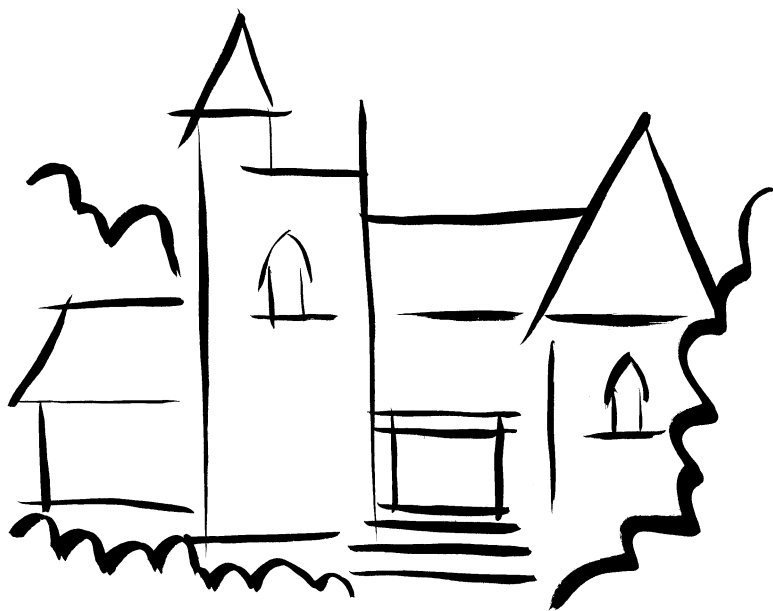


THE
OXFORD
English Centre



STUDENT GUIDE

Accredited by the
**BRITISH
COUNCIL**
for the teaching
of English in the UK



The Oxford English Centre, 66 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 6PR

Dear Student

A very warm welcome to the United Kingdom, and especially to THE OXFORD ENGLISH CENTRE! We have been welcoming students to this school since 1979 and it is our mission to ensure that your time with us will be rewarding, stimulating and unforgettable.

If you have a question, need information, or are experiencing any difficulty, please talk to us, so that we can help you. It is extremely important to us that you feel happy and comfortable here in Oxford, so that you can make the most of your time at The Oxford English Centre. We take your safety and welfare very seriously, and therefore we have a 24/7 emergency mobile phone number, which is always carried by a member of staff, even at night and weekends so you can be sure that one of us will always be available if you have an emergency.

For Emergencies only call +44 (0) 75000 16333.

School Floor Plan

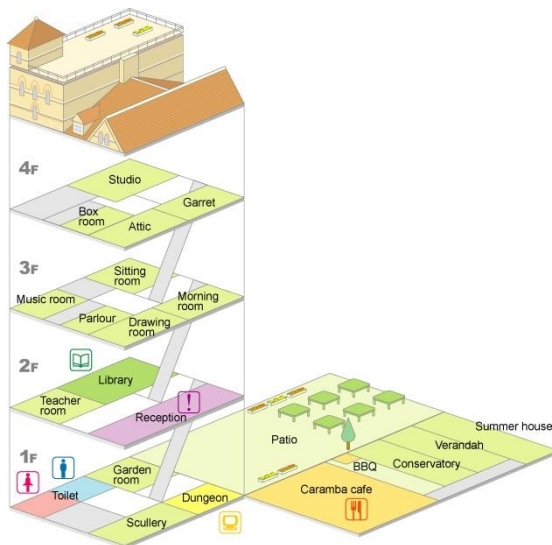
Fire Evacuation:
Emergency assembly point is the Front Car Park.

1ST Floor, Carmaba & Caramba classrooms: via the rear of the building to the front car park.

2nd, 3rd & 4th Floors: via the front entrance to the front car park

Fire Procedures and Health & Safety

If you hear the fire alarm leave the building by the nearest exit, as instructed to do so by a member of staff. Leave your belongings and move quickly and calmly. Once outside, stay in your class group and meet in the front car park where your teacher will check you are present. **Do not** go back into the building for any reason until a member of staff has told you that it is safe to do so. The Fire Alarm is tested every Monday at 10.00 am. The alarm will sound for just a few seconds and then stop, so please do not worry!



Ryan is the Fire Marshal for The Oxford English Centre.
There are fire extinguishers on each floor of the building, and in Caramba.

Who to speak to:

Centre Manager: Ryan Smith

Ryan is responsible for the overall running of the school. Speak to Ryan if you need to make any changes to your course booking, e.g. to extend your course, pay for an exam or take a holiday.

Ryan is also responsible for student welfare - you can talk to Ryan about any problems you are having in the UK, whether practical or personal.

If you are unhappy with your classes: first you should speak to your teacher. Our teachers are happy to receive your feedback so they can help you learn better. If you are still unhappy, talk to Ryan.

If you have problems with your accommodation, speak to Ryan.

Your teachers can also help you with ideas for things to do or questions you have about Oxford.

Useful telephone numbers

School office (8:30-17:00)	+44 (0) 1865 516 162
School emergency mobile	+44 (0) 75000 16333
Local Taxi	+44 (0) 1865 240 000
Police, non emergency (e.g. lost wallet) 101	999 (for extreme emergency)
Emergency Services (For Fire, Police, Ambulance)	

Oxford English Centre Mission Statement

Our mission is to inspire our students to achieve their potential and their personal goals in language learning in a supportive international environment.

Our Ethos

A high quality of student welfare is central to our ethos at the school, along with a high standard of teaching and learning.

Our aims include:

- being a school where the well-being of everyone is the prime concern of each member of our community.
- supporting a learning community in which all students can realise their full potential, whatever that may be.
- providing a safe, stimulating and enriching environment where everyone is able to enjoy his/her learning experience.
- encouraging students to be active members of their school community through a range of activities, trips and events.
- promoting regular attendance and good behaviour as pre-conditions for maintaining high standards of achievement.
- providing a caring environment in our homestay families, in which students can feel safe and supported.
- encouraging tolerance and understanding between all members of our community.
- fostering an enjoyment and appreciation of British life and culture while promoting a sense of belonging to an international community.

School Rules

- Please make sure you attend all your lessons everyday. Lessons start at 09:30. If you are ill or cannot attend class please call the office on +44 (0) 1865 516162. If you are absent for 3 days or more you will receive a warning letter and may be reported to UKVI. Your place in class may be given to another student if you are absent for 2 days and do not tell Reception.
- Please be punctual. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will be marked late and will not normally be allowed into the class until the break.
- Please turn your mobile phone to 'silent' before class.
- Please do not eat or drink in the classrooms (except water).
- Abusive behaviour, such as swearing or fighting, will not be tolerated. You may be removed from your class for inappropriate conduct and asked to leave the school.
- Expect to get homework at least three times a week (more often for exam and specialist classes)
- No smoking inside the school building. The only permitted smoking area is the 'Smoke House', by Caramba Café.

- A minimum of 2 weeks' notice is required if you want to take a holiday. Please complete the 'Holiday Request Form' available from Reception.
- Please fully complete the 'Registration Form' on your first day. Tell Reception immediately if any of the details change.
- Please inform Reception immediately if you change your address or phone number.
- You must not drink alcohol or use drugs (including so-called 'legal highs') on OEC premises.
- Students under 18 years of age must sign in and out everyday at Reception.
- Students under 18 years of age must be back at their homestay by 22:30 without exception every night.

Expect Respect

We really enjoy welcoming people from all over the world to our school, and we appreciate that we all have different cultures, religions, genders, sexualities and beliefs. We want to make sure that everyone feels comfortable at the college, and that all students, staff and homestay hosts at OEC can study and work safely and without fear of bullying or abuse. While you are studying here, we ask you to behave appropriately, showing respect to OEC staff and your fellow students; you must not behave violently or aggressively, or use threatening or abusive language towards anyone. We may ask you to leave your class in extreme cases.

Remember that sometimes things you say or do may be offensive to people of other cultures even though they are normal in your home country – be sensitive to other people's feelings. Similarly, sometimes people may do or say things that would not be polite in your country - try to remember that they may not mean to offend you. At OHC we take abusive behaviour very seriously and if your behaviour is unacceptable, we may have to change your accommodation, your class or study programme, or even ask you to leave the college.

If you are unhappy about someone's behaviour, you can talk to your teacher, the centre manager or the welfare officer. Serious incidents or repeated bad behaviour will be reported to our Group Principal in London, who will decide what action to take.

Cyber Bullying

Bullying is not something which only happens in the real world any more. Now it can happen on mobile phones, email, chat rooms, on social networks and other websites. Cyber bullying is when one or more people try to tease, harass, threaten or embarrass another person using technology such as mobile phones or internet.

Children and young people can fall victim to cyber bullying, but they can also become the bully, or be drawn into cyber bullying without realising it. Even though cyber bullying cannot physically hurt someone, the effects can be devastating.

What to do if you feel bullied:

- Sign off the computer. It's best to ignore attacks and walk away from a cyber-bully.
- Don't respond or retaliate.
- Block the bully. If you get mean messages, remove the person from your friends list or you can delete messages without even reading them.
- If the harassment continues, save the messages as evidence and show your teacher or reception.
- Tell a trusted adult. This is someone who you believe will listen to you and who has the skills and authority to help you. At school, the right person to speak to is Ryan.

Student ID cards

Your student card will be given to you on your first day. This card includes your name, UK address and the school address and emergency mobile number.

- If you are studying for more than 12 weeks, you can apply for a national student card, called a TOTUM, which will get you a discount in shops and restaurants, and at cinemas and theatres, etc. It costs £12 and lasts for one year. If you would like this card, please see the reception, who will give you a special code and link to the website to sign up.
- You can also sign up for an international student card, called ISIC on isiccard.co.uk. You will need a scanned copy of your enrolment form, and/or a letter from the school (you can get this from reception). This also costs £12 and is offered to anyone studying for more than 12 weeks.

Learning

- Lessons may be different from those in your own country. OEC focuses very much on communicating in pairs & group work as lots of practice speaking will improve your accuracy & fluency.
- Expect correction of errors by your teacher but not all the time.
- We encourage learner autonomy (students to study on their own too) through the use of self access materials in the Library and the use of a good dictionary.
- Students who attend the social programme tend to improve their English more quickly.
- Try to make friends who do not speak your first language!

- Ask about specialist classes in the afternoon. Reception can arrange 1-to-1 lessons.
- If you would like extra homework, ask your teacher for advice.

Examination classes

To study in a Cambridge or IELTS examination preparation class, students need to be at an appropriate level, you will also need to do a writing task and have a short interview.

We can register you for a Cambridge examination ask at reception for help. Please bear in mind that there are closing dates for each Exam. We can also give advice about applying to do an IELTS examination. For more information come to see us in reception.

Electronic European Language Portfolio

Make a note of your progress. For more information visit www.eElp.org

Internet Access

Free Wi-Fi connection is available throughout the school

Wifi name: oecstudent
Password: OxfordEnglish66

Social Programme

The school arranges social activities through the week. These are usually cheap or free of charge. They are a great way to make new friends, learn about British culture and practise your English. Also you can follow us on Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TheOxfordEnglishCentre>

Health & Safety

- Please take care of yourself and valuables in the school and outside.
- Students are advised that it is their responsibility to make sure that they have a good insurance policy to cover their stay, including medical cover. Endsleigh Insurance offer a special policy for international students www.endsleigh.co.uk
- Information about visiting a doctor or dentist is available from Reception. Long term students are advised to register with a doctor.

First Aid

Several OEC staff are qualified first aiders. Go to Reception should you or someone else require attention.

Treatment on the National Health Service (NHS)

If you feel unwell, need to see a doctor or dentist, please come to Reception and we can help make an appointment. If you are studying for more than 3 months you should register with a doctor. If your course is longer than six months, you will not have to pay for treatment on the NHS. You will need to pay a fixed price for any medicines you need and you will need some proof that you are a student and the length of your course.

EU Students - you should have a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The EHIC will allow you to receive all or most of your treatment free. If you do not have a card, you may need to pay for treatment.

Some countries have an agreement with the UK to provide free healthcare for their citizens. If you are not sure whether you are entitled, you can check at reception or at: <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/uk-visitors/visiting-england/Pages/categories-of-exemption.aspx>

Visa National Students - If you are not entitled to free treatment on the NHS, we recommend that you have private health insurance.

The following NHS services are free to all:

- Emergency treatment in an Accident & Emergency Department (e.g. a heart attack, a broken bone or a road traffic accident etc)
- Treatment for certain infectious diseases.
- Compulsory psychiatric treatment.
- Family planning services (sexual health).

Dental Treatment

You can have dental treatment either privately or on the NHS, if you are entitled to free medical treatment. NHS dental treatment is cheaper, but is not free. If you are entitled to free medical treatment, you will pay a lower price for NHS dental treatment, but you should register with a dentist first. You can find the nearest NHS dentist to you here: <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Dentist/LocationSearch/3> or ask for help in reception.

Child Protection Officer

The child protection officer is Ryan Smith. If you need to talk to someone, go to Reception and ask for Ryan. If you would prefer to talk to a female member of staff, Ryan can arrange it.

Student information & services

If you would like us to help you find a place of worship (Church, Mosque, Temple etc), sports facilities or other facilities near to the school or where you live, or for any other information, please come and see us in reception.

Post can be sent to the school address – we will keep it for you in reception.

Bank Accounts

It can be difficult to open a bank account in the UK. You will usually need to be enrolled as a long term student. The school can give you a letter confirming you are a student at this school. You will also need evidence of your address in the UK (a bill or other official document – the school can only provide evidence of address if we arranged your accommodation). You will need to give your address in your home country.

Important English laws & traffic regulations

- Remember that in the UK we drive on the left. Be careful, and only cross the road at traffic lights, using the 'Pelican Crossing' or at zebra crossings.
- Please note it is against the law to buy alcohol or cigarettes if you are under 18. You will not be allowed into most pubs and nightclubs where alcohol is sold if you are under 18. You may be asked to show ID proving your age.
- It is against the law to have even a small amount of an illegal drug.
- Smoking is prohibited in all public buildings and on public transport.
- Drivers and all passengers have to wear a seat belt when in a car.
- If you are arrested by the police, we advise you to contact your family immediately.

Registration with the Police

If your visa requires it, you will need to register with the police within 7 days of arriving. Ask in reception for directions to the Police Station. You will need:

- Completed registration form, available from Reception.
- A course confirmation letter from the school.
- Your passport and travel documents.
- One passport size photo.
- You will also need to pay (currently £34.00) using a card or mobile app e.g. Apple or Google pay. Cash is not accepted.

Check your passport to find out if you need to register.

Complaints procedure

If you are unhappy about anything at the school please talk to someone as soon as possible. You can talk to your teacher or someone in Reception. If you are still unhappy you can speak with the Centre Manager. For any serious problems it is a good idea to write a short letter detailing your concerns. If you are still unhappy you can contact English UK, but you must discuss the problem with us first and give us time to solve the problem (at least 5 working days).

Contact details for English UK: Log onto their website and you can find the complaints procedure: <http://www.englishuk.com/en/students>

email: info@englishuk.com

address: Customer Services. English UK, 47 Brunswick Court, Tanner Street, London, SE1 3LHG. Telephone: 020 7608 796

Any complaints which involve a crime must be reported to the police.

Staying with a Homestay Family

Advice to help you settle in and get the most out of your stay:

Do:

- Remember you are here to learn English – Your homestay host can help you! Try to speak as much as possible with them. You can talk at mealtimes about your day at school or even as you watch TV together.
- Try to keep your bedroom tidy. Your homestay host will clean your room and change your bedding, usually once a week. It can be very difficult to do this if the room is messy.
- Your laundry will be done a minimum of once per week.
- Leave the bathroom how you found it: Ask your homestay host if you are not sure how to use the shower. Showers should take a maximum of 10-15 minutes and please do not shower too early in the morning or too late at night.
- Tell your host if there is any food you don't like or do not/cannot eat.
- Make the most of your free time: come along to the school social activities and meet other students. Arrange to meet your friends from school and to do things together.
- Go home at the time you should: **There is a strict curfew time for any student under 18 years of age. You need to be home by 22:30 at the latest every night, without exception.**
- If you are over 18, please respect your homestay hosts' rules about going home. Usually we suggest you are back by 12:30pm during the week as your host will need to get up for work next day.
- Always call if you are going to be late or do not require a meal.

Don't:

- Use your homestay like a hotel! Your hosts are welcoming you into their home and sharing their lives and culture with you.
- Make a noise late at night.
- Invite people to the house.
- Use the telephone without asking permission – calls can be very expensive in England, even to local numbers

16 & 17 year-olds on adult courses

If you are 16 or 17 years old, travelling independently and attending an adult course at you will need to:

- Sign in at Reception everyday when you arrive for school. If you do not sign in, we will contact your homestay to check that you are okay or maybe your parents or agent.
- Sign out at Reception everyday when you finish school.
- **Return home by 22.30 every night.** This is part of the schools rules for under 18's. Your hosts will contact the school if you are not at home on time.

When you are not in the school or at your homestay, you will not be supervised. However, even though you are travelling as an adult, you are in a strange country – Here is some advice to help you to stay safe:

- Remember, you're not at home! In your home town you know the places it's best to avoid in the evenings or alone, you understand what everyone says and can easily see if a situation is getting dangerous. In the UK, you may miss important signals, misunderstand what someone says, or get lost and walk into the wrong part of town.
- Be aware – pay attention to what is happening around you – it's best if you don't walk around looking at your mobile phone, or listening to music on headphones.
- Stay together – Especially when you go out in the evenings; make sure you walk with someone else or in a group, have your friends' phone numbers and don't get separated.
- Make sure you know your address and phone number in the UK. Practise saying it. You might need to tell someone where you live.
- Always tell someone where you are going – if you are going out, tell your hosts or the school (or even just a friend) where you will be and who you will be with.
- You cannot buy alcohol or cigarettes in the UK – and you must not ask over-18s to buy them for you. If they agree, they are breaking the law.
- Keep your valuables safe – hold on to your mobile phone and your purse/wallet. Make sure you know where your bag is.
- Leave important documents at home – take a photocopy of your identity card or passport and carry that with you.
- Keep your OEC student card and keep it with you as the school emergency number is on the card, call it if you need help.
- Find a police officer – if you are lost or worried, ask a police officer for help. The British Police are generally very friendly and helpful.

- Talk to someone if you are unhappy or in trouble, or maybe homesick. You can talk to our welfare officer at school or a teacher (ask at reception) If you would prefer, you can call Childline 0800 1111 which is a phone line providing free and confidential help and advice for young people aged up to 19. Calls are free from a public telephone (or other landline) – you may have to pay if you call from a mobile phone.
- **In a real emergency, call the police – call 999** and ask for the police. Calls are free from any phone.

Advice for adult students moving into bed-sits or flats

- Check your contract carefully, especially how much notice you must give before you can move out.
- Check the inventory carefully and agree the condition of the accommodation before moving in. You will be responsible for any damage.
- You may be liable to pay Council Tax, check your contract.
- You will probably be responsible for paying utility bills (e.g. gas, electric and water).
- Check whether the property is a no smoking property.
- Check cooking facilities, especially whether you need to provide your own plates, cups, pans etc.
- For shared accommodation, ensure you have a private bedroom with a lock on the door, or a place you can lock valuables.
- Ensure the front door locks securely.
- Respect your neighbours and keep noise to a minimum between 22.00-8.00
- Be familiar with the local neighbourhood in case you need an emergency pharmacy etc.
- Be familiar with the local transport system so you know when the last bus is.

It can be great to rent your own flat or bedsit, but remember, you're here to learn English, so make sure you don't lose the chance to practise outside class!

Useful web sites for students studying in England

Learning

www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/>

www.examenglish.com

<http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/exams.htm>

Accommodation to rent (for 18 years +)

<https://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/oxford-accommodation>

<https://www.gumtree.com/flats-and-houses-for-rent/oxford>

Advice

www.ukcisa.org.uk

A national organization that looks after the interests and needs of international students & gives advice.

www.samaritans.com

Offers a confidential telephone support line

www.helplines.org.uk

To find a local help line for a particular problem

General Sites

<http://www.ego4u.com>

Language practice site. For reviewing grammar – explanations and exercises

<http://www.manythings.org/>

Fantastic site with loads of activities

<http://a4esl.org/>

exercises, links, bilingual quizzes and more

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/>

Great site for listening practice and natural English

See 'The Teacher' – excellent way to learn idioms

<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk>

British council site for adult learners and kids section

Listening Resources

www.ted.com

Ted talks – excellent site for higher levels- lots of interesting talks

<http://www.esl-lab.com/>

- Randell's ESL Cyber Listening Lab – lots of activities

<http://eolf.univ-fcomte.fr/index.php?page=english-listening-exercises>

English Online Listening Practice:

http://englishenglish.com/listening_skills.htm

ESL Listening Activities:

<http://www.ello.org>

English Language Listening Lab Online –over 1000 listening activities:

Listening Resources

<http://languagecaster.com/>

Learn English through football podcasts:

<http://a4esl.org/podcasts/>

Podcasts for ESL:

<http://www.lingual.net/lingualproductitems>

Learn English through short movies:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/multimedia/>

BBC Watch and

Listen_ short videos for learning English:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/grammar/pron/>

BBC Pronunciation tips:

Video useful sites:

www.youtube.com – great video resource

www.videojug.com - 'How to...' videos

www.nationalgeographic.com – lots of great videos for the more serious students

Newspapers - Broadsheet Newspapers

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/>

Reading Books

<http://www.readbookonline.net/> Short stories, novels and essays to read online

Exam Sites

<http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/> Great resource with practice for the Cambridge Exams
– FCE, CAE, CPE

<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/> This is the main Cambridge site for exams – it gives you details and tips/strategies for preparing for the exams

<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/resources/index.html> - for practice on this site

<http://www.examenglish.com/> - Some free online practice tests

<http://www.ielts.org/> - The Cambridge IELTS site with online practice

Lots of TV online

<http://www.channel4.com/programmes/4od>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer>

<http://demand.five.tv/Home.aspx>

<http://www.itv.com/itvplayer/>



Frequently Asked Questions

What Certificate will I receive when I finish my course?

On completion of your course you will receive a completion certificate from the school. In order to receive a certificate, you must have completed at least 80% of your course and you will need to complete a student satisfaction questionnaire.

I have never studied in a group like this before, and I am a little nervous. What can I do?

Don't worry; everyone feels the same at first. The most important thing is to try your best, and don't be afraid to make mistakes – we all learn by making mistakes.

The other students know more than me. What should I do?

Students who were in your class before you arrived may know some things that you don't. Your teacher will encourage them to help you when you have problems. Later, when a new student joins your class, you will be able to help them in class too.

How do I go up to the next level?

Our teachers continuously assess learners, conduct a monthly test and decide by Wednesday who will go up the following Monday. Teachers assess your level of speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar in relation to the syllabus for that level. It is important students go up only when they have mastered essential syllabus elements and not before. Sometimes, special level tests are used to ensure objectivity and validity of assessment. Talk to your teacher first, if you are unhappy with their decision, speak with the Centre Manager.

I want to do some extra work, what should I do?

You should speak with your teacher, who may increase the amount of homework. Your teacher may also recommend practice books you can borrow from the library. This will also help you revise things that the other students in your class may already have studied.

Can I change my course booking?

Please choose your course carefully. The school tries to be flexible to meet the needs of all our students but it is not always possible to change course on demand or reduce a course to one to one teaching. Please note that we will not usually transfer a group course booking for one to one teaching. Refunds are only given if a visa is denied or a student is not permitted to enter the country.

If I am not enjoying my class, who should I tell?

First of all, speak to your teacher about it. He or she will listen and try to help. You can also speak to the Centre Manager who will give you advice and may speak with your teacher.

Can I take a holiday?

Yes, ask in Reception.

You must give at least 2 weeks notice in advance.

You can only take WHOLE weeks as holiday (not parts of weeks).

Long term students are entitled to 1 week holiday for every 10 weeks of study and you must have already completed 12 weeks of your course before you can request a holiday.

For authorised holiday, your course length will be extended by the number of weeks you take as holiday, if your visa expiry date allows.

The homestay fee is still due unless you take all your belongings with you.

We will try to place you in the same class on your return but this is not guaranteed.

Can I borrow books and DVDs from the Library for free?

Yes, please speak to reception for help.

Can I book examinations at The Oxford English Centre?

Yes. You can book FCE, CAE and CPE. Please speak with Ryan for further details.

We can also advise you where you can take IELTS exam.

Timetable

Adult Programme	
Session 1	09:30 – 11:00
Break	11:00 – 11:15
Session 2	11:15 – 12:45
Lunch	12:45 – 13:30
Session 3	13:30 – 15:00 (Fluency or options)
Session 4	15:00 – 16:30 (Self-Access or options)

Teens Programme	
Session 1	09:00 – 10:30
Break	10:30 – 10:45
Session 2	10:45 – 12:15
Lunch	12:15 – 12:45
Session 3	12:45 – 13:45
Activities	14:00 – 17:00

Please check your confirmation letter for the course you have booked.