



Travel Guide and Activities



Useful Information

Climate

London experiences a temperate maritime climate, characterised by mild temperatures and moderate rainfall throughout the year. The weather in the UK is the topic of many conversations because it is so changeable. It is possible to see sun, rain, wind, and clouds on the same day, so it is a good idea to always carry a pair of sunglasses and an umbrella.

Money

The British Pound Sterling (£, GBP) is the currency used in London.

Students can change money and traveller's cheques at the post office on High Holborn. Several banks on the same street (HSBC, NatWest, and RBS) allow them to withdraw money from the ATM (cashpoint) machines.

Telephone Country Code

The telephone country code for the United Kingdom is +44.

Electricity

230 V; 50Hz – 3-pin plug.

Tap water

Tap water in London is safe to drink unless there's a sign saying not to (e.g., on trains) and widely available. The water quality is strictly monitored and meets European standards.

Unmissable London

Must-See Sights and Travel Essentials

The capital of the United Kingdom and one of the world's major financial centers, London is a city that blends rich history, vibrant culture, and endless opportunities for adventure. If you're studying English at EC London, you'll find yourself in the perfect place to explore famous landmarks, cafés, markets, shops, and so much more.

Check out the [Monthly Activities Calendar](#)

5 Things to Do

- Take a ride on the London Eye
- Visit Buckingham Palace
- Stroll through Hyde Park
- Check out St Paul's Cathedral
- Attend a show in the West End



Public Transport Info

London boasts one of the most extensive transportation networks in the world, making it easy to get around. London's black cabs and private ride-hailing services like Uber are popular choices for getting around the city. Cycling has also become increasingly common, with many dedicated bike lanes and rental schemes.

London's public transport operates under Transport for London (TfL), which manages all services, including buses, trains, trams, and river services.

Medical

The NHS (National Health Service) provides free and subsidised treatment for people who live in the UK. International students may be entitled to NHS treatment if they are enrolled in a course lasting six months or more. If their course is less than six months long, they may still be entitled to get treatment under the NHS if they are from a country that has a health agreement with the UK.

To receive any treatment through the NHS, students must first register with a doctor (GP). You should register with a local GP as soon as you have a permanent address—and not wait until you are ill. To find your local GP, students can call the NHS direct on 0845 46 47 or visit their website.

If students are not entitled to NHS treatment they will have to pay the full cost of any treatment they receive in the UK. This can be expensive, so make sure you have medical insurance covering you while living abroad.

If students are unable to register with a GP or cannot get an appointment that suits them, they can visit the Soho health centre on Frith Street. Opening hours are Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 20.00 and from 10:00 to 18:00 on weekends and bank holidays (excluding Christmas day). There is a consultation charge of GBP 35 for non-EU students.

Useful Links

[Planning your travel in London](#)

[Travelling outside of London by train](#)

[Theatre Tickets](#)

[Markets in London](#)

[Weather in London](#)

Legal Driving Age

The legal driving age in the UK is 17 years old. However, if you're an international student planning to drive, you'll need a valid driving license. Depending on your country of origin, you may be required to obtain an International Driving Permit or exchange your license for a UK one after a certain period.

Alcohol Age

The legal age to purchase and consume alcohol in London is 18. Many bars, pubs, and clubs may ask for identification, so always carry a valid ID.

Smoking Laws

Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public spaces in London, including restaurants, bars, and public transport. However, smoking is allowed in designated outdoor areas. The minimum age to buy tobacco is 18, and stores will request proof of age if necessary.

British Public Holidays

Public holidays falling on a weekday

2025: 01 Jan, 18 Apr, 21 Apr, 05 May, 26 May, 25 Aug, 25 Dec, 26 Dec.

Visa Requirements

International students studying in London will likely need a visa, depending on their country of origin and the length of their stay. Please contact us for more information.

[Visa Requirements](#)

Cost of Living

Bottle of water / soda (0.33 litre)
£0.60-£1.50
Coffee/Cappuccino (Starbucks)
£2.50-£3.50
Fast-Food combo meal
£5.00-£7.00
Meal, inexpensive restaurant
£10.00-£25.00
Fitness club (monthly, 1 adult)
£30.00-£75.00
Public transport (local transport)
£2.20 to £3.50
Public transport (monthly pass)
£140.00-£260.00

Insurance

Students must have adequate health, accident and travel insurance while attending any EC programme.

