

ESCAPE
STUDIOS
— LONDON



PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE

FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

How to best prepare for your move to the UK



For over 20 years, Escape Studios has helped talented individuals launch their creative careers. We've welcomed students from diverse countries and backgrounds, who have since forged successful careers worldwide. We're excited to continue expanding our global community and the fresh ideas, skills, and experience it brings.

PROFESSOR IAN PALMER
Principal at Escape Studios

WELCOME TO ESCAPE STUDIOS

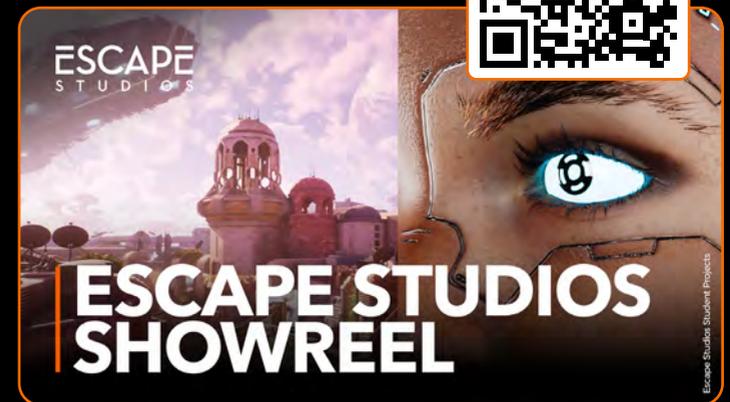
It's time for your journey into the Escapeverse!

We're excited to have you join our vibrant and creative student community of Animators, Artists, Game Designers, Programmers and more. As you prepare to embark on this exciting new chapter in London, this pre-departure guide is here to support you every step of the way.

Whether it's your first time living abroad or your first time in the UK, we've compiled the essential information to help you settle in smoothly – from travel tips and accommodation advice to cultural insight and what to expect on campus. Get ready to be a part of our diverse community and start your adventure with confidence.



CHECK OUT OUR STUDENT SHOWREEL



LIVING IN LONDON

London is the best student city in the world (QS BEST STUDENT CITIES 2025).

Our location in London's Design District on the North Greenwich peninsula is a vibrant student area, just a short Tube journey from Central London and all it has to offer.



VISA AND IMMIGRATION

UNDERSTANDING THE UK STUDENT VISA SYSTEM

Escape Studios proudly admits international students. With a student visa, you can live and study in the UK for the duration of your course. For courses shorter than six months, a student visa is not required; instead, you may need to apply for a visitor visa.

VISA REQUIREMENTS AND ELIGIBILITY

You can apply for a UK student visa if you're 18 or over and you:

- ▶ Have been offered a place on a course by a licensed student sponsor like Escape Studios
- ▶ Have enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - the amount will vary depending on your circumstances
- ▶ Can speak, read, write and understand English.

If you come to the UK on a student visa sponsored by Escape Studios you must adhere to the following:

- ▶ Have a UKVI approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) at B2
- ▶ Students are not permitted to undertake any employment during their studies (this includes paid and unpaid work, internships or volunteering).

POST-STUDY WORK VISAS

At time of writing, Escape Studios graduates are not eligible to apply for post-study work visas ("Graduate Visa"). We aim that from Spring 2028, those graduating from our undergraduate courses will be able to apply for a Graduate Visa according to that scheme's eligibility rules in place at the time. This would enable eligible international students to stay in the UK for a period of time after successfully completing a degree level course or above. If you start an undergraduate degree with us in September 2025, by the time you graduate in 2028 we hope (but cannot guarantee) you will be able to access Graduate Visas.

International students applying for a Graduate Visa must be sponsored by a 'Higher Education Provider with a Track Record of Compliance' with the UK Visas and Immigration Service (UKVI). As a relatively new sponsor, we are currently working towards gaining this status. Our last Basic Compliance Assessment demonstrated 100% compliance with those requirements, and we are therefore hopeful that we will be granted this status in 2028.

APPLYING FOR YOUR STUDENT VISA

Make sure to have your documents ready before applying for your student visa.

- ▶ You can [start your application online](#). You should download a copy of your online application for your own record.
- ▶ You will need to pay an application fee the equivalent of £490 in local currency
- ▶ You will need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge as part of your application. You can find more information about the fee [here](#).
- ▶ You need to provide your current/valid passport, and any previous passports needed as part of the application.
- ▶ You will need a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), issued by Escape Studios when you firmly accept your offer. You will find your CAS number on the CAS statement that you receive from us.
- ▶ Financial evidence: for information about financial evidence you need to provide, please [see here](#). If your documents are not in English, you will need to supply an official verified translation.
- ▶ You will be required to provide English language evidence which meets our entry requirements.
- ▶ In some countries you must show that you have been screened for Tuberculosis (TB). Check with your local visa centre if you need a certificate confirming you are free from TB before applying for a visa. [More information](#).
- ▶ Translation of documents:
 - ▶ Confirmation that the translation is an accurate translation of the original document.
 - ▶ The date of the translation.
 - ▶ The full name and signature of the translator or an authorised official of the translation company.
 - ▶ The contact details of the translator or translation company.
 - ▶ The translation must be verifiable by the Home Office.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

RECOMMENDED STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

There is a range of student accommodation that we recommend to our students in London. The right one for you will depend on factors including budget, how far away from our campus you'd like to be and the type of rooms available.

Our students choose to stay either in Greenwich (as close as a 10-minute walk from Escape Studios), or across London in neighbourhoods like Canary Wharf, Wembley or Hackney. The journey times to campus range from 10 to 50 minutes. Prices range from £183 per week for the most affordable single rooms to £355 per week for a private, self-contained studio with ensuite bathroom.

VIEW OUR RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION



OTHER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

If our recommended providers aren't for you, there are lots of other options for accommodation during your studies that you can find online.

When looking for accommodation, make sure you stay aware of potential scams. If possible, view the property or have someone you trust view it for you. Look for properties rented through estate agencies with a good reputation and make sure you feel comfortable and have taken the necessary measures to prevent against scams before you transfer any money. The University of London Housing Services (ULHS) is a good place to find reputable landlords and get advice on an accommodation contract. You can also read the ULHS' advice on housing scams [here](#).



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON HOUSING SERVICES

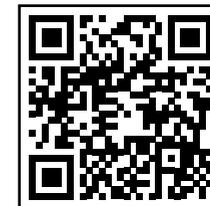


Escape Studios is a member institution with the ULHS - your dedicated housing advisory service! You can get in touch or make an appointment for advice. The following help and more is freely available to our students and offer holders.

- ▶ **Help finding accommodation**
Browse a registered database of landlords, letting agents, private halls and other providers.
- ▶ **Join a Flatmate Finder Facebook group**
You can post ads for rooms or find other students to go flat hunting with.
- ▶ **Contract checking service**
Guidance and tenancy contract checks for unfair clauses which may cause problems.
- ▶ **Legal Advice**
Support for students who experience issues including deposit disputes and disrepair.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE ULHS](#)

↓ VISIT THE ULHS WEBSITE



PRE-ORDER YOUR BEDDING AND ESSENTIALS WITH UNIKITOUT

We've partnered with UniKitOut to make moving into your accommodation easy. Kit out your room and have everything delivered before you move in.

Use code ESCAPE10 for 10% off your kit.

[CHECK OUT UNIKITOUT](#)



FLIGHTS AND TRANSPORT

PLANNING YOUR ARRIVAL IN THE UK

When planning your journey to the UK, make sure you consider the conditions of your visa and your accommodation contract start date. The closest airports to Escape Studios are **London City, Gatwick, Heathrow, Stanstead** and **Luton**. All airports offer free WiFi to help you check your onward journey when you arrive. If you arrive during the day, these airports have regular public transport connections to central London.

If you are arriving at night, you may find that public transport is more limited, so you may want to prebook a taxi or book a hotel nearby and continue your journey the following day.

TRAVELLING FROM THE AIRPORT TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION

Ensure that your accommodation is aware of what date and time you expect to arrive, so that you can collect your keys.

If you are taking a taxi from the airport, the driver should be able to take you directly to your accommodation.

IMPORTANT NOTES TO REMEMBER

- ▶ **If you are taking a taxi, make sure it is a licensed taxi.**
You will find a taxi office at the airport who can book a taxi for you to ensure you are using a licensed company. You can also book a taxi in advance and check the license online.
- ▶ **The UK also has ride-hiring apps such as Uber and Bolt, which can be used for airport transfers.**
When using these apps, make sure the license plate on the car matches what is shown in the app before you get in and send the details of your journey and driver to a friend if possible.
- ▶ **If you are travelling by train, ensure you have planned your route in advance.**
As your plane could be delayed, or there could be long queues at security, it may be advisable to purchase a ticket after you pass through security in the UK or to buy tickets that allow travel at different times. These tickets may be known as an “anytime day single”, meaning that you can make your journey at any time on the day your ticket is valid.
- ▶ **Usually, trains from the airport will take you to one of London’s main public transport hubs.**
From here, you will be able to access the local public transport network (Transport for London, or TfL), which includes the London Underground (known as the Tube) and buses. TfL services can be paid for using a contactless card, and there is no reason to book this transport ahead of time.
- ▶ **London is very often cashless.**
Make sure your payment card can be used in the UK.



HEALTHCARE IN THE UK

THE NHS

If you're studying in the UK for over six months, you'll pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of your visa application.

This allows you to use a range of NHS services free of charge, including a local GP (general practitioner), hospital services and A&E (accident and emergency). You will need to register with a local GP surgery when you arrive to access these services.

PHARMACIES

Pharmacists in the UK can diagnose some conditions and offer some types of prescription medication. It is often easier to see a pharmacist than a GP, so for minor health concerns you may prefer to visit the local pharmacy for assistance.

You can also pay for and collect prescriptions from your GP at your local pharmacy. The standard NHS prescription charge is currently £9.90, but some people and types of medications are exempt from the cost.

DENTAL AND EYECARE

These services are not fully covered by the NHS. It is hard to find an NHS dentist accepting patients, so it may be preferable to opt for private dental treatment, or to get a dental insurance plan to cover costs.

When it comes to eyecare, you should be able to easily find an appointment for an eye test at an optician such as **Boots** or **Specsavers**. These usually cost around £25, but some people may be eligible for free eye tests. The price of glasses or contact lenses varies depending on your needs and preferences.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS TO KNOW

You should save the phone number for your local GP so you can easily contact them if needed. Other important contact numbers to remember are:

- ▶ **999:** The UK emergency services, for use in life-threatening emergencies. This number can direct you to the police, ambulance or fire service.
- ▶ **111:** The NHS non-emergency number, for advice in the event of an illness or injury you can't treat at home. This service is to assess your needs and point you towards the appropriate healthcare service to offer support.
- ▶ **Escape Studios Student Services +44 (0) 204 570 2862:** This number can be used for general enquiries or support while you are studying with us.

WHERE TO SHOP FOR THE ESSENTIALS

GROCERIES

You'll find a lot of convenience stores and supermarkets around London. **Aldi** and **Lidl** are known for being affordable options, while **Tesco** and **Sainsbury's** are known for having a lot of small 'express' or 'local' stores around the city (there is a **Tesco Express** and a **Sainsbury's Local** right outside the Escape Studios building). Many major supermarkets also offer delivery services.

London is a very multicultural city, so you'll also find a lot of independent grocery shops specialising in international food if you're looking to cook traditional dishes from your home country.

HEALTH AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Supermarkets tend to sell basic health and beauty products, but you will also find shops that specialise in these products across the city. Some popular stores include **Superdrug** and **Boots**, which you will find on most London high streets.

CLOTHING

You may need to adapt your wardrobe to suit the UK's climate, so finding affordable clothing options can help you adapt on a budget.

Charity shops are a great way to pick up some bargains. They sell second-hand items, with profit from sales going to charity. Examples of these type of shops includes **Oxfam**, **British Heart Foundation**, **Crisis** and **Traid**.

Second-hand apps like **Vinted** and **Depop** are also popular with students. You'll find a huge range of choice to suit any budget. Just make sure to check the seller's reviews!

HOMEWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

- ▶ Amazon Prime (get a half price student membership for free next-day delivery)
- ▶ Argos
- ▶ Currys
- ▶ IKEA

ACCESSING STUDENT DISCOUNTS

Many shops, museums, cinemas, bars and restaurants across London offer student discounts on their prices. Many of these will accept your Escape Studios student ID card as proof of your student status, but some brands require you to have one of the following:

- ▶ UNiDAYS (free app)
- ▶ Student Beans (free app)
- ▶ TOTUM (student card, about £15 per year)

OUR STUDIO CAMPUS

WHERE IS ESCAPE STUDIOS?

Escape Studios is located on the North Greenwich peninsula, in Southeast London. The area around campus is pedestrianised and has a reputation for being a safe neighbourhood. Our campus is a 3-minute walk from North Greenwich station, which is served by the Jubilee line on the London Underground. There are also buses serving the local area, so most students get to campus using buses or the Jubilee line.

OUR FACILITIES



Studio classrooms

(With 12-40 seat capacity) featuring industry-standard software found in top studios.



Student Services hub

A helpdesk to assist you during your studies.



Breakout spaces

For collaboration or relaxation.



Multi-faith prayer room

For personal reflection.



Stunning views

Views of London from our 6th, 10th and 11th floors



Kitchen

With fridges, microwaves, and facilities for tea and coffee.



Green screen

Access to green screen technology and camera equipment.

CAREER SUPPORT

Our courses are designed with industry in mind, so everything we deliver is aiming to prepare you for work in top studios. Our close relationship with industry partners means that we teach the techniques, skills and software most relevant to your career progression.

How we support your career:

- ▶ Group projects mimicking the way you'll work in industry
- ▶ Practical briefs set by studio partners
- ▶ Coaching, mock interviews, showreel reviews and networking events with industry partners
- ▶ Final year showcase with industry partners in attendance.

ESCAPE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (ESA)

The ESA is run by students, for students and is a major part of student life here. With an active presence on Discord, the ESA helps maintain our strong community, making sure there's something for everyone.

Current societies include:

- ▶ Badminton
- ▶ Bouldering / Rock Climbing
- ▶ Creative Writing
- ▶ Dance
- ▶ Drawing Club
- ▶ E-Sports
- ▶ Football
- ▶ Tabletop Gaming



STUDY IN LONDON

HOW TO FIND US

London has excellent public transport across the city, with much of the transport in London run by Transport for London (TfL). The most iconic example is the Tube or London Underground, a network of subway train lines connecting the entire city. There are also lots of local bus options if you prefer to travel above ground and see what you're passing.

You will also find other trains, including the London Overground and National Rail services like the Thameslink and Southeastern Rail. More unique transport options you'll find near Escape Studios are the London Cable Car and Uber River Boats from North Greenwich Pier.

Almost all of London's public transport can be accessed using a contactless card, making it straightforward to pay. When using the Tube or train, you will tap in and out at stations, whereas on the bus you will only tap when you get on, as all bus journeys are a set price.

There are two ways to access student discounts on your transport costs.

- ▶ **18+ Student Oyster photocard**
Save 30% on weekly, monthly or annual travelcards for Tube/bus/trams.
- ▶ **16-25 Railcard**
Save 1/3 on (off-peak) rail and Tube fares, as well as TfL daily caps. Over-25s in full-time study can also get this railcard.

WEATHER IN LONDON

The climate in the UK is generally mild, and London is no exception. It is rare to see snow in London, though temperatures can get to around freezing during the winter months, particularly overnight. In the summer, you can expect temperatures of around 20 degrees with occasional particularly warm days hitting approximately 30 degrees. It rains frequently in London, especially during winter months, so making sure you have an umbrella, and a waterproof coat is a must!

THINGS TO DO IN NORTH GREENWICH

- ▶ See a concert or show at the O2 Arena
- ▶ Visit Canteen Food Hall & Bar
- ▶ Check out The Line Sculpture Trail
- ▶ Climb over the O2!





WHAT TO PACK...

FOR THE JOURNEY

- ▶ Passport (most visas are now electronic, so it is unlikely you will need a physical visa)
- ▶ Flight boarding pass
- ▶ Bank cards suitable for use in the UK
- ▶ Mobile phone, charging cable and power bank
- ▶ Headphones
- ▶ Comfy clothes
- ▶ A good book!

FOR WHEN YOU REACH YOUR ACCOMMODATION

- ▶ Clothing suitable for UK weather – in February it is often around 7 degrees Celsius, while in September it's around 15 degrees Celsius
- ▶ UK plug socket adapters for your electronics
- ▶ Laptop and charger
- ▶ Toiletries such as toothbrush, toothpaste, shower gel, hairbrush and shampoo/conditioner

WHAT NOT TO PACK...

WHAT TO HAVE DELIVERED TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION ON THE DAY YOU ARRIVE

- ▶ Bedding – pillows, duvet and sheets for your bed
- ▶ Food, whether it's a supermarket delivery or a takeaway
- ▶ Kitchen equipment such as pans, plates, knives and cutlery
- ▶ Towels

*Remember you can pre-order your bedding, kitchen equipment kits with a 10% discount at **UniKitOut** using the code **ESCAPE10!***

WHAT TO GET ONCE YOU'VE SETTLED IN

- ▶ A UK bank account and debit card to make managing finances easier. Many banks offer student accounts with extra perks
- ▶ UK plugs for your electronics to limit the need for adapters
- ▶ Winter clothes such as boots and a coat with a hood
- ▶ Decoration for your accommodation
- ▶ Escape Studios merchandise, of course!

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

ACCOMMODATION BOOKED, AND INFORMED OF YOUR EXPECTED ARRIVAL

VISA OBTAINED AND VALID FOR THE DATE OF YOUR ENTRY TO THE UK

PASSPORT AND ANY OTHER REQUIRED DOCUMENTS KEPT IN A SAFE PLACE IN YOUR CARRY-ON LUGGAGE

TRANSFER TO THE AIRPORT IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY PLANNED, WITH PLENTY OF TIME ALLOWED FOR SECURITY

LUGGAGE PACKED, WITH ANY LIQUIDS OVER 100ML IN YOUR HOLD LUGGAGE, AND ANY ITEMS WITH BATTERIES IN YOUR CARRY-ON LUGGAGE

ESSENTIAL ITEMS FOR THE JOURNEY SUCH AS PHONE CHARGER AND CREDIT/DEBIT CARD PACKED IN CARRY-ON BAG

PLANS MADE FOR YOUR ONWARD TRAVEL FROM LANDING IN THE UK TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION

ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR ANY ESSENTIAL ITEMS NEEDED ON DAY ONE TO BE DELIVERED TO YOUR ACCOMMODATION

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ACCOMMODATION, ESCAPE STUDIOS AND EMERGENCY CONTACTS WRITTEN OUT AND KEPT SAFE



WE'RE HERE TO HELP

If you have any questions, please reach out to our team.

We're available 9am-5pm UK time, Monday to Friday, and we'll get back to you as soon as we can.

For general queries:

international@escapestudios.ac.uk / +44 (0)203 4411 303

For admissions:

admissions@escapestudios.ac.uk / +44 (0)204 570 5091

You can also talk to an Applicant Advisor via our live chat on our website.

DISCLAIMER

This guide was published in June 2025. Every effort has been made to make sure that the information contained is fair and accurate at the date of publication.

However this information is subject to change without notice. Escape Studios reserves the right to amend or withdraw without notice and at its entire discretion any of the programmes, modules, services, facilities or other matters contained or referred to in this guide; where this is necessary Escape Studios will take reasonable steps to reduce any disruption to enrolled students. Prospective candidates should note that, in the event of such circumstances occurring, Escape Studios cannot accept liability for any complaints or costs, losses or damages made by a student resulting from a service disruption or closure, or any change to, or withdrawal of a programme/module that they have intended to study. For this reason, it is particularly important that you check our website for updates at: [escapestudios.ac.uk](https://www.escapestudios.ac.uk).

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