

LONDON TO-DO LIST

PRE-DEPARTURE

- 1. Submit Architecture London Program application** by 1 Sep 2018 to UI Studies Abroad coordinator, International Programs Office (IPO).
- 2. Obtain passport and make a copy** of the personal information page. Bring both with you; store them separately.
- 3. Obtain visa** if necessary (U.S. passport holders do not need to apply for visas). Check the British Embassy website <www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa> to determine if you will need a visa based on your country of origin (step 1). If yes, when answering the query about what you are coming to the UK to do, your correct (and only) response is “tourism.”



You must apply online. Apply for your visitor's visa by creating an account online, allow 3 weeks to collect and send all your documentation, but only 3 months before you wish to enter the UK. You should get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks. Check the guide processing times (<https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>) to find out how long getting a visa might take in the *country* you're applying from.

Download and print the “Standard Visitor Visa” pages from the gov.uk website <<https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/print>> for valuable information, especially the “3.Documents you must provide” section.

You will be interacting with the New York office (the closest office that will process your visa). Your standard, 6-month visitor's visa will cost £93. In 2017, the total cost to obtain a visitor's visa and all supporting documentation was \$200 including:

- a biometric fingerprint available by appointment only at the Spokane field office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Offices sometimes close because of bad weather or unexpected events. During bad weather, call 509-742-7000 before traveling to make sure the field office is open. For hours of operation, make an appointment, and other important information go to <<https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/find-uscis-office/field-offices/washington-spokane-field-office>>.
- photocopies and originals of your passport, U.S. visa, letter stating why you are going to the UK, schedule of the summer course, where you will be staying, bank statement, I-20, and official (stamped by Registrar's office or the IPO) Vandal web proof of current enrollment.

As you go through the process, the web site will inform you where to send the hard copies of your documents. FedEx and UPS are fast carriers. You are also required to include *return mailing prepaid*.

Coordinate with Carolina Manrique.

- 4. Print at least 4 passport-sized photos (head shots).** You'll need these for your Student Railcard and Victoria Hall King's Cross ID at least.
- 5. Collect and complete the appropriate 16–25 Railcard application forms.** All students should take at least two (2) copies of their completed Railcard application form. Mature students (over 25 years old) must have the IPO complete the mature student section of the 16–25 Railcard application form (including an original seal on each copy). Mature students should bring at least three (3) copies (in case a station agent denies your request and won't return your application form). Your international student photo ID (and a scanned copy) will also be required as proof of full-time status and identity.
- 6. Obtain and break-in comfortable walking shoes.** Many streets and pavements in the UK are cobblestone or pavers and are extremely hard on your feet!

7. **Ensure that you pack clothing appropriate for business office visits.** Linen slacks or chinos are comfortable in the summer heat; light-colored (white, ecru, pastels) buttondown (linen or cotton) shirts are also more comfortable. Remember that red and black are thermal absorptive colors. Dress and/or skirt lengths and styles should be appropriate for office visits. Save the shorts, t-shirts, minis, crop tops, and bare midriffs for your free time; they are unsuitable for class events unless specifically permitted.
8. **Ensure that your credit/debit card meets the following requirements:**
- **Your credit/debit card PIN is only four digits.** Longer PINs won't work in European ATMs.
 - **Your card has a low or zero foreign transaction fee.** Most fees are 1% to 3%.
 - **Inform your card company of your travel plans** so they don't reject your purchases.
 - **See #12 below for use requirements.**
9. **Make sure your charette group brings at least two laptops capable of creating and assembling a PDF or PowerPoint presentation.** Also video Skyping home costs much less than phoning! You can use your smart phone for web access, but it probably won't be compatible with European phone services. You might want to investigate cell phone options for the UK and Europe.
10. **You may want to obtain some UK currency (and Euros, if needed) before you leave.** U.S. Bank will allow you to specify denominations of the bills, so you can get £5 & £10 notes. There is a flat fee involved, so *it would be wise to make a group purchase* of currency. It usually takes about a week to get your British currency.
11. **Create a trip book** (print or digital, **but NOT web-based**) so you'll know *when* and *where* you're going each day and *how* you're getting there including how much time it will take. Then *add a 15-minute cushion to ensure you're on time.* We will be interacting with busy professionals who are graciously donating their time (billable hours!) so it's imperative that we are all on-time (i.e., early), appropriately dressed, and behaving with a respectful demeanor and modest conduct.
12. **Purchase train tickets 12 weeks in advance for the lowest fare.** Remember to indicate 16–25 Railcard in order to get the discounted fare. Book trains through <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk> or <http://www.thetrainline.com> (cheapest fares, U.S. credit cards ok). Choose to pick up your tickets at Kings Cross Station (closest to Victoria Hall Kings Cross) or Edinburgh Waverley (for trips from Edinburgh) anytime before your train trip. *You're required to have the same credit/debit card you used to purchase the tickets in order to collect them from the machine at the station.* Some trips will not require the 12-week advance for the best price (e.g., same-day returns Edinburgh Waverley [EDB]>Glasgow Queen Street [GLQ]>Edinburgh Waverley [EDB]). Such tickets can be purchased the same day that you travel.

Class trips not requiring advance purchase include: Edinburgh vicinity travel, BedZED (Hackbridge), RES (Kings Langley), as well as most day return trips (except Oxford and Leamington Spa).



13. **For train travel to Oxford make sure you purchase your ticket in advance and with the Plus Bus option,** which allows you unrestricted bus travel for the day in your destination city. Depending on your plans, you may need a Plus Bus for Glasgow. It's about £2 to £3 extra (depending on the city of bus travel), and well worth it!

ON ARRIVAL

- ❑ **1. ATM cash withdrawals.** Use ATMs that are *inside* a bank branch office where your transaction will be more secure (rather than on the street or in a transportation station where miscreants may rig the machine so you can't retrieve your cash).
- ❑ **2. Purchase your 16–25 Railcard from a staffed railroad station** (all London stations [except Heathrow] and Edinburgh Waverley) ticket office. You'll need to show the station attendant your passport and international student ID as well as provide a passport-sized photo and completed application form, available from me, on-line <https://www.16-25railcard.co.uk/using-your-railcard/where-to-buy/>, or at the station. The Railcard costs £30 and is good for an entire year from date of purchase. You'll need the physical Railcard with you to be able to get a discount on your rail ticket if you buy tickets over the counter at your local staffed station. Even though the website gives you the option, *you won't be able to purchase your railcard on-line.*
- ❑ **3. You must have your Railcard with you when you travel** (both train and Transport for London [tfl] trips), or you'll have to make up the considerable difference in fares between your discounted ticket and the standard ticket price. That's over £100 for a one-way Edinburgh trip! It'll also save you money on other rail trips in the U.K. you'll need to take for the course as well as for your own pleasure. (Imagine a return journey to Edinburgh for £17! Book early!) Be sure you've read the terms and conditions information (page 3 of the railcard application form).
- ❑ **4. At your first London tube station (at Heathrow if you arrive there), buy an Oyster. It's £5** (refundable when you turn in your card with a tube ticket agent, but it makes a great, reusable, cheap souvenir.). **Put £30 pay-as-you-go cash value on it.** You can purchase it at one of the machines or from the station attendant. The Oyster is a smart card that ensures you always pay the lowest fare for single trips or for all trips during the day or week. See <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/> for details. For example, peak fare from Heathrow terminal tube station to Paddington is £5.10, off-peak is £3.10, and cash is £6.00.
- ❑ **5. Register your Oyster card at a tube station ticket office. It's free.** Save some time by waiting until you've got both your Oyster and your Railcard to get the discount concession (33% discounts on off-peak travel) on your Oyster. There's a handy visitor services ticket office dedicated to such tasks at St. Pancras tube station (before you go down the stairs to the tube ticket stalls and tube train entry turnstiles). Ask for an "Oyster Registration" form (not available online). Complete this form and hand it to the ticket agent along with your Oyster card. Once your Oyster is registered, it is protected from theft or loss, and you'll get the discount! See <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/national-railcard-discount?intcmp=54723>.



SOME TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TFL) INFO

<https://tfl.gov.uk/> for *planning a journey*, fares, *status updates*, maps, railcard discounts, *major works and events*, and other useful information.

- **Read Transport for London's Card Clash info** to prevent embarrassment and over charging! See <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/how-to-pay-and-where-to-buy-tickets-and-oyster/pay-as-you-go/card-clash>. **Hint:** Keep your Oyster separate from other touch cards.
- **Underground, DLR, Overground travel.** With your Railcard discount on your Oyster the *daily cap* for tube, DLR, and overground travel in zones 1–2 is £6.80 at peak times, £4.50 off-peak. If you're not going to use it every day, putting the £30 in pay-as-you-go value on the Oyster is probably less expensive and more flexible (no time limit) than a 7-day Travel Card for Zones 1–2 (£34.10). In zones 1–2 a *single* off-peak tube trip is £2.40; with Railcard discount off-peak, 1.60; peak, £2.90; cash, £4.90.

Tap your Oyster on the yellow disc on the turnstile BOTH as you enter and as you exit. If you only tap once, you will be charged the maximum for the day.

- **Bus trips** are £1.50 regardless of zone or time. You need an Oyster or Travel Card to ride the bus—no cash fares are accepted. You must have the Railcard with you when you travel.

Tap your Oyster on the yellow disc when you board the bus. *Do NOT tap again when getting off*, or you'll be charged for another bus trip.

- **Emirates Airline.** Oyster pay-as-you-go single fare is £3.50. Flights between North Greenwich and the Royal Docks have a journey time of less than 10 minutes. Emirates Airline provides easy access to the North Greenwich Arena and ExCel Centre. The terminals are also close to the tube, DLR, buses, and river boat services.
- **River boat services.** Use your Oyster pay-as-you-go. You will not be able to top up your Oyster at river boat service docks, so be sure you have sufficient funds on your Oyster before you queue for your trip. For fares see <https://www.thamesclippers.com/route-time-table/prices>.

You will have to tap both in and out when river boat crews instruct you (so they can monitor each tap in/out).

- **Topping up.** If you need to add more money to your Oyster, there are machines in the tube station where you can find out your balance and add fare using a credit/debit card or cash. Or you can see the ticket agent, but there are usually long lines.

