17€
- Eggs: 1,40€/6 eggs
- Rice: 1,00€ - 2,00€/kg
- Sugar: 1,00€/ kg
- Apples: 2,00€/kg
- Coffee: 0,80€ - 1,00€
- 1 print: 0,10€
- Cinema ticket: 8,00€
- Journal: 3,00€

- Monthly public transportation pass: 25,00€ -30,00€
- Train ticket Porto/Lisbon: 25,00€ - 72,00€

6.3 NIF (tax number in Portugal)

The NIF (*número de identificação fiscal*) is the tax number in Portugal. This number will be required for many activities such as opening a bank account, enrolling in the University of Minho, registering at a health facility, etc. Application for the NIF in Portugal is free and is made in the local office of the Portuguese Tax and Customs Authority.

Documentation required:

- Valid ID (passport or Portuguese residence document)
- Proof of address, for example, a rental contract or declaration from the parish (Junta de Freguesia) where you are living in Portugal.
- Tax representative with power of attorney if you do not have proof of residence.

6.4 Health and Welfare

6.4.1 Hospital, Dentists, and Pharmacies

In case you have an emergency situation, call the national emergency number 112 or, in case you need medical assistance and are unsure if you need to go to the hospital and/or you need medical advice, call SNS24: 808 24 24 24.

What is the difference? The 112 should be called if you are in the presence of an emergency (e.g. medical care to victims of accidents or sudden illnesses, fire, police matters). While SNS24 provides screening, counseling and referral in non-emergent health problems (e.g. fever, cough, ...).

Hospitals

Guimarães has both public and private hospitals. The main differences between them are price and waiting time: public hospitals are generally less expensive but have longer waiting times, while private hospitals tend to be more costly but offer shorter waiting times. If you need urgent care, you can visit the emergency department at any hospital. Upon arrival, go to the reception to request assistance, and before you leave, make sure to check the cost at the reception. The Public Hospital is “Nossa Senhora da Oliveira – Guimarães” (Rua dos Cutileiros – Creixomil:

Location: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/QCRvXtNuVK7ZLdSX7>).

Dentists

Guimarães has many dentists' offices. Be sure to call and schedule an appointment before visiting. A standard dental consultation can cost between €50.00 and €80.00. Pay attention to the prices, and if you need any additional treatments, we recommend asking about the costs in advance to avoid any surprises.

Pharmacy

In the center of Guimarães, you will find several pharmacies available. Pharmacies are open on weekdays from 09h00 to 20h00, and on Saturdays. Porém, aconselhamos que verifiques o horário online antes de te dirigires a uma farmácia. At night you can always find two or three pharmacies open. You can check their addresses at the door of any pharmacy (open or closed) or ask check online.

6.4.2 Welfare

Students can benefit from the National Social Security System as any Portuguese citizen. In order to obtain this scheme, you must follow this link in order to obtain details about the process: <https://eportugal.gov.pt/en/servicos/pedir-o-numero-de-identificacao-da-seguranca-social-niss->

All students may benefit from a school insurance, which covers all accidents that occur at the University's facilities, outside the facilities (during formally organised curricular activities) and on the way to and back the university and the official residence.

It is important to highlight that in case of accident you must contact the USAI and the secretariat, so that we can formally acknowledge the occurrence to the insurance company and all formal procedures can be triggered.

6.5 Food

6.5.1 Shopping

There are several stores in the city center. Clothes, food, and electronics can be bought in small street stores or big shopping centers within walking distance of the *Campus de Couros*.

6.5.2 Eating Habits

The local dishes are traditional recipes similar to those found in other places in the Minho and include farm-raised chicken with rice, “*rojões*” (roast pork) or “*bucho recheado*” (pork tripe stuffed with pork cubes), “*papas de sarrabulho*” (shredded pork in gravy thickened with blood) and rice with “*sarrabulho*”, baked or stuffed cod, all accompanied by “green wine” (“*vinho verde*”) from the Minho region.

Recipes for the traditional sweets of Guimarães were originated in local convents; the “heavenly fat” (“*toucinho do céu*”) is a dense cake which features shreds of cooked sweet pumpkin, and the “*tortas de Guimarães*” are croissant-shaped pastries.

6.5.3 Meals

Breakfast, in Portugal, normally takes place between 07:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and consists of milk and/or coffee and toast or bread. In Portugal coffee is normally “*espresso*” type, called “*café*”, in portuguese.

Lunch is usually a full meal, including soup, fish, meat, and dessert, followed by a small coffee. Most people have lunch between 12:00 and 2:30 p.m. Around 5:00 p.m. most people have a light snack and a coffee or milk. Dinner is also a full meal, like lunch, served between 7:30 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.

There are a lot of places in Guimarães where you can stop for lunch or dinner, just about every type of food. Since menus are usually posted outside restaurants, you can decide if it's right for you before you go in. You can also search the restaurant's menu on Instagram, Tripadvisor, and other similar websites.

6.6 Communication

6.6.1 Post Office

The Post Office in Guimarães is open from 09h00 to 12h30 and from 14h00 to 17h00. The cost of the stamps depends on the destination country. You can find additional information on their website: <https://www.ctt.pt/particulares/enviar/>

You can also find UPS and DHL delivery points around the city the city.

6.6.2 Phone Calls

For calls overseas, you are best to use WhatsApp with the data on your phone plan or on Wi-Fi. You can also get a Portuguese phone number at any main communication company such as Vodafone and NOS.

To make an international call to Portugal, dial:

- the international prefix
- the code for Portugal: +351
- the phone number

To make a regional call with a Portuguese phone number to another Portuguese phone number, dial only the phone number.

6.7 Culture

Guimarães is a city rich in culture and history, offering a variety of activities for visitors to explore. You can find more information about Guimarães's tourist points, check the "Turismo de Guimarães" website: <https://www.visitguimaraes.travel/planear-a-visita/apresentacao>

The four museums we present below provide insights into the city's heritage, showcasing its art, traditions, and historical significance:

- **Ducal Palace:** One of the most well-known is the Ducal Palace (*"Paço dos Duques de Bragança"*). If you visit this monument, you can also visit the Guimarães Castle and the Church of S. Miguel do Castelo. Find out more: <https://pacodosduques.gov.pt/>
- **The Alberto Sampaio Museum:** The Museum holds important collections of sculpture that covers the medieval period, the Renaissance, and up to the 18th century in addition to paintings and works of silver. Find out more: <https://www.museualbertosampaio.gov.pt/>
- **The Martins Sarmiento Archaeological Museum:** The museum holds important collections on the pre-Roman Castreja culture as well as other archaeological items, sections on ancient sculpture, Latin inscriptions, pre- and proto-historic pieces and coins. Find more: <https://msarmiento.org/>
- **Casa da Memória:** The *Casa da Memória* is a center for interpretation and knowledge that showcases, interprets, and communicates both tangible and intangible testimonies. These contributions help build a comprehensive understanding of the culture, territory, and history of Guimarães. Find more: <https://www.casadamemoria.pt/>

7 USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS AND LINKS:

- National emergency number: 112
- Porto airport: 229 432 400
- CP (Railways): 808 208 208 (<https://www.cp.pt/passageiros/pt>)
- Fire department: 253 515 444
- Police PSP: 253 513 334 (<https://eportugal.gov.pt/entidades/policia-de-seguranca-publica>)
- Police GNR: 253 517 598
- UMinho Website: www.uminho.pt
- Academic Portal: <https://alunos.uminho.pt/EN>
- Students Association: www.aaum.pt
- School of Engineering: www.eng.uminho.pt
- SNS24: <https://www.sns24.gov.pt/en/guia/quando-ligar-sns-24-ou-inem/>
- AIMA: <https://aima.gov.pt/pt>
- SASUM: <https://www.sas.uminho.pt/en/>