

The Wash U Student's Guide to **King's College** **London**



View from classroom at KCL, Spring 2012

Academic Year 2015-2016

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Welcome to King's College London!

Congratulations on your acceptance into King's College London! For the next semester or academic year, you will be representing Washington University in St. Louis at King's College London. Your time abroad may be challenging at times, but know that it will be ultimately rewarding as you come to see London as your home-away-from-home.

This Handbook has been prepared to make your transition to life at KCL as smooth as possible. Please take the time to read the information carefully and share it with your parents. You will also be receiving emails and written transactions from both Washington University and King's College London. Pay close attention to these correspondences to ensure that you arrive in London prepared and open to your new surroundings.

If you have any questions or concerns prior to your departure, contact Overseas Programs at overseas@wustl.edu.

Best wishes!

Overseas Programs

Dates and Contact Information

Important Dates

	FALL SEMESTER
12 September	Arrival Date (accommodation move in)
14 September	KCL Orientation
21 September	Fall Term Begins
25 September	WU's London Orientation with ACCENT International
11 December	Fall Term Ends
	SPRING SEMESTER
2 January	Arrival Date (accommodation move in)
5 January	KCL Registration and Orientation
8-10 January	WU's London Orientation with ACCENT International
11 January	Spring Term Begins
10 June	Spring Term Ends
18 June	Move out

Important Contact Information

Overseas Programs

Campus Box 1088
(314) 935-5958 main line
(314) 935-5555 for emergencies after
office hours
McMillan 138
overseas@artsci.wustl.edu

ACCENT London

Tel: +44-20-7813-7723 from US
Tel: 020-7813-7723 from UK
Emergency Tel: 020 7436 5826 from UK
Emergency Tel: +44 20 7436 5826 from US
london@accentintl.com

King's College London

Tel: 44-20-7848-6579
studyabroad@kcl.ac.uk

Documentation

Short-Term Study (a.k.a. student visitor):

For students studying abroad for less than 6 months with no intention of extending your stay another semester and who are NOT planning to work while abroad. US citizens do not need to pre-apply for this. If you are not a US citizen, please check this site to see if you must pre-apply for the short-term study visa: <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>.

You will need to have with you upon entry into the UK the following items (please note that you will need to have these items with you EVERY TIME you leave and reenter the UK if you plan to travel):

- Signed Passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date
- ROUNDTRIP ticket with a return date less than 6 months after the arrival date or information about when you plan on returning/end date of program
- Official Acceptance letter from UK university
- Letter of Financial Guarantee from WU

Tier 4 Visas (a.k.a. General Student Visas)

For students studying abroad for more than 6 months or who plan to work, intern, or volunteer in the UK, you must pre-apply for this visa. The processing time generally won't take more than 15 business days. <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>

- You can pay to use a service like Travisa, www.travisa.com if you would like to expedite the process.
- Students cannot apply for the Tier 4 visa until 3 months prior to the start date of the program.

You will need the following items to apply for a student visa:

- Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies or CAS (Will be sent to you electronically from your program)
 - **Do not start the process until after you have received this from your program**
- Signed Passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date
- 2 Passport photos (Cannot be digital photos you have printed. These can be taken at Walgreens, etc.)
 - Must have name written on the back of each photo
- Visa Application, including Appendix 8 General Student self-assessment form
 - <http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/>
- \$515 paid online
- Biometrics
 - Must be done within 2 weeks of sending application
 - After you've submitted your online application, it will prompt you to schedule the Biometrics appointment. You cannot do this before you have submitted the application
 - Make sure to bring your passport
- ***Maintenance funds***

- *They will ask you in the application to declare that you have the required “maintenance funds” to cover your semester/year abroad*
- *You should be prepared to be able to show evidence of funds just in case they ask to see it (this would occur later, after the application is submitted).*
 - *Academic Year:*
 - *£600/month for 9 months (a total of \$8,654 according to today’s exchange rate)*
 - *Fall*
 - *£600/month for 4 months (a total of \$3,846.22 according to today’s exchange rate)*
 - *Spring*
 - *£600/month for 6 months (a total of \$5,769.32 according to today’s exchange rate)*
- *Conversions from dollars to pounds must be written on the document before arriving at the border (you can handwrite this):*
www.oanda.com/convert/classic
- *Documents can include a letter from Student Financial Services if you receive financial aid or scholarships, a bank statement in your name, a bank statement in a parent's name along with a signed letter from the parent that you will have access to these funds while abroad, or a letter from the bank*

Students who wish to work, intern, or volunteer: If you want British permission to work part-time in the UK, you must apply for the Tier 4 visa regardless, even if you are studying there for less than 6 months. You will be eligible to work a maximum of 20 hours/week during the term and 40 hours/week during term breaks up to the end date of your program.

Money Matters

Spending Money: Remember that the exchange rate is not in favor of the US dollar, so budget carefully. A movie in Central London can cost \$25 and a regular coffee at Starbuck’s can run \$4-5. At the time of this publication, **£1 = \$1.54**, or **\$1 = £0.65**. Almost everything in Europe is about 75% more expensive than in the US. Very roughly you will be spending in British pounds almost as much as you might spend in the US in dollars. This is the 1st financial shock you can expect.

The second is that exchange rates fluctuate daily so you may be getting more or less British £ every time you change money. Most students use ATM cards to withdraw funds from an American bank account while in the UK. You may also use traveler’s cheques (American Express tend to be the best to avoid conversion charges). The best exchange rates however are often obtained through credit card companies so you may find it cheapest and most convenient to use MasterCard or Visa, which are both widely accepted anywhere in Europe.

You should plan to convert a small amount of money (about \$300) into British pounds (£) upon your arrival at the airport in London. Alternatively you may choose to bring British pounds with you if you prefer.

Note: American Express credit cards are often not accepted in the UK. Please do not plan to rely on this card to pay for housing or other expenses.

Advice from Past Participants

“As anyone can testify, London is quite expensive. Cooking rather than eating out or getting take away reduces the costs, as does walking – which I thoroughly enjoyed!”

-Kerry Rheinstein, Academic Year

Academics

As one of the two founding colleges of the University of London, King’s College London is one of England’s oldest and most prestigious university institutions. Study abroad students are enrolled as King’s students and therefore attend the same lectures, seminars and classes as any other student.

King’s College London is comprised of nine Schools of Study spread across five campuses – four Thames-side campuses in Central London (Strand, Guy, Waterloo, St. Thomas) and one in Denmark Hill, South London. Strand Campus is the founding and main campus of KCL, and where most Wash U students attend classes. See campus maps here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/campuses/>.

Academic Culture

One of the key features of higher education at King’s is that you will have direct contact with academic members of staff within your department. You are likely to have large group lectures, but you will also have smaller group seminars, practical sessions and tutorials. You may also see members of staff individually on occasion. Also, students are expected to actively participate in small group sessions and engage in discussion, rather than simply listen.

The academic culture is also relatively informal. Staff members will tell you how they wish to be addressed, but in many cases you will be on first name terms with them.

Staff are also there to support and guide you through your program, but you should bear in mind that you are responsible for your own learning. Emphasis is placed on self-directed study, in which taught elements of the courses provide a

Advice from Past Participants

“In the US, universities tend to tell the students to come up with their own ideas, something original, then find someone to back them up. At KCL, we had to read extensively on what others had said before offering our own commentary. It helped me to understand and remember the subject in greater breadth.”

-Jessica Spencer, Fall

framework for extensive reading and research. Most subjects are assessed through end-of-semester examinations and essays.¹

Some aspects of the academic culture have been surprising to students in the past. For example, papers tend to be based more on research than forming your own new ideas and professors are often strict about word count. Instead of starting off with 100 points and getting points taken off on papers and exams, students start with 0 points and have points added. As a result, some grades that would be considered poor in the U.S. system are actually quite strong in the British system.

Course Selection and Registration

You will formally enroll in your classes during the mandatory orientation period at KCL in consultation with your departmental tutor(s). You should follow guidance from your WU advisors in making or adjusting your course selections. You are expected to enroll in courses equivalent to 15-16 WU units. Upon WU review of your academic work and performance, you should be awarded 15-16 units of WU credit in the appropriate subject areas. For KCL, 1 unit is generally valued as 1 WU unit. For a list of courses available to Study Abroad students, see

<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/international/abroad/prospective/courses/>.

The registration process is completed in person in writing as opposed to the online system at WU. Degree earning students at KCL take all of their courses in the same department. Study abroad students might find that courses you have been provisionally allocated in different departments are offered at the same times. Although the registration process may be overwhelming, you should be flexible and remain calm because you will eventually end up with a full schedule that works for you.

Study Resources

Information Services & Systems (ISS) provides library and IT services at KCL. Information Services Centres (ISCs) and libraries are located at all the main sites of the College.

Computer Access: PAWS (Public Access Workstation Service) computers are provided at all sites. PAWS provide access to Microsoft Office, web browsers, and subject-specific learning resources. PAWS have printing, data storage and remote access facilities and some computer rooms are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For information about wireless access for laptop users, please see the Communication section on p. 11.

Email: You should receive your King's email username and password at enrollment. It is important that you use your King's email because it is the principal means of communication between staff and students, but remember to check your Wash U email as

¹ Adapted from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/01/25/83/5LifeatKingspp40-49.pdf>

well as that is what the Overseas Programs staff will use to communicate with you while you are abroad!

Libraries and Information Resources: ISS provides access to a huge multi-disciplinary, multi-campus information resource base including over one million books, thousands of print and electronic journals, and archives. Students also have access to the wealth of specialist libraries, archives and collections in and around London. You will need your King's ID card (which is also your library card) to enter any library and you won't be able to borrow without it.

Support Services: The Welfare & Advice Services (including international student advice) are located at the Strand, Waterloo, Guy's and King's Denmark Hill campuses. They have experience in helping students with a wide range of issues covering immigration advice, money management, legal issues and housing.²

Housing

Vast differences in accommodation standards exist between universities in the UK and the US. Students are charged the accommodation fees of the university in the UK and should expect to receive the same accommodation standards as a British student studying at that university. Universities in the UK do their best to ensure that the housing is clean and safe, however students should not expect housing facilities abroad to be the same as they are accustomed to at Washington University in St. Louis.

The universities in the UK do their best to honor students' housing preferences, however we cannot guarantee that students will be placed in the accommodation of their choice. Like here, some housing facilities are more popular than others and thus receive more requests than rooms available. It is difficult for the universities to find housing for all study abroad students in general, particularly spring semester, let alone in the more popular facilities. In the past, some students have been placed in their last choice.

Washington University in St. Louis staff have no control over the housing placements abroad and do not have the authority to change students' accommodations. At King's College London a student may swap housing placements with another student who wants to switch and KCL provides a mechanism for students to find each other. Students may also find apartments on their own in London if they are not happy with their housing assignments, however they may lose their housing deposit. In recent years, WU students at King's College London have been placed in dorms as far as 45 minutes away from campus and Central London. Although the location of these residences is not ideal, they have the advantage of being more spacious and housing more British students. Students housed in these facilities are encouraged to befriend the other students in their dorm in order to have people with whom to commute to and from Central London at night.

² Adapted from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/01/25/83/5LifeatKingspp40-49.pdf>

Visiting students usually are offered a place in either a KCL or intercollegiate residence. The majority of KCL residences are self-catered student dormitories and apartments with kitchens that are shared with other students. The KCL and intercollegiate residence halls include cafeteria meals in the contract rate. For more information on accommodations at KCL, see <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/residences/index.aspx>.

King's students have the additional benefits of membership of the University of London and use of the many social and sporting facilities affiliated to the University.

Here are a few examples and descriptions of residences that have housed Wash U students in the past:

Great Dover Street Apartments

Offering accommodation to both postgraduate and undergraduate students, Great Dover Street Apartments is situated within walking distance of Guy's Campus and London Bridge and with easy access to all sites.

Great Dover Street Apartments has 769 rooms within 113 apartments, which are arranged around a courtyard. Each self-catering apartment accommodates between 4 and 9 students and provides en-suite shower and WC facilities and a shared kitchen/diner. Some apartments have been equipped for disabled use. Fridges are provided in all bedrooms and linen is also provided. Residents are responsible for cleaning their own apartments. There are data connections in all bedrooms and there are PAWS and quiet study facilities available. Leisure facilities include a TV room and pool table.

Facilities on site include computer connections in rooms, a PAWS room, quiet study area, common room and a launderette.³

Hampstead Campus

Offering accommodation to both undergraduate and postgraduate students, Hampstead Campus is situated in a residential area in North West London and comprises a number of separate buildings with surrounding grounds.

Rooms are cleaned on a weekly basis and are fitted with washbasins. All rooms have wireless internet connections and buildings have shared bathrooms and kitchens. Individual fridges are available for hire. There are 431 single bedrooms and a number of twin rooms which are allocated to first year undergraduate, non degree students or couples.

Advice from Past Participants

"I loved being at Hampstead. Hampstead's rooms are big for King's. The Stamford Street rooms are about 4 feet by 12 feet. So my room was nice and spacious by that measurement. At Hampstead you get all the fun of being on a freshman floor with, in my opinion, more intelligent, driven and mature people. It's 35-45 minutes from Central London, but I found that being there made me more organized because I had to plan ahead."

-Jonathan King, Fall

³ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/structure/admin/facser/accomm/residences/greatdover.html>

Most of the facilities are mixed but there are a limited number of places on a corridor for female students only.

Facilities include bar, study facilities, PAWS room, music practice room, table tennis, snooker, launderette, television rooms, recreational and social space (regular social activities are organized on site). Access to teaching sites is via bus and/or underground and takes approximately 30-40 minutes.⁴

King's College Hall

Situated within reach of shops at Camberwell and East Dulwich and within walking distance of King's College Hospital and the Institute of Psychiatry. The Hall offers 454 single bedrooms. Most corridors and bathrooms are mixed. During the standard academic semesters, breakfast and evening meals are provided each day plus lunch at weekends. Breakfast only is provided during vacations and no catering is available over Christmas closure or Bank Holidays.

Facilities include a bar, squash courts, snooker, music practice rooms, study room, computer room, television lounge, off-street parking and grounds. This residence is about 10 minutes to Guy's campus and 30 minutes to the Strand Campus and is easily accessible by bus or Tube.

Stamford Street Apartments

Offering accommodation to both postgraduate and undergraduate students, this very popular residence has easy access to all campuses and is much in demand.

There are 548 en-suite single bedrooms, with two rooms suitable for couples and a number of rooms are also equipped for disabled use. The rooms are arranged around a courtyard and within 89 apartments, each accommodating between 4 and 9 students. Rooms have en-suite shower and WC facilities, individual fridges and shared kitchen/diners. Linen is provided, but students will be responsible for keeping their apartment clean. Please note, there are also a few non-standard rooms which have no view from the window, or are of a smaller size. Although Stamford Street is a self-catered hall, the nearby Franklin-Wilkins building offers a pay as you eat refectory.

Facilities provided on site include a launderette, cycle shed and computer connections in bedrooms (requires an Ethernet card to be fitted to your PC). There is also a fitness room on site and a bar, refectory and computer room in the nearby Franklin Wilkins building.⁵

⁴ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/structure/admin/facser/accomm/residences/hampstead.html>

⁵ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/structure/admin/facser/accomm/residences/stamford.html>

Wolfson House

Offering accommodation to both undergraduate and postgraduate students, Wolfson House is situated on the Guys Campus and accommodates 268 students over 15 floors.

Rooms are either grouped in cluster flats, or on traditional corridors with shared facilities. Corridors and bathrooms are mixed. Residents are responsible for cleaning their own rooms, and must provide and launder their own bed linen. Individual fridges are available for hire.

Advice from Past Participants

“I lived at Wolfson House, which is at London bridge in Southbank, a hip new area, not too posh but very lively. Plus, it’s on the Thames which is gorgeous!”

-Kerry Rheinstein, Academic Year

Facilities include a small common room, laundrette, and access to all Guys Campus Facilities, including a bar, refectory, library, PAWS rooms, fitness room, swimming pool and squash court.⁶

Off-Campus Housing

We prefer that all students apply for KCL housing, however some students may not be happy with where they have been placed. These students should decline the housing offer if they prefer to find housing on their own. Please note that these housing options are more expensive than the King’s dormitories and students will not be living with British or KCL students in these options. They are located in Central London and the facilities will be nicer than the KCL dormitories. Here are two possible alternative housing options:

Acorn apartments - triple/twin rooms - flats up to 7 people with two bathrooms.
Fall/Spring rates approx £210 per week per person.

Nido student residence (studio apartments)- the standard rate they are offering now to any student is £175 for a bed in twin share per week and £245 for a single room per week.

For other housing options in London, you can refer to
<http://www.studenthousing.lon.ac.uk/>

⁶ <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/structure/admin/facser/accomm/residences/wolfson.html>

Student Life

At KCL, you will have automatic membership in King's College London Student's Union, or KCLSU for short. KCLSU is run by students for students and represents the interests of all King's students, as well as campaigning on issues that affect students. KCLSU also provides a wide range of recreational, social and welfare services including cafes, bars, nightclubs, shops, and a gym.

See <http://www.kclsu.org/> for a list of societies and club sports available at KCL.⁷

Life in London

As well as participating in activities on the KCL campus, you will undoubtedly be taking the opportunity to explore one of the world's most vibrant cities. London is full of museums and galleries, parks, theaters, markets, restaurants, cafes, and nightlife. All the main national collections are free, including the British Museum, the National Gallery, the Science Museum and the Tate Galleries. Cultural venues also run free events such as lunchtime concerts and exhibitions, so there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the best of London's cultural riches for free. Even if a venue or gallery is not free, there are still many opportunities to enjoy London's activities for less. Always ask about student discounts at tourist spots. Sometimes they are not advertised (for example, at the Tower of London, movie cinemas, playhouses, and Top Shop). Bring along or buy a London guide, or visit <http://www.visitlondon.com/> for ideas on fun places to go.⁸

As in any large city, it is essential that you take care with all aspects of security in central London. Some general tips on safety and security:

- Leave your North Face gear at home as it identifies you as American and makes you an easier target for pick-pocketing.
- Don't carry around large amounts of cash, and try to avoid wearing expensive jewelry and clothes.
- **Always** pay attention when you are in large, crowded areas such as busy streets, the Underground, buses, and pubs. Guys: Carry your wallet inside your front coat pocket. Girls: Do the same or have a purse you can sling across your body.
- **Do not** give strangers or even casual friends your address and try to avoid telling them you are a student and letting them know your timetable.
- Keep your flat door locked at all times, and do not leave windows open or unlocked.
- When going out at night, travel in groups and be aware of your surroundings. Walk confidently. If using the Underground late at night, sit in the carriage behind the driver at the front, or sit in a carriage with four or more groups or individuals.⁹
- Always maintain physical contact with your purse. Every semester WU students have purses snatched because they left them on the back of their chair or under the table while out to eat.

⁷ Adapted from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/01/25/83/5LifeatKingspp40-49.pdf>

⁸ Adapted from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/01/25/83/4LifeinLondonpp30-39.pdf>

⁹ Adapted from *ACCENT International Anglo-American Handbook*

Communication

Telephone

Many students choose to purchase a cell phone abroad, which is usually cheaper than enabling your U.S. phone to work internationally. Mobile World has a pay-as-you-go system, in which students can purchase a phone and then “top up” (add money) as it is used. All plans differ, so find the one that works best for you. Keep in mind that making calls in England can be expensive, and so most people chose to text instead of call.

Another option is the use of phone cards and public telephones. Phone cards are valued at different amounts in £2, £5, and £10. These can be purchased from newsagents, post offices, and supermarkets.

Internet and Email

Each campus and residency and King’s College London is equipped with wireless internet capabilities, as well as a network of computer labs available for student use. If you are living in private accommodation and you own a laptop or computer with internet capabilities, you have a multitude of service providers to choose from within the UK, such as Tiscali and Virgin Media.

While on campus, if you have an questions or problems, Information on how to contact Information Services & Systems is available here: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/iss/library/enquiry/index.html>. King’s College London provides free email accounts for all students.¹⁰

Skype

Skype allows you to make calls from your computer to anywhere in the world. Skype calls are free between Skype accounts, and can also make calls to landlines and cell phones. For more information, go to <http://www.skype.com/>.

¹⁰ Adapted from <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/content/1/c6/01/25/83/4LifeinLondonpp30-39.pdf>

Transportation and Travel

Getting There

You will arrange your travel to England independently. In setting a return date, bear in mind that you must remain for your last scheduled exam – that is, **early exams are not allowed**. You should not ask your lecturers for special exam dates. Spring semester participants will not find out their exam schedule until mid-March, so we advise students to plan to be in London through the last day of exams as a precaution.

You might use STA Travel (<http://www.statravel.com>), which specializes in student travel, or consult another travel agency. You can also use online booking systems like <http://www.expedia.com> or <http://travelocity.com>. You can also work directly with an airline (especially if you have access to frequent flyer miles). **Pay careful attention to the restrictions. Lowest fares tend to be both non-refundable and unchangeable.**

Note: Overseas Programs will reimburse you for up to £30 for transportation from the airport to your KCL housing. Save your receipts and give them to ACCENT London at your orientation for a reimbursement.

Upon arrival at London's Heathrow or Gatwick Airports, you have several options for getting to your assigned KCL housing, as follows:

1) Most expensive and easiest option: **Taxi**

Depending on what time you arrive, you may have a long taxi ride stuck in rush-hour traffic, which will significantly increase your fare. Regular fares from Heathrow to central London are estimated at £50 or \$100 US.

2) Intermediate option: **Hotel Shuttle**

You can take a shuttle from Heathrow to hotels in central London, and then take a taxi from the hotel to your KCL housing. See <http://www.skyshuttle.co.uk/> for details.

3) Cheapest but “hard to manage with luggage” option: **Tube/Train**

You can take the tube directly from Heathrow into central London for just a few pounds, but you will need to change lines and many downtown tube stations do not have escalators. There is a train in from Gatwick and you can take a cab from the London terminus to your KCL housing.

Getting Around

The Tube is the easiest method for traveling around London; it reaches nearly every area of the central city and usually runs very efficiently. London also has an extensive bus system. For maps, fares and, timetables, see <http://www.tfl.gov.uk>.

While in London, it is extremely helpful to keep a street and Tube map with you. For navigating the Underground system, you can pick up a mini Tube map from any Tube station. When using public transportation, remember that trains begin running at about

6:00 am each day and last trains leave between midnight and 12:30 am. They may stop running a little earlier on Sunday nights.

Many students choose to purchase an Oyster Card, a card that can store up to £90 which allows you to pay-as-you-go on the Tube, tram, buses, Docklands Light Railway (DLR), London Overground, and some National Rail services in London. In general, single trips purchased with the card are cheaper, and the Oyster Card also has daily price capping, which prevents you from ever spending more than the cost of a day travel card in a single day.

Advice from Past Participants

“95% of the time, you should only buy a plan that covers Zones 1 and 2 of the city. The areas of Zone 3-6 are the suburbs. If you need to go out to Heathrow Airport, which is in Zone 6, you can go to one of the Assistance stands and ask to add the proper amount to the Oyster card for a trip to Heathrow.”

-Laura Geggel, Spring

The London Transport area is divided into six zones. For the most part, you only need to buy a Travelcard for zones 1 and 2 as all King’s campuses and residences are located within these.¹¹ Keep your travel pass with you for the entire trip on the Tube or buses, as you may be checked by security officers. The fine is £20 if you are checked and cannot produce a ticket or pass.

Also, keep in mind that some Underground stations do not have escalators, so avoid bringing heavy bags on the subway. Some traveler-packed stations *may* have workers near stairs to help you with your bags.

Other Travel

London is well situated for travel to just about anywhere; nearly every airline passes through one of its four airports and there are also many trains available. Consider getting an International Student Identity Card (ISIC), which will entitle you to discounts on a range of services, including travel. See www.isic.org for details.

Advice from Past Participants

“Cheap flights are easy to find to most destinations. Railpasses are great for longer stretches of traveling, although many of those don’t include the UK. Backpacking tours are good if you’re traveling alone, since they’re usually geared towards people in their 20’s and take care of many of the planning details for you.”

-Laura Geggel, Spring

“I liked to stay in London. I wanted to really live in the city and not worry about travelling.”

-Allison Alberts, Spring

Before You Go

Packing Tips

KCL will not provide you with bedding or kitchen utensils (if you are in self-catered housing). One option is to bring these from home, but to save packing room many students chose to buy linens, bedding and utensils upon their arrival. Students recommend **Primark** for inexpensive household goods.

Also, be aware that many US toiletries brands are available in England, but not all are. If you are brand-specific, bring the toiletries you will need with you; otherwise, it's a good idea to save the space and buy once you arrive.

Advice from Past Participants

"A good rain/winter coat is important in London, as are shoes you can walk in for long distances. The weather can vary a lot in a single day, so the best idea is to bring clothes you can layer easily."

-Laura Ingwer, Academic Year

Here are some suggestions and tips for what to bring:

- Work around a basic scheme of coordinated colors to minimize the number of clothing items you bring with you
- Wash-and-wear shirts
- Sturdy, comfortable pair of walking shoes that have been well broken in
- Adapter plugs (if you plan to use US appliances)
- Laptop computer if you have one; you can buy an inexpensive adaptor cord at an electronics store
- Alarm clock (wind-up or battery-powered/extra batteries)
- Umbrella or raincoat
- If you wear contact lenses, you should take your eye care products with you
- Prescription medicine – enough to cover your entire stay, and bring a copy of your prescription and a letter from your doctor outlining your medical condition and the medication required just in case you run out
- You may wish to take along a few small token gifts; something typically American or representative of the area in which you live in the U.S.
- Some students recommend that you leave room in your bags when you go so you'll have more room on the way home
- Make sure each piece of luggage (even carry-on) has an address tag. It is also a good idea to put a copy of your address inside each piece of luggage.
- Finally, before you leave home, make sure you can comfortably carry all of your luggage at one time (try it for 15 minutes)

Vocabulary

Popular British Dishes

Savory Foods

Black Pudding – Sausage made from blood and cows fat.

Bubble and Squeak – Patties made with leftover cabbage, potatoes and vegetables and then fried.

Cornish Pastry – Pastry case stuffed with meat and folded over.

English Breakfast = The traditional English breakfast is not really eaten very much anymore, but you may see it on menus. It normally consists of sausage, bacon, fried eggs, mushroom and tomato. You may also see black pudding on the side.

Fish and Chips = Perhaps the most famous dish from the UK, the dish consists of fish deep fried in batter and “chips” (French fries).

Haggis – Traditional Scottish dish made with sheep’s stomach.

Ploughman’s = Traditionally a farmer’s lunch but now popular in pubs and restaurants. Consists of cheese, bread, Branston pickle, and maybe a pork pie.

Pork Pie – Heavy meat pie.

Sausage Roll – Minced sausage in a light pastry case.

Scotch Egg – Hard-boiled egg wrapped in minced pork and breadcrumbs

Shepherd’s Pie = Minced beef or lamb in gravy topped with mashed potatoes and baked in the oven.

Steak and Kidney Pudding – Steak and kidney in thick gravy encased in a suet pudding.

Sunday Lunch = Previously, it was a custom for families to have a large meal at lunchtime on Sundays. It normally consists of roast meat (pork, beef or lamb), Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes, roast parsnips, peas and carrots, all covered with gravy.

Toad in the Hole – Yorkshire pudding with sausage baked into it.

Yorkshire Pudding – Savory batter pudding made with eggs, flour and milk.

Sweet Foods

Bread and Butter Pudding – Made with leftover or stale bread, which is buttered, soaked with milk, and then raisins and sugar are added. It is then baked and served hot.

Cream Tea – Scones with jam and clotted cream (thick yellow cream) normally served with other small cakes and possibly sandwiches.

Fruit Crumble – Stewed fruit topped with a crumble mix made out of butter, flour, sugar and water.

Mince Pies – Pastry cases enclosing a sweet mix of dried fruits, and mince.

Spotted Dick – Sponge pudding filled with raisins.

Treacle Pudding – Sponge pudding topped with treacle (dark sugar syrup) and steamed

Trifle – Sponge biscuits, jelly and fruit topped with custard and whipped cream. Often contains sherry.

Victoria Sponge – Two sponge cakes layered with jam.

Basic Foods

aubergine = eggplant

bap = a soft, round, floury bun for sandwiches

biscuits = cookies

chips = French Fries

courgettes = zucchini

crisps = potato chips

crumpet = a doughy, slightly salty breakfast pastry the size of an English muffin

digestives = a wheat biscuit, often dipped in chocolate

flapjacks = not pancakes, but a sweet square of baked oats, often with a sweet condiment mixed in

juicy bits = pulp (i.e. in orange juice)

mangetout = snow peas

marmite = a salty, sour spread made from yeast and pickles

mince = ground beef

pudding = dessert

sultanas = raisins made with white grapes

Shopping/Home

bin = trashcan

blitz = to dry clothes using an electric dryer

fabric conditioner = fabric softener

flat = apartment

jumper = sweater/sweatshirt

pants = underwear

plastic = a Band-Aid

Tipp-Ex = correction tape

trainers = athletic shoes

trolley = a shopping cart

trousers = pants

washing up liquid = dishwashing liquid

Getting Around

car park = parking lot

cashpoint = ATM

chemist = pharmacy

lift = elevator

loo = toilet (informal)

mind the gap = watch your step

queue = line

quid = pounds

stalls = orchestra seats in a theater

ta/cheers = thank you

Uni = University

WC = "water closet"; bathroom

Useful Websites

British Government Website for Visa Services: <http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/>

British Embassy in the USA: <http://www.britainusa.com/>

International Student Identity Card: www.isic.org

FAQ's For New Students: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/abroad/atkins/holders/faqs-for-new-students.aspx>

KCL Accommodation Office:
<http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/residences/Contact/Contact.aspx>

KCL Campus Maps: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/campuslife/campuses/download/index.aspx>

KCL Information Services and Systems: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/iss/>

KCL International Office: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/international>

KCL Student Union: <http://www.kclsu.org>

London Tourist Information: <http://www.visitlondon.com>

Skype: <http://www.skype.com/>

Transport for London (Public Transportation Information): <http://www.tfl.gov.uk>