



D'OVERBROECK'S OXFORD

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

d'Overbroeck's International
Students Pre-Departure Guide
2026/2027

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Welcome to d’Overbroeck’s

This pre-departure guide will help you prepare for your arrival in the UK and the start of your course at d’Overbroeck’s. It has details about travelling to the school, things you should bring and where you will live.

We hope you find this guide helpful, but please contact us if you have any questions.

Before you leave home

Before you leave home you should make sure you have everything you need to bring with you and make sure you have:

Personal Insurance

Your ‘Consent to Travel’ form

Information about your transfer to Oxford

Checked your luggage weight allowance

Clothing

Where a school uniform is required for your year group, information on uniform expectations and requirements is provided in the Parent Handbook.

Warm & waterproof clothes

English winters can be cold and wet. Please bring a good warm coat along with hat, gloves, scarf and sweaters. National costume

Some students like to bring their traditional costume for special events and celebrations.

Electrical equipment

Such as a mobile phone, laptop, tablet, camera etc. Remember to bring adaptors for all your electrical equipment.

Money

It can take more than a month to open a British bank account, so it is a good idea to organise a bank account before you come to the UK – speak to your guardian about this. It is also a good idea to bring some pocket money with you, but it is not advisable to bring a large amount of cash. If you do bring a large amount of cash please tell the boarding staff upon arrival so they can keep it safe for you.

Musical instrument (if you play one)

Dictionary and

Mathematical (scientific) calculator

European Health Insurance Card where appropriate

Please make sure that you have insurance while you are studying in the UK:

You may need to pay privately for some medical procedures and all dental treatment so we recommend that you take out medical insurance. This will also cover you for emergency flights home.

Personal Possessions Insurance is optional and can be arranged by the school. We recommend that you pay for this in case you have an accident or lose something important like your laptop. You can also organise your own insurance if you prefer.

Travel to and arrival in the UK

Heathrow (LHR)

We recommend that students arrive at London Heathrow Airport (LHR). It is the most convenient airport for Oxford. Travel time from Heathrow to Oxford is about 1 hour.

Other Airports

Gatwick (LGW) – 2h - 2h 30 min travel time

Stansted (STN) – 2h to 2h 30 min travel time

Birmingham International (BHX) – 1h 45 min to 2h travel time

Luton (LTN) – 1h 20 min to 1h 30 min travel time

Baggage Allowance

There are different rules for each country and airline. It is important that you check with your airline before travelling as different carriers have different policies on the number of hand baggage items which may be taken into the aircraft cabin. **At the airport**

Immigration Control

When you arrive you will find two lines:

1- For EEA Nationals (European Union countries) including South Korea, Japan, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Australia New Zealand, Canada, UK, USA and Singapore.

2- All other passport-holders (like China & Thailand)

You'll then be asked to show your passport and may be asked why you are coming to the UK.

If you are refused entry for any reason you must contact us immediately

- see contact details on first page.

Consent to travel

Immigration officials may ask you for proof that your parents have given consent for you to travel alone to the UK. Your parents should complete the Consent to Travel form (see attached document in the email). You should carry this with the rest of your travel documents.

Documents you will need

To make getting through immigration easier, make sure you have all the documents you need to show at immigration in your hand luggage:

- Your passport- Please ensure that you present the same passport that they used for their student visa application.
- Your 'Consent to Travel' form.
- The address and telephone number of the boarding house where you will be staying in Oxford
- The phone numbers for d'Overbroeck's
- Share code: your unique 9-character alphanumeric code provided by the UK Government and a screenshot of your eVisa to prove immigration status

Baggage collection

After immigration you will be able to collect your baggage. If any of your baggage is missing, find a member of staff from the airline which you travelled on and fill in a lost baggage form.

Customs control

When you collect your baggage, you must go through customs control. If you are not sure what you can bring into the UK, check with the UK Visas & Immigration website at <https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control/at-border-control> before you leave home.

Arrivals hall

Once you pass through Customs, you will then go to the Arrivals Hall. Private taxi transfer: Look for someone holding a sign with your name on it.

Making your own way to Oxford: Follow the signs to the Bus Station and look for the 'Oxford Bus' stop.

Getting to Oxford

Private taxi transfer booking

If you would like a private taxi transfer, you will need to contact us using contact details above. Our designated taxi company will collect students at any time of day or night and bring them to Oxford.

At the Arrivals Gate, look carefully for a driver **who will be holding a card with your name on**. If you do not see your driver, stay near the Arrivals Gate and wait. After 20 minutes, if you still cannot see a person holding a sign with your name on call one of the Contact numbers on page 3 of this booklet and we will help you. **Don't worry, sometimes the driver is a little late.**

Approximate costs (these may be subject to change):

Heathrow (single passenger) - £125.00 Heathrow (shared) - £85.00 each

Gatwick (single passenger) - £180.00

Gatwick (shared) - £95.00 each

Stansted (single passenger) - £218 each

Stansted (Shared) - £114 each

Luton (single passenger) - £165 Luton (Shared) - £87.50 each

Making your own way to Oxford

If you are not using our transfer service and are going to Oxford by yourself, we still need to know how you will get here and what time you will arrive. Please telling us how you will be getting here by contacting us beforehand.

Bus

If you arrive at Heathrow or Gatwick airport, there is a direct bus to Oxford. For more information go to <https://airline.oxfordbus.co.uk/>. If you arrive at Luton or Stansted, for more information please look at <https://www.nationalexpress.com/en/airports/>. Please note that there are fewer departures from Luton and Stansted to Oxford than from Heathrow or Gatwick.

Where to go once you get to Oxford

When you arrive in Oxford you will need to go to either the school or your boarding accommodation (depending on the time of your arrival). You can take a local taxi. The taxi rank is a short walk from Oxford bus station. You should expect to pay between £10 and £15. Give them the address of the accommodation where you are staying. Please refer to Parent handbook for Accommodation Opening Dates and Times.

Your first day

What happens on your first day?

On the first day, you will meet your teachers and all the other students at school. You will also be introduced to your Personal Tutor/Director of Studies, who is the teacher personally responsible for you.

You will be taken to your classrooms where you will have a chance to get to know your teachers and the other students. You will be helped to understand your timetable and we will go through everything you need to start the course.

Your first week

Opening a UK bank account

It can take a long time to open an account, so you will need to have a way to manage your money before this happens. You may want to bring some pocket money with you to use in the meantime. Alternatively, it may be faster to register for a UK bank account online – speak to your guardian if you need help doing this.

Banks local to d'Overbroeck's are:

HSBC - 65 Cornmarket Street
0845 740 4404

Lloyds - 1-5 High St, Carfax
0345 602 1997

NatWest – 43 Cornmarket Street
0345 788 8444

Health

If you are feeling unwell, please speak to a member of staff or report to Reception before seeking any medication. Reception will contact the School Nurse, who will assess your symptoms and advise on the most appropriate course of action. The School Nurse can recommend suitable treatments for common illnesses such as headaches, colds, and stomach upsets, and will advise if a visit to a pharmacy is appropriate. Students should not purchase or keep medication in their rooms without the knowledge and approval of the boarding and medical teams.

If you need to see a Doctor whilst you are studying here, you will be able to see the School Doctor. If you have an accident, a member of d'Overbroeck's staff will take you to the hospital for treatment.

It is possible to see a Private Doctor, but you will have to pay for the appointment and any treatment or medicines.

If for any reason you need to be flown home because of an accident or illness, you must have insurance to pay for this.

If you need to have any medicine whilst you are in the UK, you may have to pay for it.

If you need to see a Dentist or Optician, you will have to pay for treatment.

Students on full-time courses in the UK lasting 6 months or more get free basic health treatment under the National Health Service (NHS) from the beginning of their stay as long as:

- You have applied for a UK Student Visa, you have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge
- Or, if you have an EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). You will need to make sure you bring this with you and carry it at all times.

The school will arrange for all our boarding students to register with the School Doctor (General Practitioner) at the beginning of term.

Living arrangements

Boarding at d'Overbroeck's is a good way to help you improve your English. Most students find that it is a happy experience and enjoy learning about British culture.

You will probably find that there are differences between the way you live at home and the way you live when you're in the UK. You may find this strange at first – this is called culture shock. It is normal and you will usually adjust to it very soon (see next section).

The most important thing is to make sure you talk to your Personal Tutor or the Boarding House Team. You must not be afraid to ask the Boarding House Team to repeat things or speak more slowly. All of them have had international students living with them before and will want to help you.

You should remember that where you live is your home while you study at d'Overbroeck's. You should have respect and consideration for the other residents and the Boarding House Team or Host Family. Try to be helpful and remember how you behave in your own home may be different from what we expect from you in the UK. If you need something, ask, but remember to be polite.

Remember:

- It is OK to say 'No thank you'.
- Ask before you have friends to visit.
- It is OK to leave food on your plate. Don't be afraid to refuse food or ask for more – but do this politely.
- Keep the bathroom tidy and be sensible about how long you are in there for.
- If you would like to leave Oxford or spend the night away from the boarding house, your parents or guardian must give permission to the school by the Wednesday of the week you intend to travel.

Understanding & dealing with culture shock

Leaving home and going to live and study in a new country can be a very worrying and difficult experience. Even if you have planned and prepared for your visit, the effect that it has on you may come as a surprise. This experience is quite normal. Whatever country you are from and wherever you are going to study, everyone can suffer from 'Culture Shock'.

What is culture shock?

'Culture shock' describes how people feel when they move from their home country that they know well, to another culture that is new and different. It is an experience that is described by many people who have travelled abroad to live and study. It includes the shock of a new environment, meeting lots of new people and living in a new place. It also includes the shock of being away from your family and friends and the people that you would normally go to for help and advice. You can even miss familiar sights, sounds, tastes and smells.

When you arrive in the UK you may also be jet lagged, tired, and find even the smallest things upsetting. Do not worry, these feelings are normal.

Weather

Many students find that the weather in the UK affects them a lot. Your own country may be much warmer and sunnier. It may take some time to get used to a colder climate and less sunshine. Make sure you bring plenty of warm clothes and a coat that is rainproof. The UK does not tend to get very hot in summer, or very cold in winter. Snow is rare, but most likely in January – March. The first frosts usually occur in late October, and the last in late April. All year round the weather can be wet, but we do get a lot of sunshine too!

Food

You may find the food very different from the food you are used to eating at home. It may taste or look different or seem heavy compared with what you are used to.

Don't be afraid to talk to your Boarding House Team or personal tutor if you are having problems with food. There may be things we can do to help you.

Oxford also has restaurants and supermarkets from many different countries. You may find that there is somewhere you can get familiar food as a treat.

Language

Constantly listening to another language can be tiring. Make sure you have plenty of rest and get enough sleep. You may find that you miss your language. Even if you are very good at English you may find regional accents, or the speed people talk make it difficult to understand. Don't feel embarrassed to ask people to repeat things or to speak more slowly. Please also talk to us about any language problems that you are having.

Clothing

The most important thing is to make sure that you bring clothes that are suitable for the British weather and that you feel comfortable in. At school, you will be required to wear your uniform.

The process of culture shock

Most people find that culture shock affects them in a certain order:

The 'Holiday' Stage - When you first arrive in a new culture, the differences may seem exciting and interesting. At this stage 'home' still feels very close to you.

The 'Worried' Stage - A little later the differences may begin to have a negative impact on you. You may feel confused, lonely or unable to adapt and feel comfortable.

The 'Adapting' Stage - Often the next stage people experience is that they reject the differences they are coming across. You may feel angry towards the new culture. You may only be aware of how much you dislike it compared to home. Don't worry, this happens to most people.

Things you can do to help you with culture shock:

- Simply understanding that this is normal can help.
- Keep in touch with home.
- Have familiar things around you such as photographs.
- Eat healthily and take regular exercise.
- Make friends with other international students. They will understand what you are feeling.
- Ask your teachers or Boarding House Team for help. Don't be afraid to talk to them about how you are feeling.
- Take part in the social and sporting activities on offer. This will help to keep you busy and make friends.
- If you are religious, we can help you to join your local religious community.
- Above all, find someone who you can talk to who will understand.

