

Safety, Behavior and Cultural Information for London and Bath

SCIE258

I. Safety

- a. In the case of a medical emergency, do the following as needed. Note that the equivalent of US English “emergency room” (ER) in British English is “accident and emergency” (A&E).
 - i. In London: If possible go to the Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department of the University College London Hospital, 235 Euston Road (Phone: 020 3456 7890 for the main host; 020 3447 0083 for patient enquiries), or in **extreme** (life-threatening only) emergency call 999. For lesser health issues, there is a clinic in Soho (get help from desk at the Ridgemount). Then call the instructor (24/7; see Emergency card instructions and phone numbers).
 - ii. In Bath: If possible go to the Accident & Emergency (A&E) at Royal United Hospital Combe Park, Bath, Avon, BA1 3NG (Phone: 01225 428 331). For lesser health issues, call 111 and discuss if your need can be served by the Urgent Care Centre (also at the hospital) or if you will need to be directed to a GP (possible during evening hours). Then call the instructor (24/7; see Emergency cards instructions and phone numbers).
- b. You will have one key for your room and one for the front door. Keep your room locked at all times, even when you go to the shower room. Never let anyone you do not know into the Hotel.
- c. Keep your Dickinson Emergency card and some personal identification on you at all times (but not your passport – see below).
- d. Except when specifically stated otherwise, you will not need your passport while we are in London (your Driver’s licence or other government ID are fine for age verification). It is best to keep your passport in the Hotel’s safe.
- e. Having a mobile (cell phone) that can make and receive voice calls and text messages is required. Your phone must be sufficiently charged and topped up at all times.
- f. Don’t go out alone in the evenings. Take a friend with you.
- g. Never get into a car with someone you do not know. If you feel uncomfortable, spend the money to get a cab back to the hotel. Generally speaking, Gower Street and the immediate vicinity is safe (but as in all urban centers, avoid walking alone at night).
- h. Because the UK drives on the left, you generally need to look right before crossing a road (the opposite of the US). In London, you really need to look both ways every time.
- i. Pedestrians do not automatically have the right-of-way over motor vehicles at intersections, even when you are crossing with a green light (this is the opposite of the US system). You have to wait for the pedestrian crossing signal.
- j. Make note of the nearest fire exit to your hotel room.
- k. If anyone can get access to your room through the window, lock it whenever you are not there. While the hotel generally is quite safe, Dickinson students have lost laptops, CDs, wallets, money and cameras in London in previous years. Do not leave valuable items such as money, laptops, cameras, etc., out in plain view when you are not in the room.
- l. We recommend you never invite an additional guest into your room. If you must have an outside guest, regulations require that they must be registered with the hotel desk and you must pay an additional fee.
- m. The British electricity system uses a much higher voltage than the US system. Never use a high-power US device (such as a hairdryer) in the UK. Low-power devices such as laptops are fine.

II. Behavior

- a. The legal drinking age is 18. Enjoy some of the great London pubs, but drink in moderation. Uncontrolled drinking or other unacceptable behavior at any point during the semester can result in you being sent back to the USA.
- b. All students are expected to participate fully in class activities. It is unacceptable for your participation to be compromised by staying out late or by alcohol consumption.
- c. It's important to behave well in our hotels. In particular: Be courteous and cooperative with the hotel staff. Be considerate of the other hotel guests. Don't smoke. Do not let doors slam. Be as quiet as possible, especially at night. Don't hog the wifi (e.g. don't stream video).
- d. As described elsewhere in more detail, you must fulfill the academic travel expectations. For example: don't use cell phones during tours or other visits; be courteous and pay attention to guides; take handwritten notes.

III. Cultural and practical suggestions

- a. In British culture, people generally speak more quietly than in the US. If you talk loudly, it could be interpreted as rude or abrasive.
- b. In most pubs you will order at the bar. Enter the pub, walk to the bar, get your drink, and pay for it. With drink in hand, find a table and look at the menu. Once you know what you want, note your table number, return to the bar and place your food order, being sure to tell the bartender at which table you are sitting. It is not necessary to tip the bartender.
- c. In restaurants, when you are finished with your meal you need to ask for the bill in order to pay. The server will not usually bring you the check until you ask for it. Often, service is included and no further tip is necessary. Otherwise, a 10% tip is standard.
- d. The London hotels have limited laundry service. In London, it will be easiest to do your laundry at a nearby "laundrette" (British English for laundromat).
- e. Checklist of things to bring every day:
 - i. rain coat/umbrella
 - ii. mobile phone that is topped up, charged, and turned on
 - iii. ID: Dickinson or UEA student ID and other photo ID (usually not passport)
 - iv. Emergency card
 - v. Oyster and Rail cards
 - vi. Notebook and pen
 - vii. cash and credit card
 - viii. tickets for any events or travel that day (e.g. theater tickets, rail tickets)