DU Study Abroad Guide to the United Kingdom

Please use this booklet in conjunction with the DU Study Abroad Handbook

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Introduction

This handbook will provide you with a general overview of issues involved in traveling to the United Kingdom (UK). We thank the US State Department and UK Border Agency for sharing with us the UK safety and travel information in this handbook. Please use this guide in conjunction with the DU Study Abroad Handbook.

We hope this information will assist you and your family in preparing for your time abroad. It is important that you review all the information, as well as the information sent by the UK university, before you leave the US and that you take these materials with you to the UK.

Studying abroad is an exciting opportunity. Nothing during your college years will likely change you more. You will learn about another country and another culture. You will also learn to look at your own country from a different perspective and most important, you will learn more about yourself. So, the OIE encourages you to invest yourself fully into this experience.

How much you gain from this opportunity will depend on your preparedness, flexibility and responsibility. Review the general pre-departure information the OIE has provided to you. Complete the administrative and academic matters that need to be taken care of before you leave. Research the country and city you will be going to. Review some of the suggested readings in the Study Abroad Handbook about what it means to go abroad. Be respectful of other cultures; things are not better, they are not worse; they are just different – learn to accept, not expect. Remember, you are there to complete an academic program successfully, just as if you were at DU. Good time management and goal setting are keys to handling a challenging academic program and becoming familiar with life outside the classroom.

Most of all, we want you to have a great experience and to make the most out of this opportunity. And when you return, be ready to share your stories with others. Your personal experience will be the best source of inspiration for others.

Safe Travels,

DUSA
Preparing For Your Program

Passport
You must have a valid passport for traveling to the UK and to secure the correct immigration status. If you do not already have a passport, apply for one immediately at your local Post Office. New passport processing can take many weeks. If your passport will expire while you are abroad, renew your passport right away. Your passport must be valid for the duration of your time abroad and up to six (6) months after your program ends. Make photocopies of your passport before going abroad. In case you lose your passport, a copy can help to replace it:
• Leave one with your parents.
• Keep one copy with you in a separate place from your original passport.

Local Passport Office (for emergency passports only):
(877) 487-2778 to schedule an appointment
3151 S. Vaughn Way, Suite 600
Aurora, CO 80014

Immigration to the UK
There are three primary immigration statuses for students studying in the UK. Your status will depend on your country of citizenship, program length, and internship/service learning/work options.


Immigration policy changes rapidly. You are responsible for your own legal entry and stay in the UK.

Your ultimate resource for immigration advice and information should be the consulate that has visa-issuing jurisdiction for residents in your home state or country. While there are more than 10 British Consulates in the US (including one in Denver), only the Consulate in New York has the power to issue visas for those living in the US.

Many UK universities offer visa support or information resources, so contact your program directly to see what resources they offer. Your program may send you detailed information about visas via email, so read all correspondence thoroughly.

As a third-best resource, the OIE is available for immigration guidance. Keep in mind that information from our office on this topic is not official legal advice, but rather a resource for finding information. With this disclaimer in mind, the following is up-to-date information as of 12/12/2013.
Immigration Categories: Short-Term Student Route, Short-term Study Visa, and Student Tier 4 Visa

**Short Term Student Route (apply at port of entry to UK)**
You may enter the UK via this route if:
- You have a US passport AND
- Your study abroad program is less than 6 months AND
- You will not work part-time (or take part in anything resembling work or professional training such as an unpaid internship, volunteer work, or service learning course)

Non-US citizens may also be eligible to enter the UK with this route, if their passport comes from a “non-visa nation.” You can see if you will need a visa here: [https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa](https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa)

The vast majority of DU students studying abroad in the UK will enter as Student Visitors. Student Visitors do not need to apply for a visa nor do they need to apply in advance. Rather, they will present documentation to the immigration officer at the airport each time they arrive in the UK. The necessary documentation is described in the following section. Entry as a student visitor is free of charge.

**Documents and Process:**
The information below is for Short-Term Student route, NOT the Short-Term Study Visa
1. You will go through immigration once you land in the UK. It is advised that students DO NOT fly through the Republic of Ireland before entering the UK.
2. When you arrive at immigration, you will need to stand in line until your turn to speak with an immigration officer. When it is your turn, you will need to show documentation and may be asked questions as to why you are entering the UK.
3. With this route, you do not have work permission, so do not mention “work” or anything of similar meaning when passing through immigration. Mention only your academic study abroad program lasting less than 6 months and that you will return to DU to complete your degree.

Show the immigration officer the following documentation:
1. **Your valid passport** (valid for a year after your date of entry).
2. **Acceptance letter/immigration letter from your host university in the UK:** must be on their letterhead (even if an email) stating your acceptance to their Study Abroad Program.
3. **A letter of support from the OIE:** this states that you’re a study abroad student, you’re in good standing with DU financially, you have adequate health insurance, you have a place to stay during your studies, and that you will return to the US after your program is complete to finish your bachelor’s degree.

Be prepared to show the immigration officer the following items if requested:
1. **Return flight itinerary:** showing you will leave the UK once your program is complete before the 6 months have expired.
2. **Proof of funding:** proof that you can cover all expenses without working illegally.
   - Recent bank statement under your name (not your parents’) showing enough funds for duration of program.
   - General guidelines:
     - At least £1265/month is recommended.
     - If you do not have this much in your bank account and you are questioned, point out that DU has pre-paid your tuition and rent (as stated in your letter of support, item #3) and that you only need to pay for food and living expenses. You should still be able to show that you have enough funds in your account to support yourself for your entire stay.
3. **Your address in the UK** – preferably on letterhead or a printed e-mail from the housing provider or host university.
4. **Your DU student ID** – to verify that you are indeed a student at DU.
5. **Proof of health insurance** – your health insurance membership card.
6. **Your prescription if you are carrying drugs with you.** See the “Health and Wellness” Section of the DU Study Abroad Handbook for more information.

You may need to go through this process each time that you re-enter the UK. This means that if you leave the UK to visit another country, you will need to have all items with you to show the immigration officer upon re-entry. Remember, these documents (and the stamp you may get in your passport) serve as your legal permission to enter the UK. Be sure to make photocopies of all documents in case the originals get destroyed.

**Short-Term Study Visa (application required prior to departure!)**
Short-Term Study Visas will be the primary route of entry for visa-nationals, such as Chinese international students studying abroad in the UK, who cannot qualify for the Short-Term Student Route but who do not need a Tier 4 visa. A Short-Term Study Visa must be applied for in advance of travel to the UK. Application information and a list of visa-national countries can be found here: [http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/visiting/student/visa/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/visiting/student/visa/)

Non-US citizens need to work with DU’s Office of International Student and Scholar Services to make sure that they remain in status in the US while studying abroad and will be able to return to the US without difficulty.

Note: Cherrington Global Scholar benefits only cover the Short-Term Study Visa application fee for qualified students who are visa-nationals.

**Student Tier 4 Visa (application required prior to departure!)**
You will need a Student Tier 4 Visa if:
• You will be studying in the UK for more than 6 months OR
• You will be participating in an internship program or will be doing volunteer work—including service learning—regardless of the length of your program

**Student Tier 4 Visa Application Process:**
Review the websites below IN DETAIL to understand the application process. This is a lengthy process that should be done in a timely manner and can be changed at any time:
• Application overview and requirements: [https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa.](https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa.)
• Supporting Documents Checklist: [https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/documents-you-must-provide](https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/documents-you-must-provide)
  ➢ Note that US citizens are considered “low risk” applicants and may not be asked to show evidence of funds. However, you should be prepared show this evidence if asked.
  ➢ Check your confirmation email once you’ve submitted the online visa application for the most up-to-date checklist.

**WHEN TO APPLY FOR YOUR STUDENT TIER 4 VISA: It’s best 3 months prior to departure**
You must wait until you are within 3 months of your departure to apply for your visa. If you apply before this, the UK Border Agency will not process the application nor reimburse the fee; if you apply too late you may not get your visa in time for your departure. Keep in mind that it typically takes 6-8 weeks (sometimes longer) to complete the visa application process from start to finish. **You should apply the moment that you are eligible!**

**Steps:**
1. Complete the online application here: [https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/](https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/)
   • You will enter your personal and program information and pay the application fee using a credit card. CGS students can forward the receipt to duabroad@du.edu for reimbursement.
2. Make a biometrics appointment.
Currently, this includes only the following students if they are CGS eligible:

- University of Westminster students (internship required)
- Year-long exchange at the University of York and University of Glasgow (over 6 months required)
- Non-US, visa national students required to apply for the Student Visitor Visa

### Important Supporting Documents (not a complete list):

- **CAS Number**
  - This is your online file created by your host university in the UK which can be viewed by the UK Border Agency to confirm your status.
  - If your host university does not offer to supply you with a CAS number, you need to request one from them.
  - Your Tier 4 visa application will be denied if it does not have a CAS number. Once you have completed your visa application, write your CAS number of the top of it so that the consulate can easily find it.

- **Financial Documentation**
  - The UK Border Agency reserves the right to request this information, so you should be prepared to submit it if asked.
  - If asked you will need to show a bank account in your name with sufficient “maintenance fees” for the entire length of the program. This fee is £1265 per month.
    - Maintenance fees do include rent.
    - The OIE will provide a letter of support (typically in Spring Quarter) stating that DU has paid in advance for your tuition and housing (if applicable, check with the OIE to confirm the specifics for your program).
  - More detail will be provided in the confirmation you receive after submitting the online application.
  - University of Westminster has a helpful document on Tier 4 maintenance fees here: [https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas/tier-4-visa/maintenance-and-fees-and-the-28-day-rule](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/international/visas-and-advice/visas/tier-4-visa/maintenance-and-fees-and-the-28-day-rule)

- **Self-Assessment**: [http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/visas/vaf9-app81.pdf](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/visas/vaf9-app81.pdf)
  - You may be asked to provide this with your supporting documents. Read your confirmation email for the most up-to-date requirements

If there are questions about your application, you will be notified by an official and instructed on what to do next. The British Embassy website is: [https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-washington](https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/british-embassy-washington). The website for UK Visas and Immigration, which handles all visa applications, is: [https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration).

### Policy on Cherrington Reimbursement for Visa Application Fees
The OIE will only reimburse Cherrington Global Scholars students who must pay a fee to enter the UK legally. Currently, this includes only the following students if they are CGS eligible:
To be reimbursed, you will need to submit your receipt to the international house. For more on submitting visa application fee receipts the flight booking instructions: [http://www.du.edu/intl/abroad/pdf_docs/cherringtontravelbooking.pdf](http://www.du.edu/intl/abroad/pdf_docs/cherringtontravelbooking.pdf).

US students who choose to do an internship not required by their program or who want the right to work in the UK while abroad are **not** eligible for reimbursement for the visa application fee since work/internships are optional endeavours.

US students planning to extend their program to be abroad for a full year **MUST** apply for a Tier 4 visa **BEFORE** going to the UK, regardless of whether or not an extension has been approved. The Student Visitor Status **CANNOT** be extended once you are in the UK, so you must plan in advance. Tier 4 visas for these students are **not** eligible for reimbursement as the choice to extend is entirely optional.

All the information and forms you will need to apply for immigration and visas may be found here: [https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas](https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas)

**Travel Arrangements**
You should book your travel arrangements as soon as possible once you have received booking instructions from the OIE and know your Cherrington Global Scholars status. All students are responsible for understanding the start and end dates of their program for booking their flight. Cherrington Global Scholars should refer to the DU Travel Arrangements email sent to you. Non-CGS students should book their own flight.

Your program will send you detailed information via email regarding getting from the airport to your host site. Remember that cab fares from the airport can be very expensive and are not reimbursed through CGS.

Exeter, Lancaster, and York students will likely use the British Railway system to get to their universities. This rail ticket can be reimbursed for CGS students provided they submit their receipts on time. For more information on submitting travel receipts, see: [http://www.du.edu/intl/abroad/pdf_docs/cherringtontravelbooking.pdf](http://www.du.edu/intl/abroad/pdf_docs/cherringtontravelbooking.pdf).

**CONFIRMING MOVE-IN AND ORIENTATION DATES**
You are responsible for knowing not only your program start and end dates, but also the date that you can move into or out of your housing and the date that the orientation begins. It is a good idea to arrive 1-2 days prior to your orientation (mandatory for all students) to allow yourself time to get settled, but confirm whether you will have access to your housing and, if not, plan accordingly. Make sure you have a contact number for your accommodations office and keep in touch with them if you have a delay and will not be arriving for move-in at a specific, pre-set time. If your flight arrives outside of regular business hours (Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm) make sure to contact your housing provider and understand the move-in procedure.

**CONNECTING FLIGHTS**
If you do not have a direct flight, make sure that you have ample time between connections. Also, confirm that your connecting flight leaves from the same airport where you are arriving as many major cities have multiple airports and transferring between airports may not be feasible.

**AIRPORT PICK-UP**
Some UK host universities offer to have volunteer students meet incoming international students at the airport. This is typically limited and requires that you arrive on a specific date within a specific time period. If you are interested in this service, ask your host university if they offer it and sign up **before** purchasing your
ticket to avoid needing to make costly changes. Make sure to get a contact number for the person meeting you at the airport.

**ARRIVAL TIPS**
We recommend that you avoid arriving on a Sunday if possible (unless that date is specifically requested by your host university). Most businesses in Europe are closed on Sunday, and public transport runs less frequently, making it more difficult to find your way. We also recommend arriving in the morning/early afternoon to avoid finding your destination and housing in the dark.

**VISITORS FROM HOME**
We recommend that family and friends who are planning to visit you come towards the middle of the program, rather than at the beginning or the end. In the first few days after arrival, many welcome events are planned for students that you may miss if you are spending time with parents or friends from home. Likewise, at the end of the program you will need to be mindful of your final exams schedule and move-out procedures.

**USEFUL WEBSITES ABOUT TRAVEL TO AND WITHIN THE UK**
- U.S. Department of State Consular Affair website: [www.state.gov/travel](http://www.state.gov/travel)

**Customs Regulations**
When passing through British customs, remember to be polite and to have all required documents easily on hand. When talking to an immigration officer, only answer questions you have been asked and keep the conversation as short as possible while still remaining courteous. Remember, immigration officers can refuse you entry for any reason so take the process seriously and be respectful.

**DO NOT BOOK ANY TRAVEL THROUGH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.** Arriving in Ireland before you have made your initial entry into the UK can cause for denying you student visitor status in the UK due to a lack of immigration tracking between the two countries. If you are planning to visit Ireland, make sure you do so only after you have made your original arrival to the UK and passed through British customs.

**Prescription Medication**
If you are taking regular medication, you should contact the UK Border Agency and International SOS well before departure to confirm that the medicine and the quantities you will be carrying are permitted into the country. You should also ask what the necessary documentation is that you may need to provide. It is advisable that you get a letter from your doctor describing the medication you are taking and certifying that the medication has been supplied to you for a particular medical condition. Take this letter with you in your carry-on along with your actual medication. Make sure you know the maximum amount you can bring with you. **Keep all medications in the container in which they were dispensed.**

To find out more details about British Customs regulations, please visit the UK Border Agency website at [https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control](https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control).
The British Academic System

Academic Culture
There are major differences between the British and US academic systems. Where the US system is much more interactive and offers students multiple opportunities to show their knowledge gained, the British system puts a great deal more emphasis on individual learning and research done outside the classroom. It is the student’s responsibility to understand what is needed to be successful within this system.

The typical undergraduate program lasts three years (except for universities in Scotland, some technical degrees, or those which require additional certification like nursing, medicine, education, law) and includes much more academic specialization than is usual in American colleges and universities. British students generally enter university to exclusively study their major, as there is not a “general studies” requirement as at most US four-year institutions. Additionally, the course requirements for those three years are more rigidly planned than at American institutions—there are few, if any, “elective” courses and even Year 1 students have a stronger background in their field than what is typically expected in the US. This means students are taking the same courses with the same classmates throughout their time at the university. Professors will also often reference other courses that they know degree-seeking students have already taken. This may take some time to recognize and will require flexibility and being unafraid to ask questions if you feel lost in the conversation.

With this in mind, you will need to be more intentional in planning out your coursework to ensure you are at the level of expertise for which the course is intended. Likewise, you should be prepared for some differences between the British and the US academic systems and be aware that you will experience a period of adjustment.

Teaching Style
In the UK, a student's academic schedule fluctuates between lectures, tutorials (small group sessions), laboratory work, seminars, and library study. You may find that you have fewer class hours than in the US but you are expected to do a lot more private study and spend a lot more time in the library. This may seem more like graduate work so expect long studying hours, especially in the sciences.

**Lectures:** The core material of the subject is nearly always given in lectures. In popular subjects, a hundred or more students may attend a lecture. In less popular subjects the lecture may have only a small number of students present. In a lecture there is little, if any, interaction between student and lecturer. The material is usually presented in the form of a monologue from the lecturer, perhaps supported by slides and videos.

**Tutorials and Labs:**
Your opportunity for discussion will occur during the tutorial, which has a smaller number of students, and where the tutor and the students engage in a dialogue relating to the content of the course. Whereas you are not expected to speak in lectures, you are expected to speak in tutorials. Your participation is important. Science, psychology and technology subjects, also have lab sessions. Language subjects usually require time in the language lab.

**Independent Study:**
The British system relies heavily on students keeping track of their own knowledge gain and understanding what information they need to know for the course. Students have been raised to self-educate and professors view this ability as the whole point of being at university. They will expect the same mindset from you as a short-term student in their class. Your independent research in the library or elsewhere is the primary place where learning takes place in their education system.
This can be confusing for US students, who may not have a clear idea of what information they are expected to know. View this as a great opportunity to take ownership over your education and don’t be afraid to ask questions if you’re unsure of what is expected. Many local students will organize their own study groups to keep on track and hold each other accountable—this can be a great opportunity to learn how to be successful in this system as well as get to know your classmates. Likewise, professors can help clarify any questions, but they are unlikely to seek you out—you need to approach them—and will not be as accessible as US students are typically used to.

**Course Selection and Registration**

For most British institutions, classes are either divided into Year 1, 2, and 3 lists or Levels 4, 5, and 6. These correspond with each other (Year 1 would be Level 4 etc) and are important as you look at courses.

Year 1/Level 4: DU Sophomore/Junior Level

- These courses, though Year 1, will still presume some background in the subject. You should look at these courses if considering elective credit or an area of study in which you do not have an extensive background. Even credits towards a major or minor can be found at this level depending on your background and expertise. If you do not have a strong background, be prepared to work hard to form the same understanding of the subject as Year 1 students.

Year 2/Level 5: DU Junior/Senior Level

- These courses assume a high level of prior knowledge. Often, these have important pre-requisites that you should make sure are present on your transcript before selecting the course.

Year 3/Level 6: DU Senior/Graduate Level

- These are “Senior Year” courses and assume a strong background in the subject. Keep in mind Year 3 students have studied only this topic for the last 2 years, so you should have substantial background before considering these courses.

Generally, we recommend that students stick with Year 1 and Year 2 courses, making sure that they meet all pre-requisites ahead of time. Year 3 courses can be considered by students with substantial background in the subject, typically those studying abroad their senior year and looking for a course within their major.

We assume courses will be upper division in the UK, unless the course’s title is “Introduction to _______ (a very broad academic discipline)” and it is a Year 1 course. Always confirm a course will be upper-division with your OIE advisor if your academic advisor’s approval is contingent upon it being upper level.

As part of your host university application, you were asked to select the courses you would like to take. The host institution processes these requests by speaking with each relevant department, who then consider your transcript and decide whether you are qualified for the course. This decision lies with the department, not with the OIE or with the host university’s international office. Make sure you have selected courses open to international students that you are qualified for and have a handful of pre-approved back-up courses in mind.

Final registration does not take place until you arrive in country, so keep in mind last minute course cancellations or changes may still take place. Make sure you have vetted some additional pre-approved courses in case you need to register for a different class than you anticipated.

**Basic Academic Terminology**

As you discovered while filling out your study abroad application, the academic terminology used in the UK differs from that used in the US. Below are some general terms used in the UK. To find out about other British terminology used by your overseas university, refer to your University-specific guide:
United Kingdom United States
Module Course or class
Module Directory Course Catalog
Course Entire degree/major
Timetable Class Schedule
Tutors, academics, lecturers Professors, instructors, teachers
Uni University/College
College High School OR University membership system that ALL students participate in (York and Lancaster Campuses)

Assessment (Grading)
For your class grade, you may be expected to concentrate your academic efforts in library research and writing. It is not uncommon to have a large percentage of your grade based upon only one or two exams. The tutorials may require you to prepare material, present a paper, read articles or participate in group discussions.

Exams can last up to three hours in length. Some may be “open book” exams. In other cases, you may be given a topic or questions beforehand. In most, however, the exam will be closed book. In the UK, the final exam may count for a larger proportion of your grade than in the US (up to 100% of your grade). Your exam or paper should be your very best work and you should set a specific study plan for yourself throughout the semester. Below are some helpful tips:

• The quality of your essay will be compared with others in your class. Grades will be awarded based on how yours ranks relative to the others. Students whose answers demonstrate that they did a lot of research outside of class tend to earn the highest grades.
• Make sure you site sources in your paper/exam and bring in outside sources NOT discussed in class.
• Exam questions from previous terms are often available so that you can get a sense of typical questions.
• Plan on studying 3-4 hours for every hour spent in class.
• Use the learning outcomes of the class to determine what you should focus on and what outside research you need to find.
• Request a reading list from the professor (if not already provided) and search these sources for recurring themes and references.
• Supplement lecture topics with in-depth readings on the same theme.
• Schedule a time to meet with professors early in the term to show them your study plan. They may have additional suggestions for you.
• DO NOT PRESUME A CLASS IS EASY BECAUSE YOU HAVE NO HOMEWORK! Remember the professor assumes you will be assigning yourself homework and that this will be reflected in the exam.

Scheduling Exams
You must complete all coursework and exams BEFORE returning to the US. In many British institutions, exams for Fall term classes are given in early January. For DU students, this means you will either need to schedule an earlier exam in December or, if a professor prefers, to arrange to have your exams proctored on DU campus in January. Your OIE advisor can serve as your proctor but you are responsible for making all arrangements. Ask your host university’s international office for help in this process.
If your final assessment is a paper, you must submit it to the professor in December before leaving the UK. Under no circumstances can you simply email a professor your exam or paper—this is against DU policy.

You cannot plan on remaining in the UK until January or return to the UK for an exam. This can violate your immigration status and would lead to missing a portion of DU Winter Quarter.
Make sure to save a copy of any work and proof of submission in case a professor losess a paper or exam.

**Grade Transfer**
The British education system does not suffer from the same grade inflation that has become a problem in the US. Most UK professors are accustomed to awarding “C” level grades to the average hard-working student, reserving “A” grades for rare and extraordinary students. Returned students have equated “B+” level work with “C+” level work in the UK. Also, note that the grades awarded by percentage are very different; for example, a 70 percent in most British/Irish universities is considered to be the equivalent of an “A+”!

To figure out how your UK grades translate to DU grades, please refer to Appendix B. This information was provided by each institution. However, please note these are subject to change and are updated yearly.

**Course Load & Credits**
Your course load and credits will vary depending on your program. You must enroll for at least the minimum number of credits to remain a full-time student at your host university and at DU. Dropping below this number will put you in violation of your visa status and may result in your deportation. Refer to the Study Abroad Policies on our website for information on the maximum number of credits you can transfer.

You may find that your program offers courses that are worth as many as 16 DU credits. Having this many credits in one area may cause problems for making significant progress on your graduation requirements while abroad. Some majors limit the amount of credit that you can take within your major while abroad. We strongly recommend that you speak with your major academic advisor prior to your study abroad about any credit restriction that may exist on abroad courses or credit maximums in your major.

**Course load by program**
Bangor University: 60 Bangor credits per term
City University London: 4 classes per term
Edinburgh: 60 Edinburgh credits per term
Exeter: 60 Exeter credits per term
Goldsmiths: 16 Goldsmiths credits per term
U of Glasgow: 60 Glasgow credits per term
Glasgow School of Art: 60 GSA credits per term
Queen’s U Belfast: 60 QUB credits per term
Queen Mary: 60 Queen Mary credits per term
Lancaster: 12 Lancaster credits per term
Westminster: 60 Westminster credits per term
York: 40 York credits per term

**Program Support**
British universities are public institutions. They do not compete with each other for business in the same way that American universities do. High levels of service and support for students is not a major selling point for them, especially not when compared to US private institutions such as DU. You should be prepared to be persistent, but polite and patient whenever you need assistance.

You do have access to the international office at your host university, which is your main contact on campus for everything from class registration to housing to advise on the nearest grocery store. These offices have international advisors available to help answer your questions as you learn to navigate the British system and university life. They will provide you with resources both over the summer and when you arrive (including a 24-hour emergency number if they have one) and organize your mandatory orientation session—which can last anywhere from one day to one week.

While this office is here to help answer any question you have, they will not check-up on you regularly. Some students have been frustrated with what they perceive as a lack of individual attention from these offices and the lack of clear communication. This frustration is often due to a cultural misunderstanding and ungrounded expectations about the level of service at public institutions abroad. The international office staff is there *if you need them* and will assume that you will contact them if you need help.
Take the initiative and make an appointment at their office if you need information. Most easy-to-answer questions will be laid-out in written material, which they will send to your permanent address over the summer and give to you during your orientation—read these materials thoroughly and keep them in a safe and accessible place. Before asking questions, check to see if the answer is already contained in your written material.

For your reference and convenience, our partners’ contact information is located in Appendix A. Once you are accepted to your program, please begin corresponding with them whenever you have questions about the program, your host university, your host city, etc.

**Learning Differences and Accommodations**

If you have special needs regarding assessment, such as reading assistance, or note taking assistance, please inform your DU Study Abroad Program Coordinator and DU’s Disabilities Services Program. You should also indicate this information on your green Medical and Special Needs Information sheet you received with your DU study abroad acceptance letter.

Disability services are available in the UK; however, you must give your documentation to the British university’s disabilities services office so it may determine for which accommodations you are eligible in the UK. If you plan to request accommodation for a disability, you must do so now because waiting until after your program starts to disclose may result in you not receiving the accommodations you requested.
Living in the UK

UK Housing
At your British university, you will most likely live in a university residence hall with domestic or other international students. In most cases, this will be a co-ed residence hall with a small, private bedroom and shared facilities (bathroom, living area, kitchen etc.) with the other students on your floor. However, confirm your housing options with your OIE advisor and host university as these may vary (the University of Exeter, for example, does not provide on campus housing and students must arrange their own accommodations).

Make sure to submit your housing application in time. Your host university will send you instructions on this process—typically via email after you have been accepted—so it is very important that you read this information thoroughly.

Please read your accommodation contracts before signing them, being sure to double-check that the dates are correct. Some students have unknowingly signed year-long contracts (especially at Exeter) and were billed for breaking their contract early when they returned to the US after only one semester.

As a participant on a DU Partner Program, you must live in DU-arranged student housing during your program. If you decide against living in DU-arranged housing, or if you choose to leave, you will assume the additional cost of your new housing.

MOVING IN AND MOVING OUT
Your host university/housing provider should provide you with a specific window of time to move in and receive your keys.
- Plan your arrival around this time and have a phone number for a housing contact in case no-one is at the accommodation office when you arrive or you arrive late
- This information is usually emailed to you over the summer. Contact your university and/or housing provider if you have not received it

It is wise to have the name and contact information of a local hostel/hotel, just in case something unanticipated happens and you’re not able to get into your housing the night of your arrival.

Make sure you are aware of your move-out date and procedures and plan accordingly for the end of the term.

DAMAGE DEPOSIT
You will likely be required to pay a refundable damage deposit in order to secure your accommodation, which is usually around £250-300. Before paying the deposit, please check with the OIE or host university that it is refundable. Because this deposit is refundable, the Cherrington program will not pay this for you. If you are unable to pay your deposit upfront, please speak with the OIE. To secure some university accommodations, a “Pre-payment” (i.e., a down payment on your rent) may be required (especially at York and Lancaster); if the fee is a non-refundable fee relating to housing rent, the OIE will pay for this on your behalf.

If the cost of damages to your room exceeds your damage deposit, the OIE reserves the right to bill you for the outstanding amount. Your abroad transcript will be held until the bill has been settled.

MEALS
Most British universities do not provide meal plans for their students. For this reason, you will be responsible for your own meals and will not be charged a DU meal plan for your term abroad.
If your host university does offer meal plan options, these are entirely optional and you would need to pay your host institution directly for that cost.
REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND PLANNING TIPS
Remember that most things in the UK are smaller, older, and more expensive than in the US. Please set realistic expectations about your accommodation in the UK. You can usually see pictures of the rooms online, or you can ask a recently returned DU student for a description.

Many programs and housing providers do NOT provide you with linens and basic kitchenware. Check with your accommodation provider to find out what is included, if that information is not provided upfront. Most housing options have websites with answers to the most common questions. You should build this into your start-up costs when you are designing your budget. If there is a “starter kit” available for purchase, this cost is not covered under Cherrington.

Laundry facilities are typically more expensive in the UK than US students are accustomed to. It can cost around £5 to do one load of laundry, so budget accordingly.

BEHAVIOR
You need to respect quiet hours, guest policies, and other rules of you housing site. Your mature behavior ensures that DU can continue housing its study abroad students in those halls.

Have respect for the accommodations management team. If you do not agree with the management about certain issues, please let the OIE know the details of the disagreement so it may intercede.

HINT: If you do not agree with the stated charges for certain services provided by the residence hall, do not use those services. Please do not use those services and then refuse to pay saying the cost is too high.

Fitness Center Membership
The British government heavily subsidizes university education for its citizens. This means that some on-campus facilities, such as the fitness center, charge for student usage. Therefore, when budgeting for study abroad, consider whether you plan to use the fitness center. You can generally find usage rates on the overseas university’s website by searching for “sport” or “fitness.”

Internet
As with the fitness center, you may have to pay for internet usage at your program location. Some universities have unlimited internet usage when you are in the university computer lab; some universities give you up to a certain amount of downloads on your account for free.

If there is internet available in your housing, you will most likely pay for your internet usage. You can contact your accommodations provider to understand typical costs of internet for one term. Because many other DU study abroad students will be in homestay or other accommodation situations without internet access, DU decided it would not be fair to foot the internet bill for some students, but not others.

HINT: While email is a great way to keep in touch with family and friends back here, too much time spent on IM or email will prevent you from having a full study abroad experience.

Meeting Locals
A major goal of study abroad is to develop cross-cultural understanding. In addition to achieving academic success, you should strive to meet locals (Brits, English, Scots, Welsh, N. Irish) and get to know their culture. Successful strategies for meeting the locals include the following:

1. Make an effort. Because the universities host new study abroad students each semester (some of who promise to keep in touch with the locals but never do), British students may not immediately try to befriend you. Likewise, Europeans generally take longer to form friendships rather than just
acquaintances. As the “outsider” you must show that you want to meet the locals and get to know their culture. Be friendly and genuine.

2. **Join an organization.** Each of the universities has a student union or student guild which oversees clubs and societies on campus. They may also provide general support such as tutoring or helping connect students to resources/activities on campus. The university’s sport center should also have a listing of social sport clubs which you can join.

3. **Stick around.** While you may be tempted to head out every weekend to travel around the country, doing so will greatly impede your chances of making friendships with local students. Constantly talking about your travel, particularly about expensive excursions, will also turn off the local students, who typically will not have as much spending money as an American study abroad student.

4. **Be respectful.** Compare and contrast gets old fast. Talking non-stop about your personal belongings, including cars and other expensive items in the US, will merely reinforce stereotypes about Americans and prevent you from getting to know local students.

5. **Know your politics.** Most likely you will be asked by locals about your political stance. Questions about your political views generally will be well-intentioned and made by people genuinely interested in hearing your perspective. Be careful not to get offended or defensive when these questions arise. Also, try not to compare and contrast governments. Your best move is to remain open-minded in political discussions.

6. **Know the local culture/history.** The UK is made up of four distinct regions: Wales, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland. Identifying someone as “British” rather than “Irish,” “Welsh.”or “Scottish” can have deep political or historical connotations, and individuals often have a strong preference in how they identify. Do some research about the local area and listen to how people identify themselves before making assumptions. Don’t be afraid to ask respectful questions.

Keep in mind that you are only there for a short time so you want to make the most of your time in the UK.
Health & Safety

Health Insurance
You are responsible for ensuring that you have sufficient health insurance coverage while abroad. You should contact your insurance provider to understand their coverage abroad and, if you are interested, explore travel insurance options.

The National Health Service (NHS) is the UK’s state health service which provides treatment to UK residents through a wide range of healthcare services. However, non-UK or EU residents should anticipate having to pay for all health services. These charges can be quite high—in some cases higher than in the US—so it is important that you understand what is covered by your insurance and what travel insurance options exist if you are interested in more coverage.

We require that you maintain your US insurance policy while you are abroad. It is important for you to maintain coverage in the case you require any short or longer-term care abroad, need to continue care at home, travel outside the UK, or come home mid-term for any reason. DU’s health insurance is valid overseas and can provide additional coverage while abroad. If you typically waive DU health insurance, we recommend that you contact your current health policy provider to find out what type of coverage it offers while abroad. Make sure you understand how to process any claims and what you may need to pay upfront.

Vaccinations
No vaccinations are required for travel to the UK, though you should check with your doctor for any recommendations. If you plan to visit other countries while you are abroad, check with one of the following to find out what vaccinations, if any, may be required:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, http://www.cdc.gov/
- International SOS: https://www.internationalsos.com/.

Emergency Number
The standard emergency phone number in the UK is 999.

U.S. Embassy & Consulate General in the UK
Americans living abroad are encouraged to register with their nearest embassy or consulate through the US State Department’s website. By doing so, you will receive updated information on travel and security within the country to which you are heading. You also make it easier for the US embassy (and your family) to locate you in case of emergency or disaster. To register, go to: https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibr/uis/

Crime
Crime in the UK is comparatively low and has generally decreased in the last decade. However, serious crime (i.e. assault, robbery, burglary, gun-enabled crimes, and rape) in some London boroughs has increased. As in any major city, US citizens are urged to be cautious and aware of their surroundings. The most prevalent crime is pick pocketing, “snatch and grab” of purses, computers, cell phones, or other valuables, and theft or attempted theft from cars, restaurants, and hostels. To help protect against theft, do not leave passports or other valuable documents unattended. Be mindful or your purse or wallet and make sure you know where your valuables are at all times, especially in crowded tourist sites and on public transportation. Be mindful of any scams targeted at tourists and review the State Department website above for examples. Violent crime against tourists is unusual.

The loss or theft abroad of a US passport should be reported immediately to the local police and the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are the victim of a crime while overseas, in addition to reporting to local
police, please contact the nearest US Embassy or Consulate for assistance. The Embassy/Consulate staff can, for example, assist you to find appropriate medical care, to contact family members or friends and explain how funds could be transferred. Although the investigation and prosecution of the crime is solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed.

To help prevent loss of your passport, you should carry only a copy of your passport at all times and leave the original in a secure location (the UK does not require visitors to carry their original documents at all times). However, if you are travelling internationally, you will need to travel with your original passport and documents.

**Medical Facilities**
Quality medical care is widely available, but waiting lists exist for certain types of treatment. Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost thousands of dollars. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services.

**Natural Disasters**
The UK is not prone to regular natural disasters; however severe storms and flooding can occur in certain areas. The US State Departments offers the following resource to help you plan in the case of an emergency overseas: [https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/emergencies.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en/emergencies.html). You should also read through FEMA's Disaster Response Tips: [http://www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods).

**Traffic Safety and Road Conditions**
All traffic travels on the left in the UK; roads are generally excellent but often narrow and only two lanes. In urban areas, roads can be very congested. Cars turning left must yield to oncoming cars turning in the same direction. This is especially important to remember on two-lane roads. Proceed carefully through intersections and be wary of drivers who may run yellow and red lights. Drivers should use caution to avoid animals when driving in rural areas. **Pedestrians are advised to look carefully in all directions before crossing a street or roadway, and to use crosswalks. Traffic always yields to the right and pedestrians do not have the right of way except at crosswalks... and usually not even then!**

Drivers yield to all traffic crossing or approaching from the right, and the speed limit is 70mph (roughly 100km) on highways. Multi-lane motorways and expressways form the approaches to urban areas. Distances are posted in kilometers (km).

Drinking and driving laws are strictly enforced in the UK and often result in prison sentences.

**RENTING OR BUYING A CAR**
According to the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT), the single greatest cause of death and serious injury abroad is road accidents. These far exceed deaths resulting from disease, violence or terrorism- so use your best judgment if you choose to drive and know the risk you are taking. Students may be able to rent a car in the UK if they have either a current driver's license from their home country or an International Driving Permit (IDP). However, you should refer to the UK Department for Transport website and U.S. Embassy in London to understand car insurance requirements, driver regulations, and other stipulations. If you intend to drive in the UK, you should also review the Highway Code to understand driving laws, right of ways, signage, and other necessary information.

**The University of Denver—along with our partner universities in the UK—discourages students from driving because it can be difficult and dangerous.** Nonetheless, we provide the websites above to help you make an informed decision about whether to pursue this option.
Pubs and Alcohol
Please reference the OIE Study Abroad Handbook for policies around alcohol abroad.

Criminal Penalties
While in a foreign country, a US citizen is subject to that country’s laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the United States and do not always afford the protections available to the individual under US law. Penalties for breaking the law can be more severe than in the United States for similar offenses. Persons violating British laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking of illegal drugs in the UK are severe, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines. Some materials that are legal in the US are illegal to carry in the UK. Please refer to A UK Customs Guide," detailing which items visitors are prohibited from bringing into the UK. Vessels used to import or convey prohibited drugs are liable to be seized.
Communication

How to Call Home
First things first - call home as soon as you can after arrival because your family is anxious to hear from you. Give your family your abroad phone number, email address and mailing address so they know how to reach you in the event of an emergency.

To make a direct call to the US using a phone that provides a direct dialing option, dial: 00+ 1 + area code + phone number

To help you call home or to help your family call you, please refer to the following link for detailed dialing instructions: www.countrycallingcodes.com/.

CALLING CARDS
Pre-paid calling cards can be purchased both in the US and the UK. Generally, calling rates with cards from the US are slightly lower, though it depends on the card. Do some research to see which cards offer the best rates per minute. Cards can be purchased almost anywhere: at the airport, newspaper shops and markets. Be careful of using your US cell phone without understanding roaming or international charges.

TIME DIFFERENCES
Whatever calling method you choose, consider the time difference before you dial. Generally, all locations in the UK are 7 hours ahead of Denver. However, be mindful of the time change in the Spring and Fall. While the UK does observe daylight savings time, the exact date of the change may differ from the US.

For other cities, check out http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/.

Mobile Phones
Many students purchase a cheap pay-as-you-go phone while in the UK. Keep in mind that it may be cheaper to ‘rent’ a mobile phone rather than buy one. Ask any former study abroad students who may still have their British cell phone if they are interested in selling it to you.

Email
Your British university may provide you with a local email account. Please make sure that you continue to check your DU email regularly (or forward it), as this is how the Office of International Education will most likely maintain communication with you. Keep in mind, however, that you may or may not have internet access in your housing, and you will likely have to pay for internet use both on- and off-campus. Check your housing and host university’s websites to find out about internet access where you’ll be studying.
Money

British Currency
The British currency is the “pound sterling,” officially known as the Great British Pound (GBP). The pound (£) is made up of 100 pence (p), divided exactly as the US dollar divides into 100 cents. Notes come in denominations of £5, £10, £20, £50 and differ in color and size. Coins come in £1 and £2 and 50p, 20p, 10p, 5p, 2p, and 1p and differ in color and size. Start to familiarize yourself with the currency, both notes and coins, as well as exchange rates. Check out http://www.xe.com/ucc/ to figure out conversion rates.

We suggest you carry a small amount of local currency before you leave, roughly £200 British pounds, for the first few days, and especially if you plan to arrive on a weekend. You can exchange money at a US bank or airport before departure or at a British airport upon arrival.

Cost of Living
Cost of living in the UK is generally higher than in the US, and the British pound is stronger than the US dollar. Remember that as part of your immigration process, you will be required to show proof of funding to support yourself without illegal work in the UK. Please refer to the visa portion of this handbook for the recommended amounts to show per month of your program. Be sure to account for any private travel or additional optional expenses. Many host universities will also have cost of living calculators on their websites or in their Visiting Student Handbooks to help you determine a feasible budget during your time abroad. Program returnees are also a good resource for suggestions.

Remember to account for what is not included in your program. Some expenses that typically are your individual responsibility include an unlimited local transportation pass and a recreation center pass. Internet service is not always included either.

Bank Account in the UK
It is not always possible for short term students to open a bank account in the UK, though some banks will allow it. Typically, opening an account will require an application form, your passport, proof that you are a full-time student, and proof of address in the UK. A bank account can allow you to keep your money in a safe place and avoid some ATM fees. If you are interested in the option, ask the international office at your host university for further information and advice.

If you open up a bank account in the UK, your family can transfer money from a bank in the US to your bank in the UK. Ask your bank in the US and the receiving bank about the service charges that may apply to this transfer.

ATM & Credit Cards
Make sure you know how to contact your US bank from overseas. Find out if they offer a 24-hour customer service help line and what their emergency phone number is for calls from outside of the US (1-800 numbers do not work outside of the US) If your bankcard is lost or stolen, you should notify your bank immediately.

Most credit cards, such as MasterCard, Visa or American Express, can be used in the UK, as well as worldwide. ATMs are widely available. International credit cards and ATM cards will work as long as they have a four-digit PIN encoded. Check with your bank before leaving home.

If your credit card is lost or stolen, you must contact the financial institution that issued your card immediately and report it lost or stolen. You should keep a copy of your financial institution’s name, its customer service phone number and your card account number in a convenient place – separate from your card
We recommend that you keep a copy of your passport, credit card numbers, insurance contact numbers, and airline tickets in a separate place from the originals. You should also leave a set of copies at home with your family.

**Traveler's Checks, Cashier's Checks, Money Orders, Personal Checks**

We do not recommend taking cashier checks, money orders or personal checks. Although banks will accept your checks, they will not give you cash for them until they have cleared through the whole banking network, which usually takes 6-8 weeks or longer.
General Information

Electricity
Electricity in the UK is 240 volts. In the US it is 110 volts. This means that if you plug your 110 hair dryer directly into a British plug it will BURN OUT. Transformers are therefore required. Make sure, however, that the transformer you bring is either configured for the three pin British plug or that you purchase a plug adaptor to use with the transformer. If you cannot get one of these in the US, consider buying one upon arrival. Because some hairdryers and curling irons will get dangerously hot, even when using transformers, consider purchasing these items upon arrival.

Most laptops have transformers built into the power cable (the black or white box in your charger), leaving you to purchase the plug adaptor. However, make sure to check that it can handle 240 volts; if it cannot, you will need to purchase a transformer. Regardless, you should purchase a British surge protector before charging your computer in Europe. Electrical currents are not always constant and will occasionally exceed 240 volts. Each year we have at least one student whose laptop is ruined because they did not buy a surge protector.

If you buy appliances in the UK, you will almost certainly have trouble running them when you get back to the US.

Weather
The UK uses Celsius (not Fahrenheit) as their system of measurement for weather. To help you remember approximate temperatures in Celsius, consider that:

- Water freezes at 0°Celsius: 32° Fahrenheit
- Water boils at 100°Celsius: 212° Fahrenheit
- Normal body temperature: 37°Celsius/98.6° Fahrenheit

Weather in the UK is generally cool, though it can get quite warm in the summer and very cold in the winter. Pack according to the seasonal conditions of your host city. This means bringing warm clothing, including hats, gloves, winter coat and scarves. Your warmest sweaters and trousers will also be necessary. Fleece is a practical accessory as is an umbrella. Even within your housing, you may find the temperature colder than you're accustomed to in the US. A good sleeping bag and a pair of thermal underwear will help combat the cold. Libraries are popular havens in colder weather because they are generally well heated.

For further information about the weather conditions, check out www.weather.com. If you refer to UK weather sources, the following temperature conversions will help you:

- Fahrenheit to Celsius: Subtract 32 then multiply by 5/9
- Celsius to Fahrenheit: Multiply by 9/5 then add 32

British Slang
You'd be surprised how different English can sound in the UK! Google “British Slang” to get an idea of some common phrases you'll likely hear.

Links To More Information
National Rail: http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/
For more information on the UK visit: https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/united-kingdom.html

Appendices

Appendix A- Important Contacts

**Bangor University**
International Exchanges Office
Bangor University
Neuadd Rathbone (Top Floor)
Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DF
Email: andrew.griff-owen@bangor.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)1248 388269

**City University London**
International Office
City University London
Northampton Square
EC1V 0HB
Tel: +44 (0)20 7040 0108
Email: hannah.wilson@city.ac.uk

**University of Edinburgh**
The International Office
33 Buccleuch Place
Edinburgh, EH8 9JS
Tel: +44 (0)131 650 4296
Email: studyabroad@ed.ac.uk

**Exeter University**
International Student Exchange
Univ. of Exeter Northcote House
Queen's Drive, Exeter, EX4 4QJ
Tel: +44 (0)1392 725739
Email: I.F.J.Coelho.Knapp@exeter.ac.uk

**University of Glasgow**
Study Abroad and Exchange
University of Glasgow
The Fraser Building
65 Hillhead Street
Glasgow, G12 8QQ
Tel: +44 141 330 5439
Email: Rhona.Gordon@glasgow.ac.uk

**Glasgow School of Art**
Study Abroad & Exchanges
Tel: +44(0)141 353 4500
Email: a.mcintyre@gsa.ac.uk

**Goldsmiths College, University of London**
Student Recruitment and International Office
Goldsmiths, University of London
Lewisham Way, New Cross
London, SE14 6NW

**Lancaster University**
International Office
C Floor, University House
Lancaster University
Lancaster, U.K.
LA1 4YW
Tel: +44 (0)1524 594530
E-mail: studyabroad@lancaster.ac.uk

**Queen's University Belfast**
Exchange and Study Abroad team
Queen's University Belfast
BELFAST BT7 1NN
Northern Ireland, UK
Tel: +44-28-9097 5088
Email: studyabroad@qub.ac.uk

**Queen Mary, University of London**
Harry Gibney
Queen Mary, Univ. of London
Room CB02, Queens' Building
Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 5556
Email: h.gibney@qmul.ac.uk

**Westminster University**
Education Abroad Team
First Floor - Student Affairs
101 New Cavendish Street
London W1W 6XH
T: +44 (0) 20 7911 5166
Email: educationabroad@westminster.ac.uk

**Ulster University**
International Office (L143)
University of Ulster
Coleraine Campus
BT52 1SA
Tel: +44 28 70 124155

**University of York**
Student Recruitment & Admissions- International Team
The Stables
University of York
Heslington
York YO10 5DD
Tel: +44 (0)1904 323534
international@york.ac.uk
Appendix B—Credit and Grade Conversions

For grade conversion tables, please see the Grade and Credits: Translation Scales: http://www.du.edu/intl/abroad/pdf_docs/grades_credits.pdf.