

# ACU in OXFORD

## Pre-Departure Guide



[www.acu.edu/academics/study-abroad.html](http://www.acu.edu/academics/study-abroad.html)

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## Preparing to Travel

Be sure to have photocopies of the personal data page of your passport and credit cards packed separately from the items themselves. Also leave copies of these with someone in the U.S.

**Do not forget your passport.** Without it, you cannot board the plane at Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

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## Suggested Packing List

### Clothing

- One or two nice outfits (for evening excursions or events)
- One or two pairs of dress pants/khakis
- Six long-sleeved shirts
- Six short-sleeved shirts
- A couple of sweaters and/or sweatshirts (you may want to buy a sweater or two while there)
- Two or three pairs of jeans
- Two or three pairs of appropriate shorts for warmer weather
- Shower shoes and house shoes (slippers)
- Sandals/flip-flops
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Sweats (two changes: one for working out in the cold and one for warm weather)
- Winter coat (best to use layers)
- Rain jacket with hood
- Scarf, gloves, and hat/cap
- Heavy-duty umbrella
- Washcloths (1 towel is provided)
- Two weeks of underwear, socks and anything else worn daily (When packing, consider the cost of laundry – approximately £5 for two loads of washing and drying.)

**Toiletries** (All of these items can be purchased in Oxford.)

- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Soap
- Deodorant
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Contact lens solution
- Razors

### School Supplies

- Pens/pencils/paper
- Folder/binder
- External data storage (flash drive) for computer
- Bible
- Textbooks
- Notebooks/Notecards

**Miscellaneous** (Some of these items can be purchased in Oxford.)

- Medications and prescriptions
- Batteries (less expensive in the US)
- Alarm clock or travel alarm
- Cards, games, videos, books for leisure
- Flashlight
- One bed sheet (recommended when traveling/hostels)

- Pictures from home
- Journal
- Backpack for traveling
- Earplugs
- Camera
- iPod
- Adapter/converter
- Bathing suit

Most things can be purchased in Oxford, but prices will probably be higher than the U.S. Also, a good tip for packing is to set out what you'd like to bring, then put back half of it – you need less than you think you do!

You may want to itemize the contents of your baggage for insurance purposes in the unlikely case that your bags are lost. Remember, if you buy anything there you will need room to take it home with you.

**Here are some average temperatures:**

| Months             | °Fahrenheit |
|--------------------|-------------|
| September-December | 40-55       |
| January-March      | 38-45       |
| April-June         | 47-59       |
| July-September     | 56-63       |

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## Flight Information

### Carry-On Luggage and Checked Baggage

As baggage allowances change frequently, please see the website of the airline on which you will be traveling for the most up to date information.

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## Financial Matters

### Airline Tickets

A student wishing to deviate on the return may be able to do so for a deviation fee. Students are not allowed to change the destination(s) or flight number(s) of their return flight(s), but may change the date, provided there are seats available on the desired return date and there are no restrictions on the type of ticket originally purchased. Students should make plans as far in advance as possible to avoid disappointment. Deviation requests should be directed to the study abroad coordinator and subsequently to the travel agent.

### Bank/Debit Cards

The exchange rate between the U.S. dollar and the British pound fluctuates daily so it is important to check it several times before you go to have an idea of what to

expect. Make sure to make arrangements for your personal expenses before you leave the U.S.

You should take at least one credit card and either a bank debit card with ATM capabilities or an ATM card, providing the best way to have instant access to your funds. Most ATM cards used in the U.S. will work on U.K./European ATMs. Fees may be charged for ATM usage, and exchange rates vary. You will be taken to an ATM when you arrive in Oxford so money may be withdrawn then. Though travellers checks can be used, they are not recommended as they are often more expensive to exchange and much less convenient than an ATM/debit card.

### **Meal Plan**

You will be charged the equivalent of 21 meals/week for the semester you are in Oxford. In five installments throughout the semester, 100% of that meal plan money will be transferred back into your personal bank account, essentially helping you budget for food. Therefore, you will be responsible for all of your meals, either cooking in the house kitchens or eating out. Generally, students can save money by shopping at a local grocery store and limiting the number of times they eat out.

You will be required to provide a Bank Information Form with bank details and authorization to transfer the funds to your bank account. These forms will be handed out during the orientation meetings in Abilene. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the ACU Study Abroad office.

### **Tipping**

Many restaurants and large hotels will automatically add a 10-15% service charge to your bill so always check in advance before you give any gratuity. You are welcome to tip in addition to that for exceptional service. For taxis, a 10-15% tip is typical, or perhaps a little more for a short ride.

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## **Living in Oxford**

### **Faculty and Program Supervisors**

During your stay, you will be under the direction and care of the faculty and on-site directors. Let them know immediately if any problems arise so they can help resolve them promptly.

The high quality of the ACU Study Abroad program is partly due to the outstanding faculty who teach and lead

students through this experience. In addition, those individuals responsible for maintaining the housing facility are crucial to the success of the program, and their hard work should be appreciated.

All disciplinary action will be handled by the appropriate personnel on site who will be in touch with representatives on ACU's campus if necessary. Please refer to the form entitled "Behavior Contract" which you submitted with your application and the ACU Student Handbook for more information.

### **Spiritual Opportunities**

While in Oxford you will be blessed with Christian fellowship that you will share with faculty and fellow students. You will also have opportunities to educate yourself about the beliefs of others. This part of your study abroad experience will help you to develop your own beliefs more fully.

### **Living in Community**

One of the great aspects of the study abroad experience is that you will have the opportunity to be a part of both the Oxford community and the ACU community. There are ample opportunities for students to take advantage of community events and facilities, whether it be scholarly lectures or entertainment such as the St. Giles Fair. The ACU houses are located close to University Park and Port Meadow, which are wonderful places for jogging, walking, relaxing and studying.

The INTS course has a component that includes twenty hours of service in the Oxford community. Students in the past have worked at local charity shops or soup kitchens, environmental trail clearing, and local schools and churches. Students often report that this is one of the most rewarding experiences while in Oxford.

### **Living Arrangements**

You will live in one of two Victorian houses while in Oxford. Each of the two houses has four floors, with six to nine students to a floor. Each floor has a kitchen and a bathroom with shower that is shared among the floor mates. Most students will share a room with one other student. Some may have three or four to a room. (If you have a roommate request, please notify the study abroad coordinator before you leave.) Rooms come furnished with a desk, lamp, closet, and either dresser space or storage space under beds for each individual in the room. Some rooms also have a sink.

Students are responsible to assist in the orderly maintenance and operation of the house. The director will provide further instructions pertaining to this during on-site orientation.

Upon arrival, you will be given the front door entry code. For safety reasons, under no circumstances should the code be given to those who do not live in the house.

Bedrooms in the houses are locked during every travel break and every travel weekend. However, should there be any additional concern about security, room keys are available upon request. In the event you lose your key or fail to return it, you will be charged for the loss of the key and be liable for the cost of replacement of locks should such be necessary.

## **Rooms**

You are responsible for your room. A check-in form for each room will be issued upon arrival, which should be returned to the on-site director within 24 hours. Damage to the room during the course of the program needs to be reported to the on-site director.

Any damage for which you are responsible that occurs to the room during your occupancy will be charged to your student account. If responsibility cannot be determined, the cost will be divided equally among all occupants of the room. Failure to complete checkout procedures may result in additional charges to your ACU account.

You are expected to keep your room in an orderly and clean condition. The on-site director may inspect rooms on a regular basis to ensure cleanliness. Bed linen is provided and is laundered every two weeks. It is your responsibility to assist the on-site director in the efficient exchange of bed linen.

Abilene Christian University and St. Hugh's College bear no responsibility for personal items left anywhere in the house. ACU reserves the right to inspect rooms at any time to ensure the safety of the students in the program.

## **Receiving Mail**

Mail generally takes five to seven days to/from the U.S. However, after the midpoint of the semester, it is not advisable to send non-urgent packages as they occasionally arrive after the students have returned to the U.S. The mailing address in Oxford is:

**(Student's Name)  
9 Canterbury Road  
Oxford OX2 6LU  
ENGLAND**

## **Internet Access**

The houses in Oxford are equipped with wireless internet, so students are encouraged to bring their personal laptops. There is also a computer lab for student use. Internet access can be limited, though, due to technical constraints, so use your time online wisely. Excessive internet use that impedes other students' use of computers for academic purposes will result in suspended or revoked privileges. Please also see the ACU student handbook for guidelines and regulations governing the use of computers on campus.

## **Telephone use**

There is one telephone in the house that requires a calling or credit card for use. Calling cards may be purchased and used in Oxford. The numbers (including the international code) from the U.S. to Oxford are:

- **011-44-1865-512-785**
- **011-44-1865-316-924.**

We suggest using Skype to communicate with family and friends over the internet. Skype allows you to make video calls as well, but you should keep this to a minimum to conserve bandwidth. Be aware that you can also call a telephone number in the U.S. from your computer by purchasing Skype Credit; this is the cheapest way to make international phone calls.

The six-hour time difference (Central Standard Time) should be taken into consideration when making and receiving calls.

## **Individual Travel**

A semester of study abroad provides the ideal context for experiential learning. Travel is an essential element of that kind of experience. During the fall and spring semesters, students will have one week-long break and at least one long weekend for personal travel. Students will be responsible for all expenses associated with their own independent travel.

Due to concerns related to individual safety while in unfamiliar settings and situations, the following guidelines must be followed during individual travel:

1. Students are encouraged to make day trips alone throughout Oxford or in the Oxfordshire area. There is much to see in the local area and it would be a pity to spend an entire semester in Oxford and travel each weekend to faraway places while ignoring the fascinating place where they live.
2. Students who travel outside the Oxfordshire area are required to travel in groups of two (2) or more – but **no male/female** pairs. Occasional exceptions may be made when students are traveling to join family members who are in England or Europe on vacation, etc.
3. When traveling outside the Oxfordshire area, students must sign out before departure, providing details regarding where they will stay and contact information.
4. All travel arrangements to and from Oxford must be confirmed with the on-site director to ensure your safety and efficient travel.
5. You will not be released from classes or course related excursions early in order to facilitate your own personal travel plans – no exceptions.

Additional specific information will be presented during on-site orientation.

### **Travel weekends or late events**

For safety and security reasons, students must sign out with details of where they are going, who they are traveling with, their travel itinerary, and anticipated departure and return times. You need to sign out when:

- traveling out of town,
- traveling overnight, or
- coming in very late after an event.

### **Safety**

The safety of students and personnel is a primary concern of the Study Abroad programs at ACU. Oxford is considered a safe city with many places to shop, beautiful parks to visit and opportunities to participate in recreational activities. While violent crime is rare, students should remember that petty theft and pick pocketing is not. When you arrive in Oxford, familiarize yourself with the city map, pay attention to the on-site orientation and use common sense when traveling about.

### **Academic Matters**

Students have full access to ACU's library online, in addition to numerous resources available at the houses.

Students should be able to register online while in Oxford for the next semester.

**It is your responsibility as a student to make sure you do not have a hold on your account. You should work with your advisor before you leave for Oxford as well as during the semester abroad to make registering while abroad a smooth process.**

### **Contact Information**

Please keep in mind that the information in this handout is meant to offer general guidelines only and is subject to change. Additional details will be provided during extensive on-site orientation once you arrive in Oxford. If you have questions about the materials provided in this packet, please contact the ACU Study Abroad office:

Visit: Admin. Bldg. 124  
Email: [studyabroad@acu.edu](mailto:studyabroad@acu.edu)  
Call: 325.674.2754