

FSU London Safety Guide

2021-2022

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Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to provide up to date, relevant information about safety and security at the FSU London Campus. This guide is updated annually and is produced in accordance with the Federal Jeanne Clery Act of 1990.

Safety and security in London is always uppermost in our minds as we strive to provide all students with the best possible international education. Studying abroad is all about experiencing new cultures and learning new perspectives, by living outside of what is familiar. Study abroad also has additional difficulties to consider due to unfamiliar laws and customs of the host country. Our goal is to enable our students to experience all the benefits of study abroad and to equip them to handle the challenges as safely as possible.

The current world climate makes the goals of studying abroad—becoming better educated world citizens—seem all the more relevant and immediate. We have always provided students and faculty with instructions on what to do if there is a crisis situation. We closely follow the advice of the State Department, US Embassy and London Metropolitan Police in formulating our security procedures.

After reading this guide one should have knowledge of FSU London's policies and procedures regarding safety and security. Specifically, knowledge of how to make educated/thoughtful decisions about personal safety in London, what to do if they become a victim of crime, and what to do in the event of an emergency.

Important meetings and documents

In addition to the *Safety Guide* the following meetings and documents also pertain to student safety in London and form an integral part of our safety procedures:

Welcome Reception

On the day of arrival, safety and security are reviewed with students. This includes fire safety and emergency procedures. FSU London has comprehensive emergency procedures set in place should an incident occur, such as an act of terrorism, fire or public emergency.

Student Orientation

There are mandatory orientation sessions starting the day after arrival in London. It is vital that all students attend these sessions, which cover essential information for their stay in London, including crime prevention and personal safety.

Alcohol Awareness Session with education worker from the local National Health Service Trust

As part of orientation, students are required to attend this session providing important information directly relevant to personal safety and crime prevention, as well as to personal health.

Student Handbook

Students receive a Student Welcome Pack upon arrival in London. This document details the rules and regulations that students should be aware of whilst at FSU London. It also contains a lot of very useful information about the local area and services available to students, including important safety advice.

Emergency contact cards

All students and overseas faculty receive a wallet-sized emergency contact information card, which should be carried at all times. It contains the emergency cell phone numbers

for members of the London administrative staff, specifically the contact information for the resident Program Assistants. Students should feel free to call staff on these numbers at any hour if their safety is at risk. It also contains the contact numbers for emergency services, the local US Embassy, and the International Programs office.

Safety on Campus

FSU London is located in Bloomsbury, a rather safe and highly desirable neighbourhood of central London. However, as we are located in the very centre of the London, we have taken various precautions to ensure safety.

Swipe cards

There is a swipe card entry system and CCTV cameras are located around the study centre buildings. **Swipe cards should be carried at all times when you are in the building.** If you do not carry your card you may be challenged by members of staff, or other students, and asked to leave the building. This is a security measure, to ensure we know that everyone who is in the building is meant to be there. We instruct everyone to be particularly careful of people trying to walk in behind them as the door closes and feel free to ask to see their card. If a swipe card is lost/misplaced it should be reported to reception immediately so that it can be deactivated.

Visitor Policy

Due to COVID specific re-opening plans, no visitors are allowed to the building presently. This will be reviewed on a regular basis. When this policy is lifted, visitors are required to sign in at the Reception desk. Visiting hours are between 8am – 11pm. Anyone who hosts a visitor during the hours of 11pm and 8am will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include a fine and can lead to dismissal from the program. FSU London staff are very strict about afterhours guests as allowing non-program individuals in the building after hours provides the potential for serious incidents that could compromise student safety and security. A list of local accommodation options for guests can be found in the Administration office. If a guest is brought into FSU London, the student assumes responsibility for their actions/damage to property during their time at the centre.

Staff

Staff are available at the reception desk 24 hours a day. Between the hours of 5pm and 8am a security guard is present. If there is an emergency and need for assistance, please contact the guard or one of the Program Assistants living on site. If the emergency services need to be called out (police, fire or ambulance) a member of staff must be notified.

Sometimes staff will need to access the flats for cleaning or maintenance work. These staff members will always have a swipe card and will usually be wearing FSU London uniforms. Staff will provide ID should there be any question of their identity.

Reporting a Crime

If you are a victim of crime you should call the police at 999. Please report the incident to the administrative staff as soon as possible so that we can provide assistance. We are here to assist and provide support. A crime report will need to be filled out for statistical purposes, but if preferred, this report can be anonymous. Occasionally, Administrative staff may notify all students of an incident, via memos on social media or email, in order to warn people to be vigilant. If the incident involved a current student, this process will not be carried out unless the victim provides their consent.

Crime Alerts

If a crime has occurred, which requires notifying the student body, an email and social media message will be sent to give students instructions and emergency information. If deemed necessary, telephone calls are made to student mobiles by admin staff.

The Bloomsbury Safer Neighbourhood Team

Bloomsbury Ward has a dedicated team of local police officers and Police Community Support Officers who are committed to making our area a safe and pleasant place to live. If you have a concern about issues such as vandalism or aggressive begging, you can contact the community team directly 020 8721 2693 or Bloomsbury.SNT@met.police.uk.

Secure your belongings

The bedrooms in the Study Centre apartments have small safes to keep valuables in. Locks are given to students during check-in. It is advised that students keep their safes locked at all times and ensure the key cannot be easily found. We do not recommend bringing priceless items (such as family heirlooms) to London.

Above all, we highlight the importance of closing and locking the flat doors. If an intruder did gain entry to the building (by following someone in, for example) they would look for open doors and could have access to valuable belongings.

Fire Safety

The U.K. has strict fire codes to which any institution must adhere. We at the Study Centre follow both U.K. law and FSU requirements in this regard.

When the fire alarm rings, everyone must exit the building immediately and by the most direct route. Do not ignore the fire alarm! The Study Centre is a historic building and a fire would spread quickly. Use the stairs to evacuate unless they are blocked, in which case follow signs to an alternative exit route. If a fire door is locked do not hesitate to break the glass panel of the emergency door release to exit the building.

The assembly point is Dyott Street along the east side of of the Trade Union Congress (TUC), the building directly across the street from FSU London. One must remain out of the building and across the street until the FSU London designated fire warden has indicated that it is safe to go back inside the building.

The roof must only be accessed in the event of a fire that blocks the stairs. Any other use of the roof of the building, including in the courtyard, will be subject to disciplinary action.

In accordance with UK law, there is a strict non-smoking policy in the Study Centre. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the premises.

Our fire safety equipment is inspected and tested regularly. The fire extinguishers are checked weekly by our in-house maintenance staff and if any irregularities in pressure are reported, our fire extinguisher company is called out to replace the extinguisher. They also conduct regular monitoring of all fire extinguishers. A "bell test" of the alarms is conducted weekly. Any faults that occur (either in these tests, or that are observed by in-house security and maintenance staff) are reported without delay, and the engineers are called out immediately. Our alarm company comes in on a quarterly basis for in-depth inspection and maintenance of the entire system (detectors, sounders, and panel).

We hold a minimum of one fire drill a term, which is conducted and monitored by maintenance and administrative staff.

If a student has chosen independent housing, it is their responsibility to familiarise themselves with the fire procedures of their housing.

Building Alarms

Many of the doors to the building are alarmed for security reasons. They are on a timer and must be closed at certain times of day. Other doors are alarmed if they are left open too long, to alert the security staff to close them. There should be no potential confusion between door alarms and the fire alarm – they sound very different and the fire alarm is much louder.

Safety off Campus

London is a relatively safe city with a low violent crime rate compared to US cities of an equivalent size. However, petty theft such as pick pocketing and bag snatching is common, be aware and look after belongings when out in the city. As in any large city, be street wise and be alert to dangerous places or situations.

Students are advised to register any valuables (iPads, cell phones, etc) on www.immobilise.com. This website is an online database used by police. Registered items have a higher chance of being recovered once lost or stolen, as well as aiding in the prosecution of the thief.

Tips to avoid becoming a victim of crime:

- Do not carry your wallet or phone in your back pocket.
- Do not keep valuables in a backpack – or take it off and hold it in busy areas.
- Make sure you fasten your purse and wear it across your body if it has a strap, so that it is not easily accessible.
- Do not leave your belongings on the floor in a pub, restaurant, shop, theatre or movie theatre. Use the handbag clips available in many pubs, or loop the strap around your ankle or under a chair leg.
- Be aware of people trying to distract your attention.
- Cover your PIN number at cash points.
- Don't use an ATM if it looks strange or is in a non-descript area- if possible use an ATM located inside of a bank.
- Do not carry your passport with you, except when traveling out of the country.
- Make copies of all your important documents and credit card numbers, including the numbers to call to cancel your cards and have them replaced. Keep these copies locked in your safe.
- Be conscious of your belongings in busy places and tourist spots like the tube, bus stops, McDonalds, Starbucks, Leicester Square, Oxford Street, and so on.
- Think about what you need to take with you – do you really need all your credit cards and all your cash?
- Remember that alcohol consumption impairs your judgment.
- Set aside some money separate from your wallet, so you can always get home.
- Do not walk alone at night – take a licensed cab or use transportation Apps such as Gett . Uber is not recommended.
- Never accept a ride from someone offering you a taxi – a Metropolitan Police campaign against unlicensed taxis has highlighted the dangers involved in accepting such rides. For safety, hail a black cab or book a minicab through a firm licensed by Transport for London. We do not recommend Uber.

- Avoid dark streets and alleyways – use busy, well-lit streets, even if you have to take the long way round.
- Use your sixth sense – avoid dangerous looking people and situations, even if it means turning around or crossing the street.
- If you think someone is suspicious – make momentary eye contact, so they know you could identify them to the police.
- Make sure you know where you are going – study the map or directions to the location before going out.

If you are attacked or have your belongings stolen:

- Give up your belongings to avoid being hurt.
- Scream and shout to attract attention.
- Consider purchasing a personal alarm – the noise can startle and throw an attacker off-guard.
- Pretend to throw up – the person’s instinct will be to move away.
- Report it to the police by calling 999.
- Report it to a member of staff (you can contact admin staff members and Program Assistants using the telephone numbers on the emergency card). An example of the form that will be used for gathering information regarding the crime is included at the end of this document.
- Cancel credit cards.
- Counselling can be arranged should you need it.

UK law regarding self-defence and illegal weapons

You have the legal right to defend yourself if you are being attacked, or think you may be attacked. Be aware that you may only use force that is “reasonable and necessary”. If possible, it is best to avoid all together any situation which may turn violent.

You should be aware that all dangerous weapons, including firearms, knives and **mace/pepper spray are illegal in this country.**

In accordance with UK law and FSU regulations, students are strictly prohibited from keeping or using firearms, fireworks, explosives, knives, and other weapons (including pellet, air guns, and paintball guns), or other dangerous articles or substances in University housing.

Security Alerts

London’s emergency services are very well-trained and well-equipped to deal with these types of crises. FSU London also has emergency plans in place in the event of a major security alert in London, ready to implement it if necessary. Like all Londoners, we are as prepared as we can be, and we carry on with life as usual.

Please consult the handout, *FSU Incident Response*, which is in your Welcome Pack, for more detailed information, such as directions to our meeting points.

Common sense precautions

- Use the “Buddy System” – always tell your roommates where you are going (even if it is just to the supermarket) and when you expect to be back.
- Fill out **Travel Forms** if you are going to be spending the night away from the study centre. Travel forms are an **essential** way for us to account for everyone in the event of a crisis. The

online form is located at the top right corner of either of these websites:

<http://international.fsu.edu/> or <https://international.fsu.edu/london/>

- Register your cell phone number with the administration office, so we can contact you in an emergency (we will not use it for any other purpose). We will ask for mobile numbers at the start of the semester.
- Always carry your FSU Emergency Contact card with you.
- Always carry some form of ID with you. Driver's License is recommended and widely accepted.
- **Never leave belongings unattended** in any public place, even including the student centre, and especially on public transportation.
- Be vigilant if you see an unattended bag anywhere – report it immediately to a member of staff, or call the police.

What to do in the event of a security alert

- Stay calm and follow the instructions of law enforcement officers and any emergency services personnel at all times.
- Make your way to the FSU London Study Centre (our primary meeting point) – on foot - do not use public transportation.
- If you cannot get to the Study Centre you should immediately call or text a member of the admin staff (using the contact numbers on your emergency card) to let us know where you are.
- If the phone lines are down, you should email us: LondonPA@admin.fsu.edu.
- If the Study Centre is inaccessible for any reason (if it is blocked off, or Great Russell Street is blocked off) students and staff should proceed to the secondary meeting point as described in the FSU London Student Guide given upon check-in and as discussed in the mandatory orientation.
- Follow the advice of the FSU London staff at all times.
- Call or message family/friends as soon as possible to check in.

Drugs and Alcohol

Illegal Substances

Drugs that are illegal in the UK include, but are not limited to, the following: cannabis (marijuana, dope, grass, hash, pot), heroin, sedatives (unless prescribed by a doctor), hallucinogens (LSD, acid, magic mushrooms,) cocaine, crack and amphetamines (speed, ecstasy). Drug laws in the UK and other countries you may visit are different, and often much less tolerant than US laws. Local police notify the foreign embassy of anyone who has been arrested and deportation can be the penalty for drug convictions. FSU London will cooperate with police and will not circumvent the civil authorities.

University policy on illegal drugs

The unlawful possession, use or distribution of drugs will not be tolerated on university premises. Upon finding evidence of drug use, possession or distribution by any student, staff or faculty member, the university will take appropriate action, including, but not limited to, dismissal from the program. Faculty, staff and students should be aware that, in addition to university sanctions, they may be subject to criminal prosecution under British laws that specify fines or imprisonment for drug-related offences.

Alcohol

In the UK, alcohol is often a large part of the social scene. Pubs are a common social meeting place and are central to British culture. Pubs are fun, easily accessible and relatively inexpensive. FSU London wishes to promote responsible decision-making. We require that those students who choose to drink alcohol do so responsibly and legally. The legal drinking age is 18 in the UK and this may mean that this is the first time students are able to drink legally. You should be aware that alcohol consumption is a responsibility and take the following precautions:

- Accept that you do not know your own limit. The alcohol percentage (beer especially) in Great Britain is of a higher content than any similar alcoholic drink you may have had in the US. Also, every person's tolerance for alcohol is in constant flux, therefore an individual may not be able to know with certainty their own intoxication level.
- If you decide to go out for a night of drinking, ensure a friend or trusted individual accompanies. Do not venture out on your own without people you know.
- When purchasing a beverage, ensure that it is not left unaccompanied at any time when it could be tampered with.
- Know where you are going before you start drinking. Do not let people talk you into going far away from FSU London into an area where you have never been before, as you may not be able to find your way home on your own. And especially do not do it alone!
- Carry the address of FSU London with you so that if you are unable to return using public transport, you can show the address to a licensed cab that can get you home.
- Take along an emergency cash fund of at least £20. Keep it on your person separate from the rest of your money so that you can pay for a cab home.

University policy on alcohol consumption

In all circumstances, FSU London staff expect its students and their respective guests to conduct themselves, both individually and collectively, in a responsible manner. Illegal, abusive or excessive consumption of alcohol resulting in interference with the rights of other persons, personal injury or damage to property will result in disciplinary action, beginning with conduct probation, up to and including being sent home from the program.

1. Possession or consumption of alcohol when under 18, the age permitted by the government of the United Kingdom, is prohibited.
2. Providing alcoholic beverages to an individual who is under the age permitted by the United Kingdom **is prohibited**. Other violations are listed in the FSU Alcohol Policy.
3. Students who behave inappropriately or who require staff assistance due to their consumption of alcohol could be subject to the student conduct process.
4. Alcohol displays e.g. bottles, cans, bottle caps, visible political banners or identifiers, are not permitted at FSU London.
5. Kegs, beer balls, funnels, bongs, and other devices that promote irresponsible drinking are not permitted in housing as well as organization of or participation in drinking games.

Support services in London for drugs and alcohol

Drinkline: 0300 123 1110

Advice and information for people with alcohol problems or anyone concerned about alcohol misuse. Advice on sensible drinking and information on services to help people cut down their drinking.

Alcoholics Anonymous: 0800 9177 650 or help@aamail.org

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

National helpline for those who want to stop drinking and remain abstinent; will refer callers to local contact groups. There are some 600 in the Greater London area.

Talk to Frank: 0300 123 6600

www.talktofrank.com

Helpline for anyone concerned about drug or solvent misuse. Advice and information for drug users, their families, friends, carers and professionals.

UK Narcotics Anonymous: 0300 999 1212

www.ukna.org

Helpline and regular self-help meetings for people needing support and advice about the nature of drug addiction.

FSU services for drugs and alcohol

Even though students are not on the main campus, they have access to many resources should they encounter issues while abroad. Program staff members are available to support students in a variety of ways, including connecting students with other professionals locally and/or on the main campus.

University Counseling Center

<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

The Counseling Center is a welcoming and confidential place to discuss questions and concerns such as homesickness, struggles with relationships, sexual identity, cultural issues, and more.

Sexual Assault

The following precautions may help avoid becoming a victim of a crime of a sexual nature:

- Read and use the *tips to avoid becoming a victim of crime* above (page 5).
- Remember that alcohol consumption impairs judgment.
- Refrain from being alone (e.g. in a car, home or unpopulated place) with someone you do not know well, especially if alcohol is a factor.
- Keep friends updated with plans along with an expected return time.
- Do not leave a drink unattended, or accept a drink from strangers.
- Never accept a ride from someone offering you a taxi – a recent police campaign against unlicensed taxis has highlighted the dangers involved in accepting such rides. For safety, hail a black cab or call a licensed taxi company or use a regulated transportation App such as Gett..
- Remember that cultural norms and expectations are different. Assumptions based on the situation (e.g. conversation, body language, etc) may be very different from another person's assumptions.

If you are a victim of rape, sexual assault or harassment:
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- Inform a member of staff immediately. All cases will be treated with privacy and information will only be shared on a need to know basis. However, confidential resources will be available.
- Call the police at 999.
- Do not clean yourself or the crime scene, if possible, as it may affect the ability to prosecute the attacker.
- We can help to arrange counselling and after care.

University procedure

The university will take any allegations of rape, sexual assault or harassment very seriously. Students accused of crimes of a sexual nature will be subject to university judicial procedures. In addition to university sanctions they may be subject to criminal prosecution under British laws. S.C.C. 1 (e) 1 a-c

Support services in London for sexual assault

The Havens: 020 3299 6900

<http://www.thehavens.org.uk/>

Nearest Branch: Paddington, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street, London W2 1NY
020 3312 1101

A comprehensive and completely confidential service, offered to anyone who lives in London, including treatment, advice and counselling following rape or sexual assault.

Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre: 0808 802 9999

www.rasasc.org.uk

National Freephone helpline, providing support and counselling for women who have suffered rape or sexual abuse.

Email Info@rasasc.org.uk

Survivors UK—London: 0203 598 3898

www.survivorsuk.org

Helpline and other support services for men who have suffered rape or sexual abuse.

Email help@survivorsuk.org

FSU Support Services for Sexual Assault

Even though students are not on the main campus, they have access to many resources should they encounter issues while abroad. Program staff members are available to support students in a variety of ways, including connecting students with other professionals locally and/or on the main campus.

Victim Advocate Program

<http://victimadvocate.fsu.edu>.

The University takes very seriously all types of victimization, including sexual violence, relationship violence, and domestic violence. Advocates are available and on-call 24 hours a day to provide confidential support services, even for students who are abroad.

University Counseling Center

<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

The Counseling Center is a welcoming and confidential place to discuss questions and concerns such as homesickness, struggles with relationships, sexual identity, cultural issues, and more.

Center for Health Advocacy & Wellness

<http://chaw.fsu.edu/>

The Center for Health Advocacy & Wellness encourages students to make healthy lifestyle decisions that facilitate academic success and lead to life-long health and wellness.

Safety when travelling

One of the most exciting things about studying in London is our proximity to so many European countries. During break, or on some of the long weekends, students may wish to make plans to explore parts of this fascinating continent. Every travel destination presents its own safety hazards and students are recommended to conduct their research in order to be active participants in their own health, safety and security.

Cultural Sensitivity

There are many subtle cultural differences in the way people behave in other countries, including the UK, which one should be sensitive to in order to protect themselves and avoid offending local people. For example, the British tend to talk quietly in public places, such as restaurants and public transportation, and may find loud conversations offensive. Remember at all times that you are a guest in your host country.

Read the news and be informed about any destination travelled in order to avoid any difficulties. In general, it is best to try not to stand out too much. It is advisable not to discuss politically sensitive issues in public, and not to get involved in any local politics or protests.

Learning a few key phrases of the language is also essential – hello, goodbye, yes, no, please, thank you, I'm sorry, can you help me? do you speak English? – will get you a long way and make your trip more enjoyable too.

Travel Forms

Travel forms must be completed if spending the night away from FSU London. The online travel form is located at the top right corner of either of these websites: <http://international.fsu.edu/> or <https://international.fsu.edu/london/>. It is important to inform roommates of travel plans and expected return times. If there are significant delays, please contact a member of FSU London staff.

State Department Travel Advice

You are advised to consult the State Department's website, particularly their Travel Advisories, before you plan your trip. Go to: www.travel.state.gov.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Travel Advice

You are advised to consult the CDC website for health information before you plan your trip. Go to: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/>

Smart Traveler Enrollments Program (STEP)

This is a free service provided by the US Government to US citizens who are traveling

to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows the State Department to better assist it's citizens in an emergency and to provide them with updates, travel alerts, and other information.

Go to: <https://travelregistration.state.gov>

All students should register for the period that they will be staying in London, as well as any other trips that they take while abroad.

US Embassy Services

The US Embassy in London provides services for US citizens in the UK and can be contacted by calling: 020 7499 9000.

Visit their website for more information, including how to replace a US passport:

<https://uk.usembassy.gov/>

[Sample of Incident Report on next page.]

INCIDENT REPORT

Student(s) Involved:

Student 1	
Student 2	
Student 3	

Incident Details:

Date of Incident	
Time	
Location	

Description of behaviour/incident:

Name of person documenting behaviour/incident:

(Please print)	Position
Signature	Date

Witnesses to the incident:

Witness 1	
Witness 2	
Witness 3	

Student and Witness Details:

	Student ID number	Permanent Address	Telephone Number	Date of Birth
Student 1				
Student 2				
Student 3				
Witness 1				
Witness 2				
Witness 3				