

Sample VPO Checklist

- _____ Final Payment due May 1
- _____ Airline ticket
- _____ Passport (do not pack in your suitcase)
- _____ VPO letter of acceptance signed by the American Director. This might be required at customs, so have it handy.
- _____ Money. Talk to last year's students about how much they spent. Your room and board are covered, but you need money for transportation, entertainment, weekend travel and incidental expenses. You can buy traveler's checks in pounds here from most banks or AAA, which might be a good idea because the exchange rate has recently been relatively favorable but might not stay that way. Some British banks will still charge a commission (fee) to cash traveler's checks in pounds, so shop around. In the past, Lloyds Bank has cashed American Express checks without an extra fee; Midland Bank has handled Thomas Cook checks without a fee; and Barclays has charged no fee for Visa traveler's checks. Also, credit cards such as Visa, Master Card (called Access in Britain), and American Express are widely accepted at stores where you are charging more than, say, £10. Don't pack money or traveler's checks in your suitcase.
- _____ £5 cash to pay for your key deposit when you arrive at St. Anne's. Make sure you have the money in pounds, or you won't get your key.
- _____ Many students get an international ID card which can be used for discounts. Check with your student union or Foreign Studies Advisor for details. Unless you are planning to travel before or after the program, you probably won't need a Brit Rail pass.

Other Information

ARRIVAL

When you arrive at Heathrow or Gatwick, you can take the X-70 Bus directly to Oxford. Heathrow is located between Oxford and London, so you don't **need** to go into London in order to reach Oxford. From Heathrow, you also can take a bus to Reading rail station, which has direct train service into Oxford. When you arrive in Oxford, take a taxi to St. Anne's; it's a long walk when you have suitcases. After we eat dinner on Monday, June 30, we'll have a general meeting at 8 P.M. and get oriented.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you plan to arrive in Oxford before Monday, June 30, you should plan on staying in a Bed & Breakfast. St. Anne's has a **few** spaces available for the Sunday evening June 29, but you must write to the Bursar and inquire whether a room is available; the answer may be no. Don't just show up and expect a room. Remember that you will be charged a night's fee for that

Sunday; it is not included in your VPO room and board fee. Here are a few names of Oxford B & Bs or you could contact the Oxford Tourist Information Office which books rooms in area B & Bs (All of these are either in the Bus Station or the St. Anne's vicinity or somewhere in between.):

Norham Guest House, 16 Norham Road	tel. 01865 515352
Port Meadow Guest House, 93 Walton Street	tel. 01865 52552
St. Michael's Guest House, 26 St. Michael's St.	tel. 01865 242010
Walton Guest House, 169 Walton Street	tel. 01865 52137
Woodstock Guest House, 170 Woodstock Road	tel. 01865 52579

If calling from the US, you should dial 011-41865 + the last 5 or 6 digits. The 0 is dropped at the start of the number when you call overseas.

If you are staying in London, there are many choices. Victoria Station is a bus center for arrivals from Heathrow (also tube) and Gatwick (also train). There is the Winchester - near Victoria Station, 17 Belgrave Road, Victoria SW1, London (011-44-71-878-2972); and the Seal Court B & B is nearby and recommended. Near the British Museum and University of London is the Arran House Hotel at 77 Gower St., London WC1E 6HJ (011-44-71-636-2186). You'll find many other B & Bs lining Gower Street.

ADDRESS

St. Anne's College
Oxford OX2 6HS
England (Air Mail)

TELEPHONE

This number will ring the Porter's Lodge, where your call will be transferred to the appropriate hall phone:

011-44-1865-274800

OTHER TIPS

LINENS AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. Sheets and towels will be provided, but you might want a wash cloth. Remember that our electric items will not work on English (240 volt) current unless they have a built-in converter. Some people have had bad luck with converters for high-powered appliances, such as hair dryers; your best bet is to pool resources to buy a hair dryer when you arrive.

TRY NOT TO OVERPACK. I know from experience that you never wear all the "essential" items that weigh down your suitcases, and it's a pain to be lugging heavy bags everywhere you go. We will all be quite familiar with each other's wardrobe by the end of six weeks, so try to shift into the European mode of repetitious clothing. The weather will range from cool to hot (40s-upper 70s) with plenty of rain and some sun, so dress in layers. Be sure to include a sweater, raincoat, umbrella, and comfortable shoes. You will need one dressy outfit for the formal party; informal, school-type clothes will do for most occasions. Packing a half-full suitcase is wise because it leaves you room for presents on the trip home. Above all, make sure that you don't bring more than you can comfortably carry.

SAFETY. Most British and European cities are safer than American ones, but you still want to guard against pickpockets. Don't flash your money around in public, keep your wallets secured, and in general be aware of your surroundings. Don't leave bags or purses unattended. Since the British drive on the opposite side of the road, you'll want to look carefully in **both** directions before crossing a street. Drivers will not willingly stop for pedestrians in their path!

ACADEMIC PROTOCOL. The VPO and your home institutions expect you to come to Oxford with the intention of studying diligently. There are wonderful cultural opportunities which you will enjoy, but you also need to work hard in your tutorials. Attendance at lectures and tutorials is mandatory: there are no "cuts" and no late tutorial papers. The honors systems of the home institutions apply and will be enforced. If you want to see an example of a good tutorial essay, your campus representative has some on file. If you do read an essay from a previous year and use some of the ideas, you must acknowledge your borrowings as you would any text to avoid plagiarism.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS. We are all guests in a foreign country and at St. Anne's, and as such we "represent America" to those people with whom we have contact. We want them, especially those at St. Anne's, to have favorable impressions of our group, so act with politeness and consideration. Remember that part of the reason we travel abroad is to see how other people live and experience their world. Of course things will be different from "how we do it in America" (including food, shops, services, plumbing, transportation, money), and I urge you to enjoy and appreciate the differences.

ONE FINAL NOTE. My job is to serve as an administrator of the program and a dean of students. Social problems in the past have tended to occur when people drink to excess, so be moderate in your consumption of alcohol. I will not tolerate rowdy, destructive behavior, nor will I hesitate to place offenders on probation or to send them home if necessary. I don't expect to do either, but I want you to know the rules. With everyone's cooperation, we will have a great summer.