

# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

NOTRE DAME



## Student Handbook 2008-09

Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College St Mark's Avenue, Leeds, LS2 9BL.  
Tel: 044 (0) 113 294 6644 Fax: 044(0) 294 6006

# Welcome to Notre Dame!

Congratulations!

You have chosen to study in Notre Dame Sixth Form College in Leeds, one of the leading colleges in the country, in one of the most exciting and vibrant cities in the UK!



*HISTORICAL NOTE;*  
*Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College was previously a girls' school founded by the 'Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur' who arrived from France in 1898. The college has remained at this site but has grown and developed into the major educational centre you see today!*



Leeds is the second largest metropolitan district in the UK. It is a university town with over 1 million inhabitants and is home to more than 75 nationalities!

We have around 1,300 students at Notre Dame and of these, approximately 50 are fee paying International Students like yourselves. Naturally, the ethnicity in the college reflects the diversity of the population of the city.

A vibrant and affluent city, Leeds has a lively arts, sporting and entertainment scene. Leeds is a city of contrasts with great shopping, nightlife and attractions, and green and pleasant countryside and national parks.



Hmm..nice shops!

Nice cow!



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT DEPARTMENT



**Rose Lou**

Director of International Students

Overall Head of the Department. Ms Lou will see you on a regular basis to monitor your progress. She will also deal with any major academic or disciplinary issues.

E-mail  
r.lou@notredamecoll.ac.uk



**Amanda Fenner**

International Student Administrator

Provides help and support with accommodation, visas, welfare and other college issues. First link for students.

E-mail  
a.fenner@notredamecoll.ac.uk



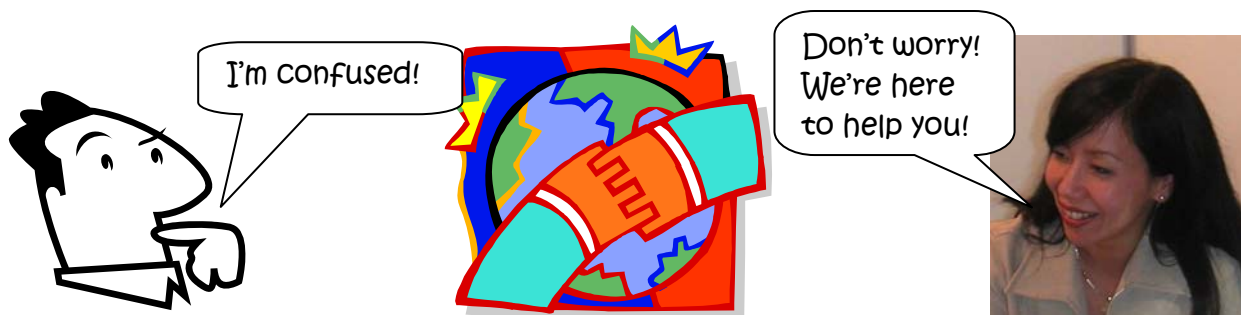
**Clare Pembroke**

EFL Teacher

Teacher of English as a foreign language. Provides English to support academic studies and teaches the IELTS syllabus for university entry.

E-mail  
c.pembroke@notredamecoll.ac.uk

## THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICE



Studying in another country is a challenging experience and as a college, we want to ensure that you get the maximum benefit from your time with us.

We will be looking after you whilst you are here.

We will monitor your progress, liaise with your tutor and teachers and provide help and guidance.

In the absence of your parents, we will try to support you as they would. Never be afraid to ask us for help!

We are available in college and by mobile if you have an emergency after college or at weekends.

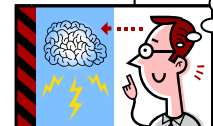
**Ms Lou and Amanda Fenner**  
in the International Students' Office



Our office is in  
**Hume House  
Room 63**

You will always  
be welcome!  
P.S. We have a  
web-cam, come  
and talk to your  
family!

**IMPORTANT!**



Ms Lou 0792 927 8382  
Put this number in your mobile...now!

E-mail [rose.lou@notredamecoll.ac.uk](mailto:rose.lou@notredamecoll.ac.uk)  
[a.fenner@notredamecoll.ac.uk](mailto:a.fenner@notredamecoll.ac.uk)

Some of the practical issues students have needed help with



- Immigration and visas
- Police registration
- Bank Accounts
- Working in the UK
- Accommodation

You may find coursework difficult or confusing at first  
but you can get help in dealing with unfamiliar UK

systems and different styles of learning and teaching.

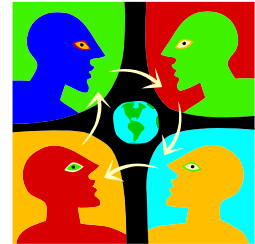




You can get support at difficult times, for example if you are homesick or lonely, physically or emotionally unwell, have academic problems, or worries about things happening back home.

International Student Forum  
*public meeting or assembly for open discussion'*

We have regular meetings (every 6-8 weeks) to discuss various issues affecting International Students. You will be encouraged to attend these meetings and may be invited to become a committee member.



Social Club

The International Student Office can also help you meet people, enjoy new experiences and explore other parts of the UK.

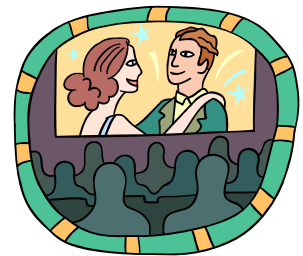
We have a full programme of social events!



Trips to the cinema, sporting events and visits to other cities/countries etc.

Christmas parties and BBQs!

You have your own cinema club showing movies after college!



We are always looking for new ideas!

We hope that you join in and make the most of your time here at Notre Dame!

Here are some of the international events from last year:



Lord Mayor's  
Welcome event



International Christmas Party



Ski-ing at Xscape  
ski slope



Dragon Boat Race

## Attendance and Absences

Your attendance at Notre Dame is very important. You need to be present at all your lessons unless you are genuinely ill or have a valid reason not to attend.

Please be aware that if you have to extend your UK visa, we will be asked to provide evidence of your attendance at college. If your attendance rate falls below 80%, the Home Office can refuse to extend your visa.

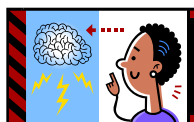
### Illness

If you are going to be absent through illness, you or a member of your family, or host family **must** contact college reception before 8.45 a.m. on 0113 2946644.

When you return to college you must go to the reception desk and ask for an **absence slip**. Write in the date and reasons for your absence and then bring the slip to the International Students' Office to be authorised.



If you do not follow this procedure, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and it will show on your records!



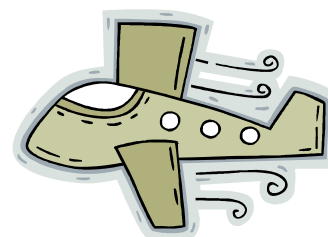
College number is  
0113 294 6644!

### Absence through Travel

We do not encourage students to miss lesson time.

However, we understand that there may be times you wish to take a flight just before the term ends.

In this circumstance, please come to see Ms Lou in advance and she will decide if the absence should be authorised.



You will be expected to make up any work that is lost!



### Doctors/Dentists

Usually, overseas students do not have to pay for medical care in the UK. However, if you do not register with a local doctor (GP), you will not be able to access the full range of medical services.

I expect you to register with a doctor **before** you become ill!

To register, you have to find the nearest local surgery with places available and then complete an application form and provide proof of identity e.g. (passport) and address e.g. bank letter or bill. Please see me to obtain a list of local doctors or visit the NHS website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

If you have a health problem such as a fever or cold etc, it is usual to go to your GP first.

In the UK, hospitals are for **emergency or acute situations only**

However, there are two Hospital Accident and Emergency Units, one at Leeds General Infirmary (LGI), Great George Street and one at St James, both are near the centre.



## Accommodation



All students **MUST** keep the International Students' Office informed of any change of address.

It is very important that we know exactly where you are living.

It is college policy to recommend that all students under the age of 18 stay with a host family.

However we appreciate that some of you are already living independently.

We are happy to assist and advise any student looking for accommodation at any time during the year.

### Homestay

A good homestay family will help you to understand the day-to-day customs of this country and will offer you the opportunity to join in family life. Your English should improve greatly!

They will provide you with breakfast and an evening meal. Some families are willing to provide extra facilities for you, but these should be arranged between you and the particular family.

We expect you to treat the family with respect but we also expect for you to be treated with respect. Please inform us if you have any difficulty with your hosts.

### Costs

Approximately £110 per week for bed, breakfast, lunch (weekends) and evening meal (some hosts include washing).



## Alternative Accommodation

### Mary Morris International Halls of Residence



Many of our students have stayed in Mary Morris Halls in Headingley. You have a private bedroom and shared facilities i.e. kitchen and bathroom. You will find yourself sharing with students of different ages and nationalities and there are staff on site at all times to help you if you have a problem. Try to take a room on the upper floors since this is usually safer than the ground floor.

Applications must be made directly to Mary Morris either in person or via the application form on their website. All students must be 18.

[www.marymorris.com](http://www.marymorris.com)

Costs approx £9 per day.

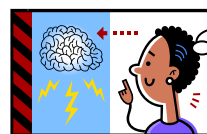
### Private Accommodation

Some students prefer to live in private, rented accommodation. Remember that if you sign an agreement to rent for 12 months, it is a legally binding contract!

Students are advised not to sign any rental agreement without consulting us first.

Costs start from £65 p.w. + bills.

Remember, if you have any problems with your homestay family or accommodation, please see us immediately.



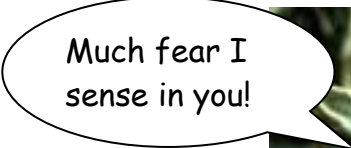
I must let  
Amanda know  
I'm going to  
move house!

## Your First Days at Notre Dame!

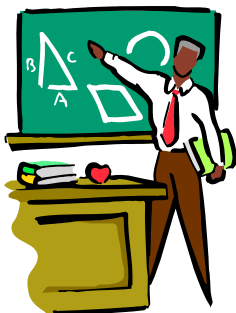
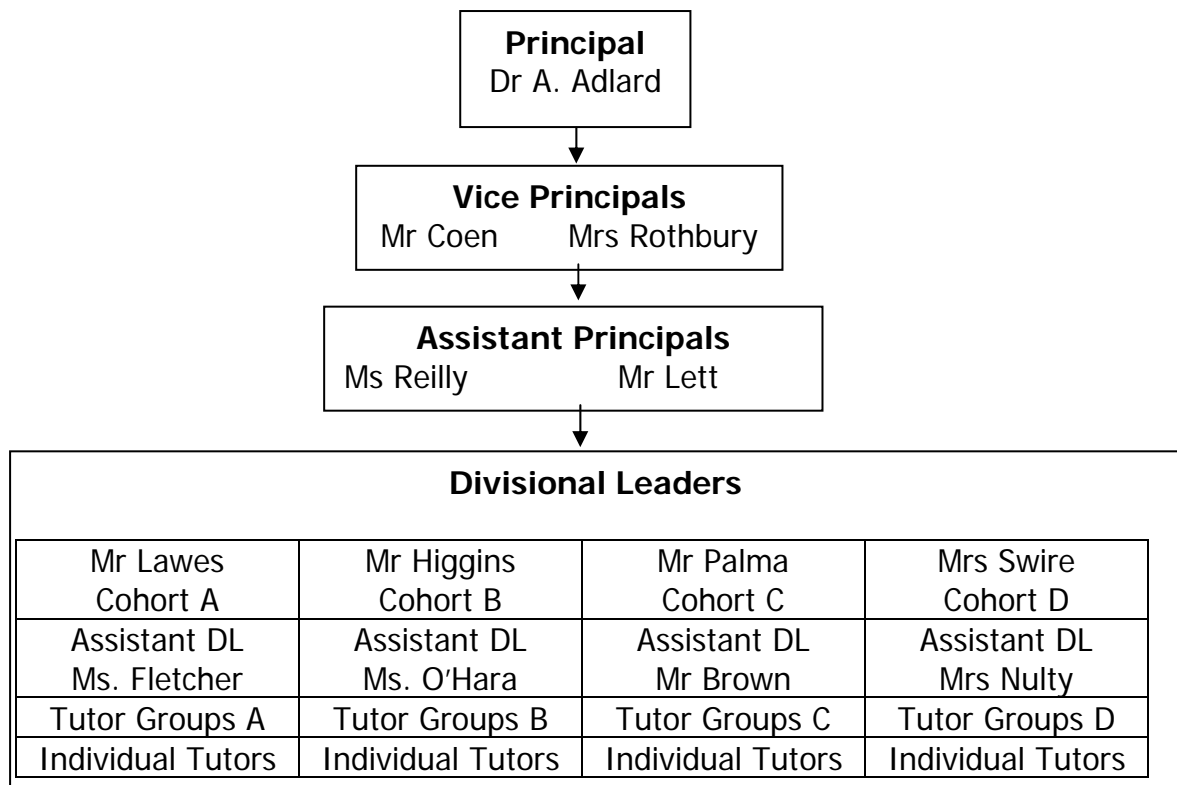
First thing, don't worry!

Second, don't panic!

There will be a lot of new things to think about and a lot of questions to ask but we are all here to help you!



O.K. let's start with the basic college structure



Notre Dame Students are divided into two main groups

Lower Sixth (AS students like yourselves) and  
Upper Sixth (A2 students in the second year of study)

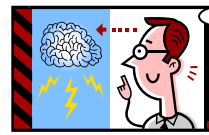
After you enrol at Notre Dame you will be placed into a Cohort Group A/B/C or D and then into an individual tutor group (e.g. L6A-HI) alongside other AS students. The groups range in size from 10 to 15.

Lower 6<sup>th</sup>/Cohort A  
DL Mr Lawes

Tutor initials  
e.g. Helen Ince

You will meet with your tutor for registration once a day (except on Wednesdays). Your tutor will guide you and give you college information, special instructions and messages during registration time.

You *must* attend tutorial. If a member of staff or the international office need to get a message to you, it will often be via tutorial.



I must remember my tutor group, the name of my tutor and DL!

You will also be given a student diary which contains all the extra information you will need concerning the college, including telephone numbers, examination times and the college year. Please keep it safe, it is very useful!

### Timetable

Whilst in your tutor group you will receive a timetable (it is different for each student), it will indicate to you where, when and with whom you have classes. This is an example:

Thursday		
<p>This code indicates the subject Further Maths /Lower 6<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>FM-L6-AD-A <a href="#">FM-L6-AD-A</a> J Spry 04</p>	<p>Name of your subject teacher Mr Spry</p>
<p>Room number Room 4</p>	<p>FM-L6-AD-A <a href="#">FM-L6-AD-A</a> M Armitage 03</p>	
	<p>PY-L6-B1-A <a href="#">PY-L6-B1-A</a> L Swire 63</p>	
<p>The code showing your tutor group means you have registration.</p>	<p>L6SBR <a href="#">L6SBR</a> S Broadley SPH</p>	
	<p>EC-L6-E1-A <a href="#">EC-L6-E1-A</a> N Higgins 43</p>	
	<p>EC-L6-E1-A <a href="#">EC-L6-E1-A</a> N Higgins 43</p>	

If there is a mistake with your timetable, discuss it first with your tutor and then follow their instructions.

You will not be allowed to keep changing subjects! If you think you have selected the wrong subject, please see Ms Lou to discuss the matter.

### Workshops

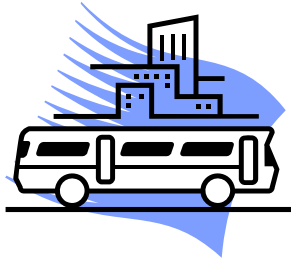
As well as timetabled classes, each subject area offers a workshop. A workshop is a period of extra time with your subject teacher where you can ask for advice and discuss concerns you have with any aspect of the subject. You can negotiate a time with your teacher for these sessions.



### Reports and Reviews

Reports on your progress, both academic and social, will be sent to your parents/guardians regularly throughout the year. We encourage you to keep your parents/guardians informed about your progress here.

In addition to standard college reviews, you will also have a review Ms Lou to discuss in detail your progress and concerns as an International Student.



### Travel

Leeds has an extensive transport infrastructure.

All students can apply for reduced rate student travel at the local post office however, if you live more than 3 miles from college, you may be entitled to a free bus pass.

You can collect an application form from the main college reception desk.

It is safest to use a taxi if you are going out at night. Try to use the Black and White Taxis which are run by the council or telephone a company and order a taxi.

Do not get into an unmarked car which simply claims to be a taxi!

## Oxbridge Programme

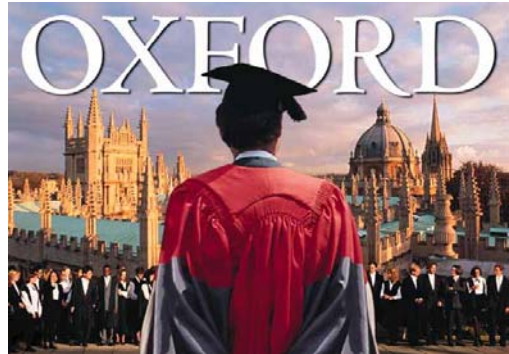
Many students both UK and International, have the dream that one day they will study at Oxford or Cambridge University.

These are two of the best universities in the world and competition for places is extremely high.

At Notre Dame we have a special 'Oxbridge Programme' .

It helps students who we feel have the potential, prepare themselves for applying to Oxford or Cambridge.

This year a record number of International Students were offered a place either Oxford or Cambridge.



Watch out for more information via your newsletter or at tutorial!





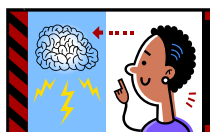
## English as a Foreign Language Curriculum

English lessons are offered at different levels of ability. At the start of the year you will be asked to complete tasks to allow assessment of the four skills: reading; writing; listening; speaking. The results of these informal tests will enable a course to be developed to suit your particular needs and help you to reach your goals.

You need a minimum IELTS score of 5.5 to start AS studies and a minimum score of 6.0 to progress into A2 studies. Many universities require that you have an IELTS score of 6.5 to start a course with them.

- You will be taught an academic and general English course that builds your confidence in all aspects of English use.
- Workshops are offered on a weekly basis to provide extra help with any material you find difficult in the EFL lessons.
- IELTS success and communicative ability are an integral part of the EFL syllabus along with building confidence and experience in general academic skills such as presentations and projects.
- The college will provide you with books and all the necessary materials to prepare for the IELTS exams.
- Extra lessons will be provided to support your A-Level subjects when needed and this will be in collaboration with your subject teacher.
- You will practise essay construction and question analysis that will be useful in both your A-levels and IELTS examinations and will be expected skills at University level.
- Work is produced in class in small groups, pairs and individually, giving you a chance to meet and learn from students from other places and achieve your own personal goals.
- Revision and study groups are often available for students taking popular courses which can be undertaken in the EFL classroom.

Even if you are not required to take English, you must always be aware of the need to constantly improve your skills. If you do not pay attention to this area of your studies, all your subject grades will be affected and you will find studying increasingly difficult! The EFL teacher is always available to chat to you about any worries you have about your studies.



I must not neglect my English Studies!