



# Information Guide

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2016



## Edinburgh

**INFORMATION GUIDE EDINBURGH**

## Welcome

Welcome to Kaplan International in Edinburgh. This guide will help you make the most of your chosen course and will give you useful information that you can refer to during your stay.

### So, what’s studying at Kaplan really like?

You have probably already imagined what your life will be like in Edinburgh. You may have ideas about life in Scotland based on films, television or stories from friends and family. This guide aims to make your transition into Scotland as enjoyable and easy as possible and will tell you what to expect when you attend a school. We hope that this information will help you to form realistic expectations and encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities ahead.

### Will I be able to adjust to a new culture?

At Kaplan we understand that living in a new place may be challenging at times – but it will also be fun. You will soon meet people from around the world, try new things, and live in a different culture. One of the best ways to make sure that your transition goes smoothly is to maintain a positive attitude and stay healthy. View your new environment as a place to learn interesting things about yourself and others. Try to get enough sleep, eat properly, exercise, and participate in social activities. Take time to observe and enjoy the new things going on around you and appreciate the differences you find in your host country.

### What can I expect from my classes at Kaplan?

English language training delivered at Kaplan International is designed to reflect your needs and level of English. Through a range of interesting and varied activities our curriculum focuses on all aspects of your language development: grammar, reading, listening, speaking and writing. Our students are at the center of the learning process – you will build a solid foundation for your English, and improve your ability to communicate with accuracy and confidence in your classes.

### I have more questions...

Please contact your local representative if you have more questions before you depart. After you arrive, Kaplan staff at the school will be happy to help you with any problems that you have or any questions you want to ask.

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## Before you leave...

We understand that at times you may feel nervous when preparing for your stay in the United Kingdom. There are some important things you need to know before you leave that will make your life easier when you arrive. Use our checklist on the next page to ensure that you do not forget anything and you are well prepared for the exciting times ahead of you.

**Pocket money**

We recommend that you budget £80-100 for every week of your course. This should be enough for personal expenses, laundry, local travel and Kaplan activities. You will need additional money if you plan to rent a car, take weekend trips or travel. Bring £100 with you in cash and the rest in travellers' cheques. These should be in small denominations: £20-50 cheques if possible. Or you can use a credit card. You should not carry around large amounts of cash.

**Clothing**

Students dress casually for classes. You should bring some nice clothes for going out to restaurants, nightclubs etc. You should also bring clothing for sports and outdoor activities. You can usually rent sporting equipment. The climate is changeable and may be very different from your own. The typical temperature is 20 C in summer and 0 C to 10 C in winter, although it can drop below freezing. Bring warm waterproof clothing if you are arriving in autumn or winter. An umbrella would also be useful as it often rains in Britain.

**Bank account**

If possible, try to set up your bank account before you arrive. If you are staying for longer than six months you may be able to open up a bank account in the UK (although Kaplan cannot guarantee this). You will need to bring a wide variety of personal documentation with you to open an account. It can take a long time so make sure you have money available in the meantime. We advise you consult with your bank at home to get their advice on banking in the UK.

**Electrical current**

Standard voltage in the UK is 240 volts. To make sure that you are able to use all your electrical appliances bring an adaptor with you.



## Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have packed everything you will need and that you are well prepared for your trip to the United Kingdom. Check off each item as you pack it, or complete the task.

- Passport**  
Remember to bring your passport and any other form of personal identification you may need. For example, your driving licence.
- Acceptance letter**  
Pack your acceptance letter and Kaplan documentation (given to you by your Kaplan representative) in your hand luggage so that it is easy to access on arrival.
- Student visa**  
Ensure that your student visa is with your passport and is stored in your hand luggage. You will need your student visa when passing through immigration.
- Homestay/residence address details**  
Remember to pack your homestay or residence address details within your hand luggage so they are easy to access on your arrival. You will have received these details from your Kaplan representative.
- Accommodation factfile (homestay or residence)**  
You can download the accommodation factfile from our website: [www.kaplaninternational.com](http://www.kaplaninternational.com). This document gives further details about the accommodation.
- Proof of Health/Medical Insurance**  
You must bring proof of your Health/Medical Insurance with you. Also keep a copy with your family at home in case you lose any documentation during your stay.
- £100 in cash**  
Store this cash on your body or in your hand luggage. Try to avoid counting or pulling out your money in busy public places.
- Relevant payment if you are taking an exam**  
If you plan to take an exam in the UK please note you'll have to pay extra at the school. Please contact your Kaplan representative for more information on pricing.
- Travellers' cheques in low denominations**  
Store these on your body or in your hand luggage. Try to avoid counting or pulling out your cheques in busy public places.
- Correct clothing**  
Pack something warm in your hand luggage and ensure that you are wearing layers in case you get hot.
- Adaptor for electrical appliances**  
Remember standard voltage in the UK is 240 volts and the fitting may be different so bring an adaptor.
- Prescription medication**  
Pack medication carefully in the original packet in case you are asked questions in customs on your departure or arrival.
- Emergency information stored in your wallet or purse!!**  
This can be found on the last page of this booklet.



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## When you arrive

Arriving at the airport of a foreign country can be overwhelming and stressful. You could be feeling very tired and disoriented. To better prepare yourself, make sure that you have followed the checklist and have read the information below about your arrival and how to get to your accommodation.

Do not feel shy about asking airport staff for help, as most will be happy to give assistance.

### Independent Transfers

#### Edinburgh Airport to city center

Bus

Journey time: 25 minutes.

See [www.flybybus.com](http://www.flybybus.com)

Airport taxis are also available.



### Your first day

On the first day of your course you need to report to the school reception with your Kaplan documents and passport at **8.45am**. Your first day will be a Monday unless there is a public holiday on the Monday, in which case your first day will be Tuesday.

#### Your course will begin with an all-day introduction that will include:

- Completion of forms and collection of any outstanding payments
- A Placement Test to determine the level of the course you require
- A welcome talk by the Principal or Director of Studies
- Information about your classes
- Information about the school and area
- An overview of school activities and excursions
- An introduction to Structured Study and the study centers available
- A tour of the school and facilities

You will also receive information about your class schedule, classroom number, study level, Specific Skills course, and the hours you are to attend class. We will put you in the most suitable class for your level of English. Please bring your Kaplan documents, your passport, and pen and paper for note-taking purposes.



## School Facilities

### Classrooms

There are 20 large classrooms with plenty of natural light. All rooms have an interactive whiteboard and new classroom furniture. There is 'state-of-the-art' wireless connection in all the classrooms and throughout the school.

### Study Center

The Study center at the school has 15 computers with language learning programs, email and Internet access. There is teacher 9.30 to 5.00 every day to help with your studies. There is also a resource library with readers, study texts including exam preparation materials and DVDs available for use in school or at home.

### Student common room

The school has a students' room for relaxing, eating and enjoying free time before and after classes. There is a café selling sandwiches, pizza and cakes as well as hot and cold drinks. We have a machine selling fizzy drinks and a cold water fountain. There is excellent wireless for laptops and phones as well as computers for students. The students' room is a place to relax as well as study. There is a dining area as well as space to relax.

### Cafeteria

There are many 'take-aways' and cafes nearby where students can buy lunch. Students can eat in the common room or on the patio outside in nice weather.

### Sports facilities

Public parks can be used for outdoor sporting activities and there is a swimming pool nearby. Edinburgh has many sporting options including skiing, ice-skating, canoeing and many more. Our Social Program Manager can help with organising these.

### Gym facilities

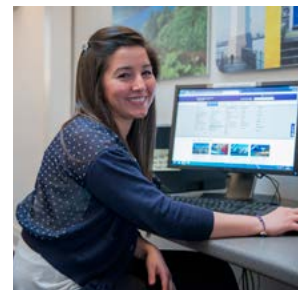
Students can join the local gym for indoor sports and fitness training.

### Activities/Social program

A full and varied social program is organised each week. Please see overleaf for an example timetable.



Kaplan students in a classroom



Multimedia room

## School Timetable

Class times are subject to change and you might have morning or afternoon lessons. You should only use this timetable as an example of what type of structure to expect. Classes are from Monday to Friday.

### Morning Classes

08:30 - 10:00 and 10:15 - 11:45

### Elective 1

11:50 - 13:05 (Mon - Thu) and 11:50 - 12:50 (Fri)

### Elective 2

13:10 - 14:25 (Mon - Thu) and 13:10 - 14:10 (Fri)

### Afternoon Classes

14:30 - 16:00 and 16:15 - 17:45

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## Local Information

### Transport - buses and trains

Weekly passes can be bought for the local bus service which can save you time and money. Trains operate from Waverley Station to towns and cities all over Scotland and England.

### Banks and Post Office

There are many banks in the town center for you to choose from. Always remember to change money and cheques in banks. There are also Post Offices in the city, and red post boxes are located on many street corners.

### Restaurants and cafés

There are many different restaurants, cafés and pubs located within walking distance of the school.

### Department stores and supermarkets

There are supermarkets and shops located near to the school. Supermarket meals are often an economical choice for lunches.

### Telephone and Internet café

You can access Internet and email from the multimedia center and from nearby Internet cafés. There are public telephones 5 minutes on foot from the school. Students are advised to buy a phone card for long distance calls and to call at weekends and in the evenings as call rates are cheaper then.

### Places of worship

There are places of worship for all religions and faiths close to the school. A list of these and their locations is in the welcome pack.



The student common room



The interior of the school is spacious and light



Activities program includes optional hikes in the magnificent Scottish highlands



Exploring Edinburgh

### Cost of Living

#### Approximate prices in GBP

Sandwiches	£1.50-3.00
Pizza/Pasta	£3.00
Coffee	£1.60
Tea	£1.20
Beer	£2.20
Wine	£3.50
Bus pass (per week)	£15.00

### Sample Activities Schedule

Please note that this is a sample program and activities may change.

#### Week one

Monday	Welcome new students - free
Tuesday	Walk along the Royal Mile on a tour of Edinburgh - free
Wednesday	Visit the Scotch Whisky Heritage Center - £12 and £9 concession
Thursday	Tour of the city's haunted underground vaults - £11 and £10 concession
Friday	International food night - free
Saturday	Day trip to the Highland Lochs and Glens - £29 - £37

#### Week two

Monday	Movie night - free
Tuesday	Walk across the spectacular Forth Bridge - free
Wednesday	Ceilidh with traditional music - £6
Thursday	Karaoke night - free
Friday	Traditional Scottish Dance evening - £6
Saturday	Day trip to St. Andrews - £29 - 35

Full-day excursion prices range from £22 - £40.

## Homestay accommodation

Homestay in the UK can include many different types of homes and families. They include young, senior and single parent families and couples with and without children. Hosts have varying ethnic backgrounds and different interests and lifestyles. Please refer to the United Kingdom homestay accommodation factfile for more details.

### Your life in a homestay

Living in a homestay will allow you to practise your English in a real-life setting. It is important to remember that you are both part of a family and a guest at the same time. You may have to help with household chores, keep your bedroom tidy and make your bed each morning. Make sure that you always ask for permission to invite friends and remember to ask before you change channels on the television!

### Meals

**Breakfast:** Breakfast is usually a light meal consisting of cereal, fruit, toast, juice or coffee. Hosts will usually ask you to prepare your own breakfast.  
**Lunch:** You will be responsible for buying your own lunch at the school, a local restaurant or from the local shops.

**Dinner:** You will usually eat dinner with your host, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host.

### What to bring

You can buy toiletries and other personal items in the local shops, but if you have specific items that you need, you should bring them with you. Your host will provide you with bed sheets, pillow case and towels. If you have any prescription medications that you are required to take, you should bring a supply with you. Although not required, some students like to bring a small token of their country as a house gift upon arrival at their host home.

### Telephone use

You should buy a phone card or use your own mobile phone to make telephone calls. Your host's telephone should only be used for emergency incoming calls. Remember to notify your family back home of any time differences to avoid calls in the middle of the night. It is often very expensive to make international calls from a home line, which is why we recommend using a phone card.

### Laundry facilities

Laundry facilities will depend on your selected homestay option. Please refer to the UK and Ireland accommodation factfile for more details. If your host does not do your washing please take it to a launderette to wash and dry - please do not wash clothes in the bathroom or dry them in your bedroom or cupboards. The average cost per load of washing in a UK launderette is £5.

### Getting to and from school

Your host will help you to find your way to and from school on your first day and will show you how to use public transport. Journey time will depend on the location of your homestay. Your school will give you more information about this. Please refer to the UK and Ireland accommodation factfile for more details.

### Smoking

When you book your accommodation, please request a host that allows smoking if you smoke. Most hosts will ask smokers to smoke outside. Always ask your host on arrival for their specific house rules regarding smoking. It is general courtesy to ask someone for permission to smoke next to them, even if you are outside. Restaurants will not allow you to smoke inside.



### Things to remember

- You are a guest as well as part of the family
- You may have to take part in family chores
- Buy a phone card for international calls
- Do not hang your laundry to dry in your room
- Ask permission to have a friend come to visit you
- Notify your host if you are not coming home for dinner
- Notify your host if you are not coming home for the night
- Ask permission to smoke



## Residential accommodation

Please refer to the relevant Edinburgh accommodation factfile for more details about your specific residence.

### What to bring

Our apartments include basic appliances and furniture. In the kitchen you will find a cooker, microwave, fridge, freezer and crockery and utensils to prepare your food. You will be given linen, duvets and pillows upon arrival. Personal toiletry items can be purchased locally. Students should bring their own towel.

### Phone Use

You will have access to a telephone for incoming calls only. You must buy a phone card upon arrival to use for calling out. Please limit your calls to 20 minutes. You can buy a phone card at school reception or at local shops. Some phone cards will be cheaper for calling home to your country. Ask reception staff for advice when buying your phone card.

### Laundry facilities

The residence has coin-operated washing machines. An iron and ironing board are available for you to do your own ironing. There will also be a launderette close by for your use. Average cost per load of washing is approximately £5.

### Security

You are responsible for keeping your own room secure. Kaplan is not responsible for items that are lost or stolen from the residence. Keep your personal belongings safely stored. Kaplan advises you to have your own Travel Insurance to cover any loss or theft.

### Going to and from school

The Kaplan apartments are a short bus ride away from the school.



### Things to remember

- Buy a phone card to make telephone calls
- Keep your valuables hidden in a safe place

## Private accommodation

Only students aged 18 and over are permitted to go into private accommodation. If you are 16 or 17 years old you will be housed in a homestay and should be home by 11 pm each night.

### If you are over 18 here are some tips if you want to find your own apartment or share a house with friends:

- Ask the Accommodation Officer for a list of good local letting agencies or if they know of any accommodation to rent locally.
- Check whether the accommodation you are going to see is in a safe area.
- Take a friend with you when you go to view any accommodation.
- If you are sharing an apartment or house find out who has access to the accommodation.
- Make sure the accommodation has a recent safety certificate - all cookers, electric fires are safe and smoke alarms are fitted. Make sure you switch everything off before you leave the accommodation each day.
- Make sure your room is secure and that you have insurance for your laptop, camera, TV, DVD, personal music player and other valuable items.

## Health and Safety

If you or a friend is seriously ill or has had an accident call 999. Stay calm and describe to the operator on the line what type of help you need (ambulance, fire or police) and your location. You may be required to describe any symptoms. Explain as much as you can, don't worry if you are not confident with your English - say as much as you can, as clearly as you can. For further information on health and safety in the UK visit the British council website at [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org).

### Medical insurance

All students must have medical insurance for the duration of their stay in the UK. Students need to organise their own medical insurance before they travel. Kaplan does not offer travel and medical insurance in the UK, but students can either use the link on the Kaplan International website to book travel and medical insurance directly with an insurance provider, or they can choose their own.

### If you get sick

If you get sick while you are in the United Kingdom you should visit a doctor. You can ask the Welfare Officer or your homestay host where the nearest doctor is. If you have a minor illness you can often ask staff at a local chemist for advice. If you are ill, make an appointment to see a doctor and take any relevant insurance or medical documentation with you. You may be required to register with your local doctor.

Medical costs are at the discretion of your local doctor or hospital. A guide to costs in the United Kingdom are as follows:

- A consultation with a doctor (minimum £40)
- Prescriptions at a chemist (minimum £5 per item)
- Dental treatment (minimum £50)
- Eye tests or new glasses (minimum £30)

### Protecting your belongings

We strongly recommend that you take out insurance for your personal belongings, especially cameras, personal music player and laptop computer. Personal items cannot be covered by Kaplan homestay or residence insurance. You can cover these items with your own personal travel insurance. Please make sure that you are properly covered in case of loss or theft.



### Things to remember

- Call 999 in case of fire, medical emergency or need for the police.
- You must have medical insurance to attend a Kaplan course.

## Laws and Customs

You may find that laws of the UK differ from those in your home country. You must obey the country's laws and respect its customs. It is important that you understand the laws, rules and customs that you may encounter.

### Laws

- No one under the age of 18 in the United Kingdom may buy or consume alcohol, cigarettes and tobacco. It is against the law to buy alcohol, cigarettes and tobacco for someone you know to be under the age of 18.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol is a very serious crime and police make regular random checks.
- Buying, selling and using drugs (including cannabis) is illegal.

The police and Kaplan are very strict in enforcing these laws.

### Kaplan's rules

Kaplan has rules that must not be broken. These rules may apply to academic work at school as well as life in your residence or homestay.

- If you leave your Kaplan course, the government may take away your student visa and advise you to return home.
- You must attend all classes. If you do not attend classes your representative will be informed. If a student is under 18, parents will also be informed. If you do not then improve your attendance you will be sent home.
- Always tell Kaplan if you are going to be absent from school for any reason and tell your homestay host if you are going away overnight.
- If you commit a criminal offence or have to be severely disciplined you will be sent home and no refund will be given. We will also inform the immigration authorities.
- Be on time for all your lessons.

### Customs

Customs are an accepted way of behaviour in a country. You need to know the customs of the United Kingdom to help you feel comfortable with people. Some important customs to know include:

**Women:** Women in the United Kingdom are equal to men and should always be treated fairly. Men and women share equally in household work and childcare.

**Queues:** Always stand in line and wait your turn when buying tickets, in a bank, post office or waiting for a bus. Keep to the right when standing on escalators.

**Friendliness:** English people talk to strangers in public areas. This is a great way to practise English, but caution should be taken. You should not give out your address and telephone number, or accept inappropriate invitations. Although most people are friendly, some may be reluctant to speak with strangers.

**Please and Thank you:** These are very important words! Always use them if you ask someone to do something for you, or if they help you or give you information.



### Things to remember

- If you are under 18 years of age it is illegal to drink alcohol
- Buying, selling and using drugs (including cannabis) is illegal
- Notify Kaplan if you are going to be absent from school
- Women are treated equally to men in the UK
- Remember to say please and thank you

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## Important Dates to Remember

### National Holidays 2016

New Year's Day	01/01/2016
Good Friday	25/03/2016
Easter Monday	28/03/2016
May Holiday	02/05/2016
Spring Bank Holiday	30/05/2016
August Holiday	29/08/2016
Boxing Day Holiday	26/12/2016
Christmas Day Holiday	27/12/2016

The dates above are the dates for observed holidays in the year 2016. For holiday dates in other years, consult your Kaplan representative. If you arrive on a week where the Monday is a national holiday, your first day of school will be a Tuesday.

There will be no classes for 2 weeks in December as the school will be closed for Christmas. Students enrolled in the Academic Year Program will also have 2 to 3 weeks of vacation during their stay. Please refer to the Kaplan brochure or your Kaplan representative for further details on these holidays.

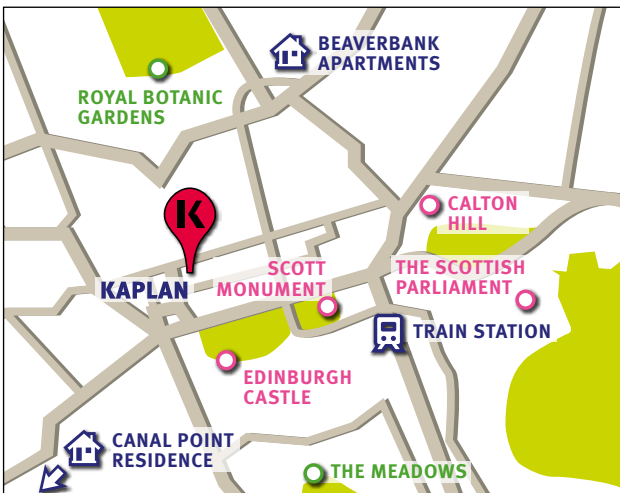
**We look forward to seeing you at Kaplan International Edinburgh.  
If you have additional questions please ask our staff on arrival.**

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**KAPLAN** INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH

**Keep these numbers with you at all times!**

**Emergency Kaplan Number:**  
+44 (0)7557 262 732

**Emergency Number (Police, Fire, Ambulance):**  
999

Information in this guide is subject to change.