



International Student
Pre Arrival Guide

September 2013

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Welcome

Sanjari International College provides students with all necessary information and services to make their stay in London as pleasant as possible.

Every year, the UK welcomes thousands of students from all over the world. Perhaps like you, they come here to experience the fantastic opportunities a UK education can offer, and the amazing social and cultural mix you can enjoy while living here.

This guide is designed to help you get ready for what we hope will be the experience of a lifetime, and it's packed with useful and important information. There's a lot to take in, so please take the time to read it carefully.

In its pages, you'll find everything you need to know, and what to do, before you leave home, as well as advice about your arrival in the UK, settling in, getting organised, and making the most of your new student life.

It includes information about immigration, fees and finances, preparing for your journey, travelling, the weather, the clothing you'll need, looking after yourself, studying, shopping, and enjoying yourself and more. So welcome to the UK. We look forward to seeing you.

Principal

Sanjari International College

129 Mile End Road

London, E1 4BG

United Kingdom

Phone: 020 7001 1000

Email: info@sicedu.org.uk

1 PREPARING FOR YOUR JOURNEY

Being well prepared for your journey makes life a lot easier. With this in mind, make sure you've got everything organised with plenty of time to spare before you leave home. You should plan your journey from your point of entry into the UK to your final destination, and know when and where you are supposed to arrive.

It is important you arrive in time for your welcome or orientation week. This is a part of the institution's overall welcome and helps international students settle into life in the UK. Usually the Administration/Student Support Office runs a welcome International or Orientation programme in beginning of each semester. The programme will provide you with dedicated local support and information to help you to settle more quickly. This includes support with opening a bank account, registering with the police, registering with a doctor or dentist, details about local shops and other useful information.

Make sure you have your student entry clearance before you travel to the UK. It is assumed that you will be arriving at an airport in the UK, although other methods of transport are available. If as the college is located close to central London, you may wish to book your flight into Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton, Stanstead or London City Airport.

1.1 Documents required for your journey

Certain documents are needed when you arrive at the airport in the UK, where you will be interviewed by immigration and health officials. It is therefore important that you bring with you:

- a valid passport, with a visa or UK entry clearance (if applicable)
- an air ticket
- vaccination certificates, if required
- an X-ray report, if required
- a letter of acceptance from College (Tier 4) -CAS
- documentary evidence that you have enough money to pay your tuition fees and accommodate yourself while studying (recent bank statements, proof of scholarship or sponsor's letter)
- Originals (or certified true copies) of any degree certificates or technical qualifications.

Make sure you keep the above documents and the following in your hand luggage:

- some warm clothing

- some British currency
- a list of what you are carrying in your luggage in case you have to make an insurance claim
- any prescribed drugs or medicine you are taking, plus a letter from your doctor explaining what they are
- an address, telephone number and travel instructions to your final destination
- the First steps pre-departure pack
- a reference letter from your bank in your own country – this will be useful when you come to open a bank account in the UK.
- Money

1.2 Money

You need to order British currency and travellers' cheques and bring enough money to cover your immediate needs on your arrival in the UK, including customs charges, rail fares and any emergency expenses. About £250 should be enough, but if you have any family with you, you will need correspondingly more. If you are travelling to the UK from a country outside the EU and carrying more than 10,000 euros you will need to declare this to customs. It is also likely that you will have to pay a deposit for your accommodation before you move in. This is normally the equivalent of one month's rent but it can be substantially more, depending on the type of accommodation you are renting. You will need to ensure that you have sufficient funds immediately available to cover this. To check the banknotes used in the UK and for further information go to: www.bankofengland.co.uk.

1.3 Transfer of funds

If you are planning to transfer extra money to the UK you should arrange this before you leave your home country. Also before you leave home, check whether you need permission to transfer money to the UK and whether your government has restrictions on the amount of money you can take out of your country. Opening a bank account in the UK can take a few weeks.

1.4 Clothing and other items

You should have enough warm clothing for your flight and subsequent journey. Several layers of lightweight clothes are better than a single shirt or dress. It is probably cheaper and easier to buy warm winter clothing in the UK, rather than in your home country. It is worth bringing items of your national dress to wear at social events, and photographs of family and home may be of

interest to new friends who would like to learn about other cultures. It is useful to bring some passport-sized photographs of yourself.

1.5 Luggage

You will have a free baggage allowance, which will be shown on your air ticket; this is usually from 20kg with a restricted weight of 32kg per single item of luggage. Only essential personal possessions may be brought in addition to research materials. You may be charged for excess baggage if you exceed the baggage allowance, so check with the airline before you leave if you are not sure of your allowance. You should make a list of everything you bring.

1.6 Insurance

You should always take out travel insurance covering your journey to the UK. This should cover delays, medical emergencies and the cost of replacing any belongings if they are lost on your journey. If you are coming to the UK for less than six months you should also take out travel and medical insurance for the duration of your stay.

1.6 Personal security

The UK is generally a safe place to be, but as with anywhere – especially if you're new to it – it pays to take a few common sense precautions. For example, always carry your money in an inside pocket, not in your back pocket or the outer pockets of coats or jackets. If you want to leave your coat or jacket anywhere, then take your money with you. And if you carry a handbag, keep it by you and don't leave it unattended, even for short periods. Don't carry large amounts of cash with you – just enough to meet your day-to-day needs. Order travellers' cheques in small denominations –£10 and £20 – and remember to keep a note of their serial numbers in case you lose them.

Avoid leaving luggage, bags or briefcases in waiting rooms, on railway platforms or on luggage racks where you can't see them. It's much safer to carry valuables like cameras, radios and computers with you, and again, make a note of their serial numbers. Take care of your mobile phone and try to avoid using it in crowded places or when you're walking along busy streets. If your phone is stolen, report it (and give your number) to the network operator and the police – to minimise the chance of thieves using it. Finally, take special care of your passport, tickets and other personal documents. Make sure that your time in the UK is safe and enjoyable.

1.7 Preparations for your course

Some courses require you to write a dissertation or seminar papers. If you are on such a course you should bring with you important documents relating to your own country, which may not be available in the UK. If you want to bring items of high value such as a computer or audio equipment, you should also bring receipts showing when and where they were purchased. British customs officials may ask you to certify that the equipment is for your own use and that you are not importing it permanently.

1.8 Checklist with the College

Once your preparations for arrival are complete, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you checked if you are able to book an airport collection and have you booked it?
- Have you received information on how to get to the place of study that is Sanjari International College from the airport, and how much it will cost?
- Do you know exactly when and where you are supposed to arrive at the college?
- Have you told the college of study when you are likely to arrive?
- Do you have a telephone number for someone you can contact at the college, in case you have problems on your journey?
- Do you have a contact when you arrive at the college or other meeting point, e.g. the railway station?
- Have you planned your journey from your point of entry into the UK to your final destination?

The College address is:

Sanjari International College

129 Mile End Road

London, E1 4BG

United Kingdom

Phone: 020 7001 1000

Email: info@sicedu.org.uk

1.9 Checklist for your journey

Once your preparations for arrival are complete, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you bought travel tickets (including connecting flight to regional airports, if required) and travel insurance?
- Have you made all the necessary arrangements for family members that are coming with you?
- Have you obtained a letter from your doctor for any prescribed drugs you may need to bring with you?
- Have you ordered British currency and travellers' cheques for your immediate arrival expenses?
- Have you checked whether you need permission to transfer money to the UK?
- Have you checked whether your own government has restrictions on the amount of money you can take out of your country?
- Have you read the Creating confidence or Safety first booklets?
- Have you taken out personal possessions and medical insurance?
- Have you checked with your local British Mission what you must declare at customs and what you are not allowed to bring into the UK?
- Have you weighed your baggage to ensure that it is within your baggage allowance and is easily transportable for your onward journey?

2 ARRIVING IN THE UK

If you are travelling by sea you will probably arrive at one of the UK ports – Dover, Folkestone, Harwich, Hull, Portsmouth or Southampton – from where you can travel to your final destination in the UK. These major ports have many onward coach and rail connections to London.

You can also arrive in London on the Eurostar train using the Channel Tunnel. Rail services throughout Europe connect in Paris and Brussels with the Eurostar service and, on arrival in London, connections can be made by rail throughout the UK from one of the main London stations.

However, most international students travel by air and your first sight of the UK is likely to be an airport. If you are travelling by air you will usually arrive at Gatwick, Heathrow, London City, Luton or Stansted airports, all of which are convenient.

Certain nationalities require a 'direct airside transit visa' even to transit to another flight within the airport, which means that you cannot leave the airport under any circumstances. Certain other nationalities can 'transit without visa' provided that the transfer is within the same airport, and you remain within the airport to take an onward flight.

If your air journey involves a connection, whether in Europe or in the UK, ask the airline staff to check you and your baggage through to your final destination, as this will make your transit through the connection airport much easier. At first sight an airport can appear a difficult and confusing place, but if you follow the steps below, getting through it is actually quite easy. These are the steps you must take:

- Follow the sign for 'Arrivals' unless you are transferring to another plane at the same airport. If you are transferring to another plane, follow the 'Flight connections' sign and any further instructions.
- Arrivals' will take you to passport control.
- As you approach passport control you will see electronic screens; these will show you which zone you will need to go through. Make sure you join the right queue or you could waste a lot of time.
- All passengers must go through the immigration zone dealing with their flight.
- Note that there is one zone for passengers who have UK, EEA or Swiss national passports and one or more zones for all other passport holders.
- The immigration officer will want to see: that your passport is **up-to-date, that your documents are in order, your landing card from the plane, and, if required, a valid visa.**
- If you do not require prior entry clearance or a visa, you will also need to show a letter of acceptance as a student from the college and proof that you are able to pay for your course and living expenses without working in the UK, for example, bank statements for the last three months and/or a sponsor's letter.
- If you are bringing family to live with you in the UK, and they are not EEA nationals, they must have obtained entry clearance from a British Mission before travelling to the UK.

- The immigration officer needs to be satisfied that you meet the immigration rules for students and that you intend to leave the UK at the end of your studies.
- Another part of the immigration process is health control: you might be asked to undergo a brief, routine health check by the airport doctor, which may include an X-ray as part of a short medical examination. The health check will take place in a separate room. Afterwards you will have to return to immigration control.
- As long as your documents are in order, you should pass through immigration smoothly. But if you find you need any help for any reason, there are two things you can do:
 - Ask the immigration officer to telephone to the college (keep the telephone number with you).
 - Ask to see a representative of the Immigration Advisory Service. The service has offices at most major airports and seaports, and can also be reached on the following numbers

Central Officer	020 7357 6917
Helpline	020 7378 9191
Detention freephone (free call)	0800 435427
From Birmingham airport	706 9765
From Dover East (seaport)	240 1224
From Dover West (seaport)	240 2461
From Gatwick airport	533385
From Heathrow airport	020 8814 1559
From Manchester airport	834 9942
For all Scottish airports	0870 606 7766

If you have travelled by Eurostar train through the Channel Tunnel your passport and documents will be checked on the train, and you may be asked further questions when you arrive in London. If you are driving you will pass through UK immigration at the terminal in France before taking your car on to the shuttle train.

2.1 Police registration

Your passport or identity card will state whether or not you have to register with the Overseas Visitors Records Office (180 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LK, telephone +(44) (0)20 7230 1600, Monday to Friday, 0900 to 1630). If you are required to register with the police, you must do so within seven days of your arrival in the UK. Your entry clearance stamp will probably

tell you to register with the police. If your entry clearance tells you to register, your husband/ wife and/or child are likely to be given an entry clearance or stamp that tells them to register too.

When registering you will be charged a registration fee (currently £34), and must take your passport and two photographs of yourself (unless you are registering in London, in which case only one photograph is required). Your student adviser at your place of study will explain, if necessary, how to register. Each time you change your address, status, or extend your permission to be in the UK you must renew your police registration. There is no charge unless you have lost your original registration document. EEA nationals and Commonwealth citizens do not have to register.

2.2 Customs control

Once you are clear of passport control you can proceed to the baggage reclaim area, where you can collect your luggage. Above each baggage carousel is an electronic display unit. Find the one that shows your flight number, as this will be the carousel that has your luggage on it. If any item of your luggage does not appear, find a representative of the airline on which you travelled and fill in a lost-luggage form.

At UK airports there are normally three exits through customs – a green channel if you are travelling from outside the European Union and have nothing to declare; a red channel if you are travelling from outside the European Union and have goods to declare; and a blue channel if you are travelling from an airport within the European Economic Area, where your luggage has already been cleared through customs control.

The notices in the customs areas will tell you if you need to declare anything you have brought into the country. If in doubt, check with one of the customs officers before passing through customs control. Even if you pass through the green channel, the customs officers may ask you to open your luggage for checking.

For advice on importing personal effects and goods into the UK, you can check with HM Revenue and Customs. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) have a website – www.defra.gov.uk – that gives information on illegal importation of foods and plants, to prevent animal and plant pests and diseases from coming into the UK.

When you have come through customs, you will have completed all the formalities and will have officially arrived in the UK

3 ONWARD TRAVEL: HOW TO GET FROM THE AIRPORT TO YOUR FINAL DESTINATION

3.1 Onward travel

You should receive instructions from your place of study on how to get there before you leave. You will probably want to arrive in the UK at one of the three major London airports: Gatwick, Heathrow or Stansted. There are many other airports throughout the UK, most of which have excellent connections through Amsterdam, Brussels, Frankfurt, London or Paris.

For information about Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Southampton airports check out the British Airport Authority website at: www.baa.co.uk.

There are also increasing numbers of direct flights to the larger non-London airports such as Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle. You can check out the institution's website for onward travel details and Visit Britain should be able to provide travel information if they are contacted well ahead of time: www.visitbritain.com.

If you have not already arranged onward travel from the airport, the general information desk at the airport will advise you on the best way to travel to college. There are also commercial information desks where you can find information about onward travel. Should arranged earlier, the college will send a staff member to meet new international students at the airport (at London airports: Gatwick, Heathrow or Stansted, conditions apply) or local train station. If they offer this service they should have sent details of it in your information pack.

3.2 Telephone

Public telephones or 'payphones' are available in the UK. They operate either with cash or a phonecard (which you can buy from post offices and some shops), or with a credit card. If necessary, you can contact the operator by dialling 100 (155 for the international operator).

Mobile phones can be more expensive to use than landlines, although if you choose your tariff and service provider in the UK carefully (most contracts will give you free minutes and text messages), then this might not be the case.

3.3 Checklist for onward travel

Once your preparations for arrival are complete, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you got instructions on how to get to the college?
- Have you checked out the location of the college on the internet?
- Have you seen a map of the UK and the location of the college?
- Do you know the length of time of any onward journey from the airport?
- Do you know about the information desks at the airport?
- Do you know how to use public transport, e.g. the Underground, buses and trains?
- Have you arranged accommodation if you need to stay overnight in London?
- Have you made sure you obtained a receipt for your deposit that includes the date, the amount paid and the words 'deposit for accommodation'?

3.4 Deferments:

The UKBA allows students to arrive up to 10 days after the published intake date. Some visas may take longer to process; therefore Sanjari International College will provide students with a deferment letter providing that they inform the College that they will not be able to arrive in time for the published intake date. If the student does not notify the College within the valid period of arrival, the student will be reported to UKBA as a "non-arrival."

4 SETTLING IN

4.1 Induction:

Sanjari International College provides students with an extensive Induction programme to help them adapt to their new surroundings. The Induction normally lasts for a day. Students need to enroll and bring:

- The original Passport
- The original Visa
- Original Academic Qualifications

- 2 Passport size photos

Students need to attend the induction programme to know the policies and procedures of Sanjari International College in more detail. The following topics will be discussed:

- Class Schedules
- Term Dates and Holidays
- Visa Extensions and Procedures
- Attendance Policies
- Course information and exam information
- Letters
- The organisational structure of Sanjari International College
- Communication Policies at Sanjari International College
- Malpractice and plagiarism policy
- Complaints policy and procedure
- Discipline policy
- Equal opportunity and diversity policy
- Health and safety policy
- First aid policy
- Privacy policy
- Behavior Policy
- Bullying policy
- Student engagement policy
- Academic appeal policy
- Student Welfare and support
- Other relevant policies
- Student union and other activities and events

Please note that induction week occurs 4 times a year before commencing of each semester. If a student arrives late for his/her course, the student will not be able to attend Induction.

4.2 Accommodation

It's always best to arrange accommodation in the UK before you leave home, but if for any reason you haven't been able to do this, the college student support and welfare is here to provide you with some practical advice. Think carefully about your needs. For example, how close is the accommodation to the college? Is there good public transport? How much will it

cost? Are you near shops and facilities? How big is your room? How secure is it? Will you have enough quiet and privacy for study? And so on. To have the best chance of securing accommodation at your place of study you must:

- apply as soon as you can
- fully complete any accommodation forms and return them before the deadline date
- confirm your accommodation arrangements with the accommodation office at your place of study before you arrive in the UK
- be prepared to have to pay for accommodation in advance, if necessary
- not bring any family with you unless you have booked accommodation for them in advance.

4.3 Checklist

- View the property
- Tenancy agreement
- Deposit
- Inventory
- Rent book
- Payment of bills
- Council Tax

4.4 Banks and money

Long-term students need to open a bank account as soon as possible, ideally with one of the banks on campus, or nearby. Many banks offer special facilities and schemes for students and the bank's financial advisers can help you organise your account.

You will need to take your passport and the letter of acceptance from your place of study with you, together with proof of your addresses at home and in the UK, and a reference and statements from your home bank when you go to open your account.

Setting up a bank account before your arrival should avoid difficulties and delays, and Barclays are the only bank we are aware of that can activate your account before confirmation of your UK address: www.barclays.com/studentandfamily.

Most banks in the UK are open from 0930 to 1630 Monday to Friday (some are also open on Saturday mornings). But if you have a cash card for your account you can use a cash machine at any time of the day, on any day of the week.

Scottish banks issue their own notes and all notes are legal currency throughout the UK.

Try to find out as much as you can about banking in the UK before you get here. Visit the website at www.bba.org.uk. You need to know how may you pay the fees, so you'll know what facilities you'll need. Then contact your bank in your home country and ask:

- how best to transfer your money to the UK
- about running a bank account in the UK
- whether your bank has a special relationship with any UK banks
- whether you can use cash cards from your home bank in cash machines in the UK.

It is important not to overspend on your account, as you can incur charges if your account is overdrawn. If you need to spend more money than you have in your account, then you need to talk to the bank's student adviser about arranging an overdraft: www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk.

4.5 Medical reports

You should have a health check at least four weeks before you leave for the UK. Don't leave this to the last minute, as you won't have enough time to readjust to any medication before starting out on your journey and course of study. You should also obtain a copy of your chest X-ray report and carry it with your offer letter, as you may have to produce this at passport control. This may avoid having to have another X-ray.

4.6 Medical costs in the UK

If you are on a course lasting six months or more you can get treatment from the British National Health Service (NHS), including free doctor's examinations and hospital treatment, from the beginning of your stay. This also applies to your dependents (spouse and/or children). You should register with a doctor as an NHS patient and take your passport, proof of your UK address and the letter of enrolment from your place of study as proof of your student status.

If you are on a course lasting less than six months you may still ask a doctor to treat you under the NHS, but they may refuse to do so, and you will not be entitled to NHS hospital treatment (except in an emergency). You should therefore take out health insurance, unless you come from an EEA country or a country with a reciprocal agreement for free health care in the UK.

Reciprocal health care agreements are limited to hospital treatment of some NHS illnesses that arise during your visit to the UK (i.e. which did not exist before your arrival).

You will have to pay a fixed contribution towards the costs of any medicines prescribed, some other GP services (e.g. vaccinations) and any eye treatment.

If you are registered with the NHS you are entitled to the services of an NHS dentist, although dental treatment is not free.

If you are ill and unable to attend your training course you must inform your academic tutor of the cause of your illness.

To check symptoms of illness or to find your nearest doctor, optician, dentist or pharmacy you can use NHS Direct at www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/en/checksymptoms/findyournearest

4.7 Climate and Clothing

The UK has a temperate climate, with few extremes. But the weather here is famously changeable. So be prepared. It can be quite wet and cold in the winter, (roughly November to March). So a warm topcoat, hat, scarf, gloves and an umbrella are a good idea. It also gets dark early. Summers can occasionally be showery and overcast, but are mostly pleasant and rarely extremely hot. The days are long and it stays light until late in the evening.

4.8 Keeping Healthy

The best way to stay healthy while you're in the UK is the same way to stay healthy when you're at home: eat healthy foods, exercise fairly regularly, and make sure you get enough sleep. Eating a balanced diet (a selection of foods) can be a challenge when you first arrive – the food in the UK may be very different from what you're used to. Try to eat, every day:

- lots of fresh fruit and vegetables
- some bread, potatoes, rice, noodles or pasta
- some protein, such as beans, lentils, eggs, fish or meat
- some milk, cheese, yogurt or soy products (e.g. soy milk, tofu).

Try to get some exercise several times a week. If you don't like sports, try an exercise class, or go for a long walk. Travelling to a new country with a different climate and different foods can cause small health upsets. You may develop minor illnesses such as coughs and colds. If you haven't had these symptoms before, they may seem worrying at first, but don't be alarmed – these problems are usually easy to treat and advice can be given by a pharmacist at your local chemist. You may need to make an appointment to see your doctor, and remember to explain any changes in your lifestyle that might be affecting your health.

4.9 Meningitis

When you have registered with a local doctor you should make an appointment to be immunised against meningitis. This immunisation is free of charge and provides protection against the disease for three to five years. Meningitis is an infection that causes inflammation (swelling) of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. Although the infection is quite rare, it is extremely dangerous and can result in deafness, blindness, loss of limbs or even death. Meningitis can develop very quickly and sometimes within a matter of hours. Early symptoms of meningitis are similar to flu, such as feeling feverish or suffering from an aching back or joints, headaches and vomiting. If any of the following symptoms develop then you must get medical help urgently:

- severe aversion to light
- a rash that doesn't fade when pressure is applied (you can test this by pressing the side of a glass against the rash; if the rash doesn't fade and change colour under the pressure, contact your doctor immediately)
- disorientation
- loss of consciousness
- leading to coma.

Further information is available from your college or university nurse or from the Meningitis Research Foundation, free number 080 8800 3344 or on the internet at: www.immunisation.org.uk or www.meningitis.org

4.10 Studying

Study methods in the UK may be very different to your own. Students in the UK use a variety of textbooks and often have to write extensively, use computers, and draw their own conclusions and analyses. In lectures and seminars note-taking is encouraged, and in small group tutorials

you should be prepared to participate actively. You may have to carry out original research or participate in practical experiments and projects.

4.11 Personal and academic support during your stay

You may find that you need to speak to someone regarding problems you are experiencing that are adversely affecting your studies. In the first instance, you should discuss any problems affecting your studies with your personal tutor or Student Support or Welfare or personal supervisor.

4.12 Checklist for studying

- Keep in regular contact with your personal academic tutor/student support officer at your and let him or her know about any problems you may have that affect your studies.
- The student support officer, as well as the academic staff in your department, and your fellow students, can offer support and advice if you are having difficulties of any kind.
- Punctuality and attendance are particularly important. Absence without a valid reason, e.g. illness, will be looked upon very seriously and may be reported to the UK Border Agency.
- You should let your place of study know of any doubts you have about the relevance or level of your course of study before you depart for the UK. It is extremely difficult to make changes to your course, course level or extensions to the agreed period of study after your arrival, and these are sometimes simply not permitted by the UK Border Agency.

4.13 Checklist for settling in

- Have you arranged suitable accommodation?
- Do you know about Council Tax?
- Have you arranged your finances?
- Have you had a health check?
- Have you arranged medical insurance, if you are not covered under the NHS?
- Do you know what to do if you become ill?
- Are you prepared for the differences in study methods used in the UK, and do you know where to seek advice if you have any difficulties?

5 OUT AND ABOUT

5.1 Shopping

If you are living in self-catering accommodation, shopping for food is likely to be a priority. Eating the right food, and enough of it, is vital for keeping healthy. You may find it easier to shop in self-service shops or supermarkets, where you can use a basket or trolley provided for you to carry the goods you intend to buy.

There are smaller shops, where you can buy specialised foods from overseas, and street markets, which are particularly good for fresh fruit and vegetables, often sold at low prices.

Because of the unpredictability of the British weather it is a good idea to wear several layers of clothes, a waterproof coat and sturdy shoes. An umbrella is essential. You can find good-quality, reasonably priced clothes in high street stores, but you can find bargains in street markets, and in the secondhand shops run by charities. These shops often have clothes that are almost new, at very low prices.

5.2 Religion

Exploring life in the UK does not mean having to give up your own culture or religion. In the UK there are many people practicing various faiths, and as the number of people from different cultures has grown, so have the facilities that allow them to lead a life according to their religious beliefs. Places of worship in London almost invariably include Hindu and Buddhist temples, mosques and synagogues, particularly if there is a large ethnic population. Today there are few places, other than remote areas, where the religious needs of people from other countries are not met. The UK is a multicultural society: people from ethnic minorities now live in most areas and are a well-accepted and well-integrated part of the population. However, if you do experience any racial prejudice, speak to your student welfare officer

5.3 Travelling around

Once you have established your study routine, you may want to take a break from your studies and travel beyond the London. Your time in the UK would be incomplete without spending some of that time enjoying what the country has to offer. The cheapest way to travel is by coach – trains are more comfortable, and a lot quicker, but more expensive.

You can travel around quite cheaply with a student rail card – or coach card. Full-time students attending courses of at least 20 weeks at a UK educational institution can buy a young persons' rail card. You can get more information about student travel discounts from information centres at coach or railway stations, or ask at your place of study.

Your time in the UK can be a truly happy and rewarding experience – all you need to do is plan properly and keep in mind the information you are given at your pre-departure briefing. Take the opportunity to read this booklet and you can be assured that there will always be people you can turn to for help and advice, wherever you choose to study in the UK.