Language Centre
Pre-departure Guide
2020
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Introduction

This guide has important information for you to read before you leave home. It includes what you need to prepare before your departure and what to expect when you arrive.

Please read it carefully and if you have any questions, we are very happy to help you. language-centre@arts.ac.uk

Please also read our Living in London guide which has lots of information including good places to visit and useful contacts and our Course Handbook with information about studying at the University of the Arts (UAL) Language Centre.

We look forward to welcoming you and wish you a safe trip.
Before you leave home

Your visa

If you have a passport from a European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland, you do not need a visa to study in the UK.

If you have a passport from another country, then please visit https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa/

- Enter the nationality on your passport and click on Next Step
- Choose Study and click on Next Step
- Choose how long you want to study and click on Next Step
- You will see if you need a Short-term study visa and how to apply or what documents you need to show when you arrive in the UK.

Please contact us at language-centre@arts.ac.uk if you want more help or advice.

Insurance

As a Language Centre student, you will automatically be covered by our insurance policy. Insurance is an agreement with a company to help cover costs of an accident that happens when you are away from your country.

You can find more information on this page: http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/language-centre/language-centre-courses/useful-information-for-students/

If you are bringing valuable items, you may want extra separate insurance to cover the cost of replacing them if lost, damaged or stolen.

Health

If you are studying with us for less than six months, then please arrange separate health insurance before you leave home.

If you are studying for six months or longer, you should register with a GP (General Practitioner – Doctor) in your area in London when you arrive. You must do this before you use your Language Centre insurance to see a doctor.

If you have special health problems, then it’s a good idea to arrange insurance which will cover your specific needs while you are in the UK.

Please note if you have a serious medical condition or take regular medication you should provide the Language Centre with a letter in English from your doctor explaining your medical needs in case of emergency.
Money

Make sure you have some UK cash with you for your first day.

If you want to use your bank card in London, please check what your bank will charge you.

We do not advise only bringing cash with you. If you need to do this, then it's safer to put it onto a cash passport which you can use like a debit card. You can also get one of these before you arrive. Find more information here: http://www.cashpassport.com/1/global-landing-page/

If you are studying at the Language Centre for over 3 months, you may be able to open a bank account in London. Please ask at the Language Centre Student Support Team for a letter to help you apply.

Identity Card

Please remember to send us a Jpeg photo of yourself before you travel to the UK. We need this to prepare your identity card so you can enter our buildings and use our facilities.
You can send this by email to language-centre@arts.ac.uk

Help and Support

UAL has an experienced Student Services team who can give lots of support to Language Centre students. We want to help all our students have the same opportunities. This includes help with a disability, learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia, or health problems. 272 High Holborn has wheelchair access and disabled toilets on most floors.

Please contact language-centre@arts.ac.uk if you will need any support or want advice about your time at the Language Centre or in London.

Join us

Join us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and make sure you get news and information about events, competitions and things to do in London.

Twitter @languagecentre
Instagram @languagecentreual
Facebook www.facebook.com/LanguageCentreUAL
Accommodation

If you booked homestay or house share accommodation you will have received a document about what to expect in your accommodation. If you are staying in homestay accommodation then it’s a great idea to email your host before your stay in London. You can tell your host about you so you know each other before arriving.

If you have chosen to organise accommodation yourself, then please be very careful if you are looking for private property from a website. **Never wire money to a “landlord” or anyone you don’t know via Western Union, MoneyGram or any other wire service. Never send a copy of your passport or other identification as it can be stolen.**

If you need more information on a safe way to rent private accommodation in London please visit our website [http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/accommodation/private-accommodation/](http://www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/accommodation/private-accommodation/)

If you have had a private accommodation problem and need to find accommodation quickly then Premier Inn has a large selection of cheap hotels throughout London. Please visit their website [http://www.premierinn.com/](http://www.premierinn.com/) to make a booking or telephone 0871 527 9222 (lines are only open from 8am to 10pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 10pm on Sundays).

Electricity

British electricity works on 240 Volts or 50 Hertz. If you bring any electrical items (such as a hair dryer) make sure you have a converter so your items will be safe with the voltage here.

What to Pack

Don’t pack too many things so you have space in your luggage for anything new you buy in the UK. Posting things home can be expensive.

**We suggest you pack:**

- Several sweaters so you can wear one over the other
- A rain jacket which you can carry with you
- Comfortable shoes for walking
- Mobile phone and laptop charger
- Plug adapter
- Umbrella
- Sunglasses
- Photos to make your room feel like home
- Medication (if needed, and make sure you can bring it into the UK)
- Documents in your hand luggage so they are easy and quick to find:
  - Passport
  - Visa letter
  - Accommodation information and details
  - Print out of the airport transfer confirmation if you arranged this

You can buy notebooks, pens and art materials you need when you are in the UK, but if you want to bring something special from your home, then pack that too.
Arriving in the UK

Airports

Most flights arrive at London Heathrow or London Gatwick airports. London also has Stansted, Luton, City and Southend airports.

If you have not booked a taxi to meet you at the airport, we can book a transfer to take you to your accommodation. This will be cheaper than a taxi service at the airport, but not as cheap as public transport. A taxi is a good idea if you are arriving late at night or early in the morning, as some public transport is not working at these times.

If you have booked an airport transfer and can’t find the driver at the airport, please phone ++44 (0)7799 693566 and please do not leave the airport.

If you want to travel from the airport to your accommodation by public transport, please check the airport website for information:

- **Stansted**: [http://www.stanstedairport.com/](http://www.stanstedairport.com/)
- **City**: [http://www.londoncityairport.com/visitingtheairport/GettingHere](http://www.londoncityairport.com/visitingtheairport/GettingHere)

Trains

If you arrive in the UK by Eurostar you will arrive at St Pancras International station. This station is in the heart of London and you can take a licensed Black Taxi from outside the station or public transport from Kings Cross station to your accommodation.

Toilets

UK toilets are flushing, pedestal toilets. Toilet paper is provided and should always be flushed away down the toilet after use. You are expected to leave the toilet tidy and wash your hands after using a toilet. Do not flush female hygiene products down a toilet, please use the sanitary bin provided in the stall. London has public toilets located on some of the busier streets and they usually cost a small fee to use.

Traffic Safety

In the UK we drive on the left so be careful when crossing the road and cross the road at the correct places: at traffic lights, a pelican crossing or a zebra crossing. Make sure the driver has seen you and wait for the car to slow down before you cross. Also watch out for bicycles, motorcycles and buses and do not cross if you can hear or see a police car or ambulance.
If you have an emergency problem with your **Homestay or House share** accommodation or an airport transfer, please call **Hosts International** on: **07799 693566**.

If you have a medical emergency then phone our emergency assistance service on +44 (0)1243 621058 which is part of your insurance. The phone line is open 24/7.

If you are ill and need health advice or information, phone National Health Service Direct on 111. You can ask to speak to someone in your own language if you prefer.

If you need help from the emergency services (Police, Fire Brigade or an Ambulance), please call 999.

The Language Centre phone number 0207 514 2309 is answered between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm from Monday to Friday.
Your First Day

Finding the Language Centre

The Language Centre is at **272 High Holborn, London WC1V 7EY**.

To find the best way from your accommodation to the Language Centre using public transport you can enter your home address and the Language Centre address on [https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/](https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/). You can find information about tickets and general London transport information on [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk).

Citymapper mobile app is also useful for finding places in London.

Holborn (Central and Piccadilly lines) is the nearest underground (tube) station to the Language Centre and is less than 5 minutes’ walk. Tottenham Court Road tube (Northern and Central lines) is a 15 minute walk away. Chancery Lane tube (Central line) is less than a 10 minute walk.

Bus numbers 1, 8, 25, 59, 168, 171, 242, 521, 17, 45, 46, 91 and 188 all stop close to the Language Centre.
Please be at 272 High Holborn on time (see the email with ‘Important information about your course’) and bring your passport with you. You need your passport to enrol on your course. A member of the Language Centre Student Support team will meet you.

On your first morning you will take a short test of English so we are sure which class is best for you. This test will include an interview with a teacher. Please tell the teacher or a member of the Language Centre Student Support team if you need any support or have any problems. We are here to help you.

You will meet our team, other students and have a tour of the building so you know where to find things. You will have the opportunity to ask questions and get information and advice.
General Information

### Student Code of Conduct

We expect our students to:
- Read the Course Handbook and the Living in London guide
- Arrive in class on time
- Attend class every day and attend a minimum of 80% of your course
- Read the absence policy in the Course Handbook and tell us if you can’t attend class
- Participate fully in class
- Speak only English in class
- Not use your mobile phone in class
- Show respect to your teachers, classmates and all Language Centre staff
- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Do your homework
- Follow our policies on class transfers, complaints and holidays

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### UAL Student Charter

In addition to the Language Centre’s student code of conduct, the University has a [Student Charter](#) which you should read and follow. The document has been developed by representatives of the University, students and Student’s Union. It aims to make sure that everyone studying and working at UAL has the best possible experience. It includes the responsibilities that the University, students and the Student’s Union have.

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### Social Activities

There are lots of ways to get involved in social activities and meet other students, not just Language Centre students, but also university of the arts students.

Every month, UAL Social Programme has a number of activities from theatre trips to the best west end shows, day trips to Oxford or other cities around the UK as well as yoga and secret cinema. All of these are either free or have a small cost. Some take place in the UAL halls of residence, but you are welcome even if you don’t live there!

Check our Language Centre Facebook page to find out our suggestions for the weekend. We also organise class trips to different places of interest in London and festival events, such as Christmas and Halloween parties.
Important Dates

The Language Centre is open from Monday to Friday. It is closed for UK public holidays, for 3 weeks in December and early January and for the late May bank holiday week.

Please note these dates in 2019:

- **6 January 2020**: Language Centre opens for the New Year
- **10 April 2020**: Good Friday. Language Centre closed
- **13 April 2020**: Easter Monday. Language Centre closed
- **8 May 2020**: Public Holiday. Language Centre closed
- **25-29 May 2020**: Late May Holiday. Language Centre closed
- **31 August 2020**: Public Holiday. Language Centre closed
- **14 December - 1 January**: Christmas Holiday. Language Centre closed

If you are studying with us for more than 12 weeks, then we ask you to book a holiday from 25-29 May or over Christmas and New Year.

Student Support

Your teacher is here to help you with your course and is the best person to talk to if you have any problems with your studies.

Our Language Centre Student Support team are available from Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm and the staff will be happy to help you with any questions you have, such as information about accommodation or opening a bank account.

language-centre@arts.ac.uk 0207 514 2309

UAL Student Services on the 1st floor at 272 High Holborn give help with many areas from visas to private accommodation, health, disability and university courses.

Help desk: 0207 514 6900