

STUDY ABROAD HANDBOOK

*United Kingdom*



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**Section 1: General Study Abroad  
Info**

**Section 2: Country-Specific Info**

**Section 3: Program-Specific Info**

# **Section 1**

## **General Study Abroad Information**

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# **OFFICE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Office of Global Education and Partnerships promotes the internationalization of the university community so that Millersville may realize its mission to:

- Prepare its students to live in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society
- Offer a curriculum that is rich and multifaceted
- Serve as a model of a pluralistic community and by providing leadership in this regard to the greater community.

Global Education fulfills this mandate by:

- Championing borderless learning and exchange of ideas by promoting institutional development to achieve these ends;
- Encouraging MU students, faculty, administrators and staff to communally embrace a vision of a globally connected campus through dissemination of information, coordination and support.
- Welcoming international students and scholars and ensuring an enriching and successful stay at Millersville by providing consistently professional logistical support and counseling where appropriate.
- Developing, operating and maintaining a comprehensive, cost-effective education abroad program (study, interning and service-learning) that meets the highest levels of professional and academic integrity and adheres to recognized “best practices” in the field;
- Organizing globally focused programming of benefit to the MU campus as well as the public and private sectors in the wider community.

## **NOTES ABOUT THE OFFICE**

The Office of Global Education has been administering study abroad programs since 1989. It is a full time office dedicated to international mobility of students and faculty, including study abroad and is staffed by individuals with several decades of combined international education experience.

### ***ROLE OF GLOBAL EDUCATION***

- Support students through pre-departure, study abroad and re-entry stages in partnership with partner institution and MU offices related to:
  - MU paperwork processing
  - Partner institution paperwork processing
  - Legal matters (passports, visas)
  - Insurance issues
  - Travel information related to study abroad experience
  - Housing and board arrangements (program dependent)

- Academic course selection and equivalencies process
- Medical, counseling and academic support where needed
- Cost information related to Financial Aid
- Program billing (program dependent)
- Issues at study abroad destination that cannot be solved “locally”
- Dormitory housing upon return
- Transcript processing after return
- Resolution of other outstanding study abroad issues upon return (academically, financially, etc.)

### **LIMITS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION**

- Address academic issues between study abroad participants and their advisors
  - TAP #s
  - Course changes/course equivalents
- Directly make flight arrangements
- Advise on housing, travel or other arrangements outside of formal study abroad program
- Address questions related to specific financial aid issues
- Assist students with program issues when Global Ed is not “kept in the loop” through regular communication with student
- Provide instant responses on non-emergency questions or routine matters

## **GETTING READY TO GO – DOCUMENTS/PAPERWORK**

### **PASSPORT**



The passport is your official identification as a citizen of the United States. It will be checked upon entering or leaving the United States or any foreign country as well as upon various other occasions that require official identification. All students going abroad need to have a passport. After you obtain your passport, be sure to sign on the signature line, make a photocopy of the record page (with your picture on it) and put it somewhere safe. It is suggested to take a copy of it with you abroad and keep it in a safe place. You may also want to keep a photocopy of your birth certificate and social security card with each photocopy of your passport. This is very helpful should your passport get stolen or become lost as it is a hassle to get your passport replaced. Take good care of this document.

**For more information and to download forms please see**  
[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

### **IF YOU LOSE YOUR PASSPORT**

Loss or theft of a valid passport should be reported immediately. You must contact your nearest US Embassy or Consulate. For locations and further instructions reference <http://www.usembassy.gov/>. This will provide country specific instructions on how to proceed.

## **SMART TRAVELER ENROLLMENT PROGRAM (STEP)**

The U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, or STEP, is an invaluable resource for American citizens abroad. The State Department developed this program to better aid American citizens in emergency situations. By registering with the STEP program, you will receive updates, information, and travel warnings via email from the U.S. Embassy regarding your host country while you are abroad. The contact information you provide through this registration process allows the State Department to better assist you should an emergency arise. All students going abroad for academic credit are required to enroll in this program as part of the pre-departure paperwork process.

## **DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD TAKE**

### **GENERAL DOCUMENTS**

- Passport\*
- Visa (if applicable)\*
- Flight Itinerary/Confirmation\*
- International Student Identity Card (ISIC)\*
- Insurance Card(s) - detailed company and insurer information\*
- Photocopies of credit cards\*

### **MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS**

- Copy of your Study Abroad Resident Credits Form (course selection with MU equivalencies)
- Updated DARS (Degree Audit Report)
- General Ed/major/minor curriculum sheets for reference
- Academic advisor and department chair's names, addresses, emails, and phone numbers in case you need to contact them while abroad.
- This handbook\*



### **HOST INSTITUTION DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS**

- Acceptance letter\*
- Visa materials (if applicable)\*
- Relevant accommodation information and directions\*
- Host university's international student guides/handbooks (if available)\*

\* *Items to be taken in **carry-on** or on your person during travel, not in checked luggage.*

## **POWER OF ATTORNEY**



We suggest that you make arrangements with someone to give them power of attorney (POA) while you are gone. This enables the designated person



to have access to your accounts – deposit and withdrawal - and they are able to sign on your behalf. For MU, Power of Attorney may be necessary for the Financial Aid appeal process. Declaring a POA comes in handy as often applications, appeals and checks for financial aid must be signed and returned by a certain date which could be while you are abroad and your POA could sign on your behalf. (See “While Abroad – Financial Aid” for more information.)

The student seeking power of attorney can write up their own statement stating who is assuming the duties of power of attorney and have it notarized. This can be arranged through any lawyer or public notary. (Notary services are conveniently available at 2 locations on Millersville’s campus; the Purchasing Office and the Student Programs Office. Feel free to contact these offices for more information.)

The requirements to prove a person has power of attorney can vary by the organization or agency that is requesting the proof. It is best that you or your POA inquire directly with the agency as to what their policies are regarding this matter. It may be in your best interest to obtain several **original** copies of the notarized statement because your POA might be required to send originals with each POA signature.

Below is an example of the format for a power of attorney statement:

*I, (name of student), hereby grant power of attorney to my (state relationship), (name of person), for the following time span: (list dates of study abroad).*

*(Student signature)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of person assuming power of attorney)* \_\_\_\_\_

## **HEALTH ISSUES**

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS**

Information for travelers on health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues can be obtained from local health departments, private doctors, travel clinics or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. More information on the CDC can found at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

For local services in Lancaster, you may contact Passport Health. Passport Health is a national network of independently owned and operated Travel Health and Immunization Clinics. They provide information, immunizations and consultation for international travel.

<http://www.passporthealthusa.com/locations/pa/monroeville/154/>

Phone: 1-888-474-8907

In Lancaster:

150 Farmington Lane  
Suite 201  
Lancaster, PA 17601

Another web site that may be helpful is [www.travelersvaccines.com](http://www.travelersvaccines.com).

Consider all travel plans when researching health precautions, immunizations and areas with specific health issues so you can be fully prepared for your time abroad whether in or outside of your host city and country.

## MEDICATIONS

### **BEFORE YOU GO**

- Students should consider getting check-ups pre-departure for general wellness, vision, and dental.
- Prescription Considerations
  - Be aware that some commonly prescribed medications in the U.S., such as prescriptions for ADHD, may be considered illegal controlled substances in other countries. Check with the customs authority or local embassy of your host country, if this applies to you, to determine local laws.
  - Obtain a clearly written prescription as well as a letter from your physician fully explaining the use of your medication, including the generic name of the drug. Customs officials may want to see this, and should you require any additional prescriptions while abroad, the pharmacy there will require this information.
  - Plan how you will supply yourself the amount of your prescription(s) needed while abroad. You may want to pack enough for the entire period of time, especially if you have medication that has been specifically made for you, such as allergy serum; however getting prescriptions and carrying them in large amounts can be an issue with certain insurance companies and/or customs' officials.
  - If you wear glasses and/or contacts, take along your lens prescription and, if possible, an extra pair of glasses and/or an ample supply of contacts.

### **WHILE ABROAD**

- We do not recommend buying medications "over the counter", unless you are familiar with the product. Keep in mind, "over the counter" drugs abroad are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.
- All medications should be carried in their original containers and clearly labeled, throughout your travels.

## INSURANCE



Health insurance coverage abroad is mandatory for MU study abroad participants and for Non-MU students participating in MU programs.

### **Important Notes About International Health Insurance:**

- Should medical attention be required while abroad, understand that you will often pay out of pocket for medical services and submit a claim to your insurance company to be reimbursed.
- It is important to have access to funds to pay for out of pocket medical costs as most insurance companies do not pay international medical providers. The cost

is on you to pay upfront. The Office of Global Education recommends having a credit card available to pay for an emergency medical situation.

- Before departing for your experience abroad, you should contact your primary insurance provider to determine if your insurance covers you internationally. If so, you want to know the details of your coverage while abroad and the claims process. It is much more helpful to have this information before a medical issue occurs.
- Your ISIC insurance through April Travel Protection is supplemental insurance to your primary provider in the U.S. If you do not have insurance here in the U.S., or your primary provider does not cover you while abroad, your ISIC insurance is your primary coverage when studying abroad.

### ***INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD (ISIC)***

(This information is taken from STA Travel, the issuing agency of the ISIC and is therefore subject to change.)

Millersville University policy requires that you purchase a Basic International Student Identity Card (ISIC) valid for the duration of your program abroad. The card is required due to the coverage it provides in certain emergency situations and for the many benefits provided to ISIC/ITIC cardholders such as:

- Medical/Health Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Discounts

Additionally, ISICs may also be recognized as an official form of student identification.

### ***ISIC INSURANCE***

The ISIC Basic provides the minimum health and travel insurance coverage recommended for traveling abroad. ISIC also offers Premium & Explorer options which provide a higher level of health and travel insurance coverage as well as other benefits. Health insurance for both the ISIC Basic and the ISIC Premium is administered by April Travel Protection. [www.AprilTravelProtection.com](http://www.AprilTravelProtection.com)

Should you decide that you require additional health insurance coverage beyond the ISIC Basic and do not wish to purchase the ISIC Premium or ISIC Explorer, other independent international health insurance providers are available to you. You will need to research these options on your own. Please note, however, that you will still be required to purchase the ISIC Basic for its other benefits.

***NOTE for NON-MU programs:*** Some Non-MU programs require or include health and travel insurance. If this is the case, this insurance must be approved by your program coordinator at the Office of Global Education to determine if it is or is not necessary for you to purchase the ISIC Basic plan. Non-MU program participants must provide your program coordinator with the details of your NON-MU insurance coverage, (meaning Global Education needs to see what the insurance covers you for and up to how much). Your program coordinator will review your program's coverage and make sure it is at least comparable to the ISIC Basic.

- If your coverage is not adequate, MU requires you to purchase at least the ISIC Basic plan by completing the registration form and submitting it with payment to the Office of Global Education.
- If your coverage is approved, you must submit proof of having the insurance coverage through your Non-MU program provider, such as a letter from the insurance company or a copy of your insurance card. Additionally, if you choose your Non-MU program's insurance provider, it is your responsibility to be familiar with the specifics of their coverage, emergency hotline numbers and the procedure to make a claim.

### **SEEKING IN-NETWORK PROVIDERS**

Before you depart, *it is **strongly recommended** that you contact April Travel Protection and/or your independent health insurance provider to determine a list of network providers within your study abroad destination area.* If you do any traveling for an extended amount of time, you may also want to consider obtaining a list of providers within your travel destinations. It is always best to contact April Travel Protection **prior** to seeking medical attention, if possible, to determine the closest in-network medical facility and so that they can arrange an appointment with the physician's office on your behalf.

### **COVERAGE DETAILS**

April Travel Protection provides a letter showing proof of ISIC-related health insurance coverage. This proof of coverage will be emailed to you from The Office of Global Education to keep for your records and/or for use with your student visa application.

**Review the chart below for a breakdown of ISIC coverage benefits:**

<b>Coverage</b>	<b>BASIC</b> (min. required)	<b>PREMIUM</b>	<b>EXPLORER</b>
ISIC Card Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Multi-Trip Insurance Validity	1 Year	1 Year	1 Year
Trip Cancellation	NA	NA	\$3000
Trip Interruption	NA	\$1500	\$3000
Trip Delay/ Per Day	\$250/\$100	\$500/\$200	\$500/\$200
Emergency Medical Evacuation & Repatriation (included emergency reunion assistance)	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Repatriation of Remains	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Accident and Sickness Medical Expenses	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Emergency Dental/ Deductible	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0	\$500/\$0
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip	\$1,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Accidental Death/Dismemberment – Entire Trip Common Carrier Air Only	\$5,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Baggage and Personal Effects (If lost or stolen)	NA	\$2,000	\$2,500
Baggage Delay (Minimum of 12 Hours)	\$100	\$200	\$200
Adventure Sports	NA	NA	Included
Mental Health	NA	Included	Included
24/7 Travel/Medical Assistance Services	Included	Included	Included
Non-Medical Emergency Evacuation due to Catastrophe	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
Security and Political Evacuation	NA	\$50,000	\$50,000
<b>Price:</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$95</b>	<b>\$200</b>

## **Additional Information about Coverage: 24-Hour Emergency Assistance Services**

- Emergency travel assistance services are provided by April Travel Protection. If you need assistance, you can call toll free 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at one of these telephone numbers:
- Within the USA Toll Free: (855) 743-6739
- Outside the USA Collect: (305) 455-1571
- Assistance Email: [assistus@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:assistus@apriltravelprotection.com)

### **Assistant Services:**

#### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION & REPATRIATION**

- Medical Transport
- Dispatch of a Physician or Specialist
- Transportation of a Family Member
- Escort Services
- Repatriation of Remains

#### **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES**

- Medical & Dental Referrals
- Medical Case Management & Monitoring
- Coordinate Hospital Admission & Discharge
- Vaccination Recommendations & Precautions
- Prescriptions Replacement

#### **TRAVEL ASSISTANCE**

- Telephone Interpretation Service
- General Travel Assistance & Information
- Pre-Trip & Cultural Information
- Emergency Cash & Bail Assistance
- International Claims Assistance
- Lost Luggage Assistance
- Lost Document Assistance
- Urgent Message Relay
- Legal Referrals

*There may be times when circumstances beyond April Travel Protection control hinder its endeavors to provide services. April Travel Protection will, however, make all reasonable efforts to provide such services and help you resolve the emergency situation.*

*April Travel Protection will not provide any services when the U.S. or other applicable trade or economic sanctions, laws or regulations prohibit April Travel Protection from providing such services, including, but not limited to, the payment of any claims. Accordingly, no services will be provided in connection with travel to Cuba and such services may be limited and/or delayed, or prohibited, in other countries.*

## ***PURCHASED A BASIC OR PREMIUM ISIC AND WANT TO UPGRADE TO A PREMIUM OR EXPLORER?***

You can upgrade to an ISIC Premium or Explorer by contacting The Office of Global Education via email or by coming into the office. In order to upgrade, you need to submit payment for the cost difference of what plan you purchased versus which plan you would like to upgrade to. This can be done in the form of cash, check, or money order payable to Millersville University.

**If you are considering upgrading your ISIC card, note that you may only upgrade PRIOR to departing the US.**

## ***SUBMITTING A CLAIM***

Follow the directions below to submit a claim to April Travel Protection (ISIC). If you have other primary insurance that covers you abroad, such as your parent's health insurance or insurance through your employer, April Travel Protection will require you to make a claim with your primary insurance first and then submit the remaining costs to April Travel Protection. Note that April Travel Protection must receive written communication within 90 days after a covered loss occurs:

### **1. Request an Insurance Claim Form**

Call or email using the contact information below to request an Insurance Claim Form & inquire about the required documentation given your coverage (Basic, Premium, and Explorer).

### **2. Provide the Required Documentation**

After you complete your claim form, provide the supporting documentation needed to complete the claim process.

-Trip Delay: Obtain specific dated documents which provide proof of the reason for delay (airline or cruise line forms, medical statements, etc. Submit this documentation along with your trip itinerary and all receipts for expenses incurred.)

-Medical Expenses: Obtain receipts from the providers of services, etc., stating the amount paid and listing the diagnosis and treatment; submit these first to other medical plans. Provide a copy of *their* final disposition of your claim.

-Baggage: Obtain statement from the common carrier that your baggage was delayed or a police report showing your baggage was stolen along with copies of the receipts for your purchases.

Report your claim to April Travel Protection at one of these telephone numbers:

Within the USA: Toll Free: (855)-743-6739

Outside the USA: Collect: (305) 455-1571

Email for claims: [Claims@apriltravelprotection.com](mailto:Claims@apriltravelprotection.com)

Claims Address:  
**April Travel Protection**  
**11900 Biscayne Blvd**  
**Miami FL 33181, USA**

All benefits will be paid in United States Dollars.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU LOSE YOUR CARD**

You are still covered under the insurance benefits for the validity period of the card; however if you wish to use the card to receive discounts and/or as a form of international ID, you will need to locate an ISIC issuing office close to you to purchase a replacement card. Contact ISIC to assist you with locating an ISIC issuing office.

The insurance benefits that come with an ISIC are only offered on cards issued in the US; therefore, you will not have double insurance coverage by purchasing a replacement card.

Keep your receipt should you get a new card and you can submit a claim to get reimbursed for the lost/stolen card.

## **LUGGAGE/U.S. CUSTOMS**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Airlines or travel agencies should be able to inform you of the latest policies affecting luggage limitations. Each airline has its own restrictions/requirements regarding checked luggage and carry on items. Excess luggage can be very expensive. Remember that luggage should be small enough to go up narrow stairways, go down train aisles, and fit on luggage racks. You may wish to use a backpack as your second piece of luggage for ease and flexibility while traveling. You should label your luggage on the outside, and it is recommended that you also include a name and address label inside your locked luggage as well.

### **TSA ACCEPTED AND RECOGNIZED LOCKS**



Company logos for *Travel Sentry* and *Safe Skies*

The vendors above, Travel Sentry and Safe Skies, have an arrangement with TSA to supply TSA “accepted and recognized” locks. TSA screeners have tools for opening

and re-locking luggage locks with either of these logos, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

Please check the web sites below for more information on TSA Accepted and Recognized Locks.

Travel Sentry: <http://www.travelsentry.org/>

Safe Skies: [www.safeskieslocks.com](http://www.safeskieslocks.com)

## CARRY-ON RESTRICTIONS

***Due to increased security at airports worldwide, the following restrictions have taken effect. Please read carefully.***

**3-1-1** for carry-ons = **3** ounce bottle or less; **1** quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; **1** bag per passenger placed in screening bin. A one-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3 oz. container size restriction is a security measure.



Consolidate bottles into one bag and X-ray separately to speed screening. Be prepared. Each time TSA searches a carry-on it slows down the line. Practicing 3-1-1 will ensure a faster and easier checkpoint experience.

3-1-1 is for short trips. **If in doubt, put your liquids in checked luggage.**

Declare larger liquids. Prescription medications, baby formula and milk are allowed in quantities exceeding three ounces and are not required to be in the zip-top bag. Declare these items for inspection at the checkpoint.

Be aware, heavy travel volumes and the enhanced security process may mean longer lines at security checkpoints.

**Note:** These requirements are being strictly enforced. You must bring your own plastic bag as none are available in the airport. You will already have checked your other luggage so **anything that does not meet the requirements will be thrown away/confiscated.**

## U.S. CUSTOMS UPON RE-ENTRY



As you pass through the United States, or any other country, you will have to go through a customs inspection. United States residents are permitted to bring into the U.S. \$800 worth of foreign souvenirs and gifts provided that:

- The goods are for personal use or will be given as gifts
- They are in your possession (goods shipped are excluded from the \$800 exemption)



- They have been declared to U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- You have been abroad for at least 48 hours
- You have not utilized the \$800 exemption within a 30-day period preceding re-entry
- The articles are not prohibited by law

Examples of articles specifically prohibited by law are:

- Narcotics, dangerous drugs, or drug paraphernalia
- Obscene articles and publications
- Seditious and treasonable materials
- Hazardous materials- fireworks, toxic or poisonous substances
- Absinthe (a common European Wormwood and a green liqueur flavored with wormwood)
- Switchblade knives
- Endangered species and products made from them may not be brought into the United States. The penalty is confiscation and a possible fine.

You will be assessed an import duty based on 3% of the value for anything in the \$800 to \$1,800 range. Import duty varies according to the nature of the articles when you go over \$1,800.

### **Some Helpful Small Print about Customs**

Articles acquired abroad and in your possession at the time of your return to the United States must be declared to Customs officials in writing. Declaration forms will be distributed to you by the flight attendants on your flight and should be completed immediately to avoid the last-minute hassle at Immigration and Customs. Your declaration must include, in addition to the gifts and souvenirs you purchased while you were abroad, any items that you are bringing back to another person on their request, alterations or repair of articles taken abroad, and gifts given to you while you were abroad. Wearing or using an article acquired abroad does not exempt it from duties, and it must be declared at the price you paid for it, although Customs agents may make a reduction in value due to the use or wear of the article. To avoid misunderstandings, it would be wise for you to retain receipts for any purchases that you make while abroad. You must declare the price actually paid for an article. If you do not know the price, say so. If an article was not purchased (i.e. a gift), state its fair market price. Personal belongings of U.S. origin taken abroad may be sent back by mail duty-free if, on the outside packaging, it is stated that the articles were taken out of the U.S. as personal effects and are being returned without having been repaired or altered while abroad ("American Goods Returned").

If you expect to carry a foreign-made item (i.e., an expensive camera, a watch, etc.) with you out of the United States, you may be subject to duty on those items when you return to the U.S., unless you have acceptable proof of prior possession. Documents that fully describe the article, such as a bill of sale or an insurance policy, may be considered "as acceptable proof". Items, which may be readily identified by serial

number or permanently affixed markings, may be registered with the Customs officials prior to departure.

## **LAW AND SECURITY ISSUES ABROAD**

This section was obtained from the US State Department website at:  
<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

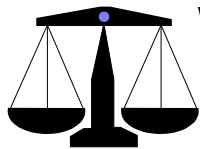
When you travel abroad, the odds are you will have a safe and incident-free trip. Travelers can, however, become victims of crime and violence, or experience unexpected difficulties. No one is better able to tell you this than the U.S. consular officers who work in more than 250 U.S. embassies and consulates around the globe. Every day of the year, U.S. embassies and consulates receive calls from American citizens in distress.

Happily, most problems can be solved over the phone or with a visit to the Consular Section of the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. There are other occasions, however, when U.S. consular officers are called upon to help U.S. citizens who are in foreign hospitals or prisons, or to assist the families of U.S. citizens who have passed away overseas.

We have prepared the following travel tips to help you avoid serious difficulties during your time abroad.

### **THE LAW ABROAD**

#### **LOCAL LAWS AND CUSTOMS**



When you leave the United States, you are subject to the laws of the country you are visiting. Therefore, before you go, learn as much as you can about the local laws and customs of the places you plan to visit. Good resources are your library, your travel agent, and the embassies, consulates or tourist bureaus of the countries you will visit. In addition, keep track of what is being reported in the media about recent developments in those countries.

Familiarize yourself with legal expectations in the countries you will visit. The [Country Specific Information](#) (This link guides you to another portion of the US State Department Webpage) pages include information on unusual patterns of arrests in particular countries, as appropriate. Again, keep in mind that while you are visiting a foreign country, you are subject to the laws of that country. Legal protection and personal rights that we take for granted in the United States are left behind when you depart. American Embassies and Consulates are limited in the assistance they can provide. They cannot provide you with any financial assistance in paying for legal or medical services, nor can they intervene on your behalf in the administration of justice as seen from the point of view of the host country.

Bail provisions, as we know them in the U.S., are rare in foreign countries. Pretrial detention, without bail, is quite common. Prison conditions are often deplorable in comparison with conditions in the U.S. The principle “innocent until proven guilty” is not necessarily a tenet of the legal system abroad. It should also be stressed that students are subject to the statutes, ordinances and regulations of the host institution.

### ***DRUG VIOLATIONS***

More than one-third of U.S. citizens incarcerated abroad are held on drug charges. Some countries do not distinguish between possession and trafficking, and many have mandatory sentences – even for possession of a small amount of marijuana or cocaine. A number of Americans have been arrested for possessing prescription drugs, particularly tranquilizers and amphetamines that they purchased legally elsewhere. Other U.S. citizens have been arrested for purchasing prescription drugs abroad in quantities that local authorities suspected were for commercial use. If in doubt about foreign drug laws, ask local authorities or the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

### ***POSSESSION OF FIREARMS***

The places where U.S. citizens most often experience difficulties for illegal possession of firearms are nearby – Mexico, Canada and the Caribbean. Sentences for possession of firearms in Mexico can be up to 30 years. In general, firearms, even those legally registered in the U.S., cannot be brought into a country unless a permit is obtained in advance from the embassy or a consulate of that country and the firearm is registered with foreign authorities on arrival. (NOTE: There are also strict rules about bringing firearms or ammunition into the U.S; check with [U.S. Customs](#) before your trip.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

Be cautious when taking pictures. Local authorities in many countries consider all airports, police stations, military locations, oil installations, harbors, mines and bridges to be security-related. Photography of demonstrations or civil disturbances is also usually prohibited. Tourists have had their cameras confiscated and have been detained for trying to take these types of pictures. When in doubt about whether you can take a picture, ask first.

## **SECURITY ISSUES**

### ***PACKING***

Safety begins when you pack. To help avoid becoming a target, do not dress in a way that could mark you as an affluent tourist. Expensive-looking jewelry, for instance, can draw the wrong attention.

Always try to travel light. You can move more quickly and will be more likely to have a free hand. You will also be less tired and less likely to set your luggage down, leaving it unattended.

Generally, it is suggested to carry the minimum number of valuables, and plan places to conceal them. Your passport, cash and credit cards are most secure when locked in a hotel/hostel safe. When you have to carry them on your person, you may wish to put them each in a different place rather than all in one wallet or pouch. Avoid handbags, fanny packs and outside pockets that are easy targets for thieves. Inside pockets and a sturdy shoulder bag with the strap worn across your chest are somewhat safer. One of the safest places to carry valuables is in a pouch or money belt worn under your clothing.

### ***SAFETY ON THE STREET***

Use the same common sense traveling overseas that you would at home. Be especially cautious in (or avoid) areas where you may be more easily victimized. These include crowded subways, train stations, elevators, tourist sites, market places, festivals and crime-ridden neighborhoods.

- Don't use short cuts, narrow alleys or poorly lit streets.
- Try not to travel alone at night.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Keep a low profile and avoid loud conversations or arguments.
- Do not discuss travel plans or other personal matters with strangers.
- Avoid scam artists by being wary of strangers who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- Beware of pickpockets. They often have an accomplice who will:
  - jostle you
  - ask you for directions or the time
  - point to something spilled on your clothing
  - distract you by creating a disturbance.
- Beware of groups of vagrant children who could create a distraction to pick your pocket.
- Wear the shoulder strap of your bag across your chest and walk with the bag away from the curb to avoid drive-by purse-snatchers.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Try to ask for directions only from individuals in authority.
- Know how to use a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand.
- Learn a few phrases in the local language or have them handy in written form so that you can signal your need for police or medical help.
- Make a note of emergency telephone numbers you may need: police, fire, your hotel/hostel, and the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.
- If you are confronted, don't fight back -- give up your valuables.

### ***SAFETY IN YOUR HOTEL/HOSTEL***

- Keep your hotel/hostel door locked at all times. Meet visitors in the lobby.
- Do not leave money and other valuables in your hotel/hostel room while you are out. Use the hotel/hostel safe.
- If you are out late at night, let someone know when you expect to return.

- If you are alone, do not get on an elevator if there is a suspicious-looking person inside.
- Read the fire safety instructions in your hotel/hostel room. Know how to report a fire, and be sure you know where the nearest fire exits and alternate exits are located. (Count the doors between your room and the nearest exit; this could be a lifesaver if you have to crawl through a smoke-filled corridor.)

### ***SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION***

If a country has a pattern of tourists being targeted by criminals on public transport, that information is mentioned in each country's [Country Specific Information](#) in the section about safety and security.

### ***TAXIS***

Only take taxis clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs.

### ***TRAINS***

Well-organized, systematic robbery of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a problem. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.

If you see your way being blocked by a stranger and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.

Do not accept food or drink from strangers. Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers. Criminals may also spray sleeping gas in train compartments. Where possible, lock your compartment. If it cannot be locked securely, take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake. If you must sleep unprotected, tie down your luggage and secure your valuables to the extent possible.

Do not be afraid to alert authorities if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.

### ***BUSES***

The same type of criminal activity found on trains can be found on public buses on popular tourist routes. For example, tourists have been drugged and robbed while sleeping on buses or in bus stations. In some countries, whole busloads of passengers have been held up and robbed by gangs of bandits.

### ***HOW TO HANDLE MONEY SAFELY***

- Do not flash large amounts of money when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- Deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.

If your possessions are lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of what happened.

After reporting missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:

- Credit cards to the issuing company
- Airline tickets to the airline or travel agent
- Passport to the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate

## **JET LAG**



Management of the phenomenon known as "jet lag" or "travel fatigue" begins when you board the plane. You may wish to grab a pillow and blanket from the overhead storage space in order to relax and save your energy on your long flight.

You probably have heard of "jet lag," which is as much a physical phenomenon as much as a psychological one. Your body, through long years of habit, has become acclimated to functioning in accordance with its own physiological clock based on a particular daily cycle.

When you arrive at your study abroad destination, that clock is going to be automatically out of sync with the local cycle because of the time difference. It will take your body a few days to adjust (some bodies take longer than others), during which time you can expect to feel quite tired and run down. This fatigue, in conjunction with the unfamiliar surroundings, customs and language, may produce a temporary sense of depression and "homesickness." It is a perfectly normal reaction and it may not even affect you; however, if it should happen, remember that it will soon pass.

**Although it's difficult to avoid jet lag, a few precautions are worth taking:**

- "Reset" your sleep patterns by going to bed early a few nights before you leave.
- On the plane, sleep as much as you can, and walk and stretch when awake.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, and drink plenty of water in flight.
- On arrival in a new time zone, take a short nap, have a light meal at the appropriate local hour, and perhaps a brief stroll afterward.
- Eat lightly for two or three days.
- Keep the first day's itinerary relaxed.
- Allow at least 24 hours to adjust

## **CULTURE SHOCK**

### **HOW TO COPE WITH CULTURE SHOCK**



With Permission from the Council on International Educational Exchange, we are reprinting the following advice on preparing for successful cultural adaptation. Although you may not encounter difficulties with culture shock, you will certainly have some cultural adjustments to make which will require you to be prepared. Please read this material carefully.

## **PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL CULTURAL ADAPTATION**

The concept of culture shock may be very familiar to you, and any travel, which you have done abroad and perhaps even within your own country will have exposed you to it. However, if it has been quite a while since you have lived abroad, or if you have never lived abroad for a length of time, you will want to do some thinking about both what culture shock is and how you can develop personal strategies for overcoming it. Most people eventually develop their own ways of coping, but since the duration of your stay abroad will be relatively brief and the academic pressures considerable, preparing for adaptation ahead may save you a lot of time and anguish.

## **UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK**

Culture shock has been defined as "...the loss of emotional equilibrium that a person suffers when he moves from a familiar environment where he has learned to function easily and successfully, to one where he has not."<sup>1</sup> The effects of culture shock range from mild uneasiness, homesickness, and unhappiness to panic, severe irritability, and loss of perspective. The basic cause of this syndrome is believed to be the abrupt loss of the familiar, which produces feelings of isolation and diminished self-importance as you find yourself unable to fully interact with the rest of society. It is important that you understand that culture shock is a personal experience, affecting each individual differently.

Since all people undergo psychological as well as physical and social adjustments to new cultures, some knowledge of acculturation may be helpful.

### Stage I

This may be called the "tourist stage," "the honeymoon phase," or the "stage of euphoria." The student is fascinated and thrilled with all that is new and tends to see similarities between the host and the home country. Even difficulties are viewed as novel and interesting.

### Stage II

During this stage, the student will be taking a more active role in his/her setting. This will produce frustration, because of the difficulty in coping with even the most elementary aspects of everyday life. There may be a tendency to overreact to minor frustrations, delays, or inconveniences with irritation or anger out of proportion to the cause. Accomplishing small tasks, such as shopping and making telephone calls, become a major nuisance. The student's focus will turn to the differences between the host and home cultures, and these differences can be troubling. These sometimes-insignificant difficulties can be blown into major catastrophes. Hence, this stage is referred to as "culture shock."

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, Arthur. "How to Cope with Culture Shock," Re-entry Preparation and Integration for Study Abroad. Center for International Education. Cal. State U., Long Beach (1986), pp. 1-6.

### Stage III

The student slowly recovers. Interest in and sensitivity to the new culture and other people emerge. A sense of humor and an ability to joke about new experiences and difficulties return. One is able to accomplish everyday tasks without undue amounts of stress.

### Stage IV

A meaningful understanding of the new environment develops. The student stops assessing the new culture by using his/her own culture as a model and accepts the culture and people for who and what they are—not better or worse, just different. Ideally, the student is able to make the transition between the cultures' value systems and behaviors without internal conflict. The student develops the ability to operate comfortably and effectively between cultures.

### Stage V

The last stage is the re-entry phase, when the student returns home. For some, this is the most painful phase of all! The student will be excited about sharing his/her experiences, he/she will realize that he/she has changed, but he/she will not be able to explain how or why. The student will have acquired different ways of behaving, feeling, and responding to others. One set of values has already been instilled in him/her, another he/she will have acquired in the host country. Both may seem equally valid.

## ***SYMPTOMS OF CULTURE SHOCK***

Health care providers, exchange program coordinators, academic advisors, and all staff involved in international educational exchange need to understand the phenomenon of culture shock and the impact it can have on a student's personal life and educational experience. A person passing through of acculturation may experience some of the following symptoms:

- feelings of helplessness and a dependence on compatriots
- homesickness
- greater irritation than appropriate when things go wrong
- a fear of being cheated, injured, or robbed
- excessive concern about physical pains or skin eruptions
- a strong desire to be home with one's own people who understand them
- reluctance or refusal to learn the language of the country
- insomnia or fatigue
- excessive concern for cleanliness
- loss of appetite
- loneliness
- poor concentration
- headaches
- stomach problems
- withdrawal from the host culture
- depression



## **OVERCOMING CULTURE SHOCK**

Just as your experience of culture shock will be individual and personal, you will need to deal with it in an individualized personal way. In adopting the following suggestions and developing your own strategies, an important thing to keep in mind is that while you should only expect yourself to tackle the symptoms and cause of culture shock in stages, confronting rather than avoiding them will help you to adapt much faster and more effectively. The following ideas are drawn from the experience of past participants (and the sources listed under *Recommended Reading* below):

- *Resolve any personal and family problems before you leave.*  
While you may think that by going abroad you will be escaping pre-existing problems, they will only follow you and be exacerbated by the especially stressful time of adapting to a new culture. Resolving personal problems before you leave home will make you more emotionally free to deal with the stresses of your new environment.
- *Learn as much about your new culture as possible.*  
The more you can learn about the culture which you are traveling to, and its customs, the easier it will be to figure out the “cultural cues” necessary to communicate with new friends and to feel at home in the new society. As mentioned in the introduction to this book, don't stop when you're through at the library. Seek out nationals of the country you'll be visiting through international student associations, international student centers, any local Embassies or Consulates, or community cultural organizations. Make friends with other students who have studied in the country you're heading to and keep on top of the news.
- *Develop cross-cultural communication skills.*  
Chances are you count on this strategy as one you have already developed if you've had friends from other countries or have lived abroad. If not, it would be worth taking advantage of any cross-cultural communication workshops arranged on your campus, participating in activities with international students studying at Millersville, and actively seeking out students from the country which you will be studying in.

One of the most important skills in cross-cultural communication, which you will need is the basic skill of learning to open-mindedly inquire and listen without being judgmental. You may be surprised to run into negative stereotypes. Americans, for example, are often assumed to be rude, always in a hurry, promiscuous, disrespectful of authority, and ignorant of other cultures. When trying to show that you are different, be tactful and try to understand the reasons for these stereotypes.

Likewise, you may find that you have brought along your own preconceived ideas about the people of your host country, and the ethnocentric attitude that the way

things are done at home is "better." Remember that you have chosen to study abroad to learn from your host country. Reserve judgment and try to understand and appreciate the new customs and ways of thinking you encounter, remembering that although different from what you are used to, they are equally valid.

- *Learn to indulge yourself in positive ways.*  
If you are feeling anxious, frustrated, lonely and/or confused, a first step, which will help you to adapt more easily, is to make yourself feel better and stronger by reducing these feelings. Spending 24 hours a day trying to communicate in a new language with new people in very new surroundings is extremely exhausting. This means that you will benefit from paying a little more attention to your physical and emotional health.

Obvious as it may seem, many students forget that added stress means needing more, not less sleep; and better, not worse eating habits. Exhaustion and eventually illness makes coping all the more difficult. A good sleep can sometimes put a previous day's crisis into perspective.

Feeling emotionally better may mean easing back a little on any campaign to become one of the natives in a few short weeks. Let yourself write letters home to friends and family who understand you, listen to any familiar music which you've brought along and try to incorporate familiar routines (such as running or making a favorite food, etc.), into your new life-style. While we certainly do not advocate hanging out only with other program students, we do not encourage you to alienate yourself from them. Avoiding students who seem bent on reacting against the host culture and making friends with other students who share both your country of origin and your desire to get to know the new one will make adaptation much easier and much more fun.

- *Form new friendships with host nationals as much as possible.*  
Students who have ultimately made friends among the students of the host institution and other host nationals are almost always those who have gotten to know the host country, its language and people the best and who have enjoyed themselves the most in the process. While spending some time with your own nationals will help ease culture shock, keep in mind that your purpose is to get better acquainted with the people, language, and culture of your host country. Making friends as early as possible with the nationals from your host country will speed the process of adaptation and allow you to get the most out of the experience.

## **CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESS WHILE ABROAD**



What personal characteristics are needed, not just to survive, but to enjoy the experience abroad?

Key traits are:

- An attitude for learning.
- Flexibility, a sense of humor, and the ability to laugh at yourself.
- Communication skills, especially the ability to communicate your feelings.
- The ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- The acceptance of different cultural demands.

## **COPING STRATEGIES FOR CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

### **PAY ATTENTION TO SELF-CARE**

- Eat healthy foods
- Rest/Relaxation
- Exercise
- Avoid overuse of alcohol

### **KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

- Suspend judgment and keep an open mind
- Be curious
- Stay flexible
- Maintain your sense of humor – laughter relieves stress
- Read humorous books
- Rent a funny movie

### **THINK**

- Identify your expectations so you can minimize disappointment if they are not met- or turn them into realistic goals
- Try to identify situations that upset you the most
- Think about what you have control over and what you don't – let it go
- Take life one day at a time

### **GET INVOLVED**

- Ask questions
- Try new activities/foods
- Practice the language
- Set small goals for yourself
- It's okay to take risks and make mistakes

### **DO FAMILIAR THINGS – something you did at home to make you feel good**

- Familiar physical activities such as walking or sports
- Listen to music
- Share your culture
- Meditate

## EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

- Talk with others about what you're experiencing – they might feel the same way!
- Write – journals, letters, poetry
- Drawing, painting or other creative expression

## UTILIZE RESOURCES

- There are people who can help!

## **WHILE ABROAD – THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND**

### **LOCAL/EMERGENCY STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

You will be contacted by the Office of Global Education to provide your local contact information for while you are studying abroad. You will be emailed shortly after your arrival for your physical address (written in proper format), local phone number, and SKYPE name (if you have one). This information will be issued to a limited number of campus officials such as Millersville University Police and is extremely important in the event of an emergency. Throughout your stay the Office of Global Education may need to contact you and without reliable contact information this will not be possible.

You will also be provided with a Trip Notification form which we strongly suggest you complete and submit to the Office of Global Education if you are traveling away from your host city overnight. It requests information of where you are going, dates of travel, accommodation details, mode(s) of transportation itinerary, availability of email access, etc. Should an issue or emergency occur while you are traveling, Global Education will have resources to assist you. If you do not inform Global Education of your whereabouts, we will have no information to go by in the event of an emergency.

### **CONFIRMATION OF CLASSES REGISTERED (AT HOST INSTITUTION)**

In order to facilitate both you and the Registrar's Office with processing your transcript from your study abroad institution, Global Education will request a list of the classes that you are actually taking soon after you have been abroad. This is for the purpose of cross checking that list with your Transfer of Credits Form that you completed pre-departure with your academic advisors. We encourage you to do this on your own as well. If the Transfer of Credits Form does not match the courses that you are currently taking, then you will need to work with your academic advisor to make the appropriate changes so that the Registrar's Office may process your host institution transcript. Not ensuring that the Transfer of Credits Form matches the list of classes you take seriously delays processing the transcript once it is received at MU.

### **MU CLASS REGISTRATION/GRADUATION APPLICATION REMINDER**

A reminder of Millersville class registration will be sent to you while abroad. You will need to communicate with your academic advisor(s) for advising and to obtain your TAP number.

If you are studying abroad during your last semester prior to graduation, you will need to complete and submit a Graduation Application to the Registrar Office prior to departure and ensure that you are registered for graduation.

## FINANCIAL AID ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The release of financial aid for the following academic year may be delayed while Millersville awaits the receipt of your academic transcript from the international institution. Transcripts from Spring semester study abroad will not arrive until early September. Because Millersville University cannot confirm that you have made “Successful Academic Progress” (SAP) in May, for the previous academic year without the transcript, your financial aid may be placed on hold until the transcript is received. The definition of SAP differs between state and federal aid:

- *Federal:* SAP is defined as earning 75% of ALL credits attempted at MU. (Example: A student completed 30 credits but earned 24 credits, therefore he/she earned 80%, calculated  $24 \div 30$ , meaning he/she made successful academic progress and will not have issues with financial aid for the following academic year.)
- *State:* SAP is defined as successfully completing, at minimum, 24 credits for the academic year.

We strongly encourage you to check your **MAX account** mid/late May to determine if you are identified as not making SAP. If you did not make SAP, you will receive an email from the Office of Financial Aid and it will be stated on your MAX account.

### What If You Do Not Make SAP? – Release Your Aid:

- *Federal Aid:* To ensure that your federal aid is released without your study abroad transcript being received, we suggest you complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form by indicating that you are studying abroad. The official appeal form is accessible from the Office of Financial Aid website and it is due in mid-June.

This process will release your *federal* aid even if the transcript has not yet arrived. Power of Attorney, processed prior to departure, may be required if you will need someone else to complete this form for you in your absence. This form can also be submitted as a scanned document via email with required signature(s).

Note: If your transcript is received, and you did not meet the minimum required Satisfactory Academic Progress, you will be required to immediately reimburse the Office of Financial Aid for any money already received. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on your account at Millersville University which will affect registration/graduation.

- *State Aid:* Your PA State Aid cannot be appealed because of study abroad yet it will be retroactively released upon receipt of your study abroad transcript confirming Satisfactory Academic Progress.

## **Section 2**

# Country-Specific Information

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## **COUNTRY BACKGROUND**

Before you leave for your study abroad experience, it is important that you are aware of the social, cultural, political, and economic history of your host country. It is recommended that you research these topics to better understand your new environment and to help with your assimilation into the country.

## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

### **Students Abroad Resource- U.S. Department of State**

<http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>

The Students Abroad website managed by the State Department gives information about almost every aspect of studying abroad in any country. In this website you can find information about how to travel safely as a United States citizen. The website provides information varying from Emergency Contacts, to Voting, Packing Lists, and much more.

### **U.S. Department of State – United Kingdom**

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3846.htm>

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/united-kingdom.html>

The State Department website on United Kingdom gives in-depth information about almost every aspect of United Kingdom, from history to culture to travel and business information. The second link is to the State Department's Travel page, which has information about traveling to and within United Kingdom.

### **Frommer's Travel Guide – United Kingdom**

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/england/>(England)

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/northernireland/>(Northern Ireland)

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/scotland/> (Scotland)

<http://www.frommers.com/destinations/wales/> (Wales)

### **LonelyPlanet – United Kingdom**

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/england> (England)

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/ireland/northern-ireland> (Northern Ireland)

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/scotland> (Scotland)

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/wales> (Wales)

Frommer's and LonelyPlanet are two of the most highly respected guidebooks for any travel needs. The guidebooks and their online counterparts contain detailed information about travel spots, safety precautions, and visitor information.

*\*Fodor's, Let's Go, and Insight Guides are among other travel guidebooks that students may choose to take advantage of. More information on these guides can be found online and in bookstores.*

## **Visit Britain**

<http://www.visitbritain.co.uk/>

VisitBritain.co.uk is the U.K.'s official travel and accommodation guide for England, Scotland, and Wales.

## **Discover Northern Ireland**

<http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/>

Discover Northern Ireland is the country's official visitor and tourism website. It contains information about travel destinations and other aspects of Northern Ireland.

## **Central Intelligence Agency World Fact book – United Kingdom**

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/uk.html>

## **CULTURAL AWARENESS**

The United Kingdom is a constitutional monarchy composed of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

### ***SCOTLAND***

The history between England and Scotland is very long and not always friendly. Today the countries get along for the most part. Be aware of a cultural sensitivity that still exists to Scottish people regarding their relationship to England. In September of 2014, Scotland voted to stay in the UK in the referendum on their ballot asking its citizens if they think that Scotland should be an independent country.

### ***NORTHERN IRELAND***

For many years, a violent ethno-political conflict, known as "the Troubles," existed in Northern Ireland. The conflict occurred between predominantly Roman Catholic individuals and groups, who claimed to represent the nationalists, and predominantly Protestant individuals and groups, who claimed to represent unionists. Unionists wanted, and still want, Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom, while nationalists would like Northern Ireland to be politically reunited with the rest of Ireland. Since the signing of the "Good Friday Agreement" in 1998, most of the paramilitary groups involved in "the Troubles" have ceased their armed campaigns. Today Northern Ireland is a safe city, offering the same amenities as its European counterparts.

### ***SMOKING***

As of July 1, 2007, smoking has been banned in all indoor public places in the U.K., including bars, restaurants, hotels, and clubs.

## England

**1 January** New Year's Day  
**Easter Week**  
**Easter Monday** After Easter Sunday  
**1<sup>st</sup> Monday in May** May Day  
**Last Monday in May** Spring Bank Holiday  
**Last Monday in August** Summer Bank Holiday  
**25 December** Christmas  
**26 December** Boxing Day

## Scotland

**1 January** New Year's Day  
**2 January** 2<sup>nd</sup> January  
**Easter Week**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Monday in May** May Day  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in May** Victoria Day  
**1<sup>st</sup> Monday in August** Summer Bank Holiday  
**Last Monday in August** Summer Bank Holiday  
**25 December** Christmas  
**26 December** Boxing Day

## Wales

**Easter Week**  
**Easter Monday** After Easter Sunday  
**1<sup>st</sup> Monday in May** May Day  
**Last Monday in August** Summer Bank Holiday  
**25 December** Christmas  
**26 December** Boxing Day

## Northern Ireland

**1 January** New Year's Day  
**17 March** St. Patrick's Day  
**Easter Week**  
**Easter Monday/Tuesday** After Easter Sunday  
**1<sup>st</sup> Monday in May** May Day  
**12 July** Orangemen's Day  
**13 July** Orangemen's Day  
**Last Monday in August** Summer Bank Holiday  
**25 December** Christmas  
**26 December** Boxing Day

## **VISAS**

A visa is an official permission to visit a country and is granted by the government of that country. The format varies considerably, from a simple stamp imprinted upon one of the pages in your passport at the time you enter the country, to an official document with your photograph attached. Many countries require advanced processing of visas, while other countries require no advanced processing whatsoever for brief visits.

Whether or not you will be required to obtain a visa depends on several factors, including:

- the country you will be travelling to
- the length of your stay
- the purpose for your visit
- your country of citizenship

If you are required to obtain a visa in order to enter the country, the consulate or embassy that will process your visa depends on where you reside within the United States.

Please see this website for more information about visa and entry requirements for your host country: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/> and <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/>.

**Note:** A visa for the U.K. is required of all students studying in the U.K. for more than 6 months.

**Note:** You may also need to acquire a visa in order to travel outside of your host country. Please visit the websites of the embassies of the countries that you wish to travel to in order to determine what the visa and entry requirements are for those countries.

For example, if you are studying in the U.K., but you decide to take a weekend trip to France, you may need to acquire a visa. Obtaining a visa may require you to fill out the appropriate forms, have passport photos taken, send or take your passport to the respective embassy or consulate, etc.; the requirements can vary by country, consulate and citizenship of the applicant. Because the process can be very involved and time-consuming, we recommend that you start planning or preparing several weeks or months prior to your departure for any trips that you intend to take while studying abroad that may require you to obtain a visa.

## **EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

### **HOST EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**

An embassy is a permanent diplomatic mission that is usually located in a nation's capital. Its main responsibility is to represent its home country abroad and to help handle major diplomatic issues.

A consulate is generally described as a smaller version of an embassy. Consulates can usually be found in large tourist cities. They are responsible for handling minor diplomatic issues, such as issuing visas and taking care of migrants, tourists, and expatriates.

Most sovereign states have embassies and consulates within the United States that are responsible for issuing visas to U.S. citizens who wish to travel to their countries. The location of your official residence will determine which foreign embassy or consulate will be the point of contact for visa application.

### **Embassy of the United Kingdom in the U.S.:**



**British Embassy**  
**3100 Massachusetts Avenue, NW**  
**Washington DC 20008**  
**Tel:** (202) 588 6500  
**Website:** <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/>

### **For residents of PA, NY, NJ, and Fairfield County of CT: Consulate General of the U.K.:**

845 3rd Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
**Tel:** (212) 745-0200  
**Fax:** (212) 754-3062  
**Website:** <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/>

If you reside outside of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, or Fairfield County of Connecticut please research which consulate you should visit based upon your area of residency.

## **U.S. EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES**



Should you encounter serious problems, the American Embassies and/or Consulates can offer limited assistance. They can, for example, provide you with a list of local attorneys and physicians; they can contact next of kin in the event of an emergency or serious illness; they can contact friends or relatives on your behalf to request funds or guidance and they can replace a lost or stolen passport. They cannot, however, provide the services of a travel agency, give or lend money, cash personal checks, arrange free medical service or legal advice, provide bail or get you out of jail, act as couriers or interpreters, search for missing luggage, or settle disputes with local authorities. Remember that their primary responsibility abroad is to help fulfill the diplomatic mission of the United States Government, not to act as nursemaids to American travelers.

**Note:** As a citizen of the United States, you are able to visit any U.S. embassy or consulate within your host country in order to seek assistance. Your location within your host country does not determine which embassy or consulate you will be able to visit as it does in the United States.

### **U.S. Embassy in London**

24 Grosvenor Square  
London, W1A 2LQ  
United Kingdom

**Tel:** (20) 7499-9000; *for emergencies:* (20) 7499 9000

**Website:** <https://uk.usembassy.gov/>

**Hours:** Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m, but some Sections and Agencies within the Embassy may differ

### **U.S. Consulate General in Belfast, Northern Ireland**

Danesfort House  
223 Stranmillis Road  
Belfast BT9 5GR

**Tel:** (28) 9038 6100

**Fax:** (28) 9068 1301

**Website:** <https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/belfast/>

### **U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh, Scotland**

3 Regent Terrace  
Edinburgh  
Scotland, EH7 5BW

**Tel:** 131 556-8315

**Fax:** 131 557 6023

**Website:** <https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/edinburgh/>

### **The American Embassy Welsh Affairs Office, Cardiff**

**Tel:** *Cardiff:* (29) 2002-6419; *London:* (20) 7984-0131

**Fax:** 20 2894-0177

**Website:** <https://uk.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/cardiff/>

## **WHAT TO PACK**



When planning what to take with you, remember that the first rule is to take a minimum of clothes. You will tend to accumulate things as time passes, so, if in doubt, leave it at home. Choose clothes that can be mixed and matched and layered to serve several different seasons and temperatures.

**Heating standards in the U.K. are not the same as in the United States, so buildings and homes may seem somewhat chilly.** Dark conservative colors are fashionable and they will wear longer without laundering, and will often help to make you less conspicuously American. Try to take "heavy-duty" practical clothes

that can stand lots of wear especially if you plan to do any traveling. Clothes that wrinkle and show dirt easily are not ideal. Above all, pack light. You should be able to get all your gear into two suitcases and a carry-on bag (check your airline for baggage restrictions). You will be buying some gifts and souvenirs to bring back, and you will have to lug and handle everything there and back!

## **CLIMATE AND WEATHER**

The temperature throughout the U.K. is very unstable; this is a major factor that influences the U.K.'s weather, where many types of weather can be experienced in one day. Northern Ireland, Wales, and western parts of England and Scotland are generally the mildest, wettest, and windiest regions of the U.K. Eastern areas of the U.K. tend to be cooler, drier, and less windy. Northern areas are usually cooler and wetter.

Be sure to consider the climate and weather when you pack in order to ensure that you pack appropriately.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PACKING**

We have compiled a list of items that some of our previous study abroad participants thought were useful while they were abroad.

- Extra Batteries
- Travel Alarm Clock
- Money Belt (to discreetly carry passport)
- Country Travel Guides
- Towel (Take 1 to start)
- Contact Solution (Could be available in host country, however it may be expensive)
- Shower Shoes
- Umbrella
- Toiletries (Take travel-sized and then you can purchase more in your host country)
- Photos (In order to personalize your room)
- Coat
- Hat
- Gloves

Keep in mind that you will need a converter/adaptor for all of your electrical appliances (razors, hair dryers, etc.). Some students choose to purchase converters/adapters before they depart for their host country. Other students, though, purchase converters/adapters once they are in their host country. Please note that many times the converters/adapters that are purchased in the host country work better than those that are purchased in the United States.

Every student will need to adjust the list above to fit his/her personal needs and tastes. You may find that you will choose to take somewhat different items, but you should remember that you can purchase similar products abroad. Also, take into consideration the season that you will be in your host country (or countries that you may be traveling to) and pack accordingly.

**NOTE:** Remember to leave room in your luggage for souvenirs and gifts. Previous study abroad participants have packed a rolled-up duffle bag in their suitcases. They

were then able to use this for travelling while they were abroad and for bringing souvenirs and other items back to the States.

It has been recommended by some experienced travelers that after you pack your bags you should carry them around the block for at least 15 minutes. You'll probably repack!



I over-packed soooooo much. Looking back on it now, I can't believe that everything fit into my luggage. My roommates thought it would be ok to send some of their stuff home that they didn't have room for on their return flight. The average student, however, will not have enough money to do this. It is extremely expensive to send packages to the US, even light ones. Another thing, waterproof any leather or suede items that you might have, whether they are shoes, bags, or jackets. The constant rain will ruin them if you don't.

## MONEY

### CURRENCY EXCHANGE



Upon arrival, you may wish to exchange some of your American currency into the currency of your host country. This can be done at most major international airports, major banks, and railroad stations abroad. **Note:** It would be wise to exchange a small amount of your money *prior* to your departure in order to have some cash on hand upon arrival at your study abroad location.

While you are living in your host country, you may wish to exchange large amounts of money. Previous study abroad participants have found that banks are generally the best place to exchange large amounts of money while abroad. The airport is usually not the best place to exchange large amounts of currency, as airports do not offer the best exchange rates. It is also recommended that you do not exchange money at hotels, restaurants, or retail shops; the exchange rate at these locations is less favorable.



While I was abroad, I only actually exchanged currency 3 times - I exchanged a little bit of money at the airport when I arrived in my host country, I exchanged a large amount at a bank, and I exchanged my host country's currency back into U.S. dollars at the airport when I left my host country. Most students do not exchange a lot of money. It's much more convenient to use your debit card and get your money, in your host country's currency, from an ATM machine. The only time I would recommend going to a bank or an airport to exchange money is



when you want to exchange a very large amount (for instance, if you're going to a place where you know there aren't any ATMs, or you won't be able to use your debit or credit card, like a market). Even then, depending on how large an amount of money you want to exchange, you could just withdraw that money from an ATM machine, which is a lot easier, faster, practical, and more convenient than seeking out a bank or going to the airport to exchange money.

You can expect to pay a commission (which varies from one country to another) every time you exchange currency. Sometimes, this commission is a flat fee regardless of the amount of the transaction. If the commission is a flat fee, it is to your advantage to exchange larger amounts of money to avoid repeated visits to the bank window. This means that you will be carrying more cash than might be advisable. You will need to find a happy medium between the risks of carrying large amounts of cash and paying repeated bank commissions for exchange transactions.

**Note:** A few exchange services offer commission-free exchanges to students (just ask and be ready to show your ISIC) or they may even give you free exchange back to your original currency if you retain your original transaction receipt.

**Note:** You can request British Pounds from your bank in the U.S. prior to departure. You should check their fees and allow plenty of time (up to 3 weeks) for them to process your request.



When you get to the airport, only exchange enough money for the first few days of your trip. Currency exchange in the airport is not the best deal for your money, as there are additional fees charged and the exchange rate is poor. It may be better to wait until an ATM machine is available to you once you arrive.

### **EXCHANGE RATE**

As with all currency, the exchange rate for U.S. dollars to British Pounds or is constantly changing. Please see this site to find the most up-to-date exchange rates:

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>

Before your departure, you should also begin thinking about exchange rates in the foreign currency which you will be using when you make purchases here in the U.S. This will help you become a little more comfortable converting money in your head before your arrival in your host country.

This is an **EXAMPLE** of a currency exchange chart from <http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>.  
Please note that currency exchange rates change every day.

USD	GBP	USD	GBP	USD	GBP
	1 = 0.69	10 = 6.93		100 = 69	
	2 = 1.39	15 = 10.40		200 = 139	
	3 = 2.08	20 = 13.87		300 = 208	
	4 = 2.77	25 = 17.33		400 = 277	
	5 = 3.47	30 = 20.80		500 = 347	
	6 = 4.16	35 = 24.27		600 = 416	
	7 = 4.85	40 = 27.73		700 = 485	
	8 = 5.55	45 = 31.20		800 = 555	
	9 = 6.24	50 = 34.67		900 = 624	
		60 = 41.60			
		70 = 48.53			
		80 = 55.47			
		90 = 62.40			

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Interbank rate  
US Dollar (USD)  
British Pound (GBP)  
May 18, 2010

GBP	USD	GBP	USD	GBP	USD
	1 = 1.44	10 = 14.42		100 = 144	
	2 = 2.88	15 = 21.63		200 = 288	
	3 = 4.33	20 = 28.84		300 = 433	
	4 = 5.77	25 = 36.05		400 = 577	
	5 = 7.21	30 = 43.26		500 = 721	
	6 = 8.65	35 = 50.47		600 = 865	
	7 = 10.09	40 = 57.68		700 = 1009	
	8 = 11.54	45 = 64.89		800 = 1154	
	9 = 12.98	50 = 72.10		900 = 1298	
		60 = 86.52			
		70 = 100.94			
		80 = 115.36			
		90 = 129.78			

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<http://www.oanda.com>

Interbank rate  
British Pound (GBP)  
US Dollar (USD)  
May 18, 2010

## ACCESSING MONEY

### **TRAVEL MONEY CARDS/TRAVELERS CHECKS**

It is not recommended that you carry large amounts of cash with you. Travel money cards or travelers checks can be safer ways of carrying your money.

#### **Travel Money Cards**

**Visa TravelMoney Card** – The Visa TravelMoney Card is prepaid card; therefore, you can spend up to the card value anywhere Visa debit cards are accepted. You can also use the TravelMoney Card to withdraw cash at any Visa/PLUS ATMs worldwide. Cards can be reloaded where they were purchased, online, or by phone. Use cash, funds from your bank account, credit or debit card to reload your card. If your card is lost or stolen, you can have the money refunded generally within 24 hours. Visa has a Zero Liability policy, which means you would not be responsible for any fraudulent purchases. It also offers emergency and emergency assistance services.

There are a number of fees associated with Visa TravelMoney cards which can add up easily. If interested in using a Visa TravelMoney card you will want to research into any additional costs associated with purchasing, reloading, and general use of the card.

For more information about the Visa TravelMoney Card, visit <https://usa.visa.com/pay-with-visa/cards/prepaid-cards/travel-money-card.html>

#### **Travelers Checks**

**American Express Travelers Checks** – While TravelMoney Cards have become more common, travelers checks from American Express also have some benefits. For example, they can usually be refunded within 24 hours if lost or stolen, they come with 24/7 customer support, and they never expire. A drawback is that these must still be exchanged for local currency before making a purchase and exchange locations may be very limited.

For more information about American Express Travelers Checks, visit <http://www212.americanexpress.com/dsmlive/dsm/dom/us/en/personal/cardmember/additionalproductsandservices/giftcardsandtravelerscheques/travelerschequesandforeigncurrency.do?vgnextoid=6d17fc671492a110VgnVCM10000defaad94RCRD>

## **AAA**

AAA offers both Visa TravelMoney cards and travelers checks to members. For more detailed information about these options, go to [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com) or contact your local AAA office.

## **BANK TRANSFERS**

For certain host universities and programs abroad, students must make payments directly into a bank account. Programs that offer this payment option will provide the detailed account information needed to do so. You will need to check with your bank to see if they are able to conduct an international bank transfer. Most banks charge a fee, which is determined by each individual bank. We recommend that you contact your bank in order to determine what their transfer policies and fees are.

## **AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES (ATMs)**



ATM cards issued by U.S. banks should work in other countries. There are two ATM systems worldwide: CIRRUS and PLUS. If you have a CIRRUS card, you need to use a CIRRUS machine; the same applies to PLUS. The PLUS or CIRRUS logo is located on the back of your card and on the front of each ATM. The machines work in the same way as they do in the U.S. and many machines have instructions in a variety of languages, including English. You will receive your cash in the currency of the country you are in and the equivalent amount will be deducted from your account at home. The exchange rate on these transactions is usually the best available; however your bank or the local bank may charge additional transaction fees.

## **WESTERN UNION**

Western Union is one of the largest companies that will offer wire transfers. Western Union allows individuals to transfer or receive money even if they do not have an account with Western Union or any other financial institution. Western Union has a number of divisions, with products such as person-to-person money transfer, money orders, and commercial services. The company has approximately 350,000 Western Union agent locations in over 240 countries and territories.

For more information about Western Union, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.westernunion.com](http://www.westernunion.com).

## **MONEYGRAM INTERNATIONAL**

MoneyGram International is a financial services company that provides money transfer services, money orders, and bill payment services to consumers. MoneyGram has offices in 190 countries around the world. Similar to Western Union, MoneyGram offers highly secure and reliable person-to-person money transfers virtually to any place around the world, taking only minutes to transfer.

For more information about MoneyGram International, its locations, and the services it offers, please visit its website at [www.moneygram.com](http://www.moneygram.com).

## **FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT**

Opening a bank account in your host country may be required or recommended. By opening a foreign bank account, you will receive a debit card for that account. Using your debit card to withdraw money from your foreign account, as opposed to using your American account, may save you a significant amount of money by cutting down on the number of international transaction fees. If you transfer a large sum of money from your American account into your foreign account, you can then rely primarily on your foreign account and debit card for day-to-day transactions.

## **CREDIT CARDS**



Credit cards are helpful to have while abroad, especially to use for any emergency situations that may potentially arise. Visa is the most commonly accepted in the world among major credit cards.

Keep in mind, however, that not all merchants abroad accept credit cards. The amount on your credit card statement will be based on the exchange rate on the day that your bank or credit card company processes the transaction. If the merchant with whom you charge your purchase is slow in submitting your charge slip, the statement could be a bit different from what you might have expected.

We recommend that you make copies of the front and back of your credit card(s) and leave some of these copies at home. If your card(s) were to get lost or stolen while you are abroad, you and your family would have the information for the cards on hand. We also recommend that you take the phone number of your credit card company(s) abroad with you. Previous study abroad participants have found it useful to put the phone number(s) of the company(s) on a small sheet of paper, which the students then kept with their passports.

Please pay attention to your credit limits. Make sure that you know what the credit limit is for each of your credit cards. Please note that newly acquired credit cards generally have low credit limits.

**\*\*\*We recommend that you advise your credit card company(s) and/or bank(s) that you will be studying abroad so that they will expect foreign transactions to appear on your monthly statements. This will avoid the possibility of the credit card company and/or bank freezing your accounts because they are suspicious of foreign spending. You should notify them each time you travel out of your host country as well.**



I found that I received the best exchange rate when I used my credit card. You can even charge a conversion of money (a cash advance) at a tourist bureau or money exchange kiosk with your credit card.

## **INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTION FEES**

All credit card companies charge international transaction fees, usually in the form of a percentage of the total amount of the purchase, when their company's credit card is used abroad. We recommend that you contact your credit card company before your departure in order to find out what the international transaction fee is for your particular card. To help you remember that fee, we recommend that you write the percentage on the back of your credit card. This will remind you of the additional fees that you will incur with each purchase while you are abroad.



When using a credit card overseas, a special international purchasing fee may apply for each transaction. Please be sure to read the fine print on the contract you signed with your credit card company and contact them with any questions. Fees may vary from card to card, so it is important to know how much you will be charged ahead of time.

## **TIPPING**

(obtained from <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/england/0221020157.html>)



For cabdrivers, add about 10% to 15% to the fare on the meter. However, if the driver loads or unloads your luggage, add something extra.

In hotels, porters receive 75p (\$1.50) per bag, even if you have only one small suitcase. Hall porters are tipped only for special services. Maids receive £1 (\$2) per day. In top-ranking hotels, the concierge will often submit a separate bill showing charges for newspapers and other items; if he or she has been particularly helpful, tip extra.

Hotels often add a service charge of 10% to 15% to most bills. In smaller bed-and-breakfasts, the tip is not likely to be included. Therefore, tip people for special services, such as the waiter who serves you breakfast. If several people have served you in a bed-and-breakfast, you may ask that 10% to 15% be added to the bill and divided among the staff.

In both restaurants and nightclubs, a 15% service charge is added to the bill, which is distributed among all the help. To that, add another 3% to 5%, depending on the service. Waiters in deluxe restaurants and nightclubs are accustomed to the extra 5%. Sommeliers (wine stewards) get about £1 (\$2) per bottle of wine served. Tipping in pubs isn't common, but in wine bars, the server usually gets about 75p (\$1.50) per round of drinks.

Barbers and hairdressers expect 10% to 15%. Tour guides expect £2 (\$4), though it's not mandatory. Gas station attendants are rarely tipped, and theater ushers don't expect tips.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Before you depart, the Office of Global Education will provide you with an orange, wallet-sized emergency card. This card contains important information, including:

- the numbers that you must dial in order to call to the U.S. from your host country out of the U.S.
- the numbers that you must dial in order to call out of the U.S.
- the telephone numbers of the U.S. embassy and/or consulates that are located in your host country
- your host country's emergency contact numbers (e.g., for fire and police)
- emergency contact numbers for the Office of Global Education during office hours
- and, outside of the Office of Global Education's office hours, emergency contact numbers for the Millersville University Police Department

While you are abroad, please keep this orange card in your wallet at all times. You never know when you may need to reference it. Also, in case your wallet gets lost or stolen, we recommend that you place a copy of the card with any important documents that you may keep in your room.

### ***WITHIN HOST COUNTRY***

**Emergency Contact Number:** 999

\*\*Ask to be connected to the Fire, Police or Ambulance service.

### ***CALLING MILLERSVILLE***

**Office of Global Education:** *(within office hours: M-F 8:30am-4:30pm)* 717-871-7506

**Millersville Emergency Number:** *(outside Global Education office hours)* 717-871-5506

The *Millersville Emergency Number* should only be used in the case of a true study abroad emergency. Should you call the emergency number outside of our regular business hours, you will be connected with an Office of Global Education team member. If your call goes to voicemail, leave a very clear and detailed message with your first and last name, your study abroad location and a number to reach you. A member of our office will return your call promptly.

## INTERNATIONAL TELEPHONE CALLS

### FROM U.S. TO ABROAD



Most areas in the U.S. are now able to directly dial internationally. Should you or your parents wish to make a direct-dial international call from the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 011
2. Dial the country code (United Kingdom: **44** )
3. Dial the city code (normally a 1 to 5 digit number)
4. Dial the local number abroad

*(all U.K. numbers begin with a 0. When dialing TO the U.K. you must drop this first 0, but dial the rest of the number).*

### FROM ABROAD TO U.S.

Should you wish to make a direct-dial international call from your host country to the U.S., the procedure is:

1. Dial the international access code: 00
2. Dial the U.S. country code: **1**
3. Dial the U.S. area code
4. Dial the local U.S number

### Calling Home Upon Arrival

Some students wish to call home immediately upon their arrival in their host country to inform their families that they have arrived safely. Because students usually do not have a cell phone, phone card, or internet access upon their arrival, they may choose to make a collect call.

A collect call is when the calling party places a call, and the party receiving the call pays the expense. The simplest way to do this is to dial an operator from a payphone in your host country and tell the operator that you want to make a collect call to the United States. The operator will call the number you give them and ask the recipient if they will accept the fees for the call. If they accept, the operator will connect you.

### SKYPE



The Skype communications system is notable for its broad range of features, including free voice and video conferencing, and its ability to use peer to peer (decentralized) technology.

Skype users essentially make telephone calls and/or video calls through their computer using Skype software and the Internet. The basis of the system is free communication between users of Skype software; however, the product also allows Skype users to communicate with users of regular landline and mobile telephones and charges a



reasonable per minute rate. This software is currently available free of charge and can be downloaded from the company website: <http://www.skype.com>.



Practically all of the international students used Skype. It's cheap and VERY easy to use. When you call people who also have Skype, the calls are free; when you call people who do not have Skype, the calls are very inexpensive compared to the price of phone calls with phone cards or cell phones. If you have a webcam, you can also video chat with other people who have Skype for free.

## **MOBILE TELEPHONE**

Depending upon the length of time you will be abroad, you may want to consider options for using a cell phone to make local calls from within your host country. Described below are two options for using a cell phone abroad. Both options are an additional expense and it is up to you to decide if this is necessary.

Most Millersville students decide to purchase cell phones with a pay-as-you-go plan. The prices of both the cell phone itself and the plans vary greatly from country to country. Upon your arrival, it is important to research the local cell phone providers in your host country to see which provider is best for you.

Another option is to replace your current cell phone's SIM card (if your phone has a SIM card) with an alternative SIM card. This process requires some research before departure and sometimes does not work with certain providers. A SIM card is a small card that lets the phone work on a particular mobile network. It can easily be swapped around in some phones. SIM cards for foreign networks can be purchased abroad at many locations including international airports. Before departing for your host country, you should contact your cell phone provider and ask them if your phone will work in your host country. If it does, you should also ask whether they have locked your phone against use with a different SIM card, and what, if anything, they will charge to unlock the phone. When purchasing a SIM card in your host country, make sure to ask if the alternative SIM card will expire after a fixed time. Often, you will pay a flat rate for the SIM card and instead of signing a contract, you can choose a pay- as- you- go plan.

## **CALLING CARDS**

We recommend if you plan to purchase calling cards, that you do so upon your arrival in your host country. Oftentimes, calling cards purchased in the United States do not work abroad. International calling cards can be purchased in many locations and can be a cheaper way to call home compared to using a cell phone. You can use these international calling cards from public phones, from your cell phone or from landlines. The prices vary greatly and some cards have very cheap per minute rates so you should research these prices before purchasing.

Caution: If using an international calling card from a cell phone, you may have to pay for the minutes used on your cell phone as well as the minutes used on the international calling card. This varies by country and cell provider.

## **ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRONICS**



The standard electric current in Europe is 220 volt/ 50 cycle. You will probably have to purchase a converter in order to run and operate any American appliances.



It might be worth stressing the need to take battery-operated products. For the most part, American appliances do not work in Europe, even with the adapter. It is important that students realize this.



I didn't take any 'plug-in' items at all. A lot of our appliances won't work there anyway, even with an adapter. It is a good idea to bring a small battery powered travel alarm clock. Other items you can either buy there, will be provided, or can be borrowed from your flat mates (this also saves some packing space and potential trouble with customs).



When it comes to electrical appliances, bring only what you need to survive. The rest you can purchase there. It can be a hassle trying to figure out the whole electric current stuff. Even when we thought we knew what we were doing, we broke so much of our electrical stuff from home.

More information about converters and adapters can be found under the heading **Suggestions for Packing.**

### **DVDs**

It is important to note as well that DVDs are formatted differently around the world. Most DVDs have a regional code, which generally restricts them from being played on American DVD players. You can purchase a universal or region-free DVD player which will allow you to play DVDs from every region. Many laptops will also play DVDs from different regions. Please note though that laptops generally only allow users to switch regions a limited number of times. Please research the number of times that the DVD player on your laptop will allow you to switch regions.

The DVD regional code for the United States, U.S. territories, Canada, and Bermuda is 1. The DVD regional code for the U.K. is 2.



Do not buy DVDs, VHSs, or any kind of electronic device that outputs a video signal. You will not be able to play them when you get home. The UK has a different video standard than we do in the US. The UK has what is called a PAL and the US has what is called a NISTC standards. In addition DVDs have region codes to prevent them from being played in other parts of the world for the reason of preventing piracy. Also if you have a laptop or computer and can bring it definitely do. Most laptops you will only need a plug converter, the voltage converter is built into the AC adapter. To make sure it is look at your adapter. It will say "INPUT 100-240VAC" This mean it will take anywhere from 100 to 240 volts. This may also be the case for other electronics. Just check the adapter.

## **CAMERA/PHOTO SUGGESTIONS**



If there is one piece of advice I would give anyone studying abroad it would be this: As soon as I came back from a weekend getaway or had a lot of pictures on my camera, I immediately uploaded them to the hard drive on my lap top. After that I uploaded those pictures onto walmart.com (or any other store that develops photographs - riteaid.com, walgreens.com, etc.). Once they were uploaded, I had the option of getting them developed, which I did. When you are not using one hour photo, digital pictures can be relatively cheap. I chose the longest time period for them to develop (which is the least expensive) and had them shipped directly to my house. Every time I came back from a trip, I ordered my pictures, had them delivered to my home in the U.S., and my entire four months abroad was printed out and ready for me when I got home. I printed pictures out little by little, so I never had one big bill to pay. Waiting until you get home to develop all your photos will be very expensive. More than likely you will not have extra money to spend when you return home from your host country. Not only were my pictures ready when I came back but it saved me the trouble of printing them out. People have the tendency to never get their digital photos printed. I am guilty of leaving the pictures sit on my camera for months. This is one experience you are not going to want to forget. Develop your pictures immediately and know that they are ready and paid for you when you come home.

## **PRESS**

In London the *Times*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, and *Guardian* are all popular, reputable newspapers. Also, magazines such as *Time Out* and *Where* contain useful information about the latest happenings in London.

## **TRAVELING IN HOST COUNTRY**

### **CARS**



Students may drive cars while abroad, but Millersville University will accept no responsibility in case of an accident or insurance problems. An International Driver's License might be required and can be purchased through the American Automobile Association (AAA).

### **TAXIS**



Taxis are available to get around towns and cities; however, they are not a bargain and you will end up paying about the same as you would for a taxi in the U.S. Taxis are usually available at airports, train stations and high traffic areas (especially populated shopping districts).

In London specifically, when hailing a taxi, look for the black cabs. These vehicles, and their drivers, have earned the reputation for providing the best taxi service in the world. Every driver is required to undergo a rigorous test of his/her knowledge of London which can take up to four years to learn before the coveted badge is awarded. Black cabs are the *only* taxis allowed to ply for hire in London - they also come in an assortment of colours and liveries, as well as black. The other cabs are privately owned and some are illegally operated. Generally, if a cab is needed, look for a black taxi even if it is a little more expensive.

### **BUSES AND METRO**

Public transportation is commonly used throughout the U.K. You will find bus and train systems are readily accessible in almost every location. Daily/weekly and monthly passes are often available.

In London, the tube is fast, convenient, and relatively inexpensive. Look for the saver passes for weekends or short stays which will also work in conjunction with the bus service.



The tube and bus systems are the *easiest* and *cheapest* means of transportation to get throughout London. The maps and routes may seem confusing at first but you will get used to traveling them daily.



You will need to have a tube card to gain access in and out of each tube station. The 'pay as you go' option can be purchased with an Oyster

Card and money is added to that anytime you choose to ride the tube and bus. If you are given the opportunity to buy the semester-long tube and bus card, take it. This is the cheapest and easiest way. You will never have to worry about having enough money to ride the tube or bus when it's late at night and you are too far to walk home. The tube stations close at midnight. Past this time you need to catch the night buses which do not run as frequently. It is very common to get lost while looking for a bus stop after a night of pubs. Make sure you know the area you're venturing into. Before leaving for the night, make sure you know where the nearest bus station is, if you are planning on being out past midnight.

## **TRAINS**



Because of their convenience and inexpensive rates, trains are perhaps the most widely used form of transportation within Europe. The trains are far more reliable in Europe than in the United States and travel can usually travel to any destination worth visiting. Be sure to carry your passport with you on trains. It is common for train attendant to check both your ticket and passport more than once during the duration of your trip.

### ***RAIL PASSES***

The Eurail Pass must be purchased in the U.S., before departure. You choose which countries to visit and how long you want to travel for. This pass is limited to those under the age of 25. <http://www.eurail.com>

### ***BRITRAIL PASSES***

Britrail offers many types of passes for travel within the U.K. Visit [www.britrail.net](http://www.britrail.net) for more information.

### ***INTER-RAIL PASS***

The Inter-Rail Pass is available for purchase in Europe and cannot be purchased in advance in the U.S. In order to purchase this pass, you must be a resident of Europe for at least six months. It provides half-price travel in the country where you purchase it, and free travel in the rest of Europe, including much of Eastern Europe. You must purchase this pass in Europe.

### ***YOUNG PERSONS RAIL CARD***

Another way you can save money on train travel is through the Young Persons Rail Card. This card is not limited in terms of dates and destinations. To apply, you need to fill out a short form at any train station, pay the fee in cash or with your credit card, and provide a passport-sized photograph. This card entitles any person between the ages of 16-25 to a discount on standard train fare. You can visit the card's website at <http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk> for more information and for an application form.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT PASSES

Rail passes are personal and nontransferable and will be forfeited if presented by anyone other than the person to whom they are issued. Presentation of your passport is compulsory when making use of the pass. Also, passes do not guarantee you a seat; some trains require seat reservations for a nominal fee.

## TRAVEL AGENTS

Information about rail passes may be obtained from a travel agent. It is not a bad idea to have a travel agent to confirm your plans abroad. Because everything is new to you, having an expert look over your travel plans may be a good idea. They are great for advice, travel tips, and they generally try to save you money.

## NOTES



### **DO NOT HITCHHIKE!**

- Be careful when traveling and review the travel tips in this handbook before you go.
- Do not underestimate the amount of walking you will be doing in Europe.
- For other traveling details and guidelines, you can look on the State Department Travel Advisory website:  
<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/united-kingdom.html>

## MISCELLANEOUS TRAVEL INFORMATION



STA has offices set up throughout the United Kingdom. When in London, a lot of my friends were able to find the best travel rates at STA. Regardless of where students may decide to travel while studying abroad, they should shop around for the best deal, as the travel industry is very competitive in Europe.



For breaks or weekend trips, it is really easy and relatively inexpensive to travel outside of the U.K. A good place to look for travel deals is in town at the numerous travel agencies. Your student union may also sponsor some trips or you can check out deals on the web. [www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com) is a site for e-plane tickets in Europe and it is very cheap. [www.lastminute.com](http://www.lastminute.com) is where I bought a great and inexpensive holiday in Malta, the website does airfare, hotels, event tickets (like concerts), and full holidays in the UK and the rest of the world. (Before signing up, clearly understand the costs, purpose, and inclusions that the trip includes). [www.visitbritain.com](http://www.visitbritain.com) and [www.budgetbritain.com](http://www.budgetbritain.com) can also help you to find more information regarding travel and attractions.

## HOSTELS

A website that many students use to travel within Europe is [www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com). This lists every hostel that registers with the site and provides guest ratings and reviews and sometimes pictures. It also lists the price and allows you to reserve your bed.

Though private rooms are sometimes available, it is not uncommon to share a room with other travelers. This can be daunting to an American who may be used to more privacy; however, sharing hostel rooms is common practice in Europe. While most travelers do not encounter any difficulties, it is still important that you use common sense and take precautions with your belongings. Many hostels allow you to use lockers but you should take a lock and secure your luggage either way.

Many hostels require your passport at check-in, even though some may suggest not taking your passport for domestic travels, it will be required for most hostels for their records.

## YOUTH HOSTELS



A cheap place to sleep is a youth hostel. Here, you also get to meet a lot of interesting, young people from all over the world. Before you go, try to get some recommendations from other students or online reviews. To save some more money, you can buy a Hostelling International (HI) card.

To learn more about this card check out: <http://www.hihostels.com/>.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY IN HOST COUNTRY

As taken from <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>

### SAFETY TIPS – NORTHERN IRELAND

Although the political situation in Northern Ireland has improved in recent years, the two main dissident republican groups, the Real IRA and the Continuity IRA, still resort to violence in some instances. These attacks generally target police and military personnel, and involve the use of firearms and explosives. Also, U.S. citizens should be aware incidents of sectarian violence or confrontation are still possible. U.S. visitors should remain vigilant if they choose to visit potential flashpoints or attend parades. Tensions may be heightened during the summer marching season (April to August), particularly during the month of July (around the July 12th public holiday).

Please note that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. U.S. citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations.

### SAFETY TIPS – CRIME

The United Kingdom has generally low crime rates. As with any major city, U.S. citizens are urged to be vigilant of their surroundings.

Crime in the U.K. usually occurs in the form of pick-pocketing, mugging, and “snatch and grab” theft of mobile phones, watches, and jewelry. At airports, theft of unattended bags is often reported. Pick-pockets target tourists, especially at historic sites and restaurants, and on buses, trains, and the subway.

In London, travelers should try to use only licensed Black Cabs. Unlicensed taxis or private cars posing as taxis may offer low fares, but are often uninsured and may have unlicensed drivers. Personal safety cannot be guaranteed if traveling in unlicensed taxis.

## **INTERNATIONAL CONVERSIONS**

### **24-HOUR CLOCK**



In the 24-hour clock system, the day runs from midnight to midnight and is divided into 24 hours. This system is the most commonly used time notation in the world today. If you subtract 12 from all times between 13:00 and 24:00, you will arrive at our standard afternoon and evening times. On the 24-hour clock, for example, 1:00 p.m. appears as 13:00.

### **TIME ZONES**



There are different time zones around the world. Please keep this in mind when calling home. Be sure to remind friends and relatives of this time difference. You can check the world’s different time zones at [www.timezoneconverter.com](http://www.timezoneconverter.com)

The U.K. is 5 hours ahead of EST and the European continent is 6 hours ahead of EST.

### **METRIC SYSTEM**

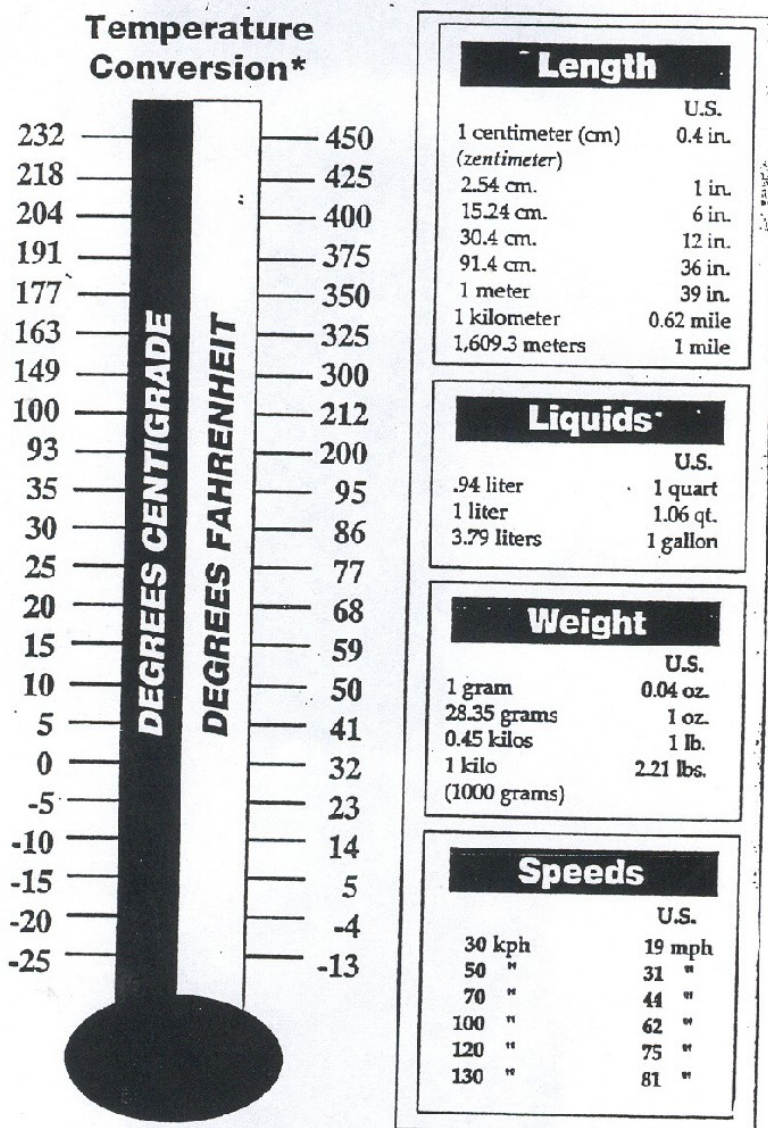


The metric system has been the standard in most countries for years; it is only the U.S. that has been out of step. If you are accustomed to thinking in terms of quarts, miles and pounds, it may take some time to get used to the metric system. Conversions that might be helpful:

1 gram	=	.04 ounces
1 kilogram	=	2.20 pounds
1 liter	=	1.06 quarts
1 meter	=	1.09 yards
1 kilometer	=	.62 miles



## CONVERSION CHART



\* To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit, multiply the Centigrade temperature by 1.8, and then add 32 to that number. To convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade, take degrees Fahrenheit, then subtract 32 and divide by 1.8.

## SIZE CONVERSION CHART

For a size conversion chart of men's and women's clothing and shoes, visit [http://goeurope.about.com/cs/shopping/l/bl\\_clothes\\_size.htm](http://goeurope.about.com/cs/shopping/l/bl_clothes_size.htm).

# Section 3

## Program-Specific Information

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## **PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **UNIVERSITY INFORMATION**

London Metropolitan University has a rich history with strong educational roots dating back to 1848. The University as it is today was created in 2002 with the merging of London Guildhall University and the University of North London, the first merger between two universities in the UK.

London Metropolitan University is one of the largest universities in London with around 30,000 students and some 4,000 staff over both campuses (North and City campuses) and offers an exciting and vibrant educational experience. London Met has a very diverse and international study body, with students coming from over 200 countries around the world.

Location: London Metropolitan University is located in the center of London and has two campuses: North (Holloway) campus and City (Aldgate) campus. The University's North campus is located in the borough of Islington in North London. The main buildings (including the International Programmes Office at Stapleton House) are on Holloway Road, near Holloway Road tube station. Holloway Road tube station is on the Piccadilly line, two stops north of King's Cross Station. The City campus has a prime location in the heart of the City of London, the Aldgate area and East London. The nearest tube stations to the City campus buildings are Moorgate (for the Moorgate building only) and Aldgate and Aldgate East for all other buildings at City campus.

### ***PARTNERSHIP/PROGRAM INFORMATION***

Millersville's official partnership began in 1998. Since this time, many students have spent a semester or academic year in London. We have a good working relationship with the London Met International Office, as well as the upper administration of the university, who are very much supportive of international collaboration. The campus and city of London have been site visited on various occasions by Global Education. Because of this, we are able to provide active "hands-on" support to students as they embark on their study abroad experience.

### ***MU RELATIONSHIP/INTERNATIONAL OFFICE SUPPORT***

London Metropolitan University has a fully staffed International Office available to provide assistance to exchange students in London. They are very accessible and able to assist with most inquiries. Students will receive more information about the university and their procedures at an orientation provided by the International Office when they arrive.

### ***BILLING PROCESS***

When you study abroad, you will still be billed according to the MU billing cycle. You will be billed for Millersville Tuition, Tech Fee, a London Met Program Charge, and Accommodations

Students are responsible for (and **NOT** billed by Millersville for):

- **Accommodations Damage Deposit** (paid directly to London Met). The £250 deposit will be due prior to arrival and should be paid by credit card. This will be returned to you if everything is in order prior to your departure.
- **Meals** – students pay for their own meals/food.
- **Miscellaneous Expenses** - visa fees (if studying abroad for a year), airfare, personal spending money, transport to and from the airport and local, books/texts, and passport.

Refer to the cost worksheet for a complete list of relevant costs, both billed and estimated for budgeting purposes.

### ***HOUSING***

NIDO Student Living is Located at King's Cross station just minutes away from the international St. Pancras train station. It is only a max.30 minute walk or a 10 minute tube journey from both campuses and central London.

NIDO provides accommodation for more than 1000 students studying in London from various colleges and universities. London Met contracts with NIDO for rooms for their exchange students.

The building is specifically designed with students in mind, this modern facility is equipped with 24 hour security, games room, miniature cinema, cafe and a fitness centre. It has wooden floors throughout, skylights, multi-function desks, is centrally located and has en suite bathrooms

All rooms through the MU partnership are double occupancy. Twin Rooms are equipped with a kettle and microwave in each room, and they share a communal kitchen with 15 people, where everyone has a lockable cupboard and individual fridge space. Rooms have internet connection and all common areas have Wifi. A 'Linen Pack' (sheets, pillows, and comforters) and a 'Dish Pack' (cutlery, dishes, pots, pans, etc.) is included in the cost of accommodations.

NIDO is a NON SMOKING facility.

### ***FOOD OPTIONS***

There are no meal plans through London Met, however there are thousands of options right outside of your accommodations. There is also a grocery store close by NIDO so that you can purchase your own food and use the kitchen facilities on your floor.

### ***COMMUNICATION IN YOUR UNIVERSITY***

The main method of communication between the university and students is through email. Students will receive a London Met email address to be used while abroad.

Students usually communicate directly with professors, unless there is a specific situation where the International Office should be involved.

## **COMPUTERS**

Each library has open access networked PCs and Macs with printers, copying and media facilities, and Wi-Fi so you can use your own laptop – look out for the MetNet signs. Wifi is also available throughout most campus academic and administrative buildings. Printing is also available on campus at a fee. Money can be added to your ID card online to access printers.



There is a computer lab in the library, as well as on the first floor of the Tower building at North Campus. You'll need to load your id card up with money in order to print. This can be done on the first floor of the library, or online.

## **INTERNET**

Internet access is available in your rooms. Wifi is available in common areas in NIDO accommodations and throughout campus, including the library. The internet is easily accessible at London Met, in NIDO, and throughout London.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

London Met does not have a health services facility as we do here. Students are directed to a local clinic, a local doctor, or the emergency room. In order to be seen at a doctor's office, you must first be registered with their practice. London Met's International Office will cover this in orientation; however it is suggested you register with a doctor as it will be difficult to be seen when you need it if you do not do so. The National Health Service (NHS) will only cover one semester study abroad students for emergency room visits only. You will need health insurance coverage for the time you are in the U.K. for anything that is a non-emergency medical need.

## **ARRIVAL**

### **GETTING TO YOUR HOST DESTINATION**

Students have three options to get to the Nido Accommodations from Heathrow Airport.

**TUBE:** There is a direct Tube line (the subway) to the Kings Cross station. Participants may navigate this system easily and the cost is approximately 5.50GBP for a one way ticket.

**TAXI:** You may take a personal taxi to the Nido accommodations. Estimate to spend about 70 GBP for a taxi ride.

**MINIBUS:** A taxi is unlikely to take more than two students because of the amount of luggage students bring! A shared minibus is a great solution and a bit less expensive if you want to coordinate your travel with another student.

Heathrow recommends this company for MiniBuses:

<http://www.greentomatocars.com/uk/heathrow>

## ORIENTATION PROCESS

Orientation at London Met is mandatory and it is a week-long program. They will review all aspects of your stay including familiarizing you with the city, enrollment in the university (getting id cards, email accounts, etc.), confirmation of registration in classes, introduction to university services, and more. This is a great time to meet the other study abroad students from around the world.

Prior to arrival, you will receive an orientation schedule and itinerary emailed from London Met. The International Office will run this program and you will get to know more about them, London Met and London in general.



Make sure you're taking this time to get to know everyone. Since the city is new to you, you may want to stick to going out at/around the school. The Rocket at North campus has some cool beginning of the year events. Just make sure you've mapped out how to get home by bus in case you miss the last tube!

## OPENING A BANK ACCOUNT

Bank accounts are difficult to open, so it's not worth it to open up an account if you're abroad for just for one semester. Instead, speak to your bank in the U.S., and look at options for getting money out abroad. You'll find that most businesses, especially in London, will take some form of credit card, and depending on your bank, you can usually use your debit card from home to take out money at various ATMs.

ATMs are called "Cash Points" in the UK. This is the easiest way to access your money while abroad. You must speak to your bank here at home before leaving, and ensure that your debit card is part of a global network such as **CIRRUS** or **PLUS**, that you only have a four digit pin, and what charges are associated with taking cash out abroad.

If you go over with foreign currency, make sure you exchange it at either a bank or the post office. These places offer no commission. Other places such as private cheque-cashing offices, stores, and "Bureau de Change" offices will charge high commission rates.



This [*opening an account*] really isn't something you'll be able to do unless you are in the country for more than 6 months. If you're there all year I'd definitely look into it as it can save you big time on overseas withdrawals from your home account.

## **ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The fall semester begins mid/late September and ends mid December (before the holidays). The spring semester begins late January and ends the end of May.

The academic calendar for London Metropolitan University can be found at <http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/international/study-abroad-programmes/incoming-students/study-abroad-programme/>



Definitely keep track of what "week" number it is. Professors won't give you dates for assignments...they'll tell you something is due "week 8."

### **CLASSES/SCHEDULING**



The Council on International Education Exchange notes the following about the academic culture in the U.K.:

Many students who travel to the United Kingdom for a semester or year expect the university to be very similar to that which they are used to in the United States. However, students should be prepared for some significant differences in terms of the numbers of hours spent in the classroom, the amount of work required outside the classroom, and methods of assessment.

Courses at universities in the United Kingdom, particularly in the arts and social sciences, may involve relatively few formal contact hours each week as they are intended as a starting point and focus a great deal on individual study. It is important for visiting students to be aware that a high degree of self motivation and self discipline are needed if they are to pursue ideas suggested in a lecture or seminar, perform the necessary private readings, and prepare the necessary written materials. Supervisors and course tutors are always ready to give advice on study methods.

Typically the teaching of a module will be based on lectures, supported by tutorials or seminars. Depending on the subject, some modules may include practical sessions, for example, in the laboratory, or fieldwork. Students are also expected to supplement formal teaching with their own private study.

Lectures are formal talks given at set times according to a timetable published in advance, and normally last one hour. Depending on the subject and the module, the size of the class may vary from a few students to two hundred students. A lecture gives students the starting point for their work, brings them up to date with the results of recent research, and, in some cases, provides a view of the topic with which they may agree or disagree. Some lecturers allow time at the end for questions but lectures are not the place for discussion of the material covered. Many students take notes of the main points the lecturer makes or in some cases the lecturer may provide hand-outs summarizing them.



A tutorial or seminar is a group discussion lasting one or two hours. Typically a tutorial group might contain ten students and will be led by a tutor. The exact topic of the subject under discussion will be determined in advance and students will be expected to have prepared beforehand by reading. Students will be expected to contribute to the discussion, perhaps offering different perspectives or suggesting new approaches.

Most lecturers will provide students with readings lists for their modules and thereafter it is up to the student to decide how much reading he or she wants to do. How much time is devoted to private study is a matter for the individual but students are expected to demonstrate a certain degree of maturity in their approach to private study.

You will take four classes while at London Met, each the equivalent of 3 U.S. credits. A total of 12 credits can be earned for one semester. London Met will not let study abroad students take more than four classes.



Be prepared for a huge difference in your classes! A lot of the responsibility is placed entirely onto your shoulders and things like readings may not be covered in class at all. Books are suggested not required and can either be taken out through the library or bought at the bookstore. An example of how my classes were run was meeting twice a week. One hour was a lecture and then the second one-hour class was a smaller round table discussion. Attendance was not mandatory or recorded. My only assessment in this class was a 5-minute presentation and an 8-10 page paper. Another major difference is the extremely informal relationship with the tutors. Each are addressed by their first names and are very laid back. Some may even invite you out for a drink or to chat.

Don't bring your notebooks; UK has a different size of standard paper. Set aside money for books, some are highly recommended and some you cannot take out of the library. Text books are not as expensive in the UK. There is usually only one essential reading book recommended by the professor.

## **EXAMS**

Many students in the United States rely on periodic assessment of their progress throughout the semester, which may be done through regular tests, mid-term exams, and papers. However, this type of regular assessment is not necessarily the norm in the United Kingdom. There is a greater expectation that students learn independently and there is less focus on tests, quizzes, and short assignments throughout the semester. Exams are normally held at the end of each term or year at which time students are required to demonstrate an understanding of the material.

There will be considerably fewer assessments than typically required in your classes at Millersville. It could be that one assessment is all that is required and is the basis of your entire grade for that module.



Make sure you turn in any Alternate Assessment Forms to the Stapleton House (the International Office)!

## ACADEMIC GRADE CONVERSION

Transcripts from London Met will be sent to Millersville in a U.S. format. Grades will already have been converted over to a U.S. system. However, your grades in the classroom will be in the U.K. system, which is numerical.

The U.K. grading scale is between 0 and 70. The following scale will give you a general idea of the U.S. letter grade equivalency for the U.K. number score.

<b>A</b>	<b>65+</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>50-64</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>37-49</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>(35 or below)</b>

*\*(A grade of C- or higher is required to transfer credits. Therefore, anything below 40 is not transferable).*

## EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

In every British University you will find a Students' Union. Students' Unions are centers managed by students for students. They offer advice, information, entertainment, friendship, clubs and societies, representation and much more. It is a good idea to become a member of the London Met Students' Union. The Students' Union will give you a student identity card called a NUS card. NUS means National Union of Students and each Students' Union belongs to the national group. You can apply for a NUS card (free of charge) as soon as you have enrolled and usually on enrolment day. This card will also entitle you to many entertainment and shopping discounts in the UK.

Student Union website: <http://www.londonmetsu.org.uk/>

A list of societies: <http://www.londonmetsu.org.uk/societies/>

## LIFE IN YOUR HOST CITY

### OVERVIEW OF HOST CITY

London is a diverse and exciting city with some of the world's best sights and attractions. Between the obvious tourist locations, theatre in the West End, incredible shopping, beautiful parks and green spaces, free museums, historical sites, and

entertainment venues, there is always something new to do and experience. You could never leave London and you would always find somewhere new to explore.

There are hundreds of tourist sites and guides to research, and London Met and NIDO will have more opportunities posted, so keep your eyes open!



If you're a young adult this is the city to be in. It has great night life in so many different parts of the city, and a great place just to experience a new culture. I could go on for days but one thing that I thought was eye opening was how different they approach everyday life. We are very open in our day to day communication. Many Londoners were not, whether they just did not want to talk, or avoided communication many times, I was taken aback by this. The city is much easier to digest when you are with a good group of people and with people your own age. The pubs are where you meet people and find some pretty decent food. Listen to where people eat; such as we ate at Eddies by Kings Cross a lot because it was good and clean. When the English do open up to you just be ready because they don't hold back and it is rather refreshing.

## CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Britain has a temperate climate and London is one of the mildest areas in the UK. However, the weather can be unpredictable; Londoners get used to carrying sunglasses and an umbrella to be prepared for anything! Top tip? Layers! You will need a warm waterproof coat but expect to be in a t-shirt when you get onto the tube or into a sunny park. London may see many rainy days each year but the overall climate is similar to that of the North-Eastern United States in terms of climate and season changes, without the extreme heat and extreme cold/snow.



Pretty much the same weather as home. Just bring an umbrella in your bag at all times. The rain isn't terrible there, its' just incredibly unpredictable!

## LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

There is an extensive network of underground and overground trains and buses in London. These are all maintained and run by Transport for London (Type in this link: <https://tfl.gov.uk/>) and are safe and convenient. It is recommend that all students get an Oyster card, which makes getting around town inexpensive. An Oyster card is a student travel card that will allow you access to the tube and buses. You will apply for an Oyster card during orientation in London, and after you are officially "enrolled" at London Met.



Can't beat the Tube! Kings Cross seems like a madhouse but it's not and everyone is in a rush. "Mind the gap and mind your step" when on the escalator and be sure to stay to the right so others can pass you. Cabs are

not always needed because of the bus system. Transportation in London makes you forget about even wanting a car! Get a student oyster card, save yourself a lot of money. London is also a great walking city as well. I walked everywhere if I had the opportunity which gave me the opportunity to find all kinds of things that others didn't see because all they knew were the tube stations. Walk Walk Walk!



The tube is incredibly helpful. If you have class everyday and like to explore on the weekends the best deal is to load up your oyster card.

Most importantly one of the FIRST things you want to do when you are there is to go online and order a student oyster card. It will take a week or two to get to you so the sooner you get one the sooner you save. You can load a month's time on one of those and not have to worry about fighting the tube queues before class. Also, the buses are very tricky at first. Be sure that you not only have the bus number, but the stop letter. The letter tells you what side of the street you're on and which direction you're going! I can't stress enough, before you head out for the night make sure you know which buses will get you home. The tubes don't run past midnight!

## COMMUNICATION IN YOUR HOST CITY

You may be able to use your own cell phone if it has 'roaming' enabled, check with your provider. However, this is expensive. We recommend getting a UK mobile, you can get a pay-as-you-go phone and sim card for around £15-20. There are many network providers with shops on the high street or visit [The Carphone Warehouse](#), also on the high street, which carries all networks and brands.

Skype is the best way to keep in touch with home. It's cheap and it's easy!



Buy a cheap phone for like 20 pounds at a wireless place and just do a pay as you go. If you plan on calling outside the UK use a calling card, the phone does come in handy when looking for a cab or getting a hold of buddies. We forget how easy life is when we aren't in Millersville.



The Evening Standard and many other papers are free! Grab one...if you don't it could be a long ride on the tube. Plus, let's be real, you're not watching the news in your spare time. The paper will help you know what's going on in the country and what you need to be aware of in order to stay safe.

## **INTERNET**

Some restaurants and stores offer free Wifi in the city. There are also some internet cafes where internet can be accessed for a small price per hour.

## **POST OFFICES**

The Post Office in the U.K. offers more services than here in the States. In the U.K., they provide you with everything from your mail to your broadband package, your car insurance to your savings account. You can exchange money here as well for one of the best rates. There are over 50 Post Office locations in London and one across from Kings Cross train station.

Mailing packages home can be very expensive. Do not plan on sending your luggage "overflow" home in boxes!



The confusing thing about the post offices is that they are usually in a store and not separated like ours here. If you have any questions about shipping though talk to them.

## **RESTAURANTS/FOOD**

The City of London is a great place to eat out and you will be spoiled for choice whether you plan to sit down or eat-on-the-run. There is everything from eateries in old banking halls to Michelin-starred restaurants, from pub grub to posh nosh, from French cuisine to Thai curry.

The City's pubs also deserve special mention. Steeped in history, some have changed little since the likes of Charles Dickens drank in them, while others offer the latest in slick décor, live music and a variety of food.



You're going to end up cooking if you want to save \$ for things that really matter. Tesco's is the most convenient and is located close. When you leave NIDO walking towards the King's Cross tube station, take a right at the first light you come to (where the hair salon is). You'll see it down a block on the left! If you want to eat cheap, pub food is always the best. The best pubs are called Weatherspoons. There is one close to NIDO called the Shakespeare's Head that is awesome. There's also one of these near North campus. Just take a left when you get off the tube and head down 3 blocks...it's on the right! Also, if Mexican is your scene the most delicious food is at Chilangos in Angel. Angel is a really nice area. For first time, take the tube there, but you'll find you can walk! If you like crepes the most delicious ones I've ever had are in the train station portion of King's Cross.

## SHOPPING

You can literally shop 'til you drop in London. From upscale shops and boutiques to flea markets – there is truly something for everyone!

Visit the following site for a few shopping options, but just get out, walk around, and browse the streets!

<http://www.visitlondon.com/things-to-do/shopping>



Shopping is everywhere you go. St. Pancras has a mall in the bottom of the rail station. Walking distance from Nido was a outdoor shopping area near Russell Square in Bloomsbury. A really neat place to go for an afternoon coffee. Of course, Piccadilly and the Westside of the city such as Oxford St., are where you will streets lined with shops. Traveling into the S. Kensington area you can hit up Harrods which is just south west of Hyde Park, a must go when in London! Be sure to check out the shrine to Princess Diana in one of the stair wells and you can sign the book. City Centre has some high class shopping as well. Probably just as expensive as the shops in S. Kensington near Harrods but all seem to be around the Bank tube station, one of the biggest tube stations in London.



Places to shop that are the best: Camden Market, Portobello Market, Spitfields Mall (a little bit of a hike), Covent Garden, and of course the place with the most New York feel, Oxford Street.

## HOSPITALS

There are many hospitals throughout London and the International Office at London Met will tell you the nearest locations during orientation.

Visit this site for a listing of London Hospitals:

<http://www.allinlondon.co.uk/directory/1379.php>



Where we were staying at Nido near King's Cross there was an urgent care type place across the street near The Big Chill House which is a pub. Also if you go due west from King's Cross you will find St. Pancras, one of the biggest hospitals in London is located here.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/MISC

### TRAVEL



DEFINITELY DEFINITELY USE THE WEEKENDS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE!! If you're interested in traveling the best place to go

through is STA Travel. They have a place located right off the Russell Square tube stop. Pop in and take a look at their weekend packages. I HIGHLY recommend the Hagas tour through the Scottish Highlands and the Isle of Sky. We had Tony as our tour guide and had the best weekend of our lives. The Southern Rocker tour through Ireland is also AWESOME!