

# Canterbury 2023 - 24

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## Study Abroad Handbook

A useful guide to your  
study abroad experience



### OVERSEAS STUDY

*Read this handbook **now** and **again** before you leave the U.S.  
Consult it **again** before you register for classes overseas.*

*The usefulness of this handbook depends on student input.  
If you find erroneous information, please contact [overseas@iu.edu](mailto:overseas@iu.edu).  
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## PROGRAM CONTACTS

International Partnerships at the University of Kent has the overall responsibility for IU students in Canterbury.

**Address:** International Partnerships  
The University of Kent  
Rutherford Annex  
Darwin Road  
Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX ENGLAND

**Telephone:** From the U.S.: 011-44-1227-824191

**Email:** [incomingexchanges@kent.ac.uk](mailto:incomingexchanges@kent.ac.uk)

**Website:** [kent.ac.uk/courses/short-term/](http://kent.ac.uk/courses/short-term/)

## PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a supplement to the *Getting Started* handbook ([overseas.iu.edu/docs/gettingstarted.html](https://overseas.iu.edu/docs/gettingstarted.html)). While it contains specific program information, *Getting Started* contains information relevant to all students on Indiana University Overseas Study programs. Both booklets should be used now as you prepare to leave and later while you are abroad. Since most student questions are addressed in these handbooks, please consult them before contacting the Office of Overseas Study.

## ICONS IN THIS GUIDE



### Helpful Program Information

Information to help prepare  
you for study abroad



### Student Advice

Suggestions from study  
abroad returnees



### Savvy Traveler Tips

Traveling tips to get you  
where you're going

# GOALS & OBJECTIVES FOR STUDYING ABROAD

The goals and objectives of a study abroad program are as diverse as the students, faculty, and administrators involved. Some goals may be common (e.g. language acquisition), while others may be more personal (e.g. becoming independent). Some goals may seem more important to some than to others (e.g. desire for academic integrity in coursework vs. desire to travel).

Study abroad programs will provide a more enriching experience if they incorporate a wide range of goals. The first step toward the achievement of these goals is acknowledging and defining them before the program begins. Once you are abroad, the process continues with a structured and cooperative approach to achieving these goals. We've begun the process by outlining some goals for your program.

## **University of Kent Program Goals**

- Knowledge of your academic major(s)/minor from British perspective
- Integration into the academic and social environment of the University of Kent
- Immersion experience in a supportive environment
- Personal development and growth

## **Program Elements that Support these Goals**

- Resident staff to provide personal and academic advising
- Onsite staff to provide personal and academic advising
- Attendance in University of Kent courses with British students
- Coursework integrated into students' academic goals
- Access to university and community organizations/clubs
- Housing with British and international students

# The Program in Canterbury

## Tentative 2023-24 Calendar

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Arrival/Welcome.....	September 16-17
Welcome and Orientation.....	September 18-22
Autumn Term.....	September 25 - December 15
Arrival/Welcome (spring students only).....	January 9-12
Spring Term.....	January 15 - April 5
Summer Term (exam period).....	May 6 - June 14*

\*Students need to stay until the end of their academic year finals.

## Passport & Visa

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If you do not already have a valid passport, apply for one immediately. You can pick up an application form and instructions at a county clerk's office or post office. You can also download an application at [travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html). Turnaround time can be as much as six weeks, so submit your application promptly.

For academic year students, you will need to apply for a student visa to study in the UK for more than six months. The Office of Overseas Study will send students instructions for applying for a student visa. For more information, students can also see [www.gov.uk/student-visa](http://www.gov.uk/student-visa).

For semester students staying in the UK for fewer than six months, you will receive a short-term visa stamp in your passport upon arrival to the UK. You do not need to apply for this before your program begins. Keep in mind, you cannot work or carry out any business as a student visitor.

The Office of Overseas Study will send students instructions for applying for a short-term visitor visa from the British consulate or embassy. For this purpose it is essential that you have your passport.

## Getting to Canterbury

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You will arrange your own air transportation to London. For academic year and spring students, since you will not know your final exam dates at Kent until the middle of the semester, you must book your flight back home for the end of the summer exam term and no sooner. Look for a ticket with no fixed return date or a low fee for changing your return date. Coordinate with other students and travel together if possible. Do not fly to London with a layover in Ireland. Doing so will pose significant immigration challenges for you.

## Clearing Customs in London

Have the following items on hand when you reach the London airport: your acceptance

letter from the University of Kent and a letter of proof of financial support. This can be a letter from parent(s) or family members who have the means to support you while abroad. Additionally, semester-only students will need to make sure they obtain a short-term visa stamp in their passport upon arrival. Officials want reassurance that you have adequate financial resources and do not plan to work full-time in Britain.

Students are occasionally detained at the airport for an on-the-spot health check. Immigration officials have the right to require such health checks, but they rarely conduct them.

## From London to Canterbury

Read carefully *Getting Started at Kent*, which is available online (see link below). It provides detailed information on options for getting from London to Canterbury.

For more information on travel to Kent, please see:

[kent.ac.uk/welcome](http://kent.ac.uk/welcome)

## Canterbury

Canterbury, the oldest and one of the most beautiful English cathedral cities, is 55 miles southeast of London amid the hop fields, orchards and picturesque villages of East Kent. It is easily accessible by road and rail, with particularly good links to the Continent. Canterbury is less than an hour away from London by train. Within half an hour's drive of the city are some 70 miles of coastline stretching from the old harbor town of Whitstable in the north through Sandwich, Deal, Dover, and Folkestone to the quiet Romney Marsh in the south.

The city itself has a population of 55,000; it acts as the shopping and commercial center for a wide area of East Kent, and a number of activities are based there. The old town, with ancient walls and narrow streets clustered around the magnificent cathedral, preserves much of its medieval atmosphere.

## University of Kent

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The University of Kent is situated on the crest of a hill overlooking the cathedral and city below. An eight-minute bus ride or 30-minute walk will get you from campus to town. The university was founded in 1965 and now has about 20,000 students, including more than 3,500 international students of 158 different nationalities. It is made up of five residential colleges, each of which has student sleeping rooms, faculty offices, classrooms, lounges, pubs, offices and dining halls. In addition, the university has a central library, a theater, a gymnasium, a bookstore, self-catering accommodations, cinema, concert hall, and a small student union. The offices of several banks are housed on campus, including ATMs.



**Savvy Traveler Tips**

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Scan a copy of your passport page and save it in your e-mail so you can have easy access to it, should you need it, while you are traveling.

## Medway Campus

The University of Kent Medway campus is located at Chatham Maritime, about 50 minutes from the main Kent campus in Canterbury. The University of Kent offers a free coach service between Medway and Canterbury which operates

seven days a week. Students can find the campus shuttle schedule here: [kent.ac.uk/transport/commute-smarter/campus-shuttle](http://kent.ac.uk/transport/commute-smarter/campus-shuttle).

Kent is part of a unique partnership of universities including the University of Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church University which is collectively known as the Universities at Medway. The University of Kent moved onto the Medway campus in 2005 and most of the buildings are new or have been completely renovated.

The Medway campus houses numerous schools and centres including the Centre for Journalism, the School of Pharmacy, the Centre for Professional Practice, the Kent Law School at Medway, the Kent Business School at Medway, the School of Computing at Medway, the School of Sport and Exercise Sciences and the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research at Medway.

For more information on the Medway campus and facilities offered there, please see the Medway website: <http://www.kent.ac.uk/locations/medway/>.

## Welcome Week

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The orientation program that takes place during your first week at the University of Kent includes assistance with academic advising, medical registration, and banking; reception and welcome dinner; and an introduction to student groups at the day-long Freshers' Fair. Spring orientation starts mid-week before the spring term starts and covers similar topics.

Since many British upperclassmen are not on campus during orientation week, you will inevitably make some of your first friends among the other international students and the British first-year students ("Freshers"). Save room in your friendship circles for the upperclassmen, who might arrive on campus closer to the start of classes. During this time, you may find that you need several photos for ID cards and passes; locate one of the many fotomat machines to have inexpensive photos made or bring extra passport-sized photos with you from home.

## Academic Program

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Academically the university is divided into six divisions, generally referred to as "faculties:" Arts and Humanities; Natural Sciences; Computing, Engineering and Mathematical Sciences; Business, Human and Social Sciences; and Law, Society and Social Justice. Within each faculty there are departments and centers, some of which are inter-faculty.

For academic purposes, you will be assigned to an academic school based on your combination of modules. Your academic school can advise you on matters relating to your academic progress as well as any personal problems. However, if you have complex academic questions, it is best to request advice from the seminar leader or lecturer of your specific module.

## The British Degree Program

Although you will be spending a short time at Kent and will not be a degree candidate there, it will be useful for you to understand in general the sort of academic program followed by regular students at the university. The program leading to a Bachelor's



degree is usually a three-year course of study, rather than a four-year one as in the U.S. The notion of a degree program, however, is somewhat broader than in our system of departmental majors. There are basically three types of degree programs: (a) Single Honors: programs of study where the majority of modules are within one major discipline (history, economics, English, math, chemistry, etc.); (b) Joint Honors: programs which equally combine work in several fields related to a particular area or topic (Renaissance studies, urban studies, industrial relations, etc.); and (c) Inter-Faculty: programs which allow students to pursue a major/minor degree where the majority of the study is in one subject and the minority is in another (history and law, accounting and computing, etc.).

The majority of undergraduate three-year programs are made up of three stages and a stage will normally consist of modules amounting to 120 credits. Stage I occupies the first year and is interdisciplinary in nature. A student who intends to specialize in English and American literature, for example, would take basic courses designed to provide a broad background in the humanities. A student in sociology would take a wide range of courses in the social sciences. Stages II and III covers the remaining two years and consists of specialized work within a student's field of concentration. Many students take a fourth undergraduate year and spend their third year at another international university.

The British degree programs tend to be more structured than U.S. degree programs; that is, there is a more rigid pattern of courses that must be followed in the three-year curriculum. Yet individual classes have far less structure than the U.S. student is used to.

## Organization and Conduct of Classes

In the humanities and social sciences, some courses consist of a large lecture session with accompanying small seminars, while others are offered exclusively in seminar format. Science courses may consist of lectures and labs. In British lecture-seminar courses, the seminar is more important than the lecture, and attendance at seminars is compulsory. Participation grades may be given in seminars, so it's important that you participate accordingly. Seminars typically include informal presentations by the instructor, with student response, discussion, reports and essays. Courses meet less frequently than in the U.S., which requires self-discipline to keep up with the required reading.

Your professors will be strict about deadlines to submit essays; it is advised that you meet the deadlines so you should plan ahead and not find yourself overwhelmed by a pile of essays to submit at the end of the year.

## Instructors

University instructors in Britain are referred to as "lecturers." The term "professor" is reserved for those who actually hold professorships (usually only a few in any field). Find out the appropriate title for your instructors. Many lecturers and professors actually prefer to be called by their first name. You may find that the relationship

The diversity and integration of the students on this campus is what makes it an incredible place to study abroad. I have met so many interesting people—from English, to Nigerian, to Bengali, to Finnish, to Japanese.



STUDENT

between lecturer and student is often less formal than at large American universities. This is true in class as well as out. The system of seminars encourages students and teachers to get to know each other and to work together closely. Your seminar leader may be different than your lecturer. However, in courses consisting of lectures and seminars, the actual lectures are fairly formal and impersonal, without student participation. Professors will have office hours, although they may be more limited than you are used to in the U.S.

## Module (Course) Selection

During your mandatory advising appointment at Overseas Study, you will set up a module (course) schedule using the Catalogue of Modules ([www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modules](http://www.kent.ac.uk/courses/modules)). This advising form will need the approval of your IU major advisors. Kent will have you complete a scheduling form with your preferred classes and alternate choices.



Canterbury, England

Kent may allow you to change modules during the first couple of weeks due to lecture clashes or concessionary reasons only. In lecture modules with required seminars, you may be able to change seminar leaders within the same course. See your Kent advisor or email [studyabroad@kent.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@kent.ac.uk) to make such changes.

## Module (Course) Load

In general, you should take courses that correspond to the work done by Kent students in their second or third year. That is, your classes should be chosen from the list of Stage II & III courses, and your module load should be the same as that required of Kent students in your field. The academic year is organized into two long terms and an exam period. The UK has very strict policies regarding coursework and exams. Please read your syllabus carefully.

For a full academic year, all short-term students are required to undertake work that will be equated to 32 credit hours under the American credit system during their academic year at Kent, equivalent to a full year's undergraduate load. At Kent all undergraduate degree programs comprise 120 study credits per year, and the modules are usually weighted at 15 or 30 credits (or, respectively four or eight U.S. credit hours). For spring and fall semester students, you are required to take 60 UK credits, which is equivalent to 16 IU credits.

**Crossing Disciplines:** You are allowed to cross faculties even though most British students do not. That is, a social sciences student can take a humanities course, and so on. If you have a single major at IU and you plan to take courses in your major only, then your work at Kent will be similar to that of a student in a "Single Honors" program. If you are pursuing a double major at IU (or if you simply want to take a course outside your major and are qualified to do advanced work in that field), then you should arrange your program as though you were in the "Combined Honors" program. It is important to recognize, however, that because the British students in your classes are majoring in that discipline, you will need some background in the course subject. Lack of at least one or two basic IU courses will make a course significantly more challenging than one

in your major(s).

There may be certain prerequisites or course restrictions that may limit your choice of courses at Kent. For example, Stage II modules typically fall into two categories: **Core Modules** and **Special Modules**. Special Modules are available only in the student's final year and have a narrower focus than the Core Modules. Core Modules aim to provide more comprehensive coverage of subject area. Some modules are also designed to be taken sequentially.

**Sciences:** Those of you pursuing courses in the sciences faculty may have less flexibility to cross disciplines because of scheduling conflicts. Inquire at the Office of Overseas Study for the written advice that past participants in these disciplines have given regarding registration, scheduling and course loads at Kent. In the natural sciences, every lecture course has a lab. The class schedule changes every term, even though you'll be registered for the same classes.

**Finding Classrooms:** After you arrive at Kent, you should visit each department to find the location of your classes. Your timetable is available through the Student Data System ([sds.kent.ac.uk](https://sds.kent.ac.uk)). Please note that locations will list the building abbreviations (R for Rutherford College, D for Darwin College, E for Eliot, K for Keynes College, etc.) followed by the room numbers. If you click on the room that is listed, it will take you to a different page that contains all the room info and detailed instruction on how to get there. If you have trouble understanding the abbreviations, ask a fellow student. The two most important abbreviations to know are LT = lecture theatre and SR# = seminar room and number. A map is available online at [www.kent.ac.uk/maps/canterbury](http://www.kent.ac.uk/maps/canterbury). This topic will also be covered during the onsite orientation welcome talk.

## Examinations (Summer Term)

The British university final examination ritual differs markedly from the American system. Students spend the third term sitting (revising) for exams, if applicable. Studying for the exams provides an important opportunity for a general review of the year's coursework. Some professors administer practice exams, and some seminar leaders hold special revision seminars in which they discuss exams and how best to study. You can consult a file of past examination papers in the library or on the web: [kent.ac.uk/library-it](https://kent.ac.uk/library-it) (authentication required). You will note that certain topics come up on the exams frequently so if you select your essay topics based on those recurring themes, you may be better prepared for the exams. Ask questions about how the finals are designed so you are prepared.

Examinations are announced well into the semester and they are also published on the web through the Student Data System. Examinations are administered in the main and small sports halls or the colleges, depending on the size of the class. You will need to bring your ID card to find your assigned seat for the exam and you will be asked to check any bags you have with you. Each exam lasts two or three hours and involves three to four questions that usually provide several choices. The number of questions may vary from subject to subject. Some professors give take-home exams with a time limit. One-day papers can be grueling for English majors, particularly if you have two such take-home exams. Students will more than likely take exams in May/June for modules that ended in the autumn term.

Fall-only students will take exams at the end of the autumn term, through a special arrangement for visiting students.

**Outside Examiners:** Each exam is marked by two examiners, and if their assessments vary greatly, a third marker is used. Final exams are also monitored by outside examiners in the same discipline. This system is designed to result in the most objective reading of the exam. Past participants say that examiners gave more weight to original, well-argued ideas than to mastery of specific facts.

In seminars ask questions, raise controversial points, and challenge views. If you do it this way, the instructor will probably like it and it is a lot more fun.

STUDENT ADVICE

**Weight of Final Exam:** The weighting given to exams, coursework and projects varies greatly between modules, with a few being assessed 100% on coursework while other modules have the final exam worth 50% of the total grade. Weight of specific assignments/the exam is typically found in the module guide that professors post to the module's Moodle page.

## Grading

The range of grades in the British university system differs markedly from the range of grades in the U.S. Although there is a 100-point scale, grades above 70 are rare. The grade conversion chart appears in the University of Kent information booklet for short-term students. A good way to think about the grading scale is that the U.S. system starts at 100 and deducts from there, where the British system starts at zero and goes up. You should strive for grades in the 55-70 range, which fall within IU's A-B range. Faculty also use "class" designations: sometimes written as First, 2:1 (or Upper Second), 2:2 (Lower Second), Third, Pass, Fail.

## Transcripts

In early spring for fall-only students and late summer for academic year and spring students, the University of Kent will send official transcripts to the Office of Overseas Study and final UKC marks will be converted to American grades based on the conversion

GRADE CONVERSION CHART			
IU Grade	UKC	Class	Ave. Mark
A	70+	1st	70+
A	67-69	Upper 2nd	60-69
A-	64-66		
B+	61-63		
B	58-60		
B-	55-57	Lower 2nd	50-59
C+	52-54		
C	48-51		
C-	44-47	Third	40-49
D	40-43		
F	0-39	Fail	Below 40

chart. To assist your advisors and professors at IU in making credit determinations, you should bring back course descriptions, reading lists, and all the papers you have written during the year, making sure to make copies of irreplaceable documents.

For spring and academic year students, your IU record may not be finalized before September. If you plan to graduate in August, consult with staff at Overseas Study before going abroad about how to proceed.

## **Textbooks**

Most classes have long book lists, but you are not expected to read all of them, and you certainly are not expected to buy all of them. How much you spend on books depends on how interested you are in having them on hand, how much demand there is for the library copies, whether the library has them at all, etc. Some departments/modules provide you with all the class reading materials in a reading packet free of charge. Photocopying journal articles for class is a good idea but may become costly.

## **Printing**

Students will pay for all printing on campus.

## **Learning Resources**

Kent has the Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS) ([kent.ac.uk/learning](http://kent.ac.uk/learning)), a division of the Unit for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (UFLT), that offers a series of handouts and workshops on a variety of topics including library skills, study strategies, essay writing, oral presentations, IT training, etc. These resources are designed for all University of Kent students and are not remedial in nature. Since academic writing is very different in the UK than in the U.S., some help in this area could have a major impact on how successful you are at Kent. Take advantage of the workshops early, at the beginning of each term, so you can get a strong start on the year.

# Life in Canterbury

## Housing

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Students can apply online for housing once they have accepted their offer of admission from the University of Kent. The deadline for housing is usually in July for fall and academic year students, and November for spring semester. Students are typically notified of housing assignments by end of August for fall and academic year students, and mid-December for spring students.

You have two on-campus housing choices: 1) a room in a college or 2) a student apartment. Laundry facilities are available (it will cost approximately £4 to wash and dry). You can purchase laundry detergent at the store, not in the facilities.

You will receive information from the International Office at Kent outlining accommodation options and costs. You can find current fees on Canterbury's Accommodation website: [kent.ac.uk/accommodation/canterbury/prices](http://kent.ac.uk/accommodation/canterbury/prices). Students pay for housing separately from their tuition costs. Housing costs are paid directly to Kent and are due by the first day of occupancy.

For the duration of the coronavirus pandemic, students should anticipate receiving specific COVID-19 mitigation information from the host university.

## College Rooms

There are six colleges in the university: Darwin, Eliot, Keynes, Rutherford, Turing and Woolf. Part-catered accommodation: Keynes, Becket Court, Rutherford, and Eliot. Although theoretically each college is associated with different interests (e.g. politics, sports, arts, etc.), IU students have found little difference between them. Please note that Woolf houses post-graduate students only.

Each college has classrooms, lecture theatres, student lounges (bars), recreation rooms, a dining hall and bedrooms. The rooms are singles, with a bed, two chairs, desk, closet and (usually) a sink. There are shared shower, bath, and toilet facilities on each corridor. Maid service is included in the housing fee, but sheets, blankets, pillows and towels are not. Students can order bedding packs online or buy them from stores in town. Rooms do not have telephones, and storage space is limited. Rental refrigerators are not permitted. All rooms have internet access.

During vacations, you must completely empty your room and store your possessions, which is a major inconvenience. Meal allowances differ depending on the type of room. Please check the accommodation website for details. Housing is limited at the university, so college rooms are allocated primarily to first-year and overseas students. Second and third-year students are required to live off-campus.

## Student Apartments

Student apartments or flats have become the option of choice among many IU students at Kent. These self-catering accommodations are on campus and fully furnished. There are flats that are one level apartments with up to five or six roommates or larger townhouse-style living quarters with up to nine roommates.



Canterbury, England

Self-catering apartments are attractive because you can prepare your own food there, while also keeping the option of eating in any college cafeteria. Campus shops are located in central campus. They are called Kent Union Co-op. Some advantages of living in Park Wood Courts and Darwin College include the fact that rooms do not have to be vacated during vacations and there is one telephone (for campus calls only) available per house of five students.

For more information on housing options, please see:

[kent.ac.uk/accommodation/canterbury/undergraduate-accommodation](http://kent.ac.uk/accommodation/canterbury/undergraduate-accommodation)

## Medical Care & Immunizations

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There is a medical centre on campus which students have access to while they're studying at Kent. If you are feeling ill, it is advised that you call in advance to schedule an appointment. For more information, see: [umckent.co.uk/](http://umckent.co.uk/). The centre consists of three full time Partners, and two part-time Partners, Nursing Staff, Health Visitor, Midwife, Reception, Secretarial and Administrative Staff. There is also a nursing service located in Keynes College and a pharmacy on campus. It's best to call in advance to schedule an appointment. For more information see: [www.kent.ac.uk/medical/](http://www.kent.ac.uk/medical/)

The University of Kent recommends that students be immunized for meningitis, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) before arriving at the university. For details, see [kent.ac.uk/getting-started/health-and-wellbeing#medical-international](http://kent.ac.uk/getting-started/health-and-wellbeing#medical-international)

Kent also offers mental health services to students. The Wellbeing Services office provides free counseling to students.

## Health Insurance

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You will be covered by the National Health Service in Britain, provided your period of study is for six months or longer. Your IU fees include additional health insurance that is valid anywhere outside the U.S. You are required to pay cash at the time of treatment and then apply for reimbursement from the U.S. insurance company. Kent's International Office has the claim forms. Be sure you have cash to meet medical bills should they arise, especially when you are traveling outside Britain. Please see your *Getting Started* handbook for more information on the health insurance coverage.

Typically, it is recommended that you bring a full supply of any medications you must take along with a copy of your prescription. There are some prescriptions you can get filled via the Medical Centre, such as birth control, which is available to students free of charge. For most medications, it is best to plan ahead since medications cannot be mailed overseas.

## Money & Banking

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You may want to bring a small amount of U.S. currency to exchange when you first arrive in Britain so you have UK currency immediately to pay for incidentals.

If using your American debit card to make withdrawals, you should contact your bank in the U.S. regarding any fees or limitations associated with international withdrawals. You should also notify your bank(s) that you will be using your card abroad, including the locations and dates of when you expect to use it, so as to avoid having your card frozen.

You may bring a cashier's check to establish a bank account, but it can take two to four weeks for the U.S. check to be credited to your British bank account and the money in pounds made available to you. Once the account is established, you can have additional funds wired to your account.

NOTE: Students in the UK for less than six months can't open a UK bank account.

British banking procedures differ from those in the U.S., so you are advised to wait until after the orientation course presentation on banking before you open an account.

We would also recommend getting a credit card with no international fees.

For more information on living costs at the University of Kent, please see: [kent.ac.uk/finance-student/livingcosts.html](http://kent.ac.uk/finance-student/livingcosts.html)

## Working Abroad

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If you have obtained a student visa (academic year students), you can work part-time in England (up to 20 hours per week during the term). A jobshop on campus puts students in touch with jobs in Canterbury and on campus. If you are a fall or spring semester student entering the UK as a student visitor, you will not be eligible to work.

## Telephones

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Telephones are not provided in college study rooms in Britain. Most students bring their cell phone with them to Canterbury. There, you can purchase a local SIM card to replace your current card. This gives you a local phone number and access to data. You will need to be sure to check with your phone carrier about whether your phone is unlocked before leaving. You cannot switch out SIM cards on a locked phone.

We recommend that you set up a regular time to have your family call you or to call your family. Pre-paid calling cards are readily available. You may also wish to ask your long distance company about its calling card options. Students have also reported that using Skype and other internet phone services have been affordable ways of communicating with friends and family.



## Email & Computers

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You may use email at PCs in the computing laboratories, colleges, library and science laboratories. You will be issued an information packet for use of email during orientation week. With a Unix account, you can access your IU account, and by arrangement with UITS at IU, have your email forwarded to Kent.

To check which computer operating systems are supported and can be connected to the Kent network, visit: [kent.ac.uk/guides/software-for-students-and-staff](http://kent.ac.uk/guides/software-for-students-and-staff)

Most students bring their own computers or use computer clusters in the colleges and the library. Campus computers are PCs, not Macs. Be aware that you will need to pay to print, but you can add money to your printing account at machines around campus or online. It is helpful to save your Kent academic work on USB memory sticks to bring home and easily access all the work you did.

## Social Life

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The University of Kent offers lectures, a cinema, plays, clubs, rock band performances and other activities. The gymnasium has basketball and an indoor tennis and events arena, and there are outdoor playing fields on the campus. At “Freshers’ Fair” during welcome week, you will have an opportunity to find out about more than one hundred societies and clubs—everything from hiking and bicycling to theatre, singing, belly dancing, medieval warfare reenactment, and debating societies. Register for as many activities as you like. Since you do not have to pay membership dues right away, you will be able to attend a few initial meetings and discover which activities are worthwhile. These societies provide one of the best ways to meet English students.

The Student Union (upstairs in the Mandela Building) provides information regarding volunteer opportunities in the Canterbury community. Former program participants strongly recommend volunteerism as a means of getting involved in British society. More info: [kentunion.co.uk/](http://kentunion.co.uk/).

## Packing

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Pack light. Ask yourself, “Can I haul all my luggage from the airport to Canterbury? Am I willing to repack all these things and lug them to storage for both winter and spring vacations? Am I accounting for all the souvenirs, clothing and books I will accumulate in Europe and want to take home with me?”

British students are not bothered by being seen in the same clothes more than once in the same week. You will need warm clothing because, despite the fact that the temperature rarely falls below freezing in Canterbury, it is often windy and wet.

### Take the following:

- Warm clothing for rainy and cold weather
- At least one good outfit for special occasions
- Sturdy, comfortable, waterproof shoes (You will do lots of walking!)
- A lightweight raincoat with a hood and an umbrella
- Towels (not provided in colleges), or you can buy one when you get there.



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- Diary or journal
- Prescription for your glasses or contact lenses
- A full supply of medications you take regularly (All medication should be in the original bottle, with contents clearly labeled, to avoid customs hassles.)
- Typewritten copies of prescription for medications, using generic, not brand names
- Light sports equipment (i.e. cleats, gloves, clothing, etc.) if you plan to play a sport

Even with converters, many overseas students experienced difficulties, as college outlets are special. You can rent a kettle from your college very cheaply, and it is worth it to buy inexpensive small appliances (radios, clocks, etc.) here.

*Some items will be unnecessary, cumbersome or useless abroad. You should leave these at home:*

- Electrical appliances (They don't work well, even with converters.)
- A large wardrobe
- Clothes that need to be dry cleaned

## Suggested Reading

Don't leave home without the most recent edition of a good guidebook. The most highly recommended student travel guides are the *Let's Go* and *Lonely Planet* series. Other recommendations include *Culture Shock: Britain*, *Brit-think*, *Ameri-think* by Jane Walmsley and *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson.

## Vacation Travel

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### Trains

Traveling by train is the best way to see Europe. In most countries the trains are punctual, clean, comfortable, inexpensive, and they go nearly everywhere. You can usually save money by purchasing a rail pass. There are a number of attractive options, all of which are described in *Let's Go* and other student travel guides. Within Britain you can use a 16-25 Railcard. The best known is the Eurail pass, which is not valid in Britain and must be purchased in the U.S. Before you invest in any rail pass, check out the benefits of national rail passes sold for travel within a single country and individual point-to-point tickets.

### Coaches

You may also want to look into coach (bus) options for traveling in and out of Canterbury. National Express coaches are quite affordable for travel within Britain (Canterbury to London is about £7).

### Planes

Commercial air travel on standard carriers in Europe can be expensive although there are many budget airlines that operate out of London. The International Student Identity

Card entitles you to cheaper rates on some flights, and you may find good fares on the web through both traditional and budget airlines (i.e. Ryanair and easyJet) without using an ISIC.

## Bicycles

Many students found bicycling in Europe to be a very rewarding experience. You can take bikes onto the trains, and in many countries (most notably France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and England) people and roads are quite friendly to cyclists. You can camp out, or bike from hostel to hostel.


## Hitchhiking

Contrary to popular belief, hitchhiking in Europe can be dangerous. Never attempt to hitchhike. Hazards include road accidents, frequent thefts and increasing personal assaults.

## Hostels

Youth hostels provide clean, inexpensive, albeit spartan, accommodations throughout Western Europe. You may need a hostel card in order to spend the night at official Hostel International member hostels. Cards cost \$28 for the year and are available from Hostel International on the web at [hiayh.org](http://hiayh.org). You can also purchase memberships at any youth hostel overseas. Call ahead or visit [hostelworld.com](http://hostelworld.com) for reservations in big cities or on weekends.

“ “ No attempt to describe the British character can replace your own observations. It's good to be laid back. The American stereotype is loud & overbearing; you will get to know people better if you do not fit this image.



STUDENT ADVICE