

UW in London: Spring 2025 Program Handbook

The UW in London program is offered by International Academic Programs (IAP) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, in partnership with FIE.

FIE, a London-based non-profit educational organization provides customized partnership programs and individual student enrollment programs in London, Dublin, Madrid, Barcelona and Amman for undergraduates. Learn more about FIE [here](#).

This program handbook contains information about:

- Program Overview
- Pre-Departure Information
- Arrival Information
- The Academic Program
- Leaving London

This document supplements materials you receive from IAP as well as the FIE/UW Student Handbook. Be sure to review all information in your UW [MyStudyAbroad](#) account as well as your FIE student portal.

FIE reserves the right to change any matter in this publication without prior notice. Therefore, it should not be read as part of a contractual agreement of courses/programs described herein.

Program Overview

The [UW in London](#) program allows you to enroll in a variety of courses while also earning academic credit for your internship/service internship placement. The internship/service internship is an essential component of the program structure and required for all students.

Spring 2025 Dates

Official Program Dates for 2025:	January 8 - April 27, 2025
Arrival date for Spring:	Wednesday, January 8 no later than 4pm (see below)**
Orientation:	Thursday January 9 – Saturday, January 11
FIE Welcome Reception:	Friday, January 10
Classes begin:	Monday, January 13
Oxford:	Sunday, February 9
Spring break:	Monday, March 3 – Friday, March 7
Brighton:	Sunday, March 30
UW in London Farewell Event:	Friday, April 25
Departure date from London:	By 12pm on Sunday, April 27, 2025

UW students are required to attend all events/activities outlined above. You should not make any personal travel plans for the semester until you arrive in London and receive a list of confirmed dates/activities.

You **MUST NOT** book any personal travel plans for the semester until you have arrived in London and received your semester schedule, which will tell you when your classes and other required events are taking place. Some activities will take place on Saturdays and Sundays.

**You should plan to check-in at Metrogate House no later than 4pm on the designated arrival date.

A Residence Life welcome meeting will take place at 6pm with details emailed, by FIE, a few weeks prior to your arrival in London. Please note that FIE cannot allow early arrivals. See “Instructions for Arrival” for more detailed information.

Pre-departure Information

SAVE-THE-DATE: Your pre-departure orientation meeting is **Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 3:00-4:30PM, Red Gym (Room On Wisconsin AB, located on the first floor)**. You will learn more about the program and have the opportunity to ask questions. It's expected that you will review all of the information located in your My Study Abroad account prior to this meeting.

During the Fall semester, you will receive emails from both FIE and UW-Madison with important program updates. Please remove any junk mail settings and check your email regularly.

There is a wealth of information available on the FIE website via the links below.

- [Arrival Information](#)
- [Academic Resources](#)
- [Student Life Introduction](#)
- [State Department Registration Information](#)
- [Fitness & Gym Membership Information](#)
- [General Housing Information](#)

The Area

One of the world's great cultural and economic centres, London offers almost endless potential for study abroad. FIE staff and faculty have been helping universities, colleges and hundreds of their students realize this potential each year since 1998 through programs of the highest quality.

FIE study and housing facilities are located in the attractive Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, one of London's most desirable areas.

Highlights of the Area

- FIE is located near schools such as Imperial College, the Royal College of Art, and the Royal College of Music.
- Just down the street are some of the world's great cultural institutions, including the Royal Albert Hall, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Natural History Museum.
- Kensington is home to charming residential areas where famous residents of the present (Madonna, Hugh Grant and Dustin Hoffman—not to mention the Royal Family) mix with the ghosts of those who lived in the area in the past (T.S. Eliot, Freddie Mercury and Beatrix Potter).
- Students live and study near some of London's most fashionable streets, including Gloucester Road, where students will find banks, a post office, pubs, restaurants, and grocery stores; and High Street Kensington, one of London's premier shopping streets.

Accessing the Rest of the City

Getting to the rest of the city is easy and convenient. The area is served by a number of underground (Tube) and bus routes, opening the whole city up to the curious visitor.

Foundation House is located near the corner of Gloucester and Cromwell Roads, at the Gloucester Road Tube stop. From here, students have instant access to the Piccadilly, Circle, and District Tube lines.

UW-Madison Contact Information

International Academic Programs
301 Red Gym, 716 Langdon Street
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: (608) 265-6329
www.studyabroad.wisc.edu

Application/Course Equivalent Request Advising
Elijah Bratsch-Prince, Enrollment Manager
bratschprinc@wisc.edu

Study Abroad Advising
Jessa Boche, Senior Study Abroad Advisor
jessa.boche@wisc.edu

Spring 2025 UW Faculty Member
Professor Ramzi Fawaz, Department of English
UW in London Faculty in Residence
fawaz@wisc.edu

On-Site Contact Information

Your primary contact in London will be:

James Cameron Cooper
UW Program Assistant
Senior Director of Student Life
Foundation House
114 Cromwell Road
SW7 4ES
Tel: 0207 591 7750
jccooper@fie.org.uk

Your **mailing address** will be:

Attn: *YOUR NAME*
Metrogate House
3-7 Queens Gate Terrace
London
SW7 5PE
UK

Emergency Contact Information

FIE Emergency Number
Facilities Support Team (Metrogate House)
0207 808 0131

IAP Emergency Phone
IAP [emergency phone](tel:608-516-9440) 608-516-9440

Important Documents

Passport

A passport is needed to travel to the United Kingdom. If you do not currently have a valid passport in hand, email your Study Abroad Advisor ASAP.

Immigration Requirements

A UK student visa is required for this program. The only exceptions are for citizens of the UK. FIE will provide you with information and guidance regarding this process, but ultimately it is your responsibility to obtain your student visa.

For more information about the application process:

- Visit FIE's "[Before You Go – London](#)" Visa Information page
- Read through the information on this page carefully
- To access the guide, scroll down to IMMIGRATION INFORMATION and click on "Internship Pathway"
 - Click on the immigration guide next to USA passport holders (and other non-EEA countries) must obtain a student visa prior to their arrival
 - Password: FIE

As part of the application process (typically in October or November) you must make an appointment in Chicago or Milwaukee to have your "biometrics" taken (fingerprints and photograph). This in-person appointment is required; students are responsible for their own travel arrangements for the appointment

Money

The cost of living in London is significantly higher than many areas of the U.S. In addition, the U.K. currency, pound sterling, has at times been valued much higher than the U.S. dollar. The exchange rate changes daily, and can be checked at www.x-rates.com. We suggest you begin to familiarize yourself with the currency and exchange rate before you arrive.

Budgeting for London

Estimated expenses vary widely depending upon the student. How much you spend will depend on your lifestyle, such as how much you eat out and travel during your free time. We recommend you budget for between £120- £150 each week for food and personal expenses. Keep in mind that your purchasing power is directly related to the dollar/sterling exchange rate.

Cash for Arrival

It is a good idea to carry some British currency with you for arrival to help you settle in during your first few days. We recommend you exchange this money before you arrive in London. Be sure to ask for mixed notes in small denominations.

Banking

- Do not plan to open a bank account while in the UK.
- Do not plan to keep large amounts of cash in your room. The easiest way to handle your money abroad is often to use the same checking account you have in the U.S., using your debit card as your primary means of payment and cash withdrawal. ATMs are readily available all over Europe.
- The largest banks in England are HSBC, Barclays, and Lloyds. If your bank has a relationship with any of these banks, they may not charge an ATM fee. Check with your financial institution to see whether they have these relationships, and what kind of charges you will incur on international purchases. Online banking with your U.S.-based account will help you keep track of how much you are spending in U.S. dollars.
- Always have a backup. If you are using your debit card as your primary means of money abroad, make sure you also bring a credit card (Visa and MasterCard are recommended) in case your primary card is lost or stolen. Keep the backup card in a different place from your primary card.
- You must inform your bank and credit card companies well in advance (1-2 weeks prior to departure) of your program that you will be abroad so they do not freeze your accounts for security reasons. Keep in mind that your bank/credit card company may require you to notify them for each international trip you take during the program.

ISIC Card

You may wish to purchase an International Student Identity Card, or ISIC, which is an internationally recognized form of student identification. Having one of these cards allows students to ask for discounts at hundreds of theatres, restaurants, cinemas, and museums, as well as student discounts on plane and rail tickets across Europe.

Packing

As you are packing, be sure to review the [Learn About Your Destination](#) page on the State Department's website. The Local Laws & Special Circumstances section is especially important. For example, **in the UK it is illegal to possess/carry pepper spray or any similar self-defense tool**. This is true for even a small container attached to your key chain. It's important to be familiar with these types of laws, rules, and regulations.

- ✓ **Practical Clothes.** Clothes that require minimal care, are comfortable to travel in, and can be layered are best to take. Layering is the best way to combat the unpredictable British temperature. Casual clothing is the most comfortable for day-to-day British life. If you plan on going out to dinner or to the theatre at night, dressier clothing would be best. Depending on your internship location, you may need ‘business’ type attire.
- ✓ **Backpack.** Backpacks are easier to carry than suitcases on longer trips. Your flats (apartments) do not have a lot of closet space or storage room, therefore it may be best to bring a collapsible suitcase. A small travel bag is convenient for weekend and day trips.
- ✓ **Comfortable shoes.** You are likely to be out and about walking around London in many of your classes in addition to outside your classes!
- ✓ **Strong umbrella and raincoat.** Many a Londoner will tell you it rains quite often here!
- ✓ **Bath towels.** Bed sheets will be provided in the flats and you will be able to buy bath towels upon arrival from a nearby store if you don’t want to carry them over. Bring a small hand towel to get you through the first day.
- ✓ **Travel purse or money belt.** To keep your passport, ID, and money safe.
- ✓ **Laptop.** We would recommend you bring a laptop with you as a lot of your work and assignments will be electronically submitted. There is free wifi in your residences and Foundation House. You will also have 24 hour access to a computer lab in Metrogate House should you not be able to bring a laptop.
- ✓ **Necessary prescriptions and medications.** Prescriptions for certain medications can be difficult to get in the UK so make sure you have the right amount of medication for the duration of your program, in their original labeled bottles. Be sure to complete this step well in advance of your departure in case you need to consult with your doctor and/or IAP.

A few tips:

- **Avoid over-packing.** Planes can place additional charges on extra or overweight luggage. You may also want to bring souvenirs or gifts back from the UK so leave some room!
- **Ensure that every bag is marked** in capital letters with your name, address and final destination.
- **Create copies of important documents** before you go abroad both for yourself and for someone you trust and can easily get in contact with at home. These documents should include scans of your passport and visa, debit/credit cards and insurance cards, as well as any supplemental information that you believe is of significant importance. It is also helpful to have all of these documents in a folder to make it easier for you to navigate border control upon entering the country.
- **Electrical Appliances.** Make sure you bring an adapter for both the UK and Europe if you anticipate travelling as the sockets are different. British electricity also runs on 240 volts, while the U.S. runs on 110 volts. We recommend you do not bring the likes of hairdryers, electric razors, radio, etc.) due to the voltage difference. We recommend that you purchase an inexpensive hairdryer (around £20 from Sainsbury’s or Argos) in London so as not to risk blowing a fuse.

Arrival Information

Site information

The program is located on FIE premises in the Kensington neighborhood of London and consists of four buildings: Foundation House, Metrogate House, Hyde Park Gate, and Manson Place.

[FIE KENSINGTON CAMPUS MAP](#)

Foundation House: Foundation House is FIE's main study centre where many of your classes will be held. The typical opening hours are 8am – 9pm during the semester. You will spend a significant amount of time in this building during the school week. The Student Life Office is also located in this building on the lower level.

Metrogate House: FIE's main residence building in the Kensington neighborhood. Upon arrival, this is where you will check-in to receive your housing assignment and key. Metrogate House has a 24-hour reception, a computer lab, study rooms, and laundry facilities. There are also three classrooms in this building, as well as several FIE administrative offices. Your mailbox is located here too, so this will be your mailing address.

Student Residences:

- UW-Madison students will be living in either [Hyde Park Gate](#) or [Manson Place](#), two of FIE's student residences in South Kensington.
- Both residences are within a 10-minute walk from Foundation House.
- Each student will share a bedroom with one, two, three or four other program participants, and the kitchen / living room area is shared by everyone in the flat.
- Laundry facilities are in Metrogate House and Manson Place. Plan for around £5 for a single wash and dry.
- You will be notified of your roommate assignment when you arrive in London.
- Keep in mind that British housing, in general, is much smaller than U.S. housing. Not only will you have a smaller living space, but also smaller storage space.
- You will share a bedroom with other UW-Madison students, but there will likely be students from other universities studying with FIE living in the same residence as you.
- All flats have their own TVs and bed linen that is changed every week (bed linen includes blanket, pillows, and sheets). You provide your own towels. Stores like TK Maxx, Marks & Spencer, and Primark offer very inexpensive towels and pillows should you decide you'd like extras.
- No overnight guests are permitted at any time. FIE can help you find inexpensive accommodations for your visitors; contact the Student Life Team for information.
- Residence Life Supervisors live in student accommodations. They are usually graduate students pursuing their own course of study in London or young professionals. They keep FIE and UW staff informed of any discipline and welfare problems that may affect the general harmony of all residents.
- Arrival/Departure dates are firm; no exceptions can be made for you to move in early or move out late.

Instructions for arrival

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to and from London. Past participants suggest having £80-100 in cash for your arrival and you can either bring it with you or exchange dollars in the airport. Once you arrive in London, please report to the reception desk at:

Metrogate House
3-7 Queens Gate Terrace
London SW7 5PE
Tel: 0207-823-7440

You **MUST** collect your keys from Metrogate House upon arrival. The reception desk is staffed 24 hours a day in case you arrive early or experience a delay and arrive late. The door to Metrogate House requires a key code to enter so when you arrive, ring the doorbell to be granted entry. You will be given the codes for the doors at Metrogate House and Foundation House at your on-site orientation.

From Heathrow Airport

By Tube

The least expensive and easiest route is to take the Tube directly from the airport. Follow the signs in the terminal to the Underground and take the Piccadilly Line (dark blue) to Gloucester Road. You can use your US debit or credit card to pay for your journey or buy a ticket at one of the machines. You can look up your journey before you go on the [Transport for London website](#). It will cost approximately £10 and take about 50 minutes. From the Gloucester Road stop, walk or take a taxi to Metrogate House. This is very easy if you are not carrying too many bags - another reason to pack light!

***Oyster cards with unlimited free travel in zones 1-2 will be given to you during registration on Thursday 9 January and fully explained in orientation.

By Taxi

The most expensive route is to take a cab from Heathrow. A licensed black cab will cost around £100, depending on traffic. This is costly, but if you are sharing a cab with another student and have heavy luggage, you may find it worth it. Don't take a cab without a meter unless you have called ahead to book a car service. We recommend [Green Tomato Cars](#). Uber and Bolt also operate in London.

By Train

The [Heathrow Express](#) train runs every 15 minutes from the airport to Paddington Station. Current prices can be found on the website. You will then need to make your way from Paddington to your residence, either by Tube or taxi.

From Gatwick Airport

By Train

Follow signs at the airport to the trains. Take the Gatwick Express train from the airport to Victoria train/Tube station. Current prices can be found on the website <http://www.gatwickexpress.com/>. Trains leave every 15 minutes. It is advisable to ask which platform you need to wait on, as Gatwick is a mainline station with trains to other destinations. From Victoria, either take the Circle or District underground train to your closest Tube station (approx £5) and walk or take a taxi directly to your residence (approx £15). We do not recommend taking a cab from Gatwick due to the distance and expense of the journey.

Registration and Orientation on Arrival

A few weeks before traveling to London you will be emailed the Orientation Schedule by FIE. This will highlight all the events and sessions taking place during the first 3-4 days. On the Arrival Day, you will need to collect your keys from Metrogate House. You will then have time to settle in before the 6pm Residence Life welcome meeting that will take place that evening, with details included in the Orientation Schedule.

The day after you arrive (Thursday), you will need to register at Foundation House. You must bring your passport and airline boarding pass/entry ticket to registration – FIE will photocopy it for immigration purposes. You'll also receive additional documents aiding your stay in London.

Orientations (required for all students) will be held Thursday – Sunday. The orientations will help you settle in and provide you with the opportunity to ask any questions about the academic program, where you are living, the local area, health and safety, and what's going on during your time in London. Further orientation activities will include a visit to the Houses of Parliament, West End theatre show, and London sightseeing trip.

The Academic Program

Your courses run from Monday-Friday and typically will be scheduled between 9am and 9pm. Classes normally meet one or two times per week.

No unexcused absences are allowed. It is very important that you attend all of your classes because a large part of your grade is based on your class attendance and/or participation. Professors do not accept traveling as an excuse for missing class.

Internship & Service Internship Information

Extensive information about what to expect from your FIE Internship can be found on the [FIE website](#). We recommend that you familiarize yourself with this information now. You will have a special Internship Orientation Session during your first few days after arrival in London, followed by interviews in the weeks leading up to your mid-semester break. Your internship placement will not begin until **after** your mid-semester break.

Curious about the difference between an internship and service internship? They have a lot in common, but there are some differences. Check out FIE's page [here](#) for more information.

Course Information

Classes are held at FIE's Foundation House and Metrogate House. All students must be registered for a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 18 credits. Each course in London is worth 3 UW-Madison credits, so this means you will take 4 -6 courses. There are no exceptions to these rules.

UW in London Program Structure:

- FIE Key Course
- 1 UW course taught by UW Professor
- International Internship placement & course **OR** International Service Learning placement & course
- 1-3 FIE elective courses

Course Selection

Participants sign up for classes in the Fall before leaving for London. This process will be coordinated by FIE. Please note: Some classes have limited enrollment. If space is limited, class enrollment decisions will be based

on the number of credits completed and GPA at the time applications are considered. Just like on the Madison campus, sometimes a course does not reach a minimum enrolment and so will not run. These are key reasons what you're asked to choose up to five electives even though you may only be taking one or two.

Review the Academics tab of your UW [My Study Abroad account](#) for more information about Course Equivalent Requests (CERs), credit and grade conversions.

Please refer to the [UW Study Abroad Handbook](#) for academic policies and procedures.

Communication

Phones

FIE requires you to have a working phone at all times; you cannot rely on simply bouncing from Wi-Fi hotspot to Wi-Fi hotspot. If you are planning to use your U.S. smartphone while abroad, you must contact your cell phone provider prior to departure and request to have your device unlocked. Upon arrival you will then purchase a UK SIM card to use with your unlocked phone, typically on a “pay-as-you-go” plan. Alternatively, you can purchase an inexpensive “burner” phone. Much more will be explained about mobile phones in the UK during your Pre-Departure Orientation.

Internet Access

All FIE buildings including your residences and Foundation House have free Wi-Fi. Therefore on your mobiles or laptops you will have Internet access. You will be given a password upon arrival to enable Internet access to your device. The Metrogate House PC Lab is also available for participants to use and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Messaging

If you are looking to limit text message costs, then applications such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger may be helpful alternatives for you. Many students find these apps to be supplementary for traditional texting, and they only need Wi-Fi to operate, saving money on your “pay-as-you-go” phone plan.

Safety

London, particularly the Kensington neighborhood, is safe. However, this is still a large metropolitan city and common sense precautions are necessary to ensure your safety. You will want to follow the same safety precautions that you would at home.

Flat Security

Never let anyone into the flat without proper identification. FIE will always try to inform you of workers entering the building, so if someone comes unexpected, do not be afraid to request an ID.

Pick pockets

London is known for its pick-pockets, especially in busy places like Tube stations. Men are advised to carry their wallet in their front pocket. Women will want to ensure that their purse is always zipped and tightly at your side, and never hang it on the back of a chair at restaurants. Use common sense!

Going Out

Make sure you leave with everyone you came with. Do not accept drinks from strangers. Always have an eye on your drink. Lots more information about staying safe in London will be explained at your Pre-Departure orientation, and reiterated at your FIE Orientation once you arrive in London.

Seeing London outside of class

Co-Curricular Excursions

Sponsored academic activities are an integral part of the UW-Madison program, serving to enhance the academics as well as the cultural base of the program. A series of events including day trips to other English cities, popular tourist sites, and meals will be arranged by FIE. Participants are required to attend academic excursions. You will learn more about this (along with specific dates/schedules) when you arrive in London.

FIE Extra-Curricular activities

The UW-Madison Program Assistant and the FIE Student Life Team in Foundation House offers you information about local events and sponsors special discounted outings for students, and is available to help with your questions and concerns. Participants are highly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities as they heighten the cultural experience of the program.

Additionally, the UW in London Faculty-in-Residence will work with FIE to arrange a series of additional optional events in the city for UW in London students, based on the interest and time commitments of the students. These could include art exhibitions, theatre performances, or trips to local markets. The expenses for these events will be covered by the program and will be at no additional cost for students to attend! You are encouraged to attend these events in order to enjoy/explore London while getting to know your fellow UW program participants and faculty leader!

Some unique FIE offerings:

- **Extra-curricular calendar:** To show students a different side of British culture, FIE coordinates an optional FIE Activity Calendar of events taking place around London. The activities are subsidized by FIE and are limited to availability on a first come, first serve basis. There is always a deadline for online sign-up early in the term, so students should make sure to sign up promptly to avoid paying full price somewhere else! This may include a spin on the London Eye and sporting events such as football or rugby. Students will receive a copy of the calendar via email before they arrive in London, with instructions about how and where to sign up for the events.
- Access to the [Imperial College Student Union](#): you can join some of the 300 societies and sports clubs at Imperial and get to know British university students.

Leaving London

London is a great hub of transportation to other parts of the UK and to Europe. Many students take the opportunity to explore the UK and Europe while abroad. You will learn more about transportation in London during your on-site orientation.

Please remember to alert FIE staff [online](#) when you leave London overnight.