iCharleston
London Pre-Departure Orientation 2019

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FIE First Year Program Manager
Today we will cover:

- FIE: Who we are and what we do
- London in 2019: what to expect in your neighbourhood
- FIE Classrooms and Housing
- Prepping for the semester ahead
- Packing
- Arriving in London: Immigration, orientation
- Living in London: money, phones, health & safety, transportation
- Culture Shock
- Resources & Trivia
The Foundation for International Education (FIE)
- Non-profit organization founded in 1998
- Locations in London, Dublin, and Amman
- 50 partner US universities and colleges
- Over 400 students last fall
- 3 Residence Halls and one Study Centre in South Kensington
- 24/7 staff coverage
- Partnered with College of Charleston since 2014

@fiestudy_abroad
How do we work with our partners?

- Every FIE program is different
- Custom designed specifically for each institution (semester programs, summer programs, First Year programs)
We’re proud of our Mission & Values!

Here’s our Educational Mission:

- To provide **high quality educational experiences** to the **global community**
- Committed to the development of **creative learning environments** wherein an understanding of, and appreciation for, the **privileges and responsibilities of international citizenship** is fostered
- Driven by the belief that interaction between people of **diverse cultures** is the base upon which empathy among nations is built
Our Articulated Values

- Knowledge and inclusivity
- Ethics and human rights
- Social and cultural reflection and action
- Commitment to the environment

We Care About: Sustainability, Diversity & Inclusivity, and Social Justice
London in 2019

- London is...
  - Colorful, vibrant, exciting, challenging, fabulous, free.
  - The most multi-cultural city in the world, with one in three Londoners born outside the UK.
  - The largest city in Europe with more than 8.7 million people.
  - Center for arts and culture and the heart of the British social scene.
  - Endlessly accessible by tube, bus and train.
  - A gateway to the rest of Europe.
Your neighbo(u)rhood: South Kensington
Foundation House + Metrogate House Classrooms

- Classrooms and offices for FIE
- Just around the corner from Gloucester Road Tube Station, Natural History Museum, V&A Museum, Science Museum, Harrods, etc!
- Student Lounge with event info, daily newspapers, weekly journals
- Foundation House hours: 8am-9pm
- Metrogate House hours: 24/7
Student housing: Metrogate House

- 24-Hour Reception
- Key-code access to the building
- Location
  - Located in the heart of South Kensington
  - 10-minute walk from classes at Foundation House
- FIE Residence Life Supervisors live in the building
- No overnight guests are allowed
- Laundry on-site (££)
Student housing: Metrogate House

- Kitchens:
  - Basic cooking gear and utensils
  - No coffee machines, blenders, Kitchen Aid mixers, etc...

- Rooms:
  - You will receive roommate assignments when you arrive!
  - Rooms will be doubles, triples, or quads
  - Your roommates will be other iCharleston students
  - Co-ed floors
  - Bathrooms shared with up to 4 people
  - Sheets are provided, towels are NOT
    - Clean sheets on Thursdays
Computing & Printing

- Each FIE academic and housing facility has high speed wifi
- Laptops and Desktop computers
  - Bring your own laptop, but you should properly insure it!
  - Desktop computers located in Metrogate Study Area
- The IT team in London are located in Foundation House
- Printing
  - Available in Metrogate House (24/7)
  - Colour printing available
You may think you have a long way to go before departure… but your program will be here before you know it!

Before you go, write down what you hope to learn or accomplish during your program.

Familiarize yourself with the UK
  - BBC News, The Times, Guardian

Make copies of important documents – passport photo page, etc.
What to pack

○ **DO NOT OVERPACK.**
  ○ Storage space is limited
  ○ You will have to get your luggage to and from your residence!
  ○ You can buy all essential items in the UK—don’t panic!

○ You should bring:
  ○ An umbrella and hooded rain jacket.
  ○ All necessary prescriptions and medications for the duration of your program, in their original labeled bottles.
  ○ Bath towel

○ Small appliances: hair dryers, straighteners, etc.
  ○ Check the voltage of your appliance. British voltages are typically 240V. It is easier to buy a cheap hairdryer upon arrival!
You MUST have a current valid passport to enter Britain!
  - And it must be valid for at least 6 months after the end date of your semester (through May 2020)
- College of Charleston will issue you a student letter that you must carry with you and present at UK Immigration.

When you land in London:
  - You will go through UK Immigration, where you will need to present your passport, student letter, proof of finances, and return flight info
  - An official will ask you questions such as the purpose of your visit, how long you will be in the UK, and where you will be staying.
  - It is in your best interest to treat the customs officials with respect, as they approve your entry into the country!
Arrival Day: Thursday August 29th

- Getting to Kensington: don’t worry!
  - Your group will be collected by a London Blue Badge Guide and your iCharleston Site Directors at Heathrow Airport
  - Travel via coach as a group with your luggage directly to your residence!
Orientation: Thursday - Sunday

- Thursday:
  - Check-in to your residence, unpack
  - Document registration at Foundation House
  - Welcome Meeting with Site Directors and Residence Life Supervisors

- Friday:
  - Living in London orientation: student life, residence life, administration, communal living, activities, Kensington Campus
  - Learning in London orientation: academic expectations, writing support, places to study

- Saturday & Sunday:
  - Sightseeing tour of London, tour of the Houses of Parliament, West End Theatre Show, trips to the grocery store, settle in!
First day of class: Monday, September 2\textsuperscript{nd}

Classes will use the extensive and excellent resources of London as part of your course.

- Field trips! ("co-curricular activities")

This is a study program (study abroad), not a travel program.

- Academics take precedence over other activities.
- Please do not book any travel until your timetable is confirmed on arrival in London!!

Preparation and participation are expected in all class sessions and excursions.

Faculty will have a different teaching style abroad than your teachers in high school.
Student Life in London

- The Student Life Team in Foundation House
  - London Activities Calendar: sign up & pay online
    - Special discounted outings for students
    - Watch your emails for sign-up date
  - Information about local events via email and Instagram
  - Travel advice

- Some unique student life offerings:
  - Imperial College Student Union
  - ISH: International Students House
  - HOST UK weekend British home stays
  - International Student Identity Card (ISIC)
Money & Finances

- The cost of living in London is significantly high—especially in South Kensington.
- For current exchange rates, visit www.xe.com.
  - 1GBP = 1.25USD
- Budget between £90 and £120 per week for food and personal expenses.
- You can visit an ATM in South Kensington once you arrive.
- Banking: Use your regular debit card while abroad.
  - You MUST notify your bank and credit card companies that you will be using your accounts overseas, or they may freeze them.
Mobile Phones

- All students **MUST** have a UK phone number in the case of emergencies.
- Most students purchase inexpensive SIM cards upon arrival
- “Unlock” your phone before arriving in the UK!
- It is up to you what plan you choose, as every student has different needs.
- Check with your own cell phone provider for study abroad rates
- Skype & WhatsApp
- Carphone Warehouse: [https://www.carphonewarehouse.com/](https://www.carphonewarehouse.com/)
Health & Wellbeing

- **Medical services:**
  - Visiting the pharmacist, doctors, ER
    - Boots, Chelsea & Westminster Hospital
    - You typically pay costs up front and receive reimbursement
  - Mental health services & counselling

- **Health & wellbeing**
  - Staying healthy
  - Joining a gym

- **Insurance**
  - iCharleston participants are covered by comprehensive travel insurance through Endsleigh.
  - You will receive more information about this policy from the London team, including instructions on how to make a doctor's appointment.
  - Supplemental insurance through your own provider

- **Full orientation to health care services upon arrival in London**
Safety in London

- Use common sense! London is a big city - petty crime happens
- Stay in touch – online travel forms
  - FIE staff
  - iCharleston Site Directors
  - Your families!
- Reporting incidents to iCharleston, FIE and the London Metropolitan Police
- Comprehensive Emergency Incident Response Plan
Transportation
Definition: Anxiety and disorientation felt when people have to operate within a different cultural or social environment.

Just because you are going to an English-speaking country does NOT mean you won’t experience culture shock. There are many cultural differences between your home country and the UK.

Expect to be challenged. Expect to also feel uncomfortable at times.

The Stages of Culture Shock:
- HONEymoon
- HOSTILITY
- HUMOR
- HOME
**AMERICAN VS. BRITISH: FOOD**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>British English</th>
<th>American English</th>
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<tr>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>Apartment</td>
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<td>Sweets</td>
<td>Candy</td>
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<td>Biscuits</td>
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<td>Mad</td>
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<td>Lift</td>
<td>Elevator</td>
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<td>Chips</td>
<td>French fries</td>
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<td>Trainers</td>
<td>Sneakers</td>
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<td>Holiday(s)</td>
<td>Vacation</td>
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- Aubergine (Eggplant)
- Beetroot (Beet)
- Candyfloss (Cotton candy)
- Biscuit (Cookie)
- Chips (French fries)
- Cutlery (Silverware)
- Eggy Bread (French toast)
- Fairy Cake (Cup cake)
- Flan (Ham)
- Gammon (Ham)
- Tin (Can)
- Jug (Pitcher)
- Maize (Corn)
- Minced Meat (Ground meat)
- Spring onions (Green onions)
Managing culture shock

- Revisit your goals for the program when you are having trouble appreciating your time abroad.
- Remember that this experience is what you make of it.
- Utilize your sense of humor.
- Be open-minded: it’s not wrong, it’s different!
- Have tolerance for ambiguity.
- Talk to your Site Directors and FIE staff if you feel that you are really having difficulties adjusting. We are here to help!!
Important Resources

- FIE Website has all this information and more! www.fie.org.uk

- Travel:
  - Citymapper: https://citymapper.com/london

- Grocery stores:
  - Waitrose: http://www.waitrose.com/
  - Sainsbury’s: http://www.sainsburys.co.uk/
  - Whole Foods: http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/kensington
British Trivia

- Who is the captain of the England football team?
- What is the British national food dish, according to the British Foreign Secretary Robert Cook?
- Who is third in line to the British throne?
- Who is the Prime Minister of the UK, and who is the Leader of the Opposition?
KEEP CALM AND SEE YOU SOON