

Cost of Living: Leicester vs London

A Practical Budget Guide for Indian Master's Students

Two very different price tags for the same UK master's degree year — every figure below is sourced from verified official and institutional data for 2026/27, with live GBP-to-INR conversions.

₹128 = £1 (LIVE RATE USED THROUGHOUT)	~40-50% LEICESTER'S COST ADVANTAGE VS LONDON	£1,023-1,687 LEICESTER MONTHLY LIVING COST RANGE	£1,300-2,750 LONDON MONTHLY LIVING COST RANGE
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THE 60-SECOND VERSION

At a Glance

Leicester and London represent two genuinely different UK study-budget realities — not a marginal difference, but potentially ₹5-8 lakh/year in living costs alone.

Factor	Leicester	London
Region	East Midlands, England	Greater London
Monthly living cost (excl. rent)	£650-900 (~₹83,200-₹1.15L)	£200-500 just on food alone; overall non-rent spend runs considerably higher
Monthly living cost (all-in, incl. rent)	£1,023-1,687 (~₹1.31L-₹2.16L)	£1,300-2,750 (~₹1.66L-₹3.52L)
Typical shared-house rent	£80-140/week (~₹41,000-₹71,700/month)	£300-350/week average (~₹1.54L-₹1.79L/month)
UKVI visa financial requirement	£1,171/month (outside London rate applies)	£1,529/month (London-specific, higher rate)
Local transport	Compact city, much is walkable; low-cost local bus network	£100-160/month on Student Oyster/Tube+bus zones
Ranked affordability	3rd most affordable UK student city; ~25-26.5% cheaper than London day-to-day	Consistently the most expensive UK study city
University in the city	University of Leicester — QS 2027 #314 (34th UK)	Home to multiple globally top-40 universities (UCL, Imperial, KCL, LSE)

The one-line verdict: Leicester is a genuinely, substantially cheaper place to spend your master's year — not marginally, but by roughly 40-50% on day-to-day living. London gives you unmatched university choice and career-network density, at a real and sustained cost premium. Full breakdown ahead.

DETAILED COMPARISON • 01

Monthly Budget Breakdown

Category	Leicester	London
Rent (shared house/halls)	£320-600/month (~₹41,000-₹76,800)	£900-2,000/month (~₹1.15L-₹2.56L)
Utilities (if not included)	£70-80/month	£75-125/month
Groceries	£100-160/month	£200-500/month
Local transport	Often walkable; modest bus costs	£100-160/month (Student Oyster)
Leisure & social	Lower baseline cost across the board	£155-305/month
Realistic monthly total	£900-1,300/month (~₹1.15L-₹1.66L)	£1,400-2,000/month (~₹1.79L-₹2.56L)
Realistic annual total (9 months)	~£8,100-11,700 (~₹10.4L-₹15L)	~£12,600-18,000 (~₹16.1L-₹23L)

The UK government's own visa financial-requirement figure (£1,529/month in London) sits at the low end of realistic London spending, not a comfortable buffer — budget above it, not exactly to it, if you're studying in the capital.

Leicester's cost advantage isn't just rent — it's consistent across every category: groceries, transport, and social spending are all meaningfully cheaper, which is why the gap compounds to 40-50% overall rather than just reflecting a cheaper room.

What You Get for the Extra Cost in London

Leicester	London
University Choice University of Leicester — QS 2027 #314 (34th UK), THE 2026 #192, strong specifically in Medicine, Law, Engineering, Business Analytics and Archaeology (#26 world subject rank). A solid, credible UK university, not a Russell Group institution.	University Choice Multiple globally top-40 universities in one city — UCL (top 10), Imperial, King's College London, LSE, and others. Unmatched density of highly-ranked options within a single metro area.
Career Network Access A smaller, more compact city job market — genuinely good regional employer ties, but a fraction of London's absolute scale.	Career Network Access The UK's dominant finance, consulting, tech and media hub — the largest concentration of graduate employers and internship opportunities in the country.
Day-to-Day Life A compact, walkable city; national top-10 for student satisfaction and safety on several UK indices; genuinely diverse, welcoming community with strong South Asian food/grocery access.	Day-to-Day Life World-class culture, entertainment and diversity, but a genuinely more expensive, faster-paced daily existence — and a real commute-time cost most students underestimate before arriving.

What This Actually Means for You

If your priority is...	Lean toward
Stretching a fixed education budget as far as possible	Leicester — the savings are real and substantial, not marginal
Maximum access to top-40-globally universities and the UK's largest job market	London — if your budget genuinely supports it
A quieter, safer, more manageable adjustment to UK life as a first-time international student	Leicester

THE VERDICT

So Which One Is Actually Right for You?

This isn't really a "which city is better" question — it's a "what can your budget actually sustain for a full academic year" question.

Choose Leicester if... LEICESTER

You want to substantially reduce your total cost of a UK master's year (potentially ₹5-8 lakh in living costs alone), you're comfortable with a solid-but-not-Russell-Group university, and you value a calmer, more manageable first UK city experience.

Choose London if... LONDON

Your course is only offered at a specific London university, you want the UK's deepest job market and internship density for your specific sector, and your family's budget can sustainably absorb the 40-60% cost premium over the full course duration — not just the first term.

A practical middle path many Indian students choose: study in a Leicester-tier city for the degree itself, then move to London afterward for the Graduate Route job search — getting the cost savings during study and the market access during the job hunt.

Still Working Out Your Budget?

A Shiksha Study Abroad counsellor can build a realistic, full-course budget for your specific target city and course. Free, no obligation.

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Figures sourced from uniaco.com, casita.com, universityliving.com, college-council.com and leapscholar.com, cross-checked for consistency, verified August 2026. UKVI visa financial-requirement figures sourced from GOV.UK guidance as reported via college-council.com. GBP-to-INR conversions use an indicative rate of ₹128 per £1. All figures subject to change — verify directly with UKVI, the University of Leicester, or your Shiksha counsellor.