



Central College Study Abroad London, England Student Survival Guide

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Introduction

London is a city with inexhaustible resources and entertainment. You will find great bookstores, unique shops and cafés, food from around the world, and amazing places to explore such as the National Gallery, the British Museum, and the Tower of London. You can take advantage of London's West End for a world class play or a musical. London is a city of endless adventure and your study abroad experience is the opportunity of a lifetime.

This student survival guide describes the London program as completely as possible and tries to anticipate your questions. It is important you understand how the program is designed, what opportunities it offers and how it can all be integrated with your personal goals. You should know that the information here is the result of years of experience in London and has been modified and adjusted each year by students, directors and the staff of the Central College Study Abroad office. There are many significant changes in the program from previous years, and it should not be assumed that what you have heard from returning students continues to be the case. This is one of the reasons why it is extremely important for you to read and understand the student survival guide. Some of the material will be important to you immediately because you will have to make important educational plans, not to mention travel plans. Other parts of the book may be more pertinent once you arrive in England, but read the whole student survival guide and be sure to bring it with you to London. The better prepared you are before you leave for London, the easier the integration and adaptation to the culture.

The student survival guide's most important purpose is to help you understand the goals of the Central College programs: to acquire a broader perspective of the world and an understanding of another culture by living in another country; to learn how to cope with different sets of attitudes, values and beliefs; to study formally and informally the history and culture of another people; and to come to terms with essential differences.

We are here to offer advice and help with your pre-departure plans. Please do not hesitate to call, e-mail or write to the Central College Study Abroad office if you have any questions.

We wish you the best of luck!

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Required Travel Documents

Passports/Visas

A valid US passport is required for travel to your program and possibly a visa. Your passport should be valid for up to six months past your anticipated departure date. Application for a passport should be made at least **three months before departure**. If you don't already have a passport, you should apply for one **immediately**. To obtain a passport application and to review all of the requirements for obtaining a passport, please check online at www.travel.state.gov.

If you plan to do an internship, service-learning, or volunteer work, you will need to secure a student visa; more information on obtaining a visa can be found in your online acceptance packet.

What if your passport is lost or stolen abroad?

Should your passport be lost or stolen abroad, report the loss immediately to the local police and to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. If you can provide the consular officer with the information contained in your passport, it will facilitate issuance of a new one. Therefore, keep a photocopy of the issue page of your passport in a safe place. Leave a second copy of the passport with a relative or friend at home.

For the most recent updates on the travel documents and visas please check the U.S. Department of State's travel website at www.travel.state.gov.

Think about how you will carry your passport securely. It is best to keep your passport on your person. Here is an article about money belts: <https://www.travelinsurancereview.net/tips-and-advice/travel-safety-tips/safe-travelers-love-money-belts/>

Flight Arrangements

One of the early considerations in planning your time abroad is to make travel arrangements. **Please consult the Program Calendar in your online account before scheduling flight arrangements.** Check with several airlines, travel agents and websites – it's a good idea to shop around for the best deal! Do not assume that the first price you hear is the best — fares may vary by several hundred dollars.

Do NOT fly through Ireland, which has an open border with the UK and allows students to pass through customs in London without a stamp. The stamp is required for U.S. short-term study abroad students to study in the UK and without it, students must leave the country and return.

If you plan to arrive prior to the scheduled move-in date, or leave after the program ends, you must make your own accommodation arrangements. There are some suggestions in the London Handbook. The University does not offer housing for early arrivals or late departures.

Read the fine print on flight changes, refund policies and baggage allowances.

London Program Academic Information

The Central College program in London is intended to give you the opportunity to learn about London and Britain while experiencing British life and culture. The program offers many different course options: internships for academic credit, Central College courses and direct enrollment in the University of Roehampton.

Required Courses

All students are required to take the British Experience Seminar (2 SH) and one of the London Studies courses (4SH). British Experience Seminar is taught by the Program Director and is designed to help you explore different topics in British life and culture.

Internships

An internship placement can define your study abroad experience; we strongly encourage you to take this opportunity to integrate directly into British society. The purpose of the internship is to provide a British work experience in the area of your academic preparation. If interested in an internship placement, you should be able to complete work independently and take major responsibility for determining your educational goals.

Internships are recorded as pass/no record and require the following time:

- Two days/week = 16 hours per week of on-site work and 6 semester hours of credit

Internship requirements also include written assignments and individual meetings with the Program Director. The student is responsible for balancing other academic requirements with the demands of the internship.

To apply for a London internship, you must complete and submit the following forms by November 1 for Spring semester and April 15 for Fall semester:

- Internship Application
- Cover letter
- Résumé
- Two References

Please note: Placements in schools require a background check before they agree to sponsor an internship for you (the Program Advisor will assist with this process, but the student is responsible for any background check fees). Placements in mental health and health care settings are not possible due to restrictions regulating student experience in these fields.

If you are interested in learning more about an internship in a specific field, please consult your Program Adviser.

The Director maintains an ongoing search for internships and may be able to find new internship sponsors in your areas of interest. If you are applying for an internship in a non-established area, it is necessary to submit application forms on time in order to give the London staff a chance of finding a new internship.

An internship looks great on a résumé, and the London program has an internship for almost every discipline. If you can, take advantage of the opportunity to interact in the British work environment.

Direct Enrollment

University of Roehampton - Central College is affiliated with the University of Roehampton. Students will live on campus and take some of their courses there and still earn credit through Central College. Most disciplines can be studied, but students generally take Roehampton courses in the following subject areas: international relations, British and European literature, sociology, history, philosophy, economics, math, business, media, psychology, politics, law, theatre, languages, art and performing arts. Courses at Roehampton for study abroad students can be found at www.roehampton.ac.uk/roehamptonabroad/undergraduate.

British Teaching Styles

Quick tip: As an American, many professors and peers will be interested in your point of view. Be prepared to share your ideas on anything from politics to sports.

The professors will lecture, presenting material in a factual, orderly, systematic pattern. Instead of prescribing daily reading assignments, as is the custom in the United States, British professors state their expectations more indirectly (e.g. “You might find X’s book useful for this topic.”). The professors will assume that students are already doing considerable outside reading, and it will be reflected in the papers that the students write. Class time is used for elaboration, explanation and discussion. In England, the student has a greater responsibility to bring ideas and insights into the class. Rather than the professors devising methods to motivate students, the students must have their own motivation to study and learn. Teaching will be split into a one hour lecture and one/two hour seminar. In lectures, students will listen to the professor. Seminars allow for a greater degree of discussion and students will often be expected to prepare material in advance to share or discuss within the group.

It is an interesting fact that not only professors, but guest speakers as well, expect American students to be vivacious and always ready to ask questions. Your natural curiosity is one of your greatest assets when studying in London. Come planning to use it.

Some university professors may refuse to discuss exams or exam grades feeling that personal integrity is being questioned. Exams are usually not returned to students.

One of the advantages of studying in London is the opportunity to use a variety of resources. Class assignments usually give students a chance to report what has been seen and heard. For example, if you study housing in London you will want to walk around, look at housing, see how it functions and talk to residents.

You should plan to keep up with major current events through television and newspapers so you know what the British are thinking and doing. This is often important, too, when you are writing a paper; you need to have a current perspective, even on a topic from the past. The media offers great insight into British culture, and you should find it interesting to see how the United States is portrayed from abroad. Below are some sources to help broaden your knowledge of UK current events:

BBC News: www.bbc.co.uk

The Guardian: www.guardian.co.uk

The London Times: www.thetimes.co.uk

The Telegraph: www.telegraph.co.uk

Field Trips, Excursions and Cultural Events

Central provides a program of cultural events, field trips and excursions in and out of London each semester to complement the various classes. There is a weekend trip to Wales or York, day trips to Greenwich, Cambridge, Bath and Stonehenge, and a variety of evening excursions, including West End shows, during the week. Students are expected to go on the excursions; medical excuses are the only legitimate reason for not going. Expenses for the semester excursions are paid by Central, but subsistence is the student's responsibility.

All lab fees or class fees for London Studies courses will be paid by Central College.

Maintaining your blog will help you remember all of the amazing things that you did during your experience. It is also required as a part of the British Experience Seminar class.

Packing

There is limited storage space for clothing, and many past students found they have brought far more than necessary. Pack clothing that is easy to care for and can easily be mix and matched or layered. A few basic items include:

- A good pair of sturdy walking shoes and a pair of dressy shoes.
- One or two dressier outfits for internships, special occasions or a night out. Nice trousers, button down shirts, ties and a jacket for men. Nice trousers, button down shirts, dresses or skirts for women.
- A warm all-weather jacket with removable lining, preferably with a waterproof exterior.
- Bring a winter coat and warm sweaters. British buildings are colder than those in the USA. Warm underwear and socks are especially useful from October through mid-March.
- Exercise clothes for using the gym or runs in beautiful Richmond Park.
- Do not forget your umbrella!!
- A towel!
- Flip flops or shower shoes are a great thing to have when traveling.
- Swimming suit. Even if you're not studying in a warm destination, you never know where you may travel!
- Bring an extra sweatshirt or t-shirt with your home college logo; you can do some trading of items like these with new friends.
- Keep in mind that you might consider traveling during the winter or spring breaks to countries where the climate will be either colder or warmer, and pack accordingly.
- Laptop and charger, an ethernet cable, a plug adapter (not a converter!), and a power bank.
- Basic medications like allergy meds, cold meds, headache relief (in case you need them on arrival).
- Spare glasses, contact lenses, sunglasses.

Remember where you are going! If you are traveling in the Fall or Spring, you will not need as many light summer clothes.

Most electric hair dryers, hair straighteners and razors will have a switch to convert to 220-240V. If you are bringing any of the items, check to make sure that they convert. DO NOT BUY A CONVERTER. These are expensive and notorious for not working and ruining these items. Laptop chargers have built in converters, and phones do too, so all you need here is a US/UK adaptor. It would be wise, however, to buy a European/UK/US adaptor with a USB port. If you forget to bring one, they are available at the airports.

Put your name, home address/phone number and destination on the inside and outside of all pieces of luggage, and lock your luggage during transit. Do not pack your passport or any other important papers you will need to get through customs in the luggage you plan to check!

Leave at home anything truly valuable, such as jewelry.

For more information on packing, check out the 'What to Know Before You Go' sheet in your online acceptance packet.

Medication & Accommodations

You should come to London with the full amount of any prescription medication you'll need during your stay. You must also make sure that you are allowed to travel into the UK with your prescriptions. Information about traveling into the United Kingdom with prescription medicine is available at this link: <https://www.gov.uk/travelling-controlled-drugs>. If your medication is classed as a controlled drug in the UK, you may need to apply for a license.

Students may call International SOS at +1.215.942.8478 to get information about the legality of certain medicines.

It is a good idea to carry a letter from your physician on letterhead explaining your diagnosis, treatment and prescribed medication(s).

Do not rely on having medication shipped to you from the United States, as they may get held up in customs. Individuals cannot mail medications abroad. Medications can only be mailed by registered practitioners or dispensers and, even then, most countries have strict regulations on shipping medication abroad. Decisions on what medications are accepted into the country are made by the host country government-not the U.S. Post Office. Medications can be stopped by the host country's Customs services, which may require payment of fees, completion of documentation and several trips to the Customs office.

Customs officials abroad may inspect medications, so be sure to pack them in your carry-on luggage in their original containers along with the letter from your physician.

Please visit the University of Roehampton's Well Being pages if you need to apply for adjustments. <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/student-support/wellbeing-support/> You must do this prior to your arrival in London.

Housing

Students on the Central College program in London live in the University of Roehampton dorms. Each student will have their own room single study bedroom in a shared six or eight room apartment. Each apartment will contain a shared bathroom and kitchen. Each dorm has laundry and recreational facilities. All apartments are co-educational. Dorms are self-catering, and come fully equipped with kitchen utensils and crockery. For more details visit www.roehampton.ac.uk/accommodation/on-campus

All housing is assigned by the Roehampton staff. General policy is to house students separately in apartments with British students. On average each apartment will only have one or two US or other international students.

Linens

Roehampton will provide bed linens. You will be responsible for washing them. The housekeeping staff cleans all common areas and public restrooms. You will be responsible for cleaning your own apartments, and relevant cleaning materials will be supplied. Students must supply coat hangers and towels.

Residence Rules and Procedures

All residents are subject to the rules and procedures of Roehampton and must agree to accept the consequences of failure to observe and follow them. Breaking any of these policies could result in temporary or permanent eviction from the program.

- Quiet hours begin at 11 p.m.
- Appropriate dress is expected in public areas.
- Consideration for college property is expected.
- Keys are not to be lent to non-students.
- The use of illegal drugs is not permitted.
- Smoking is not permitted.
- Students spending nights away from Roehampton must inform the Director
- Other rules and regulations will be added by the Director during orientation.

Vacation Policies

Most students prefer to travel during breaks, but you are allowed to stay at Roehampton if you choose to do so. The program contracts for students to occupy their rooms until noon of the Saturday following final class meetings. If you wish to remain in London after this date, you must make your own arrangements.

Independent Housing Arrangements

In rare instances, students may request and be granted permission to make independent housing arrangements. Appropriate situations may include: students with immediate family in the city, college graduates or older student, students with unusual health problems and/or married students.

All independent housing arrangements must be made in advance with Central College. Students must take responsibility for finding their own accommodations in the city. The director will offer advice and suggestions but cannot devote time to the search. All housing arrangements must be approved by the director in London and Central College.

Workout Facilities

Sports and recreation facilities are available on campus. Running is no problem with several parks nearby. There is an excellent gym on campus, a nearby swimming pool (Putney Leisure Centre), tennis courts and playing fields. Students can participate in competitive club sports or participate in non-competitive, social sport. Membership of the gym is available at £20 per month.

Arrival

Immigration

When you arrive at Heathrow, you will be routed through Immigration. Follow the “ARRIVALS” sign to the Immigration Hall.

If you are a Tier 4 Visa student

You will be directed to the e-Gates, which you may use. It is essential that you keep your boarding card, or equivalent e-version of the boarding card, and give it to me to scan after your arrival. I am required to keep a copy of this to fulfil my duty as a Tier 4 Visa sponsor. You will also need this when you return to the UK, as it proves that you have entered the country at the start of your course. The University of Roehampton may also ask to see it during registration.



If you are a short-term study student (i.e. not a Tier 4 visa student)

It is **essential** that you see a border official. As you are American, they will try to direct you to the e-Gates. **DO NOT USE THE E-GATES.** The Program Director or Pella staff will provide you with a document to show at the border, which makes clear your status.

The Border Official will want to see the following documents:

- Your letter of acceptance to Central College in London’s course. You will have received this letter from Study Abroad. Note: You may have to produce this letter every time you come into the country.
- Evidence that you are able to fund your stay in the UK. You can either bring copies of your most recent bank statements or a letter from your parents confirming they are supporting you. A template is attached in Appendix 1.
- Evidence you intend to leave the UK at the end of your course. If you haven’t bought your return flight yet, you should demonstrate you have enough funds to purchase the flight or your parental letter can confirm that your parents will pay for the flight.

You may also need to give:

- Details of where you’re staying. You will be informed of your room assignment a few days prior to your arrival by the University of Roehampton. The address is

University of Roehampton
Roehampton Lane
London, SW15 5PU

The document referred to above is also saved on dropbox in the pre-departure folder:
Dropbox\CC in London Spring 2020\Predeparture\Exceptions_request_for_stamp_BorderForce

If you don’t get the stamp, you will be required to leave and re-enter the country within 30 days.

Getting to the University of Roehampton in London

THIS ONLY APPLIES TO STUDENTS WHO ARRIVE LATE AND DO NOT TRAVEL WITH THE GROUP ON THE COMPLIMENTARY CHARTER BUS!

From Gatwick Airport:

After clearing customs and claiming your baggage, follow the signs for *National Rail*. Do not take the *Gatwick Express* train. This goes to Victoria Station in central London. You can purchase tickets at the train station from a ticket desk or a machine near the trains for approximately £14 (about \$17). Upon arrival at Barnes Station, go to Barnes Cars, which is a taxi company at the station, and ask for a ride to the University. It should cost about £7 (about \$8). Busses have contactless payment and your train ticket will not give you access.

From Heathrow Airport:

SUBWAY: After clearing customs and claiming your baggage, follow the signs to *Underground* (subway) and purchase a *day ticket* for roughly £12 (\$15). You will take the *Piccadilly Line* (the only line at Heathrow) to *Earl's Court*. It will take approximately 25 minutes.

At *Earl's Court* you will need to change to the District Line. The District Line breaks and goes in different directions. You need to get on a train going to Wimbledon. Get off the train at Putney Bridge and either take a taxi to campus, or get on the bus 265 which stops at the University Main Entrance.

If you are arriving on your own, the Director will be in touch to discuss travel options and provide precise instructions.

Don't forget that you may have multiple, heavy suitcases and will have to take them from point-to-point yourself! Consider that before you make a decision on how to get to Roehampton.

If you are arriving on your own, the Director will be in touch to discuss travel options and provide precise instructions.

Early Arrival

Be aware that if you plan to arrive early you will not be able to stay at Roehampton! Also, you cannot arrive late for the program. The first few days are important both in terms of official orientation and becoming comfortable with your new surroundings.

If you will arrive a few days in advance of the start of the program, you must find your own housing until the official start date, below is a list of hostels and hotels nearby. Prices listed below are subject to change. It is worth using an internet search for hotels in the Roehampton/Putney/Barnes area to discover best deals at set times of the year.

Premier Inn
3 Putney Bridge Approach
Fulham
London SW6 3JD
<http://www.premierinn.com/gb/en/hotels/england/greater-london/london/london-putney-bridge>
Budget hotel from £53 a night

The Crown
102 Lavender Hill
London SW11 5RD
www.publove.co.uk/crown-battersea
Pub Hostel from £11 a night

University of Roehampton
Elm Grove Conference Centre
Roehampton Lane
London SW15 5PH

www.roehamptonvenues.co.uk/accommodation

On campus facilities from £69 a night

www.barnesbedandbreakfast.co.uk

Traditional bed & breakfasts/self-catering in Barnes & Putney
from £45 per night

Local Transportation

You will need to use London's public transport at least three days a week. The system is generally very efficient and consists of a subway (known as the Underground or the Tube), railway and an integrated bus system. At first glance it can seem expensive but like most things in London, there are ways of making it cheaper!

Remember to use London's extensive bus system! Although it looks challenging, it is easy to use and the best/cheapest way to see the city

As a part of the program, an Oyster card will be purchased for you and given to you upon arrival. An Oyster card allows you to use London's transportation system – simply by touching in and out. The card can be charged with money online by the student. You will receive a one-month pass. After the first month, how you use your Oyster pass is up to you, and the London staff will advise you according to your schedule. A student Oyster Card saves you 30% if you buy a weekly or monthly pass. To give you some idea of costs, a month's pass at full cost Zones 1-3 will be around \$136. More information about costs is available in the section, *Budgeting for Expenses*. For more public transport information, visit www.tfl.gov.uk

Communication

Mail

Regular airmail generally takes four to seven days to travel between its destination in Europe and the United States. When you address letters to the United States, remember to write "U.S.A." on the envelope or postcard as well as to write "airmail" or use an airmail sticker. Using, lightweight airmail writing paper and envelopes available at stationary stores will help keep your postage costs lower. Advise parents and friends who send you parcels to ensure that an official label is attached with a list of contents; otherwise, the parcels may be opened by Customs and Excise with a subsequent fee of up to £80 (\$156)!

Telephoning

Students are required to have a UK number during their stay in London. A SIM is provided with student orientation packs, but students are free to choose the program they like. Information will be provided.

When calling from the United States to London, your friends and family must be sure to use the (011) access code, the (44) country code and the phone number, without the first digit which is always a zero. For example, the number for Central College's office in London is +44 (0)208 392 5058. When calling from the United States, dial like this: 011 44 208 392 5058. If you are calling from within the UK, dial like this: 0208 392 5058. Students will not have telephones in their rooms.

If you are making a call from the UK to the USA, dial like this 00 (international access code), 1 (country code) and the rest of the number. To call Central College, you would dial like this: 00 1 877 462 3687.

E-mail

Your housing has wifi, so you may bring a laptop. If so, you may want to purchase the computer adapter in London because some students have found that U.S. adapters have “fried” their electronic items and other appliances (curling irons, hair dryers, etc). You will be advised about this at orientation in London.

Skype

The best way students have found to communicate is via *Skype*. It is a very affordable way to speak to friends and family via the internet. Visit www.skype.com to set up a free account and to learn about using the program.

Good Communication Management

Communication with your friends and family at home is easy and accessible through the internet and cell phones, but this can be both a blessing and a curse. While these lines of communication allow you to stay in touch, they can also interfere with your adaptation to the local culture and give you an easy out when you’re feeling homesick.

Below is a basic list of Dos and Don’ts for managing your communication home:

- Do call your family to assure them you have arrived safely at the program site.
- Do remember to factor in the time difference so you’re not calling at 3 a.m.
- Do remember to call or answer for all pre-arranged phone calls.
- Do use the internet to stay in touch by email or start blogs to share with those at home.
- Don’t use the phone as your first line of defense for problem solving. First think, make a plan and solve your own problem. It is better to call home and report how you solved the problem. This is a great step toward independence!
- Don’t make calls from hotel phones. There is usually an expensive surcharge.
- If you do call a friend or family member when you are feeling down or during a problem, be sure to call them back to let them know you are feeling better or the problem is solved.
- Limit your time on the internet. Don’t use the internet as a way to avoid your new surroundings. Spend your time developing friendships with those around you!

**In case of an emergency, call the Program Director first!
Do not call someone in the U.S. first in case of emergency.**

Living in London

Medical Care

Doctors: There is a Health Centre on Campus, which is available for all students to use. It is important to register with the service as soon as possible.

Dentist: Students can make an appointment with a private dentist. Castelnau Dentist, 200 Castelnau, London, SW13 9DW T: 020 8563 7177 www.castelnaudentist.com

Chemist/Pharmacy: Chemists are usually the best source of free, expert advice for minor medical concerns. Well, 3 Danesbury Avenue, London, SW15 4DG is the nearest. T: 020 8788 3150 www.well.co.uk

NHS 111: This is a government healthcare line manned by trained medical professionals, offering advice for anyone who is unwell but doesn't wish to visit a doctor. It is free. T: 111

Personal & Emotional Issues: Students should speak to program staff if they have any personal or emotional issues. The University of Roehampton has a team of qualified counselling staff who can provide support.

Sexual Health: Family planning and sexual health is available at Queen Marys Hospital, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PN T:020 8487 6861 www.roehamptonclinic.nhs.uk

Money

British currency is the “pound” (£) or “GBP” (Great Britain Pound), which is based on the pound sterling and divided into 100 “pence”: £1 = 100 pence. Most students, however, have found using ATM cards, and drawing from US Bank accounts, to be the most convenient and accessible way of accessing money. You may wish to check whether your US bank has an agreement with a UK bank, which could save you money when withdrawing cash.

Cash on arrival

It is a good idea to have cash (in British pounds) on hand when you arrive in London to cover your expenses until you can get to an ATM. Most large banks in the US sell foreign currency, and if you have a bank account with them, you can order cash over the phone or online to be delivered to your local branch for pickup (there is sometimes a delivery fee). AAA will also provide foreign currency with enough warning. Keep in mind that exchange rates for banks tend to be better than exchange rates at international airports.

Debit cards

Depending on what US bank you use, your debit card can be used to withdraw cash in local currency at ATMs in the UK. Most banks tack on ATM fees that can add anywhere from 3-8%, but a few, such as Citibank and Bank of America, have international partner banks that allow you to use your ATM card with no extra fee. Bank of America is particularly convenient, as its partner bank is Barclay's. Check with your bank about its policies. If you do have to pay international transaction or ATM fees, it is best to minimize them by withdrawing larger amounts less often.

Credit cards

Another option for purchases while abroad is using your credit card or debit card just as you would at home. MasterCard and Visa are widely used in the UK. Be aware, however, that most card issuers usually tack on currency-conversion fees of 2-3% per international transaction. There are however, credit cards, such as Capital One, that do not add on an international transaction fee. Here's a link to a list of some popular cards that do not charge an international transaction fee: <http://www.creditcards.com/no-foreign-transaction-fee.php>

Do not use a credit card to take money out of an ATM! You'll be hit with hefty fees (up to \$20 in transaction fees or 4 percent of the amount of the advance, along with any local ATM fees), plus you'll be charged interest starting on the day you withdraw the money.

Alternatives

Another option for a credit/debit card while abroad is a AAA Visa Travel Money card. More information about this is available here: http://www.aaa.com/AAA/FinancialSvcs/Prepaid/AAATrv_FAQs.pdf

The card works like a debit card and money can be uploaded on it online or in a AAA store. You can also view your balance online.

Contactless payment

Contactless payment has become commonplace and makes purchases here easy. If you can get a contactless payment card before you come, it is recommended. With foreign cards, you are sometimes forced to sign, which is a hassle. You can also use your contactless debit or credit card in place of your Oyster card on London transport (the Oyster card is explained below in the section on budgeting). Contactless payment can be made for purchases up to £30. You can also use Apple Pay and Android/Google pay, but current students tell me this needs to be set up with your bank prior to departure.

Notify your bank of your plans to travel abroad

You should notify the bank(s) associated with any debit, credit, or ATM cards that you plan to use abroad with the dates you will be traveling. Otherwise, they may assume your card has been stolen and halt all activity on it. If you plan to travel outside of the UK during your semester, alert your bank with the list of countries you will visit. Also note that most ATMs in the UK and Europe require 4-digit PINs; if you currently have a 6-digit PIN, contact your bank to change it to a 4-digit PIN.

Electricity

Voltage is 240v, which means that American 110v appliances will burn out. Most electric hair dryers, hair straighteners and razors will have a switch to convert to 220-240V. If you are bringing any of the items, check to make sure that they convert. **DO NOT BUY A CONVERTER.** These are expensive and notorious for not working and ruining electrical items. Laptop chargers have built in converters, and phones do too, so all you need is a travel adaptor. It would be wise, however, to buy a European/UK/US adapter with a USB port. If you forget to bring one, they are available at the airports and in shops all around London.

Entertainment

Museums & Galleries: London is home to the UK's major museums and galleries, plus hundreds of others. Most of the major museums and galleries are free to enter.

Theatres: Theatre is very varied and is one of the great experiences of living in London. London has two of the largest and most famous theatres – the Royal National Theatre on the South Bank and the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican. The West End has numerous popular theatres, many in beautiful old buildings. Don't forget that 'fringe' and pub theatres often offer the most enjoyable and exciting theatre in town for very little money. Some theatres offer discounts for students and for tickets bought just prior to curtain-up. There is a cheap ticket outlet in Leicester Square for popular shows.

Cinema: London has numerous venues for showing all types of film. Leicester Square in The West End has many cinemas showing the latest films, and is also the venue for UK film premieres. Cinema tickets are cheaper outside of the centre – Angel, Camden, Brixton and Holloway cinemas are much more affordable.

Eating: There are thousands of restaurants and cafes all across London, serving literally every different cuisine you could think of. However, eating out in the UK is generally more expensive than in the US, so you will probably cook most of your own meals at your dorm. When eating at a restaurant expect to pay a 10 – 15% tip or service charge. The service charge is meant to be optional but many restaurants actually add it to your bill, so check before paying. If you feel your service has been poor, you do not have to pay the charge.

Pubs: Visits to pubs and bars form an important part of British social life. Many pubs now serve food as well as simply being places to meet friends and have a drink. Traditionally, pub food is basic and fairly cheap but more and

more pubs have started taking their food seriously and have separate dining areas and fairly extensive menus (gastropubs).

Places of Worship

If you follow a religion and worship regularly at home, then you can continue to do so in the UK. Every major world religion is represented in London. Keeping routine with your faith will provide you with a link to your life at home, as well as enabling you to develop new friendships quickly.

Budgeting for Expenses

It is difficult to estimate the amount of spending money that you will need for your stay in London. Different students have different needs and comfort requirements, as well as different personal spending habits. All students agree, however, that London is an expensive city.

Most students cook their own meals in the dorm kitchens. Students report spending anywhere from £20-40/week on food, depending on how much they rely on take-away, ready-made meals or eating out. You can get a hot meal on campus for about £4.

Typical Expenses

The following represents sample costs that a typical student might encounter in London:

Light lunch (sandwich and beverage)	£6-9
Cinema ticket	£10-12
Theatre ticket	£23-25
Cup of coffee	£2-3
Concert ticket	£20-40
Dinner (fast food/bargain)	£6-9
Dinner (standard)	£16-28
Weekly food shopping	£25-45
Load of laundry	£2.20/wash, £1.20 to dry

Anticipate spending more than you think you will, and practice careful budgeting. You'll likely be able to get by on £100-175 per week for spending money and minor travel expenses (this excludes longer weekend trips and travel outside London, and it excludes extensive clothing and gift purchases).

Travel in London

The Oyster card is payment card which is used on all London transport. London transport is cashless. Your student Oyster card will give you a 30% discount when you buy a travel pass. You will get a one month travel card on arrival for Zones 1-3 (central London is zone 1 and the University of Roehampton is in zone 3). It is valid on any type public transport in those zones for that period. After your pass expires, you can top up your card based on your travel needs. Please consult a currency exchange website (e.g. xe.com) for up-to-date exchange rates.

Weekly pass for zones 1-3 (all transport):	£28.80
Monthly pass, zones 1-3 (all transport):	£113.70
Pay as you go, day pass (all transport):	£8.50
Bus fare:	£1.50 per journey, capped at £4.50/day.

UK vs US English

In theory, going to the UK means that as an American you don't have to worry about a language barrier. But some terms that the British use, especially college students, may not be familiar to you. Certain words in the States may have a very different meaning in the UK. Just to give you a 'leg-up' and help you keep up with your British 'mates', we've provided a short list of some commonly used words in the UK that may seem foreign to you:

A4: standard sized paper

Are you ok?: This is used all the time in everyday conversation in Britain – it means 'how are you?'

Aubergine: eggplant

Bangers and mash: sausages and mashed potatoes.

A common staple in most pubs.

Bap: bun or roll for sandwiches

Bin: garbage can

Biscuit: cookie

Bloke: a guy

Bloody: a swear word, similar to the American 'damn' but a bit stronger*

Bugger: similar to the American 'damn!' Can also be used as 'bugger all' meaning 'nothing.'

Bum: rear end, bottom.

Canteen: cafeteria

Car park: parking lot

Chat up: flirt with, come on to

Cheers: greeting, as in 'hello'. Can also be used in lieu of 'thanks'

Chemist: pharmacist/pharmacy

Chips: French fries

Coach: bus

Courgette: zucchini

Crisps: potato chips

Dosh: cash/money

Duvet: comforter or bed covering

Fag: cigarette

Fanny: in the UK, 'fanny' refers to female genitalia*

Fiver: five pound note

Flat: apartment

Full stop: a period (punctuation)

Football: soccer, football is called 'American football'

Fortnight: two weeks

Garden: yard

Hire: to rent

Holiday: vacation

Hoover: a vacuum or the act of vacuuming

Jelly: gelatine dessert, Jell-o

Jumper: sweater

Knackered: tired, worn out

Knickers: ladies' underwear

Lorry: truck, 18 wheeler, semi

Mate: friend, pal, buddy

Mince: ground meat/hamburger meat

Motorway: highway/freeway

Nutter: crazy person

Off licence: shop that sells alcohol to go.

Pants: in the UK, 'pants' refer to underwear. Be wary of using the word 'pants' to describe your trousers!!

Petrol: gasoline

Pigeon hole: mailbox/slot

Pissed: drunk

Pram: baby stroller/buggy

Queue: line (to wait in)

Quid: a pound (£) currency

Return flight: roundtrip

Ring up: The British don't 'give you a call', they 'ring you up.'

Rubber: eraser

Smart: fashionable/chic

Snog: to kiss/make out

Solicitor: a lawyer

Sorry?: pardon me? Excuse me?

Sort it out: figure it out

Sultana: golden raisin

Sweets: candies

Ta: thank you

Take the mick/take the piss: teasing/taunting*

Takeaway: takeout food

Tea: dinner. 'Going to tea' often refers to going out for dinner

Telly: television

Tipp-ex: white-out/liquid paper

Torch: flashlight

Trainers: tennis shoes/sneakers

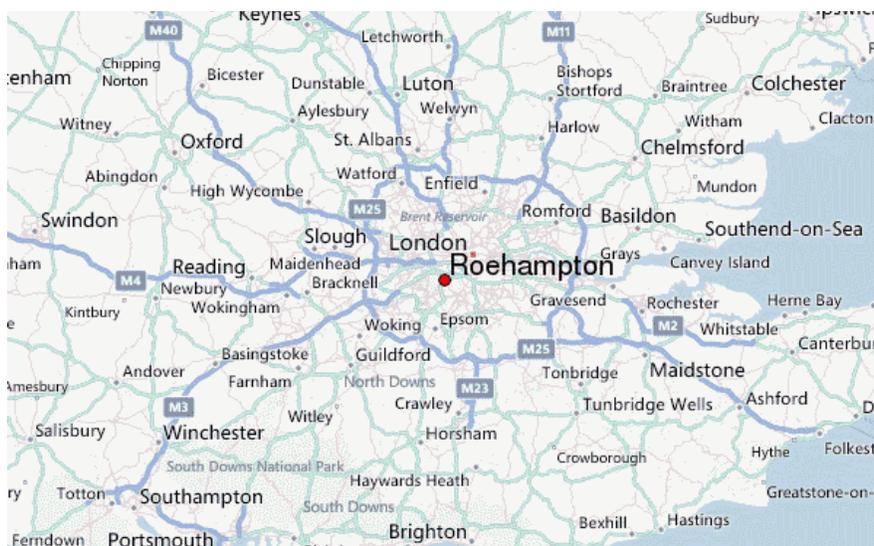
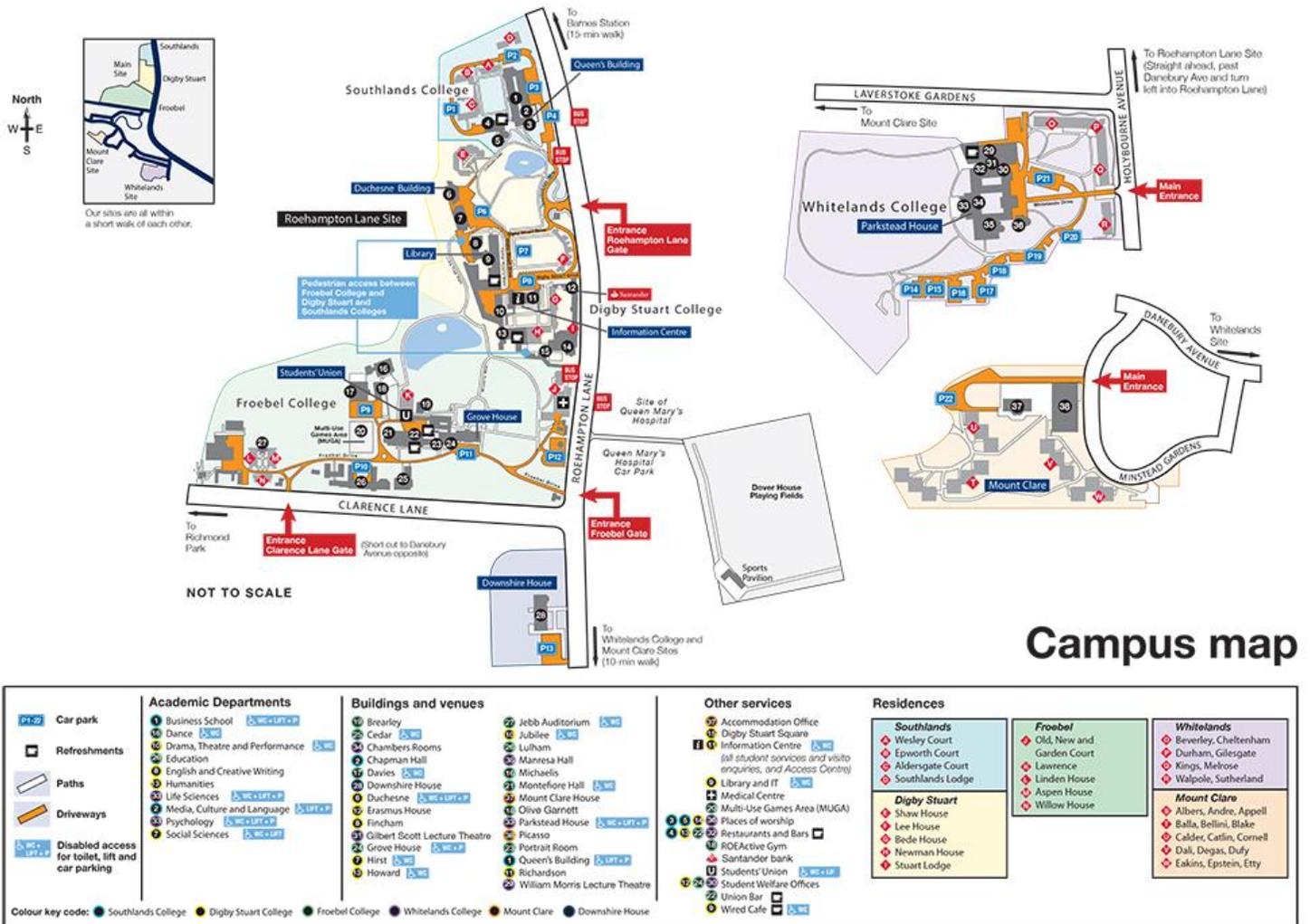
Uni: university

Washing up: doing the dishes

** You should not use those marked with an asterisk with people you do not know, as they may be offensive*

Maps

It's good to know as much about your host country as possible before you go abroad. Here are a couple of maps to familiarize you with the area.





Appendix 1. Sample letter of intent of financial support

PARENT NAME
PARENT ADDRESS
PARENT PHONE/EMAIL

Immigration Officer
Heathrow Airport

DATE

Dear Sir/Madam:

NAME OF STUDENT, U.S. citizen born _____(DOB)_____ in _____ **CITY, STATE**

This letter is written to advise you that my **son/daughter**, named above, is a participant in the short-term study abroad programme operated by Central College in London, and based at the University of Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, London, SW15 5PU.

NAME is a student in good academic standing, and the study abroad program forms an integral part of his/her degree programme. **NAME** will return to **COLLEGE, TOWN, STATE** to complete **his/her** degree. **He/she** is on track to graduate in **MONTH, YEAR**.

During my **son's/daughter's** visit in the United Kingdom, I will provide a monthly payment of funds for my **his/her** living expenses. Therefore, I am writing to request that you grant my **son/daughter** permission to remain in the United Kingdom for up to six months.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Respectfully,

Parent signature
PARENT NAME