

PREPARING FOR ARRIVAL IN THE UK AND STUDY AT SOAS AND IFCELS

We look forward to meeting you soon for the start of your IFCELS programme! New students complete an orientation programme on arrival which includes an introduction to your programme of study and covers enrolment and registration as well as registering with a doctor, applying for a bank account and using the SOAS library among other things.

However, you may have other questions about how best to prepare for your arrival or how to prepare for studying at SOAS and IFCELS and this document will try to answer them.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR MY ARRIVAL?

Please make sure you read all information you are sent very carefully, **especially with regard to visas and immigration.**

If you have not already read the **IFCELS Student Handbook** please do so now: <http://www.soas.ac.uk/ifcels/file41404.pdf> . It contains important information on accommodation, banking, health care, police registration, social activities and travel as well as important information on immigration procedures.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR LIFE IN THE UK?

The **British Council** website contains useful information for students coming to London: www.visitbritain.com/gb/en/things-do#pGGJKx1ES3gJMEGb.97

THE UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website has useful sections on preparing to come to the UK: <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice>

Food in the UK

<https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/living/food-drink>

UK Weather and What to Wear

<https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/living/weather>

British Council Blog

<https://www.visitbritain.com/gb/en/things-to-do-blog#BmbSJBw8jOvrZtW7.97>

London weather forecast

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/2643743>

Money and budgeting

<https://international.studentcalculator.org/>

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/international/ukliving/living-in-the-uk-living-expenses.html>

What to pack

www.soas.ac.uk/international/ukliving/living-in-the-uk-what-to-pack.html

HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY ENGLISH BEFORE I ARRIVE?

Try reading a quality English newspaper e.g.

The Guardian www.theguardian.com/uk

The Independent www.independent.co.uk/

The Financial Times www.ft.com/

The Times www.thetimes.co.uk/

(NB: At present the Guardian is available free online but you may need to register for an account with the other newspapers).

If you want to improve your speaking and listening skills you can try English language TV and radio. The [BBC website](http://www.bbc.co.uk) is huge and has a mass of interesting and useful background information on the UK as well as both UK and international news. You can also listen to the BBC radio channels live and selected programmes through the [iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/1/zh/programmes/iplayer) if it is available in your country. (BBC Radio 4 is recommended for news, current affairs, documentaries and discussion and the BBC World Service is particularly good for listening to more formal English)

www.bbc.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/worldserviceradio

You may also be interested in the following:

BBC Learning English site: www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/

www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/english

British Council Learning English: learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en

You could try writing a diary or journal every day in English to help you get used to expressing yourself in written English or try noting down the new vocabulary you come across each day in a reading or listening in a vocabulary note book.

Other useful websites are:

Using English for Academic Purposes - www.uefap.com/

Improving Grammar - www.ef.com/english-resources/english-grammar/

Vocabulary – Averil Coxhead’s Academic Word List -
www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist

Pronunciation - www.howjsay.com

Please also see the notes in the section below on How Can I Prepare for Study in a UK University for a list of further useful websites and apps.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR STUDYING IN A UK UNIVERSITY?

Prepare for Success is an interactive web learning tool for international students who are getting ready to come to the UK for study in higher education. It contains learning resources and activities to help you find out about different aspects of academic life in the UK and the skills needed for effective study. As well as preparing you for what to expect during your studies, the activities provide scope for English language improvement. The learning resources can be used in any order by clicking on a title. Alternatively, you can use them through the 'study pathways' page if you would like to search by skill or topic. There is a demo to watch if you would like more information on how to use the activities, and an interactive FAQs page where you can find simple answers to questions about study in the UK.

www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/

In particular you might like to look at:

- Differences in university study -
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/differences_in_university_study.html
- Adapting to a new life -
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/adapting_to_a_new_life.html
- Settling down to study -
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/settling_down_to_study.html

The BBC also produces an intermediate level animated series - **Learning English at University**: www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/english-at-university and the British Council produces a number of **Apps for University Students**: www.britishcouncil.org/english/academics/apps including pronunciation, IELTS, vocabulary, listening skills etc.

WHAT WILL STUDYING AT SOAS AND IFCELS BE LIKE?

In IFCELS you will be taught in small classes, usually around 12 students, and students participate in activities and exercises, discussing issues with each other in pairs or groups and with the teacher or lecturer. You are encouraged to ask questions and engage critically with ideas and theories. You will also spend time outside class completing homework, assignments, reading tasks and preparing for classes and seminars.

You might like to look at the following activities on Prepare for Success:

- Ways of being taught on your course:
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/ways_of_being_taught_on_your_course.html
- Studying independently:
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/studying_independently.html
- Critical thinking: www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/critical_thinking.html
- Taking part in seminars:
www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/taking_part_in_seminars.html

Have a look around the SOAS and IFCELS website or get to know SOAS through our radio station or via social media.

www.soas.ac.uk

www.soas.ac.uk/ifcels

Maps

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/soas-life/location/maps/>

How to get to SOAS

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/soas-life/location/travel/>

<http://content.tfl.gov.uk/standard-tube-map.pdf>

SOAS Radio

<https://soasradio.org/>

SOAS Youtube YouTube - [soasuniversity](https://www.youtube.com/soasuniversity)

View inaugural and taster lectures as well as films by and about SOAS students:

www.youtube.com/user/soasuniversity

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fd0ZpM3kZyU

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<https://twitter.com/SOASifcels> @soasifcels

<https://twitter.com/soassu> @soassu

<https://twitter.com/SOAS> @soas

Facebook - www.facebook.com/soasunioflondon

Instagram - soasuni www.instagram.com/soasuni/

Weibo - SOASLondon <https://weibo.com/SOASLondon>

Blogs - www.soas.ac.uk/blogs/study/

Any other questions? Please get in touch on ifcels@soas.ac.uk