



Rose of York  
Language School  
London

# WELCOME TO LONDON

Information about living in London

45 Oxford Street, W1D 2DZ

Tel: +44 (0) 207 434 0643

Emergency tel: +44 (0) 7888 148 074

Website: [www.roseofyork.com](http://www.roseofyork.com)

Email: [hello@roseofyork.com](mailto:hello@roseofyork.com)

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## Welcome to Rose of York Language School and London!

We hope that you enjoy your time with us and have a chance to explore this wonderful City of London. In this pack, you will find useful information for living in London. Read this before you leave your home country and hopefully, it will help you and give you things to think about. In this handbook, you will find useful information about life in London, but if you need any further information please come to see us, we are always happy to help.

## Oxford street and Rose of York

With over 200 million visitors each year, Oxford Street is the busiest shopping street in Europe, and the most popular shopping destination in London.

The 1.5-mile-long street (stretching from Tottenham Court Road station in the east and Marble Arch station to the west) is known to be packed full of locals and tourists rushing through the streets with lots of shopping bags.

Don't worry about running out of cash during your visit, as there are many different ATMs and banks along Oxford Street. There's also many takeaways, cafes, pubs along Oxford Street, and many different fast food chains like McDonalds and Burger King. If you would like something a bit healthier, you can also find a Sainsburys on Tottenham Court Road and other shops such as Planet Organic.

## Find Rose of York

Rose of York Language school is located between Oxford Circus and Tottenham Court Road stations.

## From Tottenham Court Road Station

1. Take Exit 1 and you come out onto Oxford street
2. Turn left (Primark will be on your right-hand side)
3. Continue straight and look for Schuh shoes (on the right-hand side of the street) or Office shoes (on the left) to locate a huge "Language school" sign.
4. Come upstairs!

## Oxford Circus Station

If, however, you are coming from Oxford Circus station, it's the best to:

1. Take Exit 6/7 (Topshop will be just in front of you)
2. Turn right and walk down Oxford street. The walk will take 7-8 minutes to reach Rose of York and on your way, you will see many shops. You will see two Zara shops on your right and when you have reached the second you are almost there! After Zara you will notice Office Shoes on your right-hand side. Rose of York language school is just next to Office shoes.
3. Come upstairs!

If you have difficulties finding us, you can always give us a call on +44 (0) 207 580 9888.

## Getting around London

London has an large network of public transport options, including bus, the [London Underground](#) (the Tube), tram, light rail, the London Overground and more. To avoid the high price and inconvenience of many tickets, get an [Oyster card](#). This is a pay-as-you-go smartcard that works with all of those public travel options. Or, if you know your transport needs can be met by the Tube, consider an unlimited week pass.

Alternatively, if your credit/debit card has a Contactless option, you can use this, too. Be sure that you use the same card when tapping in and out of the tube. If you do not use the same card, you can be charged more than your journey.

Be aware that although the Tube closes at midnight Monday through Saturday, some stations may close earlier. Also, London cab drivers are famously knowledgeable, but can be expensive compared to other European capitals. Alternatively, [night buses](#) provide an economic means of transportation around the clock.

**The tube network is very busy during 'rush hour' between 07:30 and 09:30 in the morning and between 17:00 and 19:00 in the evening.**

If you have enrolled on a course lasting 14 weeks or more, you can apply for a 30% discount on London Transport. You can apply online, ask at Reception for more details. Please note that **according to London Transport's regulations you risk losing your student card discount if you fail to attend classes regularly.**

## Google maps and Citymapper

We recommend downloading an application called Citymapper to get around London. The app can offer buses, trains, subways, bikes and cabs. Citymapper will also show you the approximate cost of your travels.

Alternatively, you can use Google maps and explore the surrounding area for restaurants pubs and other places of interest.

## What to Pack?

### Technology needs

Appliances in the UK operate on 230 volts with a frequency of 50 Hz—nearly twice the standard voltage used in the US, Canada and Japan. Although many battery-powered electronics, such as laptops, can step-down voltage automatically, North American and Japanese travellers will want to bring a voltage adaptor for other devices, such as hair dryers, as well as a three-pronged adaptor to adjust to local sockets. Visitors from Continental Europe and most other Asian countries should be fine with a socket adaptor.

### London weather and what to pack

**The city's famously changing climate can put a damper on your visit if you're not careful. Pack a portable umbrella wherever you go to ward off sudden showers — most convenience shops stock them.**

### Mobile numbers, internet data

If you are travelling to London from abroad, using your mobile phone may cost you more than it does at home. Roaming charges vary between countries and networks. If you are planning to stay in London for a long time, consider buying a pay-as-you-go SIM card when you arrive. These are available from any mobile telephone shop and allow you to make calls and send text messages at the local rate. The major networks are EE, Vodafone, O2 and Three but you can find many more like Lycamobile, Tesco Mobile, Giffgaff etc. Please note that your phone needs to be network unlocked to use a UK SIM card.

## London Culture

### Tips London-style

Restaurants often automatically include a 12.5 percent tip on the bill. If they don't, 10 to 15 percent is considered polite, including at pubs where you've ordered food through table service. The same rate is customary for cab drivers.

### Sightsee for free

Many of London's finest museums are open to the public free of charge, including the [National History Museum](#) and the [Tate Modern](#), although special exhibitions may have a separate entrance fee. The royal family provides visitors with an array of uniquely British experiences at no cost, such as the famous changing of the guards and the lesser-known [Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge](#).

## Money

If you are traveling to the UK from a country outside the European Union and are carrying more than 10,000 Euros (approximately £8871.90) with you in cash, cheques or a bankers' draft, you will need to declare this to customs.

You can change currency and cash travellers' cheques at 'Bureaux de Change' offices. Try to avoid changing very small amounts of money as there is often a minimum commission charge which makes it expensive. Shops and services in the UK will accept payment in UK currency only. Credit and debit cards are also widely accepted. You may be able to withdraw money from cashpoint ('ATM') machines

When you arrive in the UK, you should bring about £250 in cash or travellers' cheques for your immediate needs (meals, train fares, etc.). Avoid carrying any more cash in case it gets lost or stolen. Most shops and hotels will accept credit cards, and some will also accept payment in sterling travellers' cheques.

### Where to bank

Most 'high street' banks will offer customers the option to open a 'basic bank account'. A 'basic bank account' is different to a standard 'current account'. It offers limited facilities, is usually fee-free, and allows you to receive money and pay bills but does not allow you to have an 'overdraft' facility. Many banks will also offer an account specifically designed for international students. This will often be, or will be similar to, a basic bank account. However, it may also offer limited overdraft facilities.

Opening a bank account will usually involve visiting the local branch. They will require a range of documentation including personal identification (passport and student visa or national photo ID card for example) and a letter from Rose of York confirming study details. Legally, banks are required to carry out these checks regardless of where the customer comes from. It can take time to set up a UK account, so it is important that you set up an account as soon as possible to store your money safely. For more information, visit UKcisa at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>

## Shopping

### Supermarkets, Pharmacies and International shops

UK's largest supermarkets are: Tesco, Sainsbury's, Waitrose, Asda, Marks and Spencer and you can also find Lidl and Aldi shops. In these shops you can find organic and gluten free products and halal/kosher meat is available as well. Fresh fruits and vegetables may be cheaper at a kiosk and the busy ones have a fast turnover.

Small and large shops have fresh breads and rolls along with morning goods, cakes and other bakery items. World foods is also available in a lot of supermarkets, but International shops will sell you products from all over the world.

Multiple supermarkets will deliver your groceries to your accommodation at a small fee. Millions of people shop this way in the UK.

If you require supplements or medicine you can always find some in Boots, Superdrug or Holland and Barrett shops and there are plenty of them around London. However, if you require something that cannot be found in these shops you can always visit a pharmacy where you will be assisted by a professional.

## Tax-Free Shopping

It is possible for international visitors to get a VAT refund on purchases of goods made and/or business expenses incurred while visiting London. Value-added tax (VAT) is a 20% sales tax put on many goods and services except basic food items, books and children's clothing. Restaurants must, by law, include VAT in their menu prices.

If you are travelling for leisure or visiting friends and family, you may be eligible for a VAT refund.

The VAT refund scheme is called the Retail Export Scheme or Tax-Free Shopping. Not all shops participate in the scheme, and different shops will have different minimum purchase conditions.

On request, participating shops will give you a special form (VAT 407). This must be presented with the goods and receipts to customs when you leave London (VAT-free goods can't be posted or shipped home). After customs has certified the form, it will be returned to the shop for a refund, this process takes about eight to 10 weeks.

## What are the requirements?

You can sometimes get VAT refunds on goods bought in the UK if you:

1. visit the UK but live outside the EU and are going back home;
2. are an EU resident leaving the EU for 12 months or more;
3. are a non-EU resident but work or study in the UK and are leaving the EU for 12 months or more.

You can find more information on the Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-on-shopping/taxfree-shopping>

## Health and Safety in London

### Police Registration

International students whose passports contain a stamp telling them to register with the police should do so within 7 days of arriving in the UK. Students living in Greater London should go to:

**The Overseas Visitor's Record Office**

180 Borough High Street

London SE1 1LH

(the nearest Underground station is Borough on the Northern Line)

Tel: 020 7230 1208 for recorded information

Mondays – Wednesdays and Friday 9.00am – 4.00pm (Closed on Thursdays)

To register you must take the following documents with you:

- the application form that you can download from <http://content.met.police.uk/Site/overseasvisitorsrecordsoffice>
- your passport

- 1 passport size photograph which must be pasted/glued to your application form before you arrive
- your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), if you have one
- **£34 in cash**
- proof of student status (offer letter or enrolment letter from the UG/FE Registry or PG/Professional Registry if you have already enrolled)

After registration, the police will give you your "Police Registration Certificate." Keep this safe and use it when you re-enter the UK or apply to renew your student visa. If you are ever asked to produce it, you will have 48 hours to do so. Every time you change address, please inform your local police station of the new address within 7 days so that they can change your Certificate.

## Personal Safety

The UK is generally a safe place with low levels of crime but whenever you travel to a new country, it is very important that you look after yourself. In the event of an emergency, there are different numbers that a person may need. Please see the numbers below and their purposes:

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| 999 | This is the emergency number for police, ambulance, fire brigade, coastguard etc. Note <b>the important word 'EMERGENCY'</b> . This number should be used only when urgent attendance by the emergency services is required. |
| 112 | This works the same as 999 and directs you to the same emergency call centre. The important thing about 112 is that it will work on a mobile phone anywhere in the world.  |
| 101 | <b>Use 101 when you want to contact the police, but it's not an emergency.</b>   |
| 111 | <b>Use this for illnesses and minor injuries where life isn't threatened, but you would like some advice on what to do next.</b>   |

As an international student coming to the UK it's a good idea to make sure you've learnt as much as you can about your school and the local area before you arrive.

Use the internet to familiarise yourself with the UK's customs, British manners, and relevant laws. This will help you to be more aware of crime or fraud risks and less likely to become a victim.

International students can be **targeted by criminals** because they think you won't know the area and will have lots of valuable items.

You can look after your belongings by hiding valuable items. For example, when you are not at home, put your cash and credit cards in a drawer and your laptop under your bed so a criminal can't see it through the window.

## Valuables

If it's not necessary, don't bring it. Some valuables are safer left at home.

Making friends with students who know the area and can show you around or give you advice on the **best areas to live is a good idea**. The Police in the UK are friendly and approachable, don't be intimidated by them. 5 top tips for international student safety:

4. Make sure you know where you will be living, your way around and how to get to and from your accommodation and Rose of York. If you are not sure, ask a flat mate or host to help you!
5. **Don't carry large amounts of cash with you when in the UK, £50 is the most you would realistically want to have with you.** Just use a card (such as a credit card or debit card) to pay for things.
6. Make sure you have travel and property insurance that covers you abroad. Check to see if you need medical insurance too.
7. Keep a photocopy of your travel documents, the data page of your passport and any visa information in a safe place.

8. Keep the telephone number of the school handy, in case you need to call for help. Our emergency phone number is +44 (0) 7888 148 074. Our landline is +44 (0) 207 434 0643 and the email address is [hello@roseofyork.com](mailto:hello@roseofyork.com)

## Licensing Laws in the UK

The laws in the UK may be different from those in your home country. This especially applies to the use of tobacco, alcohol and weapons.

- Drugs - You must not carry drugs with you (unless prescribed by a doctor) or use any illegal drugs, including cannabis, ecstasy, LSD or amphetamines. You may be charged with possessing an illegal substance if you are caught with drugs, whether they are yours or not. The penalties depend on which drug and the amount you have, and whether you are also dealing or producing the drug. The most severe penalty can be an unlimited fine and life in prison.
- Alcohol - It is illegal to give or sell alcohol to people that are younger than 18 years old. You can be stopped, fined or arrested by police if you are under 18 and drinking alcohol in public. If you are under 18, it is against the law:
  - for someone to sell you alcohol
  - to buy or try to buy alcohol
  - for an adult to buy or try to buy alcohol for you
  - to drink alcohol in licensed premises (e.g. a pub or restaurant)

If you are 16 or under, you may be able to go to a pub (or premises primarily used to sell alcohol) if you are accompanied by an adult. However, this isn't always the case. It can also depend on the specific conditions for that premises. You must be 18 and over to buy alcohol.

- Weapons - It is illegal to carry any sort of weapon, including knives, self-defence chemical sprays, guns or stun guns.
- Tobacco - It is illegal to give or sell tobacco to people that are younger than 18 years old. You must be 18 and over to buy tobacco.

## Health

Students wishing to register with a doctor or dentist need to do it in the area they live in. The easiest way to do this is to go to the local pharmacy, where the shop assistants will have a list of doctors and dentists in the area, with their telephone numbers. You can also find a list of local General Practitioner/doctor (GP), NHS Walk-in Centres (also called Urgent Care), A&E Units and dentists on the internet: [www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectorios/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx)

You will need to take proof of address to register with a doctor. If you need hospital treatment, you should go to the nearest hospital. If you are seriously unwell or you are unable to move or need special help, phone 999 and ask for an ambulance.

To qualify for any other NHS treatment, you must meet certain conditions. Residents of the UK and the rest of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Swiss nationals receive free and subsidised medical care from the NHS. If you are from a non-EEA country and your course of study is for six months or more and you are studying in England, you will qualify for NHS treatment from the beginning of your stay on the same basis as anyone who is ordinarily resident in the UK; your spouse or children with you in the UK as 'dependants' will also be entitled to NHS treatment. The UK has reciprocal health care agreements with some countries. If you are covered by a reciprocal health care agreement, you will be eligible for some NHS treatment even if your course lasts for less than six months.

If you are not from a country in the EEA or a country with a reciprocal health agreement and your course of study is for less than six months you will not be entitled to NHS hospital treatment, except in emergencies. GPs may agree to treat you for free, but this will usually be limited to



urgent treatment that cannot be delayed until you return home. You will have to pay for any other treatment as a private patient.

It is very important that you take out medical insurance for the duration of your visit to the UK if you are not eligible for free or subsidised treatment on the NHS. If you do not have insurance, private treatment could be very expensive.

## Renting Accommodation Privately in London

### Assured shorthold tenancies

When you privately renting an accommodation, you are entering an assured shorthold tenancy. The most common type of it is a contractual arrangement. You can rent directly from a landlord or through an agency.

### Direct from the landlord

Look for landlords who belong to an accreditation scheme. Your local authority can advise you about accreditation schemes operating in your area.

### Through a letting agent

Find out what fees (and costs) you will be charged and when you need to pay them. By law, a breakdown of all fees **should be clearly visible to you in the agent's office and on their website**.

What independent complaints scheme is the agent a member of? Do they offer client money protection? By law, this information should also be clearly visible to you.

The agency must be accredited through a professional body like ARLA, NALS, RICS or UKALA.

### When you've found a place

#### Check the paperwork

Make sure you have a written tenancy agreement and read it carefully to understand your rights and responsibilities. The landlord or agent usually provides one, but you can request to use a different version.

Agree an inventory (or check-in report) with your landlord and, as an extra safeguard, make sure that you take photos. This will make things easier if there is a dispute about the deposit at the end of the tenancy. If you are happy with the inventory, sign it and keep a copy.

#### The landlord must provide you with:

- A copy of "How to rent: the checklist for renting in England" as a printed copy or, if you agree, via email as a PDF attachment. You can visit this guide at: [How to Rent](#)
- A gas safety certificate. The landlord must provide one each year if there is a gas installation.
- Deposit paperwork. If you have provided a deposit, the landlord must protect it in a government approved scheme. Make sure you get the official information from the scheme, and that you understand how to get your money back at the end of the tenancy. Keep this information safe as you will need it later.
- The Energy Performance Certificate. This will affect your energy bills and the landlord must provide one (except for Houses in Multiple Occupation).

#### You as a tenant must:

- **Pay the rent on time.** If you don't, you could lose your home because you have broken your tenancy agreement.

- **Look after the property. But get your landlord's** permission before attempting repairs or decorating.
- Be considerate to the neighbours. You could be evicted for anti-social behaviour if you **aren't**.
- Not take in a lodger or sub-let without checking whether you need permission from your landlord.

#### The landlord must:

- Maintain the structure and exterior of the property.
- Fit smoke alarms on every floor and carbon monoxide alarms in rooms using solid fuels – such as coal and wood – and make sure they are working at the start of your tenancy. If they are not there, ask your landlord to install them.
- Deal with any problems with the water, electricity and gas supply.
- Maintain any appliances and furniture they have supplied.
- Carry out most repairs. If something is not working, report it to the landlord (or their agent) as soon as you can.
- Arrange an annual gas safety check by a Gas Safe engineer (where there are any gas appliances).
- Give at least **24 hours' notice** of visits for things like repairs – the landlord cannot walk in whenever they like.
- Get a licence for the property, if it is a licensable property.

#### If things go wrong

There are often legal protections in place for the most common problems that you may experience during the tenancy – you can find more by following this [link](#). If you have any questions or problems with your accommodation, please talk to us at reception or email us at [hello@roseofyork.com](mailto:hello@roseofyork.com)

Most importantly, welcome to London and we hope you  
enjoy the city as much as we do!