



PROGRAMME FOR  
**AFRICAN LEADERSHIP.**



**Firoz Lalji Institute**  
for Africa

# PFAL GUIDE TO LONDON



### **PfAL Contact Information**

Below is information on how to contact the PfAL office and staff.

**Address:**

Programme for African Leadership  
Pethick-Lawrence House, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Firoz Lalji Centre for Africa  
London School of Economics & Political Science  
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**Contact:** Tosin Adebisi, Senior Programme Manager  
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**WhatsApp Groups:**

LSE Africa 2022-23 (all LSE African students): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/E9WZrimnc3v91zFvUnKp5N>

PfAL12 2022-23 Cohort (PfAL students): <https://chat.whatsapp.com/HxBWFPTu38BBbcyG55eqnk>

### **Opening a Bank Account**

To open an account with most UK banks you will need proof of address, ID and proof of student status. Before you open an account be sure to check all the details and terms and conditions.

- Natwest Bank is one of the UK banks that is quite student-friendly and can be quite helpful with setting up an account:  
[https://personal.natwest.com/personal/current-accounts/select\\_account.html](https://personal.natwest.com/personal/current-accounts/select_account.html)
- If you do not yet have a permanent address yet you may want to look into opening a Monzo account as they do not require proof of address:  
<https://monzo.com/blog/2018/09/07/open-a-uk-bank-account>
- If you send money overseas often it may be worthwhile looking into Revolut as they offer the best rates for international transfers:  
<https://www.revolut.com/a-radically-better-account>

### **Getting Around in London**

When you arrive in London it is a good idea to get an Oyster Card, a pre-pay smartcard that offers major discounts on the Transport for London (TfL) network or use a contactless bank card. You can use your Oyster Card on the Underground, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), the Overground and National Rail trains but only inside London.

If you are travelling outside of the city on trains, you will need to buy a ticket but as a student you are eligible for significant discounts on trains travelling outside of London.

As a student you are entitled to a variety of travel discounts that we encourage you to take advantage of as you can save a lot of money and we recommend that you check the TfL link below for full details:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/student-travel#on-this-page-0>

You can apply for a discounted Travelcard here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/18-plus-student-oyster-photocard>

Buses are the cheapest way to get around London, costing £1.50 a trip. On buses, you just touch in once as all journeys cost the same no matter how long the journey. If you use two buses in the same hour you only pay for the first trip

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/find-fares/bus-and-tram-fares#on-this-page-4>

Google Maps and Citymapper are both fantastic apps to guide you around London. Google Maps is great for walking while Citymapper provides you with many alternate travel choices whether they be bus, tube or train.

### **Clothing and Weather**

London has a temperate climate and therefore the weather is rather changeable and difficult to predict. In the autumn between October and November, temperatures begin to lower, with the average high at 13°C in October and 8°C in November, and rainfall increasing slightly. From December to March, high temperatures can drop to an average of 6°C and low temperatures to 2°C. In recent years there have been days when temperatures drop below 2°C. Temperatures begin to rise during April and May but can still be cold enough to keep wearing light jackets in the evenings. From May on through to August, summers are expected to be warm, reaching mid-to-high 20s.

The best way to prepare is to bring several layers of clothes, which can be worn according to the prevailing conditions. A waterproof jacket and closed footwear should also be included in your

luggage as rainfall is common. Previous scholars indicated that the cold can be difficult to adjust to and recommended warm clothes, especially a warm jacket.

If you have not bought appropriate winter clothes yet we recommend that you do it before November. Clothes shopping on a student budget in London can be quite challenging so the followingshops are relatively affordable for students: TK Maxx, Primark and H&M.

### Healthcare

As your programme is longer than six months, you should have had to pay a health surcharge with your visa application fee. This allows you to register for the UK's National Health Service (NHS), which entitles you to receive a wide range of health services including:

- consulting a GP (doctor) and most other GP services (e.g. visiting a clinic)
- treatment in a hospital (both emergency and non-emergency treatment)
- emergency treatment (but not follow-up treatment)
- family planning services
- diagnosis and treatment of certain communicable diseases
- compulsory psychiatric treatment

According to the NHS website, you may need to pay for:

- medicines prescribed by your GP
- some GP services (eg vaccinations for travel, getting a sickness certificate) - ask your GP for details of costs
- dental treatment
- optical treatment

It is advisable to register with a doctor as soon as you can following registration at LSE. There can sometimes be delays when first registering with a doctor so you may want to do it sooner rather than later, well before you're unwell.

St Philip's Medical Centre (Floor 2, Tower 3) on the LSE campus will cover those living in Butler's Wharf. If you choose not to stay in this residence hall, you should check on the St Philip's website whether your accommodation is located within their catchment area. If you are located outside the designated areas, you can search on the [NHS website](#) using the postcode of your accommodation (e.g. Butlers Wharf = SE1 2NE & Sidney Webb House = SE1 4WW) to see where you can register. You may need to show proof of your student status, which can be in the form of a certificate of registration. For more details and information, you can refer to the [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKCISA).

### Electricity Supply

The British electricity supply works on 240 volts/50 hertz (Hz), so if you bring any electrical goods from home, you must be able to use them safely on this voltage or use a transformer. Most buildings in the UK have sockets for 13amp square pin fused plugs (see image). Adaptors can be bought locally to adapt plugs to fit British sockets.

If the switch is red,  
it means the socket  
is switched on.  
Other sockets  
might show 'On'



### Mobile phones

Students who are residing temporarily in the UK often choose a pay-as-you-go plan as it does not bind them to a contract and it is easier to monitor expenditure. You can do some research online for providers.

There are options to purchase SIM cards or phones. If your mobile phone uses a SIM card, you will probably be able to just buy a SIM card when you're here and keep using your own phone. However, some phones (for example from the United States) can be incompatible with the UK SIMs, in which case you can usually find an affordable mobile phone to purchase.

### Calling Home

It is invariably quite expensive to phone African countries from the UK and the two best options are either free Whatsapp calling when you are connected to wifi or you can purchase pre-paid phone cards here in London that may reduce the rate you are charged. When you arrive, you can compare the various options, often internet cafes sell these types of products – you just need to shop around.

### Gym access

The LSE gym is located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Saw Swee Hock Student Centre and on level -1 of the Marshall Building. There is an initial £5 joining fee that includes a mandatory gym induction. It is important to note that appointments for inductions are limited to certain times during each week. You can then choose to pay £6 for any day you use it or sign up for different plans. You can visit the gym once you arrive for more details or refer to the [Sports Facilities page](#).

### Life in London

London is a lively city of history, culture, shopping, dining and entertainment. Activities and dining can cost as little as nothing to a premium price, so we highly recommend that you research places to see and things to do during your time here. Previous scholars recommend visiting the many museums that offer free exhibitions and rich culture. You can refer to the LSE London Life page in the

school's website for a few ideas. On the Students section of the website is also information about [student discount cards](#) that you may find useful.

For even more info on living in London see LSE's fantastic guide to student life:  
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/London-life>

### **Student Accommodation**

LSE rent guarantor scheme: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation/private-housing/rent-guarantor-scheme>

More information on Accommodation at LSE, including securing private accommodation and how to contact them, can be found here: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation>

Other alternatives to the LSE Student Accommodation:

- Zebra Housing (for international students): <https://www.zebrahousing.com/>
- Goodenough College (for postgraduate students): <https://www.goodenough.ac.uk/accommodation/>
- Spare Room: <https://www.spareroom.co.uk/flatshare/london/page2>
- Open Rent: <https://www.openrent.co.uk/>

Please make sure to request a viewing, if you're looking for accommodation on Facebook Marketplace be aware that the announcements could be scams.

### **Entertainment**

Most on-line subscription services have a one-month free trial so as long as you cancel by the end of your first month you will not have to pay.

- [Netflix](#) streaming for students
- [Audible](#) audiobooks for students
- [BBC iPlayer](#) for TV, radio and sports
- [Kindle](#) ebooks for students
- [Spotify](#) music and podcasts for students
- Free games on [Steam](#)
- [Stitcher](#) for podcasts
- [Disney Plus](#)
- [Student discounts on streaming](#)
- [Amazon Prime Student discounts](#)

### **LSE Language Centre**

As a PfAL student there are specific groups for the course LN995 Academic Writing organized by the LSE Language Centre. All courses are free and do not count towards your assessment. For more information go to:

<https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/lse-life/events/english-language-skills>

Course teacher: Simon Roberts [s.j.roberts@lse.ac.uk](mailto:s.j.roberts@lse.ac.uk)

Contact the Language Centre: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/language-centre/How-to-contact-the-Language-Centre>

### **Learn something**

- [Duolingo](#)
- [Udemy](#)
- [Drawing & Painting - The Virtual Instructor](#) (free for quarantine duration)
- [Khan Academy](#)
- [Skill Share](#)
- [Open University](#)
- [Massive Open Online Course](#)
- [Harvard University Free Online Courses](#)

### **Exercise and keeping active**

- [Youtube channels for home workout](#)
- [Yoga with Adrienne](#)
- [Planet Fitness home exercise livestreams](#)
- [Turbulence Training home bodyweight exercises](#)
- [Sarah Beth Yoga](#)
- [Find you local park](#) (Please note ongoing government guidance on using public spaces)

### **Health and well-being**

- [LSE Student Counselling](#)
- [LSE Coronavirus FAQs](#)
- [Mental Health Advice](#)
- [Find your GP](#)
- [NHS Coronavirus advice and updates](#)

### **Museums**

- [Sir Jhon Soanes Museum](#) (Lincon's Inn Fields)
- [National Gallery](#)
- [British Museum](#)
- [Tate Modern](#)
- [Natural History Museum](#)
- [Natural Maritime Museum](#)
- [Southbank Centre](#)
- [Black Cultural Archives](#)

### **African Restaurants**

- [Tatale](#)
- [INairobi](#)
- [Prince of Peckham](#)
- [Mozah](#)

### **African spaces**

- [Africa Centre](#)
- [Royal African Society](#) ([Film Africa 2022](#))