

Working at Dalian Leicester Institute

What is DLI?

DLI, established in 2017, is a joint educational institute (JEI) between the University of Leicester and Dalian University of Technology (DUT), offering joint degrees in Maths, Engineering and Chemistry taught in English by staff at University of Leicester and DUT. From 2025, two joint degrees in Environmental Engineering and Pharmaceutical Chemistry will also be offered.

Approximately 100 students are recruited to each degree programme each year from high schools across the region. Students begin their studies with EAP (English for Academic Purposes) modules, studying 60 credits of English for Academic Purposes with the EAP tutors in Year 1 alongside other foundation year modules. You can read more about the partnership [on our website](#).

Where is DLI?

The Dalian Leicester Institute is in a peaceful, somewhat remote location in Dawa district, Liaoning province. It is an hour away by taxi from Panjin city and 300km from Dalian; accessible by high-speed train. It is a 30-minute taxi-ride from Yingkou, a city with a population of around one million people offering all the amenities you would expect from a Chinese city of this size, including numerous restaurants, shopping centres, bars and Karaoke. It could not be considered a cosmopolitan city, but there are some western restaurants, cafes and clothing stores. It is not common to see westerners and you will find most people do not speak English.

The closest high speed train station is an hour away from the tutor accommodation by taxi. Taxis are inexpensive and easily booked through a closed WeChat group with local taxi drivers. From this high-speed rail station, travellers can travel to cities such as Dalian (1 hour) Shenyang (1 hour), Beijing (3 hours), Harbin (3 1/2 hours). The local airport is an hour away from the campus and offers local flights to a small number of cities, including Shanghai.

Who is the team?

- The EAP teaching staff in Panjin are part of Centre for International Training and Education (CITE) at the University of Leicester.
 - The EAP teaching team is supported by staff based in Panjin and staff based in the UK.
 - The team consists of one centre manager responsible for academic matters, a small team of coordinators and the EAP tutors. We expect there to be around 30 CITE staff living and working in Panjin in the next academic year.
 - Several members of the subject departments fly out to China regularly.
 - There are currently 3 China-based administrators dedicated to assisting all University of Leicester staff.
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What is the accommodation like?

Tutors are provided with single occupancy two-bedroomed apartments approximately a 30-minute walk from campus. The apartment has two bedrooms, a living area with comfortable seating and a TV, a dining area with table and chairs, and a small, well-equipped kitchen for cooking. A full inventory is provided below. The apartment is equipped with linen and towels, which are changed fortnightly. The apartment is also cleaned every two weeks. There is a western-style toilet in the bathroom.

What eating options are there?

The campus offers a large, multi-storey canteen for both staff and students, open from 7am – 9.30pm. There are multiple food stalls in the canteen offering food from across the region and other parts of China at extremely affordable prices. There are vendors selling fruit, salad, baked goods, juices and snacks. Many of the vendors have English translation of food items. There is a small supermarket on campus selling dried goods, drinks, fruit and snacks as well as goods for the home such as washing up liquid, toiletries, slippers and stationery. There is also a fruit and vegetable shop.

Eating options near the apartments are modest, but there is a hotpot restaurant, a barbecue restaurant, a café (home delivery is available for food and drinks) and a small supermarket selling eggs, some fruit and veg, drinks, snacks, and some products for the home. Most teachers cook in their apartments. The closest supermarket is in Yingkou, and it is also possible to order food and other item online via an English-speaking app: Baopals.

I have dietary restrictions. What will I be able to eat?

Vegetarian

- Salad bar in the canteen
- Vegetarian options with information in English at some of the food stalls in the canteen.
- Vegetable only dishes e.g. hotpot available in the canteen and restaurants.
- Vegetarian restaurants in Yingkou and Dalian.

Vegan

- Teachers can cook and prepare their own meals and bring to campus. There is a staff kitchen with a microwave and microwaves are available in the canteen.
- Coconut, almond and oat milk is available in the campus shop / can be prepared at home.
- There is a vegan restaurant in Dalian.

Halal

There is a Halal vendor in the canteen and at least one Halal restaurant in Yingkou.

Gluten-free

- Gluten-free is not a recognised diet in China and tutors who are celiac/ need to maintain a gluten-free diet are advised to bring products from the UK to enable cooking at home.
 - Some products can be purchased online from an English-speaking app: Baopals
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Cost of living

Taxis, food and goods are relatively inexpensive. For example, a large bottle of water is about 30p, 10 dumplings at a street stall are £1.00 and a 40-minute taxi ride is about £6.00. Western food and western clothing is often cheaper than it might be at home.

What is the weather like?

Autumn is warm but it starts to get cold in November. December – March are usually dry, clear days with bright sunshine and cold temperatures: it can reach temperatures as low as -20 in winter before starting to warm up in March and April.

What does the area offer?

Sports

There is a gym on campus open Monday – Saturday. There are also outdoor and indoor basketball, badminton, tennis courts for student use which teachers can also use. There are five-a-side football pitches, table tennis tables and pool tables on campus. There is a swimming pool in Yingkou. There is also a gym near the accommodation, which many tutors are able to join.

Entertainment and leisure activities

Further afield, Yingkou offers some limited leisure and entertainment opportunities, such as Karaoke, many Chinese or Korean BBQ restaurants. There is a cinema 10 minutes by taxi from the accommodation and an IMAX cinema in Yingkou; both cinemas sometimes have English language films. Many teachers bring items from home or purchase items in the city to allow them to pursue their interests: in the past, tutors have studied online courses, started chess clubs, brought a musical instrument with them, subscribed to a streaming site such as Netflix, brought books, DVD players and DVDs or purchased gym equipment to keep fit at home. It is worth considering what you would bring to allow yourself to enjoy time outside work.

What do teachers do on the weekend?

Some teachers choose to stay local, shopping, sightseeing, or eating out in Yingkou while others use the weekends as a chance to explore the area. There are hikes and hot springs reachable on a daytrip, and from Yingkou train station, the cities of Anshan, Shenyang and Dalian can be reached in an hour or less. It is even possible to go to Beijing or Harbin for the weekend. There are several smaller cities that are perfect for weekend getaways, such as Shanhaiguan, Chengde or Dang Dong where you can see the Great Wall, the summer Imperial Palace, or the border with North Korea!

What support does the University of Leicester offer in DLI?

- Visa, flight bookings and risk assessments handled by the CITE team at University of Leicester
 - Insurance cover
 - Furnished free accommodation with utilities and Wifi
 - A university work laptop for use on assignment
 - Assistance with settling in through welcome pack for apartment, campus tour, IT support and support with using WeChat and Alipay
 - Weekly meetings with coordinators to plan lessons and understand materials and assessments
 - Weekly Saturday shopping trip to Yingkou
 - When the temperatures plummet, a bus to and from the campus
 - Free Chinese classes
 - Flexible return flight, within an agreed budget
 - Storage for items you want to keep in China between semesters
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What are the challenges of living in China?

- Outside of the main cities, there are few tourists and few people who can speak English. There are apps such as Alipay, Baidu translate and DeepL which can translate from text, picture and audio and we recommend you download these before you arrive. Free Mandarin classes are offered to our EAP tutors.
- Although travelling between cities is easy, visitors should be prepared for long distances between high-speed train stations and the city.
- Phones reign supreme in China. They are needed to read menus, order taxis, show tickets, navigate around a city and pay for things; not having a Smartphone would be a significant challenge and we strongly recommend that you bring a phone that has capacity to download the Apps needed to manage travel, payment and translation in China.
- Living conditions may be different to those you are used to at home. Apartments are rarely sound-proofed, kitchens are small and modestly equipped with counter-top devices rather than an oven, finishes may be rough: it is not unusual to see plaster coming off walls or concrete blocks piled up outside a building, and furniture may be basic. The apartment and utilities are provided by the

accommodation management company and as such, you will have little control over when repairs take place. This can be frustrating.

- Outside of the home, workplace, and airport, you may find it difficult to find a western-style toilet. Public toilets may not meet your standards of cleanliness.
 - The internet connection is generally good but during peak times, the connection may drop. Streaming is not always possible.
 - China has a firewall which means that some websites and streaming sites are unavailable. Although banned, many people in China, both nationals and visitors, use a VPN which masks your location and allows you to access blocked sites. However, they cannot be guaranteed to work all the time.
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Apartment inventory

Living space

Dining table, 4 chairs, sofa, television

Bedrooms

The bedrooms may be set up as one bedroom and one office or two bedrooms. You may express a preference.

Bedroom: bed, bed linen

Office: Desk, chair, lamp

Bathroom

Linen

Kitchen

Cutlery, plates, bowls, glasses, pots, pans, rice cooker, hot plate X2, microwave, kettle, air fryer, large fridge freezer.

Other items

Iron

Ironing board

Hairdryer

Portable electric heater

Router