

SKIDMORE

C O L L E G E

First-Year Experience in London

August 24 - December 12, 2021

Arrival Date: London

August 24

Final Night to Stay in Housing

December 11

Departure Date

December 12

Note to Student: The information contained in this IES Abroad Predeparture Guide is believed to be accurate at the time of publication. However, IES Abroad reserves the right, AT ANY TIME AND WITHOUT NOTICE, to change information contained in this document, and to publish corrections thereto.

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EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Predeparture

Use these numbers for emergencies before the start of the program, including travel delays prior to leaving the United States.

If you are calling from the United States - 800.995.2300 (toll free) or 312.944.1750
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. CT In the case of an emergency after business hours* - 800.766.7793

*Please note: the after-hours number will contact an IES Abroad Representative at home and should be used only in the event of a real emergency.

Upon Arrival Abroad

Use these numbers** and the dialing instructions below for emergencies on-site, including travel delays within Europe.

IES Abroad London Center Emergency Phone

0207.299.4420 (During office hours) | 0780.151.4547 (After office hours)

If you are calling from the U.K. dial - 0 + number above

If you are calling from another European country dial - 00.44 + number above

**The emergency contact is an on-duty staff member. Please remind friends and family not to use this number except in cases of real emergency and to keep in mind the time difference between the United States and the U.K.

STAY CLUB KENTISH TOWN CONTACT INFORMATION



Stay Club Kentish Town
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London
NW5 3AN ENGLAND



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	7
SORTING OUT DEPARTURE	8
NECESSARY DOCUMENTS	8
Passport	
Visas & Prior Entry Clearance	
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS	9
Arrival Information	
Early Departures	
London Orientation Program	
Planning Independent Travel	
HOUSING	10
Commuting	
Quiet Hours	
Guest Policy	
Stay Club Kentish Town	
Meals & Cuisine	
COMMUNICATION	12
Cellular Phones	
Keeping in Touch Online	
Time Differences	
Mail	
PACKING	15
Pack Sparingly	
Pack Lightly	
Keep Local Weather and Dress in Mind	
Shipping Luggage	
Storing Luggage	

Towels, Sheets & Laundry
Electrical Appliances
Laptop Computers
Customs

INSURANCE & HEALTH 17

Student Health Insurance
Mental Health Services
Property Insurance
Liability Insurance
Prescription Drugs & Toiletries
Vaccinations
Health
Coronavirus (COVID-19)

FINANCES 20

Currency
Handling Money

EXPLORING ACADEMICS 21

Organizing Your Time
Library Facilities
Computer Facilities
Reading Preparation
Academic Resources
Academic Accommodations

TRAVERSING NEW CULTURES 25

Cultural Introduction
Meeting the British
Intercultural Competence
IES Abroad Field Trips
Cell Phones & Trip Tracker

STUDENT SAFETY	28
Cell Phone Policy	
Independent Travel	
Travel Safety	
DISCUSSING DIVERSITY	29
Diversity in England	
Minority Students	
Sexual Orientation	
Religious Issues	
Physical Disabilities	
Additional Diversity Resources	
CODE OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY	31
Alcohol & Other Drug Policy	
CHECKLIST	32
SUGGESTED PACKING LIST	33

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Skidmore College & IES Abroad **London First-Year Experience!** The adventure of studying abroad can truly be a life-changing experience and we congratulate you on taking your first steps of this journey!

We know you will have a lot of questions as you prepare for your departure and hope that this Predeparture Guide will address most of your immediate concerns. This guide is meant to enhance the other information you've received from Skidmore College and is your information resource for answering questions like:

- What should I pack?
- What kind of computer and library facilities will be available?
- How can I handle my money from overseas?
- What is London like?
- What do I need to do to get ready?
- And many others!

We hope that you will read this guide carefully, familiarize yourself with the information it contains, and carry it with you to London for reference. If you or your parents have any other questions not answered within this guide, please call or email the OCSE Office at Skidmore College. You can also access this information online in a different organizational format through your **MyIESAbroad account**.

In London, the FYE program is managed by IES Abroad, a global organization celebrating 65+ years of superior service to students worldwide. For more information on IES Abroad, we invite you to visit the IES Abroad home page at www.IESabroad.org.

We are confident of your success and encourage you to take every advantage of the tremendous opportunities that await you. Are you ready?



SORTING OUT DEPARTURE

Several details require your attention as you prepare for your departure. Perhaps you're feeling a bit overwhelmed as you anticipate sorting out travel arrangements, packing wisely, and planning your finances. Not to worry. We'll help you be prepared for your time abroad by addressing these and other items of immediate concern.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

PASSPORT

If you have not already done so, apply for your passport **immediately!** U.S. citizens can apply at most post offices. For further instructions on obtaining a passport, you can go to www.state.gov or call the government hotline at 1.800.688.9889. The passport application form indicates the current fee, photo, and identification requirements.

It takes an average of four to six weeks to obtain or renew a passport. You must apply for your passport or your passport renewal **at least three months** before your departure date. Once you obtain your passport, it will be valid for 10 years.

If you have a current passport that will expire before your return to the United States, *you must renew your passport at this time.* **Furthermore, if your passport will have less than six months remaining after the end date of the program, you must renew it before departure.** Otherwise you may have to surrender your passport for a time while you are abroad which will temporarily restrict your freedom to travel.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you should follow your government's procedures for obtaining a passport. To obtain consulate phone numbers, please refer to the "Foreign Consular Offices in the U.S." website at <https://www.state.gov/s/cpr/fco/index.htm>.

We strongly recommend that you make photocopies of the identification page of your passport and keep a copy with you at all times, preferably in a money belt or similar carrier that can be concealed underneath your clothing. We also strongly recommend that you keep a copy in an e-format that can be accessed and to leave copies of the document with a trusted third party at home in case yours are lost or stolen.

VISAS & PRIOR ENTRY CLEARANCE

A visa is a stamp placed in your passport by the government of the country you wish to enter. Essentially, a visa is proof that you have the permission of that government to enter and remain in their country for the duration of the visa. The U.K. visa system may change its policies at any time, so it is important that you look out for updates from your program advisor as your departure date nears. You will receive more detailed information on what exactly you need to do in your acceptance materials sent by Skidmore College. Please refer to the flyer titled *Immigration Information*.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Students will arrive in London on **August 24, 2021**. Due to the ongoing global pandemic, Skidmore will NOT hold an in-person pre-departure orientation in Saratoga Springs, NY before the start of the semester.

The decision to have students arrive directly to London was, in part, due to the current U.K. regulations requiring a 10-day quarantine upon arrival. Current U.K. regulations allow students to quarantine in their residence hall room and most orientation activities, as well as the first week of classes, can be held virtually. If the quarantine upon arrival requirement is changed before students arrive on August 24th, orientation activities may be adjusted to offer a combination of in-person and virtual activities in London.

Students are responsible for booking their own flight arrangements to London. You will receive more information about arrival in London and booking your flight soon. Late arrivals are not permitted unless warranted by a documented medical or family emergency and approved by Skidmore College. If you are delayed when traveling to London due to flight cancellations or travel delays please contact IES Abroad London for further instructions.

EARLY DEPARTURES

Early departures are not permissible unless warranted by a documented medical or family emergency. It is not possible to reschedule a final exam or final paper deadline in order to accommodate early departure.

LONDON ORIENTATION PROGRAM

The IES Abroad program will begin with a mandatory orientation in London that provides detailed information about health and safety in London and Britain, academics, cultural adjustment, housing, and other important topics. It is possible the UK government will impose a mandatory quarantine upon your arrival. IES Abroad will assist students in effectively managing the quarantine period.

There are also a number of activities and presentations whose aim is to acquaint you with London, your fellow students, IES Abroad staff, and student life in England. Orientation will also acquaint you with the expectations and teaching methods of British professors, as well as the educational format of the program. All students are required to attend.

PLANNING INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

We recognize that you will want to explore your new surroundings through independent travel. However, please note that during the Fall 2021 semester, you will only be permitted to travel within the United Kingdom. For example, you not permitted to travel to Ireland or to Europe. In addition, you will not be excused from academic obligations or required events in order to travel independently.

For this reason, we strongly encourage you to refrain from making independent travel arrangements (including visits from family or friends) until you have received a final program calendar upon arrival in London.

HOUSING

Living arrangements are an important part of a study abroad program and can add greatly to the academic and cultural value of your experience. In London, you will reside in the Stay Club Kentish Town. You are expected to adapt to your accommodations and to try to understand and respect the cultural context in which you are living.

IES Abroad will try to meet the preferences you indicate on your online Housing Form, but cannot guarantee that all of them will be met. As such, it is important that you submit your housing documents on time, particularly if you have dietary or other requirements.



Since IES Abroad arranges housing for the duration of the program, you may not change your housing later without incurring substantial financial cost. IES Abroad reserves the right to change your housing assignment at any time.

COMMUTING

Daily commuting is a reality for all who live in or near London. Located within Central London (Zone 2), the hall is a 30 minute commute to the IES Abroad Center. Students should plan to purchase either a weekly or monthly transportation pass for Zones 1-2 upon arrival.

QUIET HOURS

Quiet hours in the residence hall last from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. Sunday-Thursday, and from midnight to 8 a.m. Friday and Saturday.

GUEST POLICY

Currently, no overnight guests are permitted at Stay Club Kentish Town.

STAY CLUB KENTISH TOWN

Stay Club Kentish Town provides a mixed-use student accommodation with outstanding facilities such as a cinema, disco, gym, and study areas, as well as an on-site cafe.

Excellent Location

A short walk from the famous Camden Market, Kentish Town is one of London's most vibrant areas, known for its bustling high-street, live music venues, array of independent shops and restaurants and the nearby Talacre Gardens and Hampstead Heath woodlands.

Like local students, you will commute daily for courses and field trips either on foot or via tube or bus. Commute times vary depending on your destination, traffic, and the type of transportation used. Public transportation stops are located close to the residence hall.

- 5-minute walk from both Kentish Town Station (Tube and National Rail) and Kentish Town West Station (Overground)
- 30 minutes door-to-door to IES Centre via tube
- 50-minute walk to IES Centre
- 5-minute walk to nearest supermarket and Kentish Town Road high street
- Located in Travel Zone 2

About the Building

The residence hall is a multi-story, purpose-built, wheelchair-accessible building. The reception area, as well as the building's offices, are located on the ground floor. The Skidmore Program Assistant lives on site. There are lifts (elevators) that take you to the remaining floors, which consist of student bedrooms and kitchens. There are card-operated laundry facilities in the basement, and common rooms on various floors, which are furnished with comfortable seating, and wireless Internet. Some floors have a television in the common room, while others have been established specifically for reading and studying. All residents have access to the fitness facility.



Safety & Security

Your security is a priority at the Stay Club Kentish Town residence hall. Along with 24-7 security coverage, there is an electronic key-card entry system; each student will have one key that provides access to the front door, bedroom, and kitchen.

The front desk in the reception area is also staffed 24 hours a day. Each student also has access to a personal safe in his or her room.

Rooms

One or two students per room with an ensuite-bathroom. The bedroom is furnished with a bed, a writing desk, and a wardrobe. Bedding and towels are provided. In addition, there is a small kitchenette which includes a stove, microwave, electric kettle, toaster, small fridge/freezer, and cupboards for storage.

Room Size

As you may know, real estate in London is among the most expensive in the world, and in general, student housing in the U.K. is much less spacious than you are accustomed to. The location of the hall, access to the shared common rooms, and organized social events promote a rewarding experience that for most students outweighs the relatively small room sizes.

We encourage you to consider space and versatility when packing—remember, almost anything you might need from home you can likely find in London. We also suggest bringing soft-sided luggage that will fold down to save space.

Internet Access

Each resident has access to Stay Club Kentish Town free 24-hour wireless Internet access. To utilize the Wi-Fi, you will need to bring your own laptop or other device (make sure it is insured!).

Students are encouraged to set up Skidmore's VPN or virtual private network prior to the start of the semester. Skidmore VPN is a secure application required to get access to some of Skidmore's online on-campus resources from London, such as the library or the Registrar's student information system.

You can find information about setting up the VPN at

<https://www.skidmore.edu/it/network/wireless.php>.

Cultural Events & Opportunities

The Skidmore FYE program includes many special programming activities already in the program fee and arranged just for Skidmore students.

Program Assistant

Skidmore students will have a dedicated Program Assistant (PA) during the program. The PA will live at Stay Club Kentish Town and will provide support and assistance to students during the program. The PA will arrange special activities for Skidmore students throughout the programs well. These activities are included in the program fee at no extra cost to the student.

MEALS & CUISINE

There are a wide variety of restaurants in all price ranges in London, and you will undoubtedly find inexpensive and convenient eateries. Pubs typically serve tasty, inexpensive lunches. London also offers a particularly welcoming environment for special diets. Most restaurants include vegetarian menu options, and Kosher and Halal diets are easily satisfied.

Many ethnic foods are available and are often a good value, such as Indian, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, and Mediterranean. In addition, many students find it both affordable and rewarding to grocery shop and cook for themselves in the shared kitchens.

COMMUNICATION

CELLULAR PHONES

Because IES Abroad is first and foremost committed to student safety and security, we require all students to have a cellular phone while enrolled in our programs. It is the responsibility of each student to acquire a cellular phone either in the host country within the first two days of arrival or in the U.S. prior to departure. Failure to acquire a cellular phone and report the number to IES Abroad staff in this period of time will result in judicial action. Here are the three options available to students studying on the FYE program:

- 1) Purchase a U.K. cell phone with a pay-as-you-go plan;
- 2) Have your U.S. phone unlocked and use it with a U.K. SIM card; or
- 3) Purchase an international plan from your U.S. network provider.



It is up to the student and their parents to decide which option is best for them. IES Abroad doesn't suggest any of the options as preferred but requires that all students provide their U.S. or number within the first two days of arrival. We do suggest that regardless of the option chosen, a mobile data plan should be included. Things to be aware of and to consider:

Option 1

It will cost approximately £20 for cheapest entry level phone and approximately £10 for a local pay-as-you-go SIM card if bought on its own (subject to availability at a store). IES Abroad will organize a shopping tour to assist with purchasing a phone.

Contract deals are only available to people with a U.K. bank account and are available for a minimum length of at least 12 months. (Note: It can be difficult to open a bank account in the U.K.) If you decide to purchase a U.K. cell phone you will be required to carry it with you at all times along with your U.S. phone. You will be required to always have credit on your U.K. phone as well as always have the battery charged and ready to use.

Option 2

Your U.S. phone can be used with a U.K. SIM card only if it's unlocked. IES Abroad will have free sim cards available for pick up at the IES London Centre. Please contact your U.S. network provider to see if your phone can be unlocked and if there are any fees associated with unlocking the phone. If you'd like to use your phone with a U.K. SIM card, make sure your phone is unlocked before you leave.

Some students have been told by their network providers that their phones were unlocked only to find this is not the case after they had arrived in the U.K. In this case, you will need to consider options 1 and 3. It is possible but difficult to unlock your phone in the U.K. as the main cell phone stores will not provide this service and it may nullify the warranty of your phone.

Option 3

Please call your network provider to find out the cost associated with international plan (which should include mobile data) and what you are entitled to once you pay the fee. You will need to carry one phone only and won't have to be concerned with charging your U.K. phone or making sure that it's got credit. Whilst data will be available to you any time which is incredibly convenient when navigating the city, please note that those who opt to purchase U.K. phone may be charged more for contacting you which in some cases may mean they will not be able to do so unless they have a smart phone and can contact you using data.

Keeping in Touch Online

Internet-based communication is an easy and free way to maintain contact with family and friends back home and abroad. Check out:

[Zoom](#) for free internet-based audio and video calling

[Skype](#) for free internet-based audio and video calling and messaging

[Wechat](#) for audio calling and messaging

[Whatsapp](#) for audio calling and messaging

[Google Hangout](#) for audio video calling and messaging

Even if you purchase a basic cell phone abroad, you can use your smartphone's Internet-based communications when you are connected to WiFi.

Be sure to check with your cellular provider to ensure that you may access the Internet on your phone without incurring mobile data costs. You'll probably want to set your phone to Airplane Mode or turn Mobile Data OFF.

Keep in mind that high bandwidth services like Skype may not function as expected in areas with slow Internet connections.

Please note that all students should download WhatsApp and have it available on their phone.

TIME DIFFERENCES

Please keep in mind that the United Kingdom does not change to and from daylight savings time on the same date as the United States. In the U.K., daylight savings time starts a few weeks earlier than in the U.S. Center staff can help with the exact dates.

MAIL

All mail should be addressed to your attention at Stay Club Kentish Town, using the sample below:

**Your Name
Room Number
Stay Club Kentish Town
65-69 Holmes Road
London
NW5 3AN
ENGLAND**

IES Abroad London will not pay duty on packages received for students; however, they will act as an intermediary between the post office and the student. Letters sent via airmail from the United States usually take five to seven days to reach London. Mail is priced by weight so it is advised that you use airmail paper. This can be purchased from post offices and stationary stores and does not need additional post. Letters on airmail paper cost much less.

PACKING

There are three keys to packing:

PACK SPARINGLY

Be very selective about the clothes you pack. Taking a few key items that you can mix and match is much better than packing many separate outfits. Students rarely complain about taking too little, but many say that they packed more than they needed. Also, keep in mind that you are likely to accumulate additional possessions while abroad, so pack light! In addition, closets and storage spaces overseas are generally much smaller than they are in the United States.

A suggested packing list is available as an appendix at the back of this Guide. For other tips on packing efficiently, visit www.onebag.com.

PACK LIGHTLY

Keep in mind that you will have to carry your own luggage. Do not pack more than you can carry and fit in the trunk of a **small taxi!** (If you cannot carry your luggage up a flight of steps by yourself, you are packing too much.) Also, consider how much traveling you will be doing while abroad. Do you really want to lug around several suitcases? Check with the airline you have chosen for luggage allowances, as many have reduced the weight limits and number of bags allowed.

- ***Do not pack your passport in your checked luggage. You will need it to embark and when you disembark, before having access to checked luggage.***
- ***Also, in case your luggage does not arrive at the same time that you do, bring a carry-on bag that includes the bare essentials including toiletries, any necessary medications, and a change of clothes.***

KEEP LOCAL WEATHER AND DRESS IN MIND

The climate of London is usually temperate, neither excessively hot nor extremely cold. The weather is, however, changeable, damp, and often rainy. While each room has its own thermostat, you will find that the British are accustomed to considerably lower indoor temperatures during the winter than you may be. Therefore, sweaters, warm clothes, flannel pajamas, and a heavy outer coat as well as hat, gloves, and scarf are very practical items. Rainwear is a must during the entire year and umbrellas are always useful. Don't forget to bring comfortable walking shoes! If you plan to visit the British countryside (highly recommended) you may wish to bring hiking boots. Additionally, air conditioning is not common in British buildings or colleges in the warmer months. You will find that the usual campus clothing in the United States, including a couple of dressy outfits, is quite acceptable in London. For current weather conditions in London, visit www.weather.com.

SHIPPING LUGGAGE

IES Abroad does not recommend shipping clothing ahead of time. Stay Club Kentish Town cannot sign for shipped luggage because a customs fee often needs to be paid. Also keep in mind that any items that are shipped over must also be shipped home, and postage rates are generally much costlier abroad.

STORING LUGGAGE

Please note that the Stay Club Kentish Town cannot be used to store luggage prior to your arrival or while you are traveling. Luggage storage is available after the program end date at the Stay Club Kentish Town residence hall (organized through IES Abroad). Also, if you are traveling before returning to the U.S., consider the luggage services at www.excess-baggage.com. Luggage storage is also available at the main train stations (i.e., Paddington, King's Cross, or Victoria Station) for approximately £6 per bag per day.

TOWELS, SHEETS & LAUNDRY

In London, each student will be provided a comforter, sheets, towels, and pillow by Stay Club Kentish Town. The hall has card-operated laundry (per-load costs: wash £3.00; dry £1.00). Dry cleaning is considerably more expensive than in the United States and usually takes a couple of days.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Wall sockets/plugs are different in the U.K. You will need an adapter to plug in your appliance as well as a converter to convert the voltage. Electricity in Britain operates at 240 volts AC, and the frequency of oscillation is 50 Hz (cycles) per second (as opposed to 110 and 60 in the United States, respectively). Transformers are necessary for most American appliances. Past students have felt it wiser to keep appliances to a minimum and purchase small items like hairdryers upon arrival. Alternatively, dual-voltage dryers and other small appliances are widely available in the United States. All electric plugs will need an adapter in order to fit the wall sockets in Britain. The electrical adapter for Britain is unique and cannot be used in Continental Europe.

Please note: an adapter only changes the shape of the plug. It does not transform the voltage. For more information on voltage converters/plug adapters, see www.voltagevalet.com/country.html.

LAPTOP COMPUTERS

The IES Abroad Center provides wireless Internet access. **Skidmore is requiring that you bring a laptop computer to London, however, do not ship it.** This incurs exorbitant customs charges and may take the length of the semester to clear customs. Carry your laptop with you on the plane.

Bringing your own laptop is a requirement so you can access virtual orientation activities or classes. If you do not have the financial resources to purchase your own laptop, please contact Skidmore's London FYE Program Manager, Kendra Nelson, at knelson1@skidmore.edu to discuss your options.

You will be able to access the Internet 24-7 from the wireless access in your room in the residence hall. Keep in mind that you will need adapters appropriate for computers, as well as anti-virus software and virus scan prior to linking to the network.

Please be sure that your laptop is adequately insured.

Please note: you will not be allowed to connect your laptop to the Center printers, or to download software or digital photos to IES Abroad computers. Make sure to bring a flash drive or use Internet-based drives to save work for printing.

Please note: IES Abroad does not offer technical support for personal lap-tops and cannot assist with hardware or software malfunctions or incompatibilities.

CUSTOMS

Helpful information entitled “Know Before You Go” is available through the U.S. government at www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/know-before-you-go.

INSURANCE & HEALTH

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

You will be dually covered by two different insurance companies, due to IES Abroad and Skidmore policies. You are free to choose whichever company you wish to use on site.

Skidmore Insurance

Skidmore College has partnered with AXA to provide students travelling internationally with emergency and non-emergency services and benefits. AXA will provide services ranging from travel assistance to telephone advice, to full-scale medical and security evacuations. For details, please see <https://www.skidmore.edu/ocse/safety/>.

NOTE: Students will receive information about Skidmore's on-campus insurance requirement in early summer. New York State requires all matriculated students to be enrolled in a valid health insurance plan even if they are studying in London. Therefore, students are required to enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan administered by CDPHP, OR provide proof of alternative insurance coverage through a comparable plan. Even though you are going to London, you are still registered on campus for the fall semester and will receive notices about the on-campus insurance requirement. You must either purchase the Student Health Insurance Plan for Skidmore Students (which is different from the international insurance provided through AXA) or provide proof of alternative insurance coverage by the deadline stated even though you are going to London. If you have any questions about the on-campus insurance requirement, please contact the Bursars Office at 518.580.5830 or Off-Campus Study & Exchanges.



IES Abroad Insurance

Health insurance is an important component of study abroad with IES Abroad. All IES Abroad students are required to be covered by the comprehensive international health insurance plan mandated by IES in order to participate in their chosen program. Once a student has been confirmed for their IES Abroad program, IES Abroad will automatically enroll the student in the required international health insurance. Detailed information about the student health insurance plan(s) is located in the *IES Abroad Student Handbook*.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Students that need to seek or continue counseling or therapy during the semester in London should contact the IES staff in London for a list of recommended therapists. Students will not be charged an insurance deductible to access these services in London if they contact Skidmore's international insurance provider, AXA, prior to accessing any mental health services in London. AXA also offers remote mental health counseling services. You can access the AXA's remote mental health counseling services 24/7 by calling 1-855-327-1425 (from outside the US) or 1-630-694-9802 (from inside of the US).

PROPERTY INSURANCE

IES Abroad does not insure students' property. IES Abroad urges all participants to purchase property insurance for the entire duration of their time abroad. Despite students' best efforts to safeguard their property, it is still possible for belongings to be lost, stolen, or damaged during travel or life abroad. Students should research their family homeowners' insurance to determine whether the items brought or bought while abroad are covered by their policy. IES Abroad recommends that all students purchase property insurance for all belongings, especially high cost items such as laptop computers, digital music players, and other valuables.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

In many countries, it is considered customary to have personal liability insurance to cover accidents caused by an individual. Students should explore family insurance coverage for personal liability incidents abroad.

If no family property or liability insurance is available, the student should consider the pros and cons of obtaining coverage prior to departure. A wide variety of providers can be found on the Internet, and Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) offers one such plan.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS & TOILETRIES

If you plan on taking any type of medicine or prescription drug while abroad, IES Abroad strongly suggests that you consult with your physician prior to departure regarding any need for monitoring. Pack your prescription drugs in your carry-on for easy access should there be a delay while you are traveling.

VACCINATIONS

Vaccine-preventable diseases continue to infect people around the world. While many diseases have been eradicated in the U.S. due to the application of public health laws, many diseases are still prevalent in other countries. Your immunization status should be considered before going abroad. IES Abroad strongly recommends that you consult with your doctor, county, or state Department of Public Health, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for the most up-to-date vaccination requirements and recommendations for where you plan to study or travel while abroad. IES Abroad considers vaccinations and prophylactic medications to be a matter of individual choice. It is likely that you have received vaccinations for numerous preventable diseases as a child or as part of the matriculation process to your college or university. Individual student vaccination requirements vary from state to state and institution to institution.

In accordance with the American College Health Association (ACHA) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), IES Abroad strongly recommends that you be vaccinated against the following diseases:

- COVID-19
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Polio
- Varicella
- Variola (Small Pox)
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (TDaP)
- Hepatitis A & Hepatitis B
- Meningitis/Meningococcal Tetravalent (A, C,Y,W-135)
- Pneumonia/Pneumococcal Polysaccharide

You should bring documentation of the above vaccinations with you to your study abroad location should documentation of vaccination or preventative treatment be requested. Documentation information can be found at www.who.int/csr/ihr/IVC200_06_26.pdf.

In addition to these vaccinations, the CDC recommends vaccinations and preventive medications for students studying or traveling to various locations around the world. Depending on where you are traveling, you may also need protection including Japanese Encephalitis, Yellow Fever, Malaria, Rabies, and/or Typhoid. Tuberculosis is a major concern in many parts of the world. If you are studying or traveling to areas known to have tuberculosis, you should be tested for tuberculosis before leaving your country of origin, upon return to your country of origin, and three months after your return to your country of origin. The CDC operates an international traveler's hotline (800.232.4636) which provides up-to-date vaccination requirements for any region or country you select. You may also consult their website at www.cdc.gov.

HEALTH

IES Abroad considers student health an extremely important element of the study abroad experience. To ensure that students are adequately prepared to manage their health while abroad, and that IES Abroad staff are equipped to reasonably accommodate students' needs, IES Abroad requires that all students and their medical providers fill out a Medical Report. In an effort to appropriately assist students in a timely fashion, IES Abroad has established a deadline for the submission of the IES Abroad Medical Report. **It is essential that students complete and return the Medical Report by the required date.**

As the information disclosed on the Medical Report will be used to make housing assignments, IES Abroad will withhold housing placements from any student who has not turned in a completed Medical Report.

The Medical Report is comprised of three parts: the Student Self-Evaluation, in which students are asked to provide details of their medical histories, the Physical Exam, to be completed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant following a **physical examination within six months of the departure date**, and a vaccination history. The Medical Report also provides students with the opportunity to disclose disabilities and request reasonable accommodations.

In further efforts to encourage conscientious personal health management, the IES Abroad Dean of Students Office may contact students prior to departure to discuss issues disclosed on the Report and any preparations that may be necessary for continuation of care abroad.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

IES Abroad's Crisis Management Team is actively and closely monitoring the outbreak of respiratory illness caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19). Communications are being sent regularly to our students, their home colleges or universities, and parents, as needed. We will continue to monitor each of our locations individually, and base future decisions about on-site programming based on the following factors, which include:

- Advisory Levels (CDC and U.S. State Department)
- Travel restrictions (airline, train, local, quarantines)
- Mobility restrictions
- College and university policies and decisions (sending and receiving)
- IES Abroad staff and faculty capabilities
- Local university shutdowns
- Health care capabilities in host city

To help enhance effective social/physical distancing, IES Abroad is taking pro-active measures in the classroom, too, including limiting class enrollment sizes, adjusting space layout, room choice, and promoting student/faculty use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

FINANCES

CURRENCY

The currency of the United Kingdom is the pound sterling (£). The pound functions similarly to the U.S. dollar in that it is subdivided into 100 units (pence). All money up to and including £2 is in coin. Thereafter, denominations are in paper. Each denomination differs in size and color/design, so that they can be easily distinguished. A slang term you will probably hear in place of pound is quid.

Please note that while the United Kingdom is part of the European Union, they are not a part of the monetary union and have not changed over to the Euro. You will, however, use the Euro if you travel in continental Europe or to Ireland.

For current exchange rates, consult www.xe.net/currency/table.htm.

HANDLING MONEY

Before departing for the U.K., you should change about \$200 USD into British Pounds (£) in order to cover incidental expenses during your first few days in London. Pounds can be purchased at large U.S. banks, American Express offices, and at most international airports in the United States and abroad.

During your time abroad, you should plan to obtain local currency primarily using an ATM card linked to your home bank account. In case of an emergency, however, you should have more than one way to access funds. The following guidelines will help you plan for financial management abroad.

Visa Travel Card (Debit Card)

All program participants will receive a stipend to assist with the cost of meals and local transportation in London for the semester. Each student will receive an individual Visa travel card (debit card) on which the stipend will be placed on a monthly basis. Debit cards will be issued at the predeparture

orientation at Skidmore and will be valid for the length of the program. If you lose the card, please note that there will be an administrative charge of £20 for the first replacement card, and a charge of £25 for each subsequent replacement card.

ATM (Best option!)

When accessing a bank account through an ATM card, we recommend the following:

- Before departing for London, notify your bank that you will be using the card for an extended period of time abroad, and inquire about usage fees and any special procedures that may be necessary to use your card abroad;
- If obtaining a new card, test your PIN number before departing for London;
- Give a family member access to the account in case of access problems abroad;
- Make sure the card is linked to a checking rather than a savings account; and
- Bring a duplicate card in case the card gets damaged, lost, or stolen.

Credit Card

You may also make purchases and obtain cash advances using a credit card. VISA and MasterCard are the two credit cards most widely accepted internationally. Keep in mind the following in terms of using credit cards abroad:



The first thing you should do if your ATM or credit cards are lost or stolen is to block others from being able to use them. Contact the card providers before you leave your home country to obtain the telephone numbers to call from abroad in case of lost or stolen cards. These numbers should not be kept in your wallet together with the cards.

It is essential that you and your family members realize that financial responsibilities above and beyond those outlined in the IES Abroad *Form of Agreement & Waiver* are **your responsibility**, and IES Abroad's general policy is not to provide students with personal loans. However, in case of emergencies (e.g., accidents, hospitalization) IES Abroad may be able to make cash advances or payments on your behalf.

- Before departing for London, notify your bank that you will be using the card for an extended period of time abroad, and inquire about any additional fees that may be associated with using your card abroad.

- Although accepted in many places, credit cards are not used as frequently in other countries as they are in the United States; Arrange for someone at home to pay your monthly balance.
- Using your credit card for a cash advance generally requires you to pay a finance charge and interest on the amount you withdraw, making a cash advance costly.

EXPLORING ACADEMICS

The information in this chapter will help you prepare for the new academic environment that awaits you overseas.

The First-Year Experience program is carefully designed to ensure that students have an academic experience comparable to the one that they would have received if they had remained on campus. Classes are scheduled five days each week and attendance is mandatory. Students are asked to come prepared to class, to complete written assignments outside of class and to sit for rigorous examinations at mid-term and at the end of each course. **Under no circumstances will exam schedules be modified or special arrangements made to accommodate travel.**

All students will be required to enroll in a Scribner Seminar. The Scribner Seminar is the centerpiece of the London First-Year Experience (FYE), taught by the Skidmore Faculty Coordinator accompanying the program. The Scribner Seminar help new students begin to explore ideas, challenge assumptions, and gain first-hand experience of Skidmore Faculty expectations of academic rigor and excellence all within the backdrop of London. The Scribner Seminar is not an isolated educational opportunity but is part of the larger continuum of FYE curricular, mentoring, co-curricular, and residential experience that will help shape students' four years at Skidmore.



Most of your instructors in IES Abroad courses will be British, and most have had substantial experience teaching American students. The lecture and discussion format of IES Abroad courses will be similar to what you are used to, and there will be a formal syllabus which details what the student and the instructor are expected to cover. Most courses also require finals and papers. However, IES Abroad does not try to duplicate an American classroom in a European setting. The faculty will tend to lecture in much the way that they do in their own university courses, and a considerable amount of independent effort will be asked of you.

Course descriptions are available online at http://www.skidmore.edu/ocse/london_fye/courses.php. Syllabi are available upon request from Skidmore's Off-Campus Study & Exchanges.

ORGANIZING YOUR TIME

After you have worked out your timetable of lectures and seminars, you may be surprised to find you have quite a lot of free time. Make sure you organize and divide this time between studying and relaxing. Time that isn't organized can disappear very quickly and you may find that you are always staying up late working on an essay due the following day when you knew you had to write it several weeks before. Additionally, it is important to carefully plan your time for writing papers.

It is important to allocate some time for hobbies, sports, seeing friends, and simply relaxing. It is a good idea to make a plan and set priorities. Establish a routine, control your time and don't let a lack of organization control you!

LIBRARY FACILITIES

A small reference library is available for students at the IES Abroad Center which houses a core collection of required books for IES Abroad courses. The IES Abroad library also functions as a quiet study space for students. Additionally, you will have borrowing privileges at Senate House, the University of London Library, a few minutes' walk from the IES Abroad Center.

COMPUTER FACILITIES

The IES Abroad Center is wireless, so students can use their personal laptops anywhere throughout the Center. There are also several PCs available in the IES Abroad Center. Students cannot hook laptops onto the Center network or download software or digital photos to Center computers. On Center computers, students with academic work will have priority over those checking email. Students may find that the computer facilities are not as equipped and that the hours are not as extensive as on their campuses at home. IES Abroad London is a small institution, which is not, nor is it intended to be, a U.S. campus. Just as you will have to be flexible and adapt to British society and culture, you will also have to be flexible and open-minded towards a new learning environment. Where you might be used to utilizing a computer for research, at IES Abroad London, you will be required to rely upon the rich resources of London, including its people, newspapers, and libraries.

READING PREPARATION

Like every other form of learning, successful study abroad depends in large measure upon your past experience. The richer your background, the more you will benefit from your study in the U.K. A sense of British history is important and familiarity with British literature is valuable. Please try to become informed about British news and current affairs. British newspapers, such as *The Times* or *The Financial Times*, are available in most university libraries and newsstands in large U.S. cities. Weekly periodicals such as *The Economist*, *The New Statesman*, and *The Spectator* are also available in college libraries and can give you a broad perspective on world affairs from the European point of view. In addition, Bill Bryson's *Notes from a Small Island* and Kate Fox's *Watching the English* offer entertaining yet insightful depictions of British culture.

In many ways, the most valuable orientation that a student going abroad can have is orientation to his or her own country. While you are abroad, you will be looked upon not only as a student, but also as a representative of your own country, and for this reason you are likely to be questioned by Europeans on many subjects related to history, politics, economics, and cultural life. Some students going

abroad have minimal knowledge of their own country. European students with whom you will come in contact may have a much more thorough knowledge of your country's politics and background. For this reason, we strongly suggest that you spend some time familiarizing yourself with current literature on your country's history, politics, and social trends before your departure for Europe; one way is to visit www.nytimes.com and www.cnn.com. Below is a table of Internet websites you may also find useful:

U.K. Directory	www.ukdirectory.co.uk
London Net	www.londonnet.co.uk
Go U.K.	www.gouk.com
Time Out	www.timeout.com/london
Transportation	www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl
BBC	www.bbc.co.uk
Theater	www.officiallondontheatre.co.uk
Discount Travel	www.lastminute.com
London Police	www.met.police.uk/index.htm
Easy Everything	www.easyeverything.com
Info on Chelsea	www.rbkc.gov.uk

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

The First-Year Experience program will provide students with additional academic support through Academic Resources optional drop-in hours. The Academic Resources drop-in hours are designed to guide students in the transition from high school to college, providing the kinds of assistance that are typically available through offices and support structures on Skidmore's campus. Students will gain an understanding of what reading, research and writing expectations are as well as what resources are available at the IES Abroad Center in London and the Skidmore College campus in Saratoga Springs.

Students can also learn about issues such as getting organized and understanding course syllabi, personal goal setting, critical reading skills, academic research, writing and proper referencing techniques, and exam preparation.

Note: Skidmore and IES Abroad faculty can require students to attend Academic Resources drop-in hours for one-on-one advising if the professor thinks that a student needs additional support in order to succeed academically.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

IES Abroad actively works to reduce barriers faced by students with disabilities who participate in its programs. Working individually with students, IES Abroad attempts to provide reasonable accommodations for students whose disabilities have been documented by a qualified professional, and who request and are deemed eligible by IES Abroad for such assistance. **In order to attempt to provide accommodations to eligible students, IES Abroad must receive requests for accommodations and full documentation from a qualified professional in writing no later than four weeks before the beginning of the term.** Although accommodations may not always be possible, IES Abroad remains committed to attempting to provide them.

If a student anticipates requesting academic accommodations to participate in Skidmore's London First-Year Experience program, they should be prepared to provide documentation confirming the presence of a specific learning disability. Academic accommodations from high school do not automatically carry over into college.

Students should indicate any disability-related needs on their IES Medical Report form distributed to students in the months prior to the start of the program. Students should also work with Skidmore College's Coordinator for Students with Disabilities to apply for accommodations/services at Skidmore College.

Students with a documented disability are encouraged to complete Skidmore's **Application for Academic Accommodation** and return it with the required documentation to the Coordinator for Student Access Services at Skidmore College. The application form and documentation requirements are also available online at www.skidmore.edu/accessibility/index.php. The documentation is reviewed to determine if the student meets ADA and Skidmore College eligibility criteria for identification as "a student with an educational disability."

If the student's documentation is conclusive, the Coordinator will work with the student to determine which accommodations requested are reasonable for the college setting—accommodations that are sometimes different from those provided in the student's high school the Coordinator then prepares a Memo of Academic Accommodations, which identifies the student as disabled (but does not state the type of disability) and lists the accommodations they are entitled to receive for the semester.

The student must then submit the Memo of Academic Accommodations to IES Abroad at least 4 weeks prior to the start of the program. The student can also request that Skidmore's Coordinator for Student Access Services forward a copy of the memo to Skidmore's Off-Campus Study & Exchanges or directly to IES Abroad on the student's behalf.

When the student returns to Skidmore for the spring semester, they should meet with their Coordinator for Student Access Services within the first week of classes to discuss their academic accommodations on the Skidmore campus.

As at all colleges, the success of disabilities support in London and at Skidmore College depends significantly on the student's willingness and ability to seek the help they need and to follow through with academic and other recommendations.

Students or parents who have further questions about support for students with disabilities at Skidmore should contact the Office of Student Academic Services, at 518.580.8150 or www.skidmore.edu/accessibility/index.php. The London FYE program is part of the Skidmore College community. Therefore, the Skidmore College Standards for Academic Excellence and Conduct apply just as much to you in London as they do on the campus.

While studying off campus, all students must adhere to the Skidmore Honor Code and Academic Policies in place at Skidmore College. Students are responsible for understanding Skidmore College's academic policies.

The Skidmore College Academic Policies can be found in the Skidmore College student hand book at http://www.skidmore.edu/student_handbook.

Students must also follow the office of Off-Campus Study & Exchange's academic policies as well as the IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code. OCSE's academic policies can be found at <http://www.skidmore.edu/ocse/policies/academic.php>. The IES Abroad Academic Integrity Code can be found in the accompanying *IES Abroad Customized Programs Student Handbook*.

Skidmore College Honor Code

The Skidmore Honor Code defines the guiding principles of honesty, respect, and integrity that should inform choices and behavior patterns in the Skidmore academic and social communities. Each student, in matriculating at Skidmore College (or engaging in any Skidmore-sponsored activity or program, such as off-campus study, as a non-matriculated student), agrees to the following code:

I hereby accept membership in the Skidmore College community and, with full realization of the responsibilities inherent in membership, do agree to adhere to honesty and integrity in all relationships, to be considerate of the rights of others, and to abide by the College regulations.

It is the responsibility of every student and every member of the faculty and staff, both by example and by instruction, to encourage students to embrace the standards of the Honor Code. If a student is aware of a violation, he or she is honor-bound to speak to the student, and if necessary, to report the student to the Dean of Student Affairs or other appropriate member of the staff or faculty.

If a member of the faculty is aware that someone has committed an academic violation, faculty legislation requires that the faculty member report the violation to the Associate Dean of Faculty for Academic Advising. It is only through a combination of ethical commitment, guidance, and sanctions that the Honor code can become a living set of principles for our community. The Skidmore Honor Code can be found at <https://www.skidmore.edu/advising/integrity/index.php>.

TRAVERSING NEW CULTURES

Exploring the sites and culture of your host country most likely will be one of the most memorable aspects of your time abroad. From extracurricular events to field trips and independent travel, this chapter will help you prepare for the excitement and challenge of living in another culture.

CULTURAL INTRODUCTION

London has long been the center of the English-speaking world. It is a city always evolving while at the same time preserving the rich cultural heritage of its eventful history. Of course, London is renowned for its famous landmarks—Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, The Royal Albert Hall, Tower Bridge, and St. Paul's Cathedral.

However, London is also a city of radical modernity: the Lloyds building in the City of London and Canary Wharf in Docklands offer some of the best illustrations of postmodern architecture in Europe. One area of London has the greatest concentration of visual artists in the world! Pubs are still a centerpiece of social life where Londoners from all walks of life go to chat, drink, listen to rock, folk or jazz, eat, make friends, etc.

The vibrancy and energy of London are readily expressed in music, classical and contemporary, first-class clubs, a vast and cosmopolitan range of restaurants, art galleries, and its world-famous theatre scene. London is home to approximately 8.5 million people. It is a booming metropolis with an astonishingly international population.

The city is comprised of 32 boroughs, each with individual characteristics and unique flavor. Joseph Chamberlain's remark in 1904 that "London is the clearing-house of the world" is truer today than ever as people from all cultures continue to pass through or settle in the metropolis. In short, London is a fascinating nexus of history and culture.

MEETING THE BRITISH

Due to its multicultural nature, people in London are used to walking down the street and hearing a variety of languages and accents. Moreover, about 5 million Americans visit London each year. In this sense, as an American you will not be as much of a novelty in London as you may be in other cities in the U.K. Let this be to your advantage! Integrate yourself as much as possible by going to the theater or attending student functions or shopping in Camden Town, Hampstead, or Islington. If you put yourself in the position to meet people and allow yourself to relax, you won't be disappointed. Clearly some people will be more amiable than others, so try not to draw rapid conclusions about the British people in general.

In the past, IES Abroad students have found church groups, sporting clubs and various university-sponsored organizations very conducive to meeting new people with common interests. IES Abroad London Students can also participate in the HOST Program, for an additional fee, where students can stay in a British home for a weekend anywhere in the U.K. Students only need to pay for their travel. Time will seem to pass very quickly while you are abroad. Don't wait too long to seek out contacts with the British if you hope to get to know someone reasonably well before you return home.

The IES Abroad staff will point you in the right direction, but please understand that your degree of integration into British life is entirely dependent upon your own initiative and willingness to explore.

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: PREPARING FOR YOUR CROSS- CULTURAL ADVENTURE

Studying abroad is a great adventure. There are places to see and people to meet, and with it all comes a sense of excitement. But study abroad also means a transition from a culture with which you are familiar to a culture or cultures that may be very different. Even as you have to adjust to new food, housing, and possibly a new language, you will be adjusting to unspoken rules and cues that are different from those that you take for granted at home. Adjusting to a new culture is part of the process of gaining intercultural understanding. This can be a long process, but the period during which you study abroad can give you a great start.

There are many aspects to the cultural transition process, and we have outlined them for you in your *Student Handbook*. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with the information in the "Intercultural Competence" section of the *Student Handbook*, as you prepare for your cross- cultural adventure. Students have access to a small gym in the residence hall with weights, cardio equipment, exercise balls, and mats. The IES Abroad Center staff can also provide you with information about local sports facilities close to the Center and the residence hall. You can choose to join whichever option meets your workout routine and your budget the best.

IES ABROAD FIELD TRIPS

Students are required to attend field study trips that are part of the First-Year Experience London courses. IES Abroad will host a few informal walks around the greater London area, as well as one or more day-trips outside of London. In the past, IES Abroad day trips have taken students on a tour of Bath, Brighton, Cambridge, Oxford, and Stonehenge. All field trip locations are subject to change. Please note that students may not bring guests on IES Abroad-sponsored field trips.

CELL PHONES & TRIP TRACKER

Our longstanding commitment to student safety means we work very hard to establish and maintain avenues of communication and information tracking between students and staff.

We require you to have a working cell phone with data plan during your time abroad to encourage and simplify communications with both the IES Abroad Center and your parents in the event of an emergency.

You will be required to provide your Center with your cell phone number and to keep your phone turned on and charged at all times for the duration of enrollment.

You are also required to submit an electronic independent travel itinerary through our Trip Tracker form via Moodle and/or a paper independent travel itinerary form to Center staff any time you are away overnight. This information is vital in the event of an emergency and students need to be reached when their cell phones are not functioning.

STUDENT SAFETY

IES Abroad continues to maintain its longstanding commitment to student safety. In light of this priority, IES Abroad employs procedures that establish avenues of communication and information tracking between students and staff. As indicated in the *Communications* section of this guide, IES Abroad requires students to have mobile phones during their study abroad experience, encouraging and simplifying effective communication with both the IES Abroad Center and parents in the event of emergencies. Students are required to provide their Center with their mobile phone number and to keep your mobile phone on and charged at all times for the duration of enrollment. Additionally, students are required to place an electronic independent travel itinerary through Trip Tracker™ and/or paper independent travel itinerary form to Center staff any time they are away overnight.

This information is necessary in the event of an emergency and students need to be reached when mobile phones are not functioning.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Please review the Cell Phone Policy in the *Communications* section of this guide.

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

There are innumerable places of interest to visit in Great Britain. You could probably spend every weekend traveling and still not be satisfied that you've seen it all (if you are lucky enough to have that kind of money and stamina!). Organized walks around London spotlight Shakespeare, Dickens, Sherlock Holmes, and Jack the Ripper among others, and there are a number of exciting day trips from London as well. A guidebook we recommend is Lonely Planet's *Britain*.

For the fall 2021 semester, students are forbidden from traveling outside their program host country.

TRAVEL SAFETY

Should you to take an independent trip outside of London, which need to be considered with caution, be sure to keep basic health and safety provisions in mind. We recommend that you:

- Avoid walking alone at night, even if you are familiar with the area.
- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Don't drink and swim.
- Pack a basic first aid kit.
- Use helmets, seat belts, life jackets, and other relevant safety devices.
- Choose safe, reliable transportation.
- Leave jewelry and expensive watches at home.
- Limit your use of iPods or MP3 players in public as it may distract you from recognizing dangerous situations and/or make you the target of thieves.
- Carry money, tickets and passport in body pouches; do not leave them in your hotel room or luggage.
- Carry photocopies of passport, credit cards, and airline tickets.
- Investigate what emergency medical services are available in the region or country where you will be traveling.
- Make sure luggage has identification inside and out.
- Keep luggage locked and securely stored.
- Always keep your door locked in any facility where you are staying.

DISCUSSING DIVERSITY

At IES Abroad, diversity is the representation and integration of multiple cultures, groups, perspectives, and ideas within a single, non-discriminatory environment. We value the unique contributions that the individuals comprising our diverse student body have to offer. We believe in creating a diverse student population that attracts and supports groups which include, but are not limited to, students of color, the LGBTQI+ population, students from different religious, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, and students with physical disabilities. We seek to cultivate an educational environment that is welcoming to students with varied backgrounds, communication styles and ways of thinking. By embracing human differences through inclusion, IES Abroad articulates the idea that diversity represents not only a characteristic of our student body, but an essential component of the intercultural learning experience central to the mission of study abroad.

In preparation for your upcoming study abroad experience, we hope the information below will answer some of the questions or concerns you might have. If you have any further questions, contact the IES Abroad Dean of Students Office or Diversity Coordinator at 800.995.2300. We are dedicated to helping you have the most enriching study abroad experience possible.

DIVERSITY IN ENGLAND

There are few places where most of the population comes from one national, religious, or ethnic group. At IES Abroad, our faculty, staff, and programs are committed to recognizing and acquainting students with the diversity that exists within England. IES Abroad students are continually provided with opportunities to explore the cultural richness of their host environment and learn about the economic, social, and political status of local populations.

Minority Students

Students considered racial and ethnic minorities in the United States will still be part of minority populations in England. The CIA's World Fact Book reports that 87% of the population has origins

from a European country, 3% are of African descent, and the remaining 10% reflects persons of Asian, Middle Eastern, and mixed heritages.

Clearly-defined and distinct ethnic communities exist, each with well-preserved traditions, languages and activities particularly in London. Among the European cultures the Irish, Turkish, Polish, Greek, Portuguese and Spanish are strongly represented. Among others are Indian, Bengali, Japanese, Chinese, Somali, Nigerian, Kenyan, Caribbean, and South East Asian. Adding to the cultural fabric of the city is also a growing number of immigrants from Latin American countries.

IES Abroad staff is aware and sensitive to the range of issues students experience as part of minority populations. Staff is always available and accessible to discuss how you are adapting to your host environment and interacting with local residents. Staff can also provide information on support groups and cultural or social organizations in local ethnic communities.

Sexual Orientation

England is progressive in its laws with regard to discrimination and attitudes related to sexual orientation. London itself has a large and internationally celebrated LGBTQI+ and LGBTQI-friendly population which crosses ethnic and religious groups.

Prior to arriving you should consider how your sexual orientation may affect your relationships with local resident and other IES students, your cultural adjustment, safety, and overall education abroad experience. Furthermore, IES Abroad staff can provide resources to LGBTQI+ students about support networks and events in London.

Religious Issues

Students who ascribe to a range of religions can easily find a community of worship or practice. Although the CIA's World Fact Book identifies 60% of the population as Christian (Catholics, Methodists, Anglicans), 25% do not identify, and 15% comprise practitioners of a number of other religions like Judaism, Islam, or Hinduism, all of which contribute to the religious mosaic that reflects London's diverse populations. IES Abroad staff can assist you in finding an appropriate local place of worship.



Physical Disabilities

Although the U.K. as a country is not fully accessible, large cities like London have increased their commitment to persons with limited mobility. Most public transportation, hotels, museums, etc., are equipped with ramps, lifts and elevators to accommodate patrons' independent exploration.

Additional Diversity Resources

Additional information and site-specific resources are located by logging into your **MyIESabroad account** and choosing Diversity Resources from the menu or by visiting:

<http://www.IESabroad.org/diversity-resources> If you have any further questions related to diversity, contact the IES Abroad Dean of Students Office or the IES Abroad Diversity Coordinator at diversitycoordinator@IESabroad.org.

CODE OF STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

The IES Abroad Code of Student Responsibility is based on the premise that our students are guests abroad. IES Abroad students are expected to abide by the customs of the country in which they are studying and are legally subject to the same laws that govern local students. Students who participate in IES Abroad programs are representatives of IES Abroad at all times for the duration of their enrollment.

Any student who violates any policy outlined in the Code will be subject to administrative review and possible sanctions up to and including dismissal from the program. There are four parts to the Code of Student Responsibility: the Academic Honor Code, the Academic Honor Code Violation Review Process, the Student Code of Conduct, and Judicial Procedures. Systems for dealing with violations of these policies are outlined in detail in the *IES Abroad Student Handbook*. It is in the best interest of all students to read and become familiar with these policies. The Code of Student Responsibility, the IT Policy, the Alcohol and Other Drug Policy, and the Student Sexual Harassment Policy can be found in your *IES Abroad Student Handbook* and at www.IESabroad.org under Students.

ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUG POLICY

The use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol are seriously detrimental to individual health and well-being. IES Abroad allows for the consumption of alcohol, within reasonable limits, by students who are of legal age in their host countries. Students who choose to consume alcohol do so with the knowledge that they remain responsible for their actions at all times and are expected to drink responsibly.

IES Abroad does not encourage the use of alcohol or condone any drinking patterns or behaviors that are detrimental to the health and welfare of the individual, IES Abroad, or the community. The possession, use, or distribution of any drugs that are considered by host country law to be illicit or illegal drugs or controlled substances is prohibited. Students are cautioned that **ANY ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUG INFRACTION WILL BE CONSIDERED A GRAVE VIOLATION OF POLICY AND WILL RESULT IN SERIOUS SANCTIONS THAT MAY INCLUDE DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM.** The complete Alcohol and Other Drug Policy can be found in the *IES Abroad Student Handbook*.

CHECKLIST

Below are some of the key steps you need to complete before departure.

I ALREADY:

Have my passport and a visa (if needed).	
Submitted all required online and paper forms to Skidmore College and IES Abroad. (Visit your MyIESabroad account at www.IESabroad.org)	
Made copies of all important documents (passport, visa, etc.) to leave at home and to bring with me.	
Know how I will get money while abroad.	
Planned for prescription and medical needs while abroad.	
Discussed with my family whether or not I should be vaccinated for COVID-19 before my departure.	
Know the country telephone codes needed to call home from overseas.	
Know the time difference between my hometown and my study site.	
Know where to go upon arrival and how to get there.	
Read about the history, economy, and culture of my host country.	
Am aware of my own cultural values and realize that people I meet may have different cultural values.	
Reviewed current events and feel comfortable discussing my perspective.	
Have chosen a small item from my city or country to share with students from my host country.	
Read this Predeparture Guide and the <i>IES Abroad Student Handbook</i>.	
Plan to pack this Predeparture Guide in my carry-on.	

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

THE BARE MINIMUM

- 1 light, water-repellent jacket (or raincoat)
- 1 lounge outfit/sweat pants
- 1 dress outfit for theater
- 1 bathing suit
- Gloves, hat, scarf
- 1 pair of long-underwear (e.g. silk)
- 2 pairs of pajamas (summer & winter)
- 1 pair of jeans
- 1 pair of khakis
- 1 or 2 skirts (men substitute another pair of pants)
- 1 cotton sweater
- 1 dark cardigan sweater/sports coat
- 2 blouses/shirts
- 2 pairs of shorts
- Several t-shirts/summer shirts
- 1 week worth of socks (also pack hosiery and dress socks)
- 1 week worth of underwear
- 1 or 2 belts

ACCESSORIES

Accessories help round out a seemingly sparse wardrobe. A belt or scarf adds a lot to an outfit and packs easily. However, do **NOT** pack expensive jewelry or clothes as these will mark you as "wealthy" —an invitation to crooks—and may get lost in your travels.

SHOES

- 1 pair of dress shoes
- 1 pair of VERY comfortable and broken-in walking/hiking shoes (waterproof preferred)
- 1 pair of casual shoes/loafers
- 1 pair of slippers
- 1 pair of flip flops/sandals

BATH & TOILETRIES

- 1 towel
- deodorant
- Glasses/contacts & contact solution
- 1 toothbrush and toothpaste
- 1 hair brush
- 1 travel size manicure set
- 1 shaver
- Cosmetics
- 1 month of feminine hygiene products
- Small travel size toiletries (optional)

MISCELLANEOUS

- Laptop
- Sunglasses
- Umbrella
- Journal
- Music
- A list of family/friends' addresses and a small supply of airmail stationery
- Copies of contact information for academic advisor, credit card companies, hometown banks (for emergency situations)
- Travel alarm clock (battery operated)
- Small flashlight
- Camera
- Memory card for camera (much more expensive abroad)
- Batteries
- Plug converter kit for your country
- Small bungee cord
- Travel guide(s)
- A small sewing kit
- A few packets of travel size laundry detergent
- A few photos of family and friends