the Rules

You will need:
1 British coin,
an assortment of bottle tops to use as tokens,
and 3 or more friends

Players take turns in order, with the initial player determined by chance. To begin the game, each player flips a coin three times. The player who flips the highest number of heads starts.

When it is your turn, move to the first tile and follow the instructions. If the tile does not tell you to move forward, wait until your next turn to move on. Players move anti-clockwise around the board.

Whenever two players both stand on "partnership" tiles at the same time, they can propose to marry each other. For some characters, marriage to a UK or EU national will change their range of options in the game. Solidarity marriages can save people from deportation!

Legend:
♕ Heads
⊗ Tails

Start

You have decided to study at QMary – or any other university in England. Flip a coin to start!
♕ Go to the next tile.
⊗ You are delayed! Wait one turn.

Is English recognised as your first language?*
Yes. Move forward 4 tiles.
No. Move forward 1 tile.

*Language is the first filtering mechanism for granting a study or work visa for the UK. If you are classified as "national of a majority English speaking country", you don't need to take a language test. In all other cases, you need to prove your proficiency in English.

Do you hold a qualification taught in English?
Flip a coin.
♕ Yes. Move forward 3 tiles.
⊗ No. Move forward 1 tile.

You take the language certificate test. Flip a coin.
♕ You passed! Move forward 1 tile.
⊗ You failed the test. Try again next turn. You have 3 tries; if you fail, go back to start.

Language requirements are constantly changing and getting tougher. Requirements since September 2010: an English language course at or above level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

You have passed through the first filter.
Bravo!

You now meet all the requirements! Send your application to QMary and flip a coin to see if you are accepted.
♕ Yes! Move forward 1 tile.
⊗ No... With the recession, competition is tough: your application is rejected. Try again next turn. You have 3 tries, then go back to start.

You have been accepted! Celebrate with your family and friends.
Your grandmother is very happy for you!

Partnership Tile
If there is nobody available to marry, move forward.

Do you need a student visa?*
Yes. Move forward 1 tile.
No. Move forward 11 tiles.

*European Economic Area (EEA) citizens and Swiss nationals have the right of free movement and residence in the UK. The EEA includes all EU countries plus Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein. People from all other countries need a visa to study in the UK.

Your visa application begins...
Remember: you need 40 points!*

*The Points-Based Immigration System was introduced in the United Kingdom in 2008. Migrants are divided in five tiers, with student visas part of Tier 4. Points are awarded according to a variety of reasons, including qualifications, earnings and history of compliance with migration controls. For a student visa, the points are awarded for availability of maintenance funds (10) and for the confirmation of acceptance by the school/university (30).

Do you have £199* to pay for the Tier 4 (General) Student Visa Fee?
Flip a coin.
♕ Yes. Go forward 1 tile.
⊗ No. Wait a turn and try again.

*This is the flat rate for visa applications from outside the UK as of May 2010. If you are already in the UK, the rates are £357 for a postal application and £565 if you apply in person.

Bureaucracy is a money-eating monster...

Maintenance: Have you had £7,200* + £10,650** = £17,850 in your bank account for 28 days***?
Flip a coin 3 times:
♕♕♕ Move forward 2 tiles.
Otherwise, move forward.

*Inner London living expenses are calculated at £800 per month for the length of the course (9 months).
**This is the minimum annual tuition fee for an international undergraduate/postgraduate student at QMary for 2010/2011.
***You must be able to prove that the money has been available in your account for 28 days before the date you apply.

So, you don't have £17,850... You can take a chance and flip again for ♕♕
Beware! If you fail move back 2 tiles.
Or you can ask friends, relatives and neighbours to put money in your account (but miss a turn while you wait).

In many countries there are now loan agencies that lend you money at high interest rates.

You have now got the money, that's 10 points!
Only 30 more points to go...

Request a sponsorship letter from QMary.*
Flip a coin.
♕ Move forward 1 tile.
⊗ Your letter is lost in the post! Your application is delayed. Miss a turn.

*You need to provide the UKBA with a letter of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies, with the documents used to obtain it. From September 2010 on, this is worth 30 points.

10+30 = you now have 40 points!
You are ready for biometric enrolment...

Biometric enrolment has to be paid separately in the local currency. 70% of all UK visa applications are processed by VSF Global. On 26 May 2010 the UK government cancelled their plans for ID cards for UK nationals, yet retained biometric identification for all non-EEA + Swiss nationals.

Your visa application is finally ready! Flip a coin twice.
⊗⊗ Your application has been rejected.* Go back 8 tiles and remember to pay the fee again!
Any other result: Your student visa has been issued. Move ahead.

According to UK Entry Clearance Statistics 2008-2009, the rejection rate was 61% for applicants from African countries, 19% from the Pacific, 39% from South Asia and The Gulf, 23% from the Euro-Med, 8% from the Americas. Overall, 32% of applicants for a student visa had their applications rejected.

The visa is in your passport. QMary and London are now only a few steps away!

Can you afford your journey to London? Flip a coin.
♕ Yes. Move forward 1 tile.
⊗ You're broke! Beg and borrow from friends and relatives. Miss a turn.

You are travelling to London. Enjoy!

You arrive at the airport: are you a UK/EU/EAA or Swiss national?
Yes. You squeeze past the border. Move forward 3 tiles.
No. Move forward 1 tile.

You are at the UK border: do you need to be TB screened?*
Yes. Miss a turn while you wait for the test.
No. Move forward 1 tile.

*Residents of the following countries need to be checked for Tuberculosis at the border: Bangladesh, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Kenya, Eritrea, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Pakistan.

UK Border Control
The border agent checks your documents. Flip a coin 3 times.
⊗⊗⊗ The info in your documents is deemed incorrect or false. Go to deportation limbo!!!
Otherwise, move forward 1 tile.

Welcome to London!
Now you are ready for enrolment at QMary.

Do you or your family have enough money to pay tuition fees up-front?*
Flip a coin.
♕ Yes. Move forward 5 tiles.
⊗ No! Move forward 1 tile.

*Tuition fees were introduced in 1998, putting an end to free higher education. In 2000 the Scottish government abolished up-front tuition fees. So in Scotland, university is still free for Scottish residents and EU citizens – but not for English students, who have to pay £1700p/a for most degrees. In England, fees for UK/EU students are capped at £3,290 (2010-2011), although there are strong pressures from the current government to increase them. International tuition fees do not have a cap: at QMary the highest annual tuition fee for a postgraduate degree is £34,000 (2010-2011).

You try to apply for a scholarship. Flip a coin 3 times.
♕♕♕ You have won a scholarship. Congratulations! Move ahead 4 tiles.
Otherwise, move forward 1 tile.

Partnership Tile
You're looking for a room and meet some lovely international students. Forget about your money troubles and party!

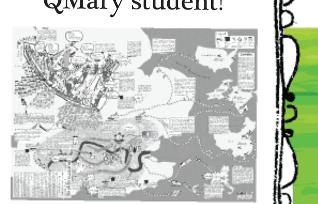
You join the band playing at the party and decide to leave London and go on tour with them...

Can you apply for a student loan?*
Yes. Apply, pay your fees, prepare to be in debt. Move forward 1 tile.
No. You decide to beg, borrow and steal. Miss a turn, then move forward 2 tiles.

*Eligibility for an undergraduate student loan is based on the student's immigration status or nationality, residence condition and age. One of the requirements is to be ordinarily 'resident' in England. Postgraduate students cannot apply for a student loan.

Unemployment is sky-rocketing in your field! You wonder whether it's worth taking a student loan.
♕ Wait 1 turn while you ponder your future. Should you leave uni?
⊗ Who cares about the future? There's so much to learn!!!

Partnership Tile
Go to QMary Mile End Campus, and enter the Octagon Room to enrol. Staff at enrolment are helpful, but the queue seems infinite. You miss a turn, but make a new friend.

You are finally a QMary student!

At Fresher's Fair you receive a counter-map of the university.

London is expensive. You need extra cash. Flip a coin to find a job.
♕ You get a job interview. Move forward 1 tile.
⊗ You send off 12 job applications, but get no reply. Baked beans are only a temporary option. Move forward 2 tiles.

A friend teaches you how to bake bread and you start a community bakery. Bread Uprising! Mix 400g whole -wheat flour, 100g rye flour, 275g white flour, 1T salt, 450g water, 125g walnuts 1T yeast. Knead, rise, and bake 45 min at 230 C...

At the interview, you are offered a 22 hours/week part-time position. Can you accept?*
Yes. Move forward 2 tiles.
No. Move forward 1 tile.

*A Tier 4 student visa at degree level allows you to work only 20 hours a week. The National Minimum Wage rate for workers aged 21 and over is £5.93 per hour (October 2010).

You really need some money! You hear about a cash-in-hand job in a bar. Flip a coin.
♕ Your family sends extra funds so you won't have to neglect studies. Miss a turn while you wait, then move 4 tiles.
⊗ You take the risk and accept the job. Move forward 1 tile.

...get to Canary Wharf, and realize business is not for you (too much coke). You decide to study something else... You try philosophy for a while but realize it's not what you expected. But with the crisis, there's no work. Back to the drawing board and the course guide...

Partnership Tile
A fellow student whom you secretly fancy invites you for a stroll along Regent's canal. It's autumn and the air is crisp.
Life is bright!

People get married for lots of different reasons. Ideas of love and commitment dominate the institutions of marriage. People marry to increase their wealth, or because their families want them to, or to get around customs prohibiting premarital sex. Many people also do so to gain access to citizenship or the ability to stay in certain countries.

Work and study is tough. You start missing classes. Can you switch to studying part-time?*
Yes. You become a part-time student and life is a bit easier. Move forward 2 tiles.
No. Move forward 1 tile.

*A Tier 4 student visa is only issued for full-time study. Only UK/EU/EEA students are able to study part-time.

Poor attendance puts you in breach of your visa. The head of dept. calls you into her office. Flip a coin 3 times.
⊗⊗⊗ She reports you and your visa is cancelled. Go to deportation limbo!!!
⊗⊗ She changes her mind. Move forward 2 tiles.
⊗ A new campaign on campus – Students not Suspects. They help you resolve the issue, but it takes time so you miss a turn.

If the University doesn't report poor attendance to the UKBA, under the Points-Based Immigration Scheme, it could have its sponsorship licence revoked. At Goldsmiths College, staff and students have protested this through the Students not Suspects Campaign: http://studentsnotsuspects.blogspot.com

Deportation Limbo
After deportation, you are banned from getting a visa to the UK for 10 years. Deportation can seriously affect your chances of getting a visa for other countries.

You start getting involved in political campaigns, and you forget your PhD to focus on organising. Luckily, you're in a radical business school!

Your grandma has to have an emergency operation tomorrow. Can you go see her?
Yes. A flight will get you there in a few hours. There's one tomorrow morning. Miss a turn.
No. Too far away and too expensive. All you can do is cry and keep moving.

You've made a lot of friends along the way!
You may decide to miss a turn to help them.
If you do, you can either: give a turn to them, or go join them on a partnership tile if that's where they are.

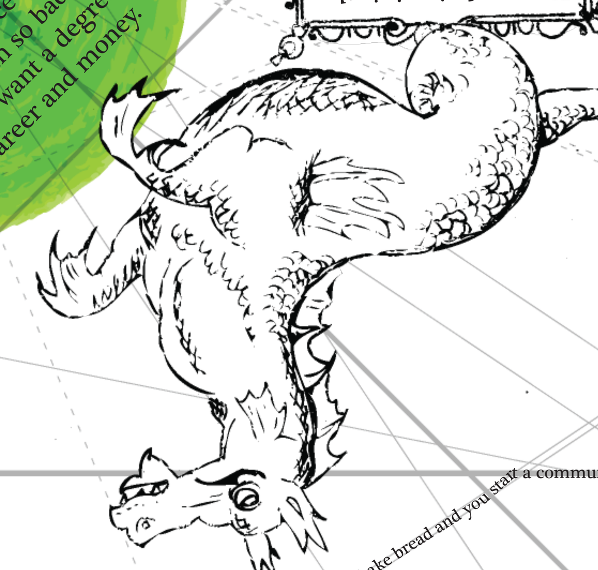
You made it – it is the end of Term 1! What are you going to do next?
Stay in character and pick one of the four desires that follow. Beware: the other players will question your choice! Explain how you might fulfil your desire.

Higher education is not for you. You want to leave university.

Despite the weather, you want to find ways to make London your home.

It is clear the world is not right. You want to fight and change the rules of the game.

The rat race doesn't seem so bad. You want a degree, career and money.



Characters:

Scottish undergraduate
UK citizen. Does not need a visa to work/study and pays Home tuition fees.

English undergraduate
UK Citizen. Does not need a visa to work/study and pays Home tuition fees.

Chinese postgraduate
Needs a Tier 4 VISA to study in the UK. Can only work 20 hours per week during term-time. Pays International post-graduate tuition fees.

Pakistani undergraduate
Needs a Tier 4 VISA to study in the UK. Can only work 20 hours per week during term-time. Pays International undergraduate tuition fees.

Italian postgraduate
Citizen of an EU country. Does not need a visa to work/study and pays Home tuition fees.

Players may also create their own characters. No two people can pick the same character.

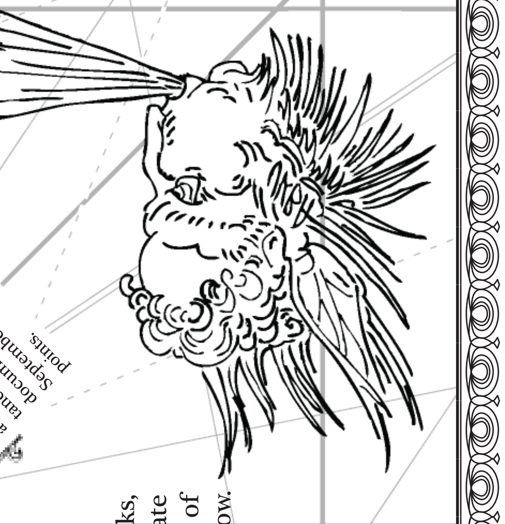
Each player is represented by a token on the board. When it is your turn, read aloud the instructions on each tile and answer in character. There is extra information at the bottom of the tile to help you answer the questions.

the Game

Which games are worth playing? Some games we come to be part of without choosing or even knowing the rules. Yet rules abound as we move through the university, the city, nation-states, checkpoints, queues, tunnels and corridors. We might all be tossing the same coins, but the rules distribute our chances unevenly. These rules determine who can win and who loses. But then, what would it mean to lose? Or to win? We arrived at these questions many times, and over and over again and came to no definite answer.

What we do know is that success through hard work and merit is a myth. So long as we believe it, everything functions in that smooth sterile way that is so crucial for 'them'. But not for us. Why should we be complicit in the pretence that class, race and gender do not affect the way we are filtered through the university? Perhaps the only way to survive the border and bureaucracy (without turning into one of its managers) is to approach it as a prank, a game with rules that have to be broken so as to be followed at all. The education system is no different.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to find cracks, fellow travellers and the opportunities that exist to create something different. Make sure you make your own maps of these travels... ours is but one version. (Y)our time starts now.



Queen Mary University subscribes to diversity in our staff and student body, valuing our differences as an important contribution to our research, teaching and other activities