

# COMMUNICATION



When you are away from home you will no doubt feel the need to keep your nearest and dearest upto date about what you are doing. Here is some advice about the various ways you can stay in touch while you are away from home:

## EMAIL & INTERNET



You can use the Internet facilities in the AIFS Student Centre free of charge. The centre is open Monday–Friday 8am–6:30pm (5:30pm on Fridays). There are 27 PC's available, running Microsoft Office and connected to free printing facilities. If you want to save coursework/pictures we recommend you bring a portable flashdrive/thumbdrive with you. (These are much cheaper to purchase in the USA).

Please note that you will not be provided with an email address in London, so it is best for you to use your school email/Yahoo/Hotmail/Aol or similar account while you are abroad.

The student services centre and the University of London Union (where your classes are) is also wireless enabled. Therefore if you have your own laptop you will be able to connect to the internet for free.

Homestay Students, please do not assume your family will have an internet connection. In the UK it is still not as common as in the US.

## TELEPHONE

### MOBILE (CELL) PHONES

AIFS recommends that students purchase a UK mobile telephone on arrival in London. This is the most straightforward way of staying in touch with friends and family back home and fellow students in London.



You can purchase a basic "PAY AS YOU GO" phone on arrival in the UK for an initial payment upwards of £15 and then you can purchase prepaid minutes. With credit on your phone, you can make calls and send text (SMS) messages. It is also possible to send text messages to the USA, however some US networks do not accept or send texts to European phones.

The biggest difference from the US is that in the UK you do not pay to receive calls. You only pay for the calls you make. Once you have your UK number, you can email your friends and family the details and they can call you! (Remember the time difference!)

A UK Pay as you gone phone does work across Europe (extra fees will be charged to make and receive calls) and you can use an international calling card as well.

### EUROPEAN SIM CARDS + US PHONES

Over the last few years some students have brought over a US cellphone with the intention of using it with a UK Sim card. In theory this is possible but in practice, we would not recommend it. There are usually issues with handset compatibility and charging the phone, plus if anything happens to your US phone, getting a replacement is complicated and there are usually tears. It's best to get an inexpensive UK Pay as you go phone.



## INTERNET BASED PHONE SERVICES

This is a relatively new technology but more and more students have been embracing it. The computers in the AIFS student centre are not set up for making calls but if you do have your own laptop that connects to a wireless network, services such as Skype, Vonage and so on are available for you to call anywhere cheaply and even for free! Have a look at [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com).



## LANDLINES IN THE STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE

You may receive incoming calls in the Student Services Office during office hours, however it is not the most private place to receive calls. Please notify staff if you are expecting a call so that they know where to find you. When the office is closed an answering machine will receive calls. Messages received will be transcribed as soon as the office re-opens, and put in your mailboxes.

## PAYPHONES

You will see payphones in the street and in certain buildings throughout Britain, although they are a dying breed! Most payphones accept coins and credit cards. Just follow the instructions above the phone. Sadly not all our payphones are in the red boxes but they are still quite common. For your information – all local calls cost money in Britain. Freephone numbers in the UK begin with 0800.



## HOMESTAY STUDENTS

Homestay students should make personal arrangements with their homestay hosts concerning use of the telephone. Please respect their wishes regarding Calling Cards, Length of Use and time difference with the USA.

## APARTMENT STUDENTS

Please note there are not usually telephones in the student apartments.

## CALLING CARDS

If you buy a calling card while in the US, please ensure that you ask for an INTERNATIONAL CARD that allows you to call from outside the US back to the US.

All of the major US networks (ATT, MCI, SPRINT) provide calling cards that work from anywhere in the world. Just make sure you have the local access number (AIFS student services can help). Calling cards are also available in the UK or online. Please remember the number of minutes varies dramatically depending if you make the call on a Landline, Mobile telephone or Payphone.

## MAIL

Let's face it, even in this modern age, everyone still loves to receive letters, cards, or even better, packages. All mail is sorted into easily accessible alphabetical mailboxes (by last name). Please send all mail to the AIFS Student Centre at the below address:

(NAME) AIFS STUDENT CENTRE, DILKE HOUSE, 1 MALET STREET, LONDON, WC1E 7JN, ENGLAND

## FAXING

Sometimes, things just need to be faxed. No problem. The fax number of the AIFS Student Services Office, when dialling from the USA is **011 44 20 7637 1325**.