

Oxford-St. Anne's College 2017-18

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Study Abroad Handbook

A useful guide to your
study abroad experience



OVERSEAS STUDY

*Read this handbook **now** and **again** before you leave the U.S.
Consult it **again** before you register for classes overseas.*

*The usefulness of this handbook depends on student input.
If you find erroneous information, please contact overseas@iu.edu.
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What's Inside?

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PROGRAM CONTACTS

The International Office at Oxford - St. Anne's College has the overall responsibility for IU students in Oxford.

Address: St. Anne's College
Oxford, OX2 6HS
ENGLAND

Telephone: From the U.S.: 011-44-1865-274825

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PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a supplement to the Getting Started handbook. While it contains specific program information, Getting Started contains information relevant to all students on Indiana University Overseas Study programs. Both booklets should be used now as you prepare to leave and later while you are abroad. Since most student questions are addressed in these handbooks, please consult them before contacting the Office of Overseas Study.

This handbook is also available on the Web: <http://overseas.iu.edu/programs/handbooks/oxford-stannes.pdf>



ICONS IN THIS GUIDE



Helpful Program Information

Information to help prepare you for study abroad



Student Advice

Suggestions from study abroad returnees



Savvy Traveler Tips

Traveling tips to get you where you're going

GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR STUDYING ABROAD

The goals and objectives of a study abroad program are as diverse as the students, faculty, and administrators involved. Some goals may be common (e.g. language acquisition), while others may be more personal (e.g. becoming independent). Some goals may seem more important to some than to others (e.g. desire for academic integrity in course work vs. desire to travel).

Study abroad programs will provide a more enriching experience if they incorporate a wide range of goals. The first step toward the achievement of these goals is acknowledging and defining them before the program begins. Once you are abroad, the process continues with a structured and cooperative approach to achieving these goals. We've begun the process by outlining some goals for your program.

Oxford Program Goals

- Knowledge of your academic major(s)/minor(s) from British perspective
- Integration into the academic and social environment of St Anne's College
- Immersion experience in a supportive environment
- Personal development and growth

Program Elements that Support these Goals

- Academic Tutors to provide personal and academic advising
- Attendance in University of Oxford courses with British students
- Course work integrated into students' academic goals
- Access to university and community organizations/clubs
- Housing with British and international students

The Program in Oxford

2017 -18 Calendar

Arrive at University (after 12 noon).....	September 30
Orientation.....	October 1 - 6
Michaelmas Term.....	October 8 - December 2
Hilary Term*	January 14 - March 10
Trinity Term*	April 22- June 16

* Students need to be back in their rooms for Hilary and Trinity terms no later than 12 noon the Thursday before the term begins.

Passport & Visa

All students should have a passport valid until a few months after your departure date from England before applying for your visa. All students receiving a visa to study in the UK for a length of time will require a Tier 4 General Student Visa. Before you can apply, you need to have received a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies number (CAS) from St Anne's College. This number needs to be included in your visa application as proof of acceptance into a visa sponsoring university (St Anne's). All specific instructions on visa application will be provided to you through either St Anne's or the Office of Overseas Study.

Getting to Oxford

Once you are enrolled at Oxford, you will receive a welcome packet and emails on the next steps. The University of Oxford usually offers a pre-arranged bus service straight from Heathrow Airport to the bus station in Oxford through the Oxford Tube bus service. You will be able to register for this service through the university with your flight details and pay upon boarding the coach bus. The easiest and most efficient way to get from the Gloucester [glow-ster] Green Bus Station to St Anne's College is by taxi. The taxi terminal is right around the corner from the bus station and costs only about £5.

Oxford

The city of Oxford is about two hours northwest of London with a population of roughly 150,000. Known as the oldest university in the world, the University of Oxford is interspersed throughout the city, which it shares with its neighboring university, Oxford Brookes (not associated with the University of Oxford). The university is comprised of 38 self-governed colleges and a variety of research departments. Its primary landmarks are Magdalen College, the second oldest college only to Christ Church, the Radcliffe Camera, and the Bodleian Library.

St. Anne's College

St. Anne's College is one of the northern-most colleges in the city of Oxford, and is about a 15-minute walk to the central Cornmarket Street. Most shops, cafes, and other colleges are located in or around this central area. St. Anne's is considered one of the larger university colleges, and is unique in being able to house its students on campus through all three years of their degree. It has its own coffee shop, known as STACS, a small college gym, a college bar, dining hall, laundry, library, and the College Nurse. In addition, at the main entrance there is a glass building with two security personnel known as porters. Although the porters' primary function is monitoring the security of the college, they also serve other functions such as answering questions, looking up faculty members, providing spare keys if you get locked out, giving directions, etc. Essentially, when in doubt, ask a porter! It's part of their job to be a walking St. Anne's encyclopedia.

Academic Program

As a Visiting Student at St. Anne's College, you will be placed in the 2nd year courses with other university students. Depending on your subject, you can expect to have small, essay-based tutorials and lectures with other British or American students (tutorials usually consist of one to two other students). As a Visiting Student, you will not be required to take official tests or Collections (start of term tests similar to those you may have taken in high school to determine how much you remember of the subject). Collections are typically not counted towards the degree and are optional, but some tutors may prefer you to take them.

The academic year at Oxford is broken into three terms: Michaelmas (winter; October to November), Hilary (spring; January to February), and Trinity (summer; April to early June). Each term is eight-weeks long with a six-week vacation between terms.

The British Degree Program

At the University of Oxford, all degrees take three years to complete (with the exception of languages and certain sciences). At the end of their first year, all students take examinations called "prelims" based on that year's course which determine their eligibility to remain at the university for the rest of their degree. The second and third years are called the "Final Honors School" during which they take upper level courses. While students do not take any official exams during their second year, the third year is used primarily for review before their final examinations. Grades at Oxford are for the most part entirely determined by their final exam scores. In between terms, students are required to take collection exams which serve as a measure of their progress and do not affect their grade.

Tutorial System

The British tutorial system consists of two parts: weekly tutorials and lectures. Each week, students attend a "tutorial" for each class (or paper) they are taking. For each tutorial, students will be expected to prepare an essay of roughly 2,000 words based on the reading list



Savvy Traveler Tips

Scan a copy of your passport page and save it in your e-mail so you can have easy access to it, should you need it, while you are travelling.

given the week before. During the weekly tutorial sessions, students meet with their professor individually (or occasionally with one other student) to discuss their essay. Tutorials are considered the primary mode of instruction and are organized between the student and the professor.

Unlike at U.S. universities, lectures are considered to be complementary to your study and do not have any bearing on your course grade. It is still expected, however, for students to attend lectures related to their course each term as relevant topics and information may be discussed which can be used to inform students' weekly essays. Lecture lists can be found on department websites at the start of each term and it is the student's responsibility to find them. Many professors attend lectures, so it shows initiative for a student to attend relevant lectures.

Grading

At the end of each term, students receive narrative reports from each tutor regarding their performance. Since no official grades are given for essays, a student's performance is based on tutorial discussions, overall essay quality, understanding of the material, and personal growth. For the purposes of transferring credit back to IU, however, your tutors will be contacted by Overseas Study at the end of your year abroad with a request for letter grades based on your overall performance.

Instructors

Each college and department has its own faculty and research fellows. Depending on the paper (or class) that you take, your tutor may be either a tenured professor, graduate student (less common), or research fellow. In addition, tutors may be assigned through St. Anne's, another college of Oxford, or the university department. At the beginning of the year, you should expect to meet with your assigned Personal Tutor (similar to an academic advisor) who will inform you of your assigned tutors and instructors for the term. It is the student's responsibility to then contact their assigned tutors within the first week to schedule tutorial times. For lectures corresponding to tutorial subjects, it is the student's responsibility to find the departmental Lecture Lists each term. Lecture Lists can be found either on the department's Weblearn page (similar to Oncourse) or the department's website.

Learning Resources

In addition to the numerous subject area libraries around the University of Oxford, each college also maintains its own College Library. Due to the fast-paced nature of tutorials and ever-changing essay topics, students are not required to purchase books, as most books can be found in multiple libraries throughout the university for student borrowing. While each library has its own borrowing policies, most university subject libraries rent books for one or two weeks, while books from the College Library can be rented for the entire term. More information on borrowing books will be provided during your Fresher's Week Orientation.

Tutorial Course Load

Most students at Oxford take six classes or tutorials over the course of three terms. It is highly recommended that students take two tutorials per term (any more or less will add a significant amount of stress later on). Two tutorials per term is the standard of most students at Oxford, consisting of one tutorial a week for one eight-week term, or

one tutorial every other week over the course of two terms. Some tutorials are called "major" and some are called "minor." This can be changed on-site depending upon how much credit a student needs for a certain course. Typically, "major" tutorials are equivalent to 8 IU credits, while "minor" papers are equivalent to 4 IU credits.

Therefore, most students will take one major and one minor tutorial each term. Students in the sciences may have a different arrangement, but St. Anne's is quite flexible at accommodating students' needs for credit.



In tutorials, ask questions, raise controversial points, and challenge views. If you do it this way, the instructor will probably like it and it is a lot more fun.



STUDENT ADVICE

Tutorial Selection

As a visiting student, all your tutorials will have been selected during your secondary application, and will be arranged by St. Anne's before your arrival. Within the first week, you will be assigned a Personal Tutor based on your area of study, and they will provide you with the information on contacting your course tutors and arranging meeting times for the term.

Organization and Conduct of Tutorials

Tutorials are arranged between the tutor and the student, but typically consist of one, one-hour long session, once a week for eight weeks. Tutorials typically take place in the professor's office, although occasionally a tutor may choose to have tutorials elsewhere, such as a local café or bookstore. It is expected that each student come to tutorials fully prepared and having read at least four to five of the suggested reading materials, and to participate in thoughtful, academic discussion of your essay and of the topic as a whole. Unlike U.S. lectures, professors rarely expect "correct" answers, aside from certain historical or scientific facts, and often look for the student to be engaged with the topic, think critically about the source material, and be able to contribute new ideas or perspectives on the topic.

Emphasis is put on growth in knowledge from the beginning of the term to the end. Tutors value well-researched and defensible positions, rather than one which matches their own opinions or beliefs.



Life in Oxford

Housing

All visiting students at St Anne's College will be given single rooms in the student dorms. Although there will likely be other international students and Visiting Students (defined as American students studying abroad), the dorms are mixed with native British students as well. Each floor of the dorms has a kitchen with a stove, oven, counter space, and fridge, two toilets, and two showers. The college campus also contains a dining hall open three times a day for meals.

Email and Computers

Even before you arrive at St. Anne's College, you should receive a university email address which you should monitor for updates from the college. Upon arrival, you will be given information on how to register for the university Wi-Fi and secure internet network. Occasionally, students find they are unable to use the Wi-Fi in their room, and in this case are able to purchase an Ethernet cord from the porters. Setting up the internet connection can take time and be relatively confusing, so it's a good idea to let family or friends back home know to expect a few days without internet access, just in case. You can always ask the porters if you have any problems setting up the internet!

Health Insurance

Since you are traveling on an IU Co-Sponsored program, Indiana University will provide you with health insurance as part of your program fee. Since you will be in England for over six months, however, you will receive free healthcare and health insurance as described below.

Medical Care

All students staying in the UK for over six months are able to receive free healthcare from the National Health Service as long as they are registered with the College Doctor. There is, however, an immigration health surcharge for the Tier 4 visa. This is usually around £150. Registration will occur during the orientation week for incoming students in one of the buildings on college. Specific requirements for registration will be explained in your welcome packet, but be sure to bring the Health Insurance card from IU and any relevant medical history records. It is highly recommended that you register with the College Doctor since you may get sick at some point in the year, and it's nice to receive the free healthcare while you can! The college also has its own nurse on staff.

If you have any current prescriptions, make sure to bring at least a few months' worth with you, if possible. You should also bring an original prescription from your doctor to give to the College Doctor in Oxford. Also, any standard medications like ibuprofen, acetaminophen, Tylenol, Advil, Midol, etc., should be brought with you since the UK uses different medicines and you may not find what you're used to in Oxford (however

the UK does not allow NSAIDS). Contraceptive pills can also be received free of charge with a prescription from the Jericho Health Center in Oxford.

Money & Banking

The currency in England is the pound (£) and Euros are typically not accepted.

Since you will be in Oxford for an academic year, it is highly suggested to open a banking account at a local bank in Oxford. You will receive more information regarding banks upon your arrival, but in general doing some research beforehand can be useful. Some American banks provide free services through partner companies abroad (for example, Bank of America account holders can use Barclay's ATMs with no fee). If you choose to use an American debit/credit card abroad, you need to be aware of ATM fees accumulating over time and fluctuating currency exchange rates.

Another method is to bring your American card and open a local account in Oxford. This way parents or guardians at home can easily transfer money into your regular account, and then you can withdraw from that account abroad and transfer it into your local account. With this approach it is still necessary to keep an eye on ATM fees and fluctuating exchange rates. However, this method allows you to withdraw larger sums of money fewer times, which means fewer fees and less thinking about currency rates.

In addition, most bank cards in England have what they call a "chip and pin". It functions like a debit card in that you must enter a PIN number, but instead of a strip across the back of the card, there is a small golden chip. Because of the structural differences, an American "swipe" card may not work in all British chip and pin machines.

The major banks in Oxford are HSBC, Santander, and Barclay's (partnered with Bank of America).

Cell Phones

Depending on what you need in a cell phone or "mobile", there are various options available to you. If you would like to use data abroad, most students are able to use their iPhones from home, although it may be necessary to purchase a UK SIM card to avoid long distance charges. If you only want texting and calling, there are a few cheaper options such as "top-up" or pay-as-you-go phones, which can be topped up online. Although unlimited texting options are available on these phones, the typical text rates are fairly low and minutes tend to last a while when communicating with people in the UK. The primary place to get phones in Oxford is Carphone Warehouse on Cornmarket Street. The attendants there can help you find something that fits your needs and budget.

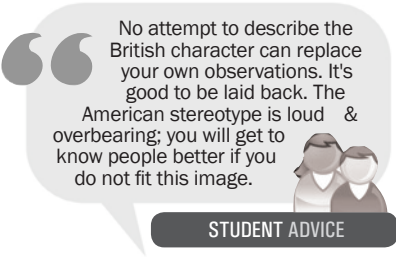
Helpful Program Information

- Using a service like Skype is the cheapest way to make and
- receive calls to the U.S. However, most students will also purchase
- a mobile phone after they arrive in Oxford. Go to a phone store
- (VODAFONE or TMOBILE) and buy the cheapest phone they have
- for about £30. You can then purchase pre-paid minutes on the
- "pay-as-you-go" plan. You can also purchase phone cards.


Social Life

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While every person's experience will be different, there is a strong "work hard, play hard" concept at St. Anne's College, and at Oxford in general. During the day, most social interaction happens during meals, as students will typically spend their day working on schoolwork and occasionally meeting up for lunch or tea. It is very common in the evening to go out to pubs or dancing with friends, see a movie, watch plays, etc. There are also plenty of opportunities to join college and university clubs, organizations, or sports, which typically involve lots of group activities, dinners, and socials. Some of the highlights and most popular events at Oxford are the formal dinners, bops (themed college club nights) and the College Balls. Balls are organized by each college's JCR (Junior Common Room; student government) and are typically held each term. Most students go to at least their own ball, but it is possible to go to other colleges' balls as well.



No attempt to describe the British character can replace your own observations. It's good to be laid back. The American stereotype is loud & overbearing; you will get to know people better if you do not fit this image.



STUDENT ADVICE

As for finding a social group or niche at Oxford, keep in mind that you are in the same position as you were freshman year, and it may take a little more effort to get started. Most Oxford students find it easiest to befriend other students in their subject, since they are the people you will see most often, but don't forget about university-wide clubs, as they are a great way to meet people outside of the college!

Packing

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When packing for your year abroad, remember that after getting off the plane, you will need to carry your luggage through customs, on and off buses or trains, and around the college until you get to your room. Therefore, it makes your life easier to pack light! Bring any essential medications, products you really can't live without or that may not be available in Oxford, toiletries, and only one or two weeks' worth of clothes. You will accumulate souvenirs and clothing abroad, so you'll want to leave space for that heading over. Also, St. Anne's College provides bedding and a pillow and has a kitchenette with a tea kettle. It is also possible to buy most of your everyday items at stores around Oxford, and although it may be a little expensive, it is worth buying these items in Oxford to save space. Here are some things to think about bringing.

Take the following:

- Copy of prescriptions & enough of them for a few months in advance if possible; basic medicine such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Imodium, antacids, Midol, Band-Aids, etc. Some American brand names can't be found in the UK. All medicines should be in their original containers to avoid problems with security and customs.
- Toothbrush/toothpaste, travel size face & body wash, travel size shampoo and conditioner, etc.
- Gym shoes and 1 pair every day shoes (lots of walking!). 1 pair of heels or dress shoes for formal events, flip flops for the showers.
- Umbrella! Also, most people in the Oxford don't wear rain boots, so plan on regular boots or cheap flats instead.

- A book or two and music for the plane. There will be a lot of waiting in the airport.
- Pictures of family, friends, and pets! A few small, easily packed posters for your room! Addresses/phone numbers, personal items or hobbies such as: sentimental objects, journal, sketch book & pens, workout clothes, etc. But beware of over packing!
- Jeans/trousers (the UK uses 'trousers' for any kind of pants); skirts. Jeans are very expensive anywhere in Europe, so it's cheaper to bring them from home.
- Shirts: casual and dressy; 1 or 2 jumpers: sweaters, cardigans, anything warm, but these will be everywhere in England for pretty decent prices, so don't waste too much space on them.
- A nice dress or suit – lots of formal events!
- Light jacket. You can find a warmer one in Oxford, but it doesn't get as cold as Indiana.

Also, all important documents (passport + visa), medicines, sentimental objects, and things you can't afford to lose should be packed in your carry-on. Any larger containers of (nonperishable) food or liquid, or metal objects should be packed in your checked bag.

Travel

When traveling, it is recommended that you secure housing before you travel, as well as a tentative list of what you expect to see and do. Although Americans can visit most countries in Europe for a short amount of time without a visa, you should still prepare for your travel by researching country-specific entry requirements through embassy and consulate websites.

Trains

Traveling in and around England is a great way to experience culture and explore your new environment. Within England, there are a number of trains across the country, the two major companies of which are First Great Western and East Coast Rail. The most up to date and accurate train timetables and online ticket purchase is through the National Rail Website: (www.nationalrail.co.uk).

Before you start taking too many trains, however, it's a good idea to get your 16-25 Student Railcard, which takes 60% off all train fares. The railcard is available to all students attending a UK university, typically costs about £28, and can be obtained at the Oxford Train Station down George Street.

Airplanes

As for plane travel, the two cheapest airlines for travel to and from the UK are Ryan Air and EasyJet. When booking tickets, however, you should pay attention to available destinations and departure/arrival airports since many cheaper flights will not go through Heathrow. Also be aware of any luggage restrictions of the airline (for example, Ryan Air typically allows only a small carry-on and no checked baggage). The largest and most common airports in England are Heathrow and Gatwick, but Ryan Air flies only out of Stansted. Make sure you have your passport!

London Underground (Tube)

The cheapest and most efficient way to travel around London is to purchase a prepaid Oyster Card. Within the London and Greater London areas, the Oyster Card can be used to pay tube and bus fares at a discounted rate. An Oyster card can be bought at electronic ticket machines at any tube station for an initial £7 (which will be immediately available for use), and can be topped up as needed. Small pocket-sized maps of the underground can be found in any station, and all stations are labeled above-ground with a red and white sign saying “underground”.

Hostels

Many students travel on a budget, making hostels an ideal alternative to expensive hotels. Hostels in Europe are far more common than in the US and can range from around £12-£40 per night, depending on the quality and style of the room you choose. Unlike hotels, hostels typically have room options to choose from: male only, female only, mixed gender, private, 4-bed, 6-bed, 10-bed, 12-bed, etc. Beds in hostels tend to be bunk beds in order to accommodate more travelers, and larger rooms (with more beds) tend to be cheaper than rooms with fewer beds. Although specific hostels should still be researched, most are safe as long as you exercise common sense. Hostels are made with backpackers in mind and therefore typically provide at least one meal, beverages, front desk service, internet access either in the rooms or in a central area, showers, maps, etc. The most popular site for finding and booking hostels is Hostelworld.com (www.hostelworld.com).