



**AVALON** SCHOOL LONDON



# Student Handbook

# Welcome to Avalon !

This handbook gives you all the information you need about being a student at Avalon and living in London.

Find us:

Avalon School of English  
8 Denmark Street  
London  
WC2H 8LS

Opening Hours  
9:00 - 18:30



Tottenham Court Road

Contact us:

info@avalonschool.co.uk  
(+44) 2073791998

Emergency\* contact (+44) 7563901526

\*Out of hours

connect with avalonschoollondon



Check us out on social media before you arrive !

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# Your first day...

If you didn't book a skype **speaking test** before your first day, you will have a **level test** when you arrive. Because we are a specialist speaking school, the teacher will ask you some questions to **decide your level**.

**Your classes will be anytime between 9:30 and 18:20**, depending on your level and availability. Quantum Plus students study between 15:30 and 18:20. Our class timetable looks like this...

9:30-10:20	10:30-12:20	12:30-13:20	13:30-15:20	15:30-16:20	16:30-18:20
General English	<b>AQE Speaking</b>	General English	<b>AQE Speaking</b>	General English	<b>AQE Speaking</b>

**Classes are 50 minutes long with a 10 minute break.**

**Don't write in your books for the first few days** in case you need to change your level.



# Be social at Avalon...

If you want to **make friends** quickly and practise English, be social at Avalon. Join our **Facebook group** (Avalon School London Students) to find out about school events, share photos and chat to your classmates.

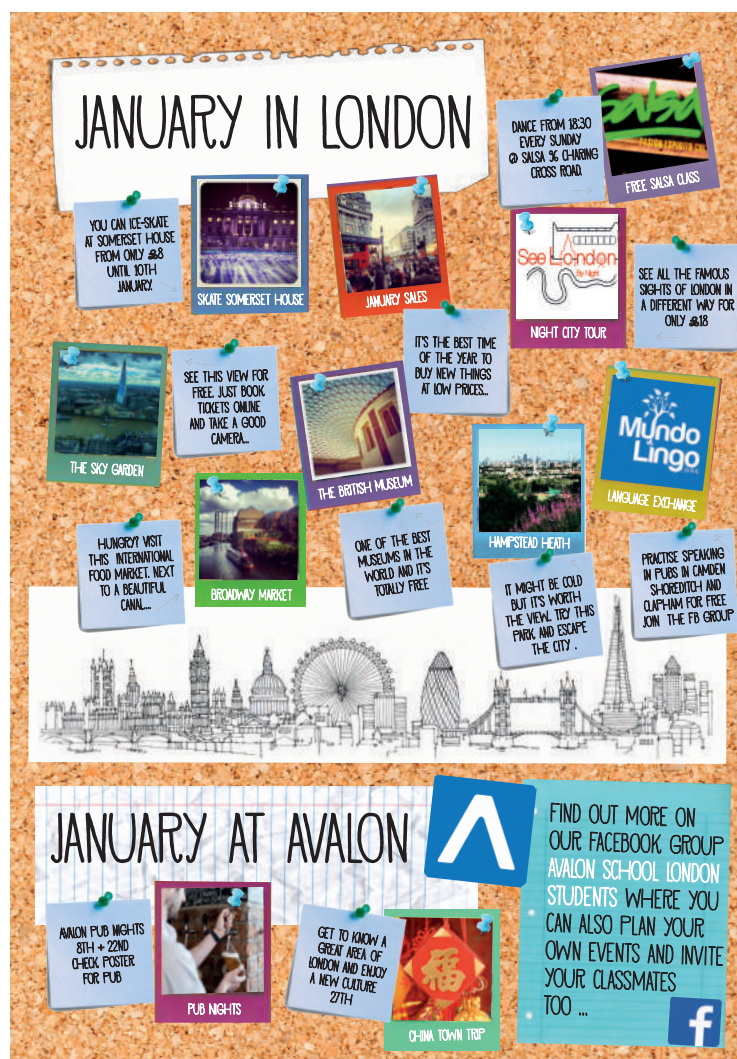


Check the **social calendar** for things to do in London each month. Come to our **pub nights** and **school parties** where you can spend time with your teachers and classmates.

connect with avalonschoollondon



Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram and Google+ to get to know Avalon and to practise even more English!



# Your classes...

**AQE** is a fun, dynamic speaking class which helps you **speak naturally**, fluently and accurately.



AVALON QUANTUM ENGLISH

You speak **directly to the teacher**, not just the other students.

You focus on **pronunciation** and the teacher will use **phonetic symbols** to show the sounds of words, like this...



The teacher asks individual students **questions** and then helps the students answer with **long answers**.

When you make a mistake, don't worry! **The teacher will correct you!**

The teacher uses the board for presentations of new vocabulary; grammar explanations and **correction**.



AQE classes have two stages:

- 1) Revision (you review and practise the language again)
- 2) New Work (you study a new page of the book)

You have a different teacher for each class.

Follow these **tips**;

- Answer your teacher's questions with **full sentences**.
- **Make notes** in your book when the teacher explains something on the board.
- If you don't understand something, **ask your teacher to explain** it again.
- **Listen to the teacher's correction** and try to copy their pronunciation.
- Practise the phrases you learn in class as much as you can outside school.
- Get a **pronunciation app** to practise using the phonemes, we recommend Macmillan 'Sounds'



You will need to buy an AQE book to use in your speaking class. There are 8 books each with **essential pictures, phonemic charts; phonemic chunks, exercises and grammar tips**.

In **General English classes** you will practise a wide range of language skills with a focus on English you can use every day.

You will practise **reading, writing, listening** and **speaking**. The class includes a lot of vocabulary expansion and grammar practice. Sometimes you may need to do homework.

If you're studying for more than 4 weeks, you need to buy a course book. If you don't write in your book, the school can buy your book back at a discounted price. The nearest bookshop to Avalon is Foyles where you can get 10% discount with a student card.

The books we use are;

**New Inside Out** Kay, Sue; Kones & Vaughan (Macmillan Education Ltd, 2007)  
**English Result** Hancock, Mark & McDonald, Annie (Oxford University Press, 2007)  
**Outcomes** Dellar, Hugh & Walkley, Hugh (Cengage Learning, 2015)  
**Language Leader** Labeau, Ian & Rees, Gareth (Pearson Education Ltd, 2008)

General English Level	AQE level	Approximate CEFR level
pre-elementary	book 1	A1
elementary	book 2-3	A2
pre-intermediate	book 3-4	A2
intermediate	book 5-6	B1
upper-intermediate	book 7-8	B2

We offer **FCE** and **IELTS preparation classes**.

The International English Testing System (IELTS) and First Certificate in English (FCE) are qualifications recognised by universities and employers worldwide.

In these classes, your teacher will **guide you through the examination process** and give you practical as well as academic advice to prepare you for the exam.

The level required to take these courses is CEFR B1. Students must take a speaking test and pass an entrance exam form in reception.

We believe that regular feedback on your learning is very important which is why students take progress and end of book **checks**. After your teacher will give you specific **feedback and targets** for improvement.

### **AQE** Checks

L.A Check (Language Awareness)

after every unit

L Check (Listening)

after every unit

Q Check (Speaking)

after every book

**General English** (Grammar and vocabulary)

throughout the course



## **Study Tips**

- Practise English outside the classroom too, like at our social events or at a language exchange like Mundo Lingo London.
- Watch English TV. Try [www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer](http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer) and [channel4.com/programmes/4od](http://channel4.com/programmes/4od)
- Read free newspapers like The Metro, The Evening Standard and Time Out

# Facilities

Relax in our **cafe** with your classmates where you can buy drinks and snacks. There is free water and also a microwave and computer to use.

Use our free **Wifi** to relax and study. Just ask in reception for the code.

Have lunch outside on our beautiful **roof terrace**. You can smoke there too.



Need a quiet space to study? Go to the **Silent Study** area next to room 1.

Get **feedback on your learning** face to face with Senior Teachers, Lee and Erin, or Academic Manager, Sarah in a **tutorial**. Book in reception.

If you have a **personal problem**, please book an appointment in reception to speak to Erin who is also our Welfare officer.

To **meet the Avalon team** (teachers, management and sales) visit our website [www.avalonschool.co.uk](http://www.avalonschool.co.uk), and go to menu and meet the team!

# Reception

Our reception is open from 9:00- 18.30 Monday- Friday and 9:30-13:30 Saturdays. Our receptionists can **help** you with;

- **information about your classes**
- **exam classes**
- booking tutorials**
- booking welfare officer appointments**



- complaints**
- booking holidays**  
(book 5 days in advance and not at the end of your course)
- end of course certificates**
- leaving reports**
- letters**
- **setting up a bank account**
- **SIM cards**
- **accommodation**
- wifi**
- applying for oyster cards**
- **tickets for museums, theatres, attractions and tours**
- printing**



# Learner Contract

At Avalon, we want to make a comfortable learning environment for everybody. To do this, students and staff must follow the rules below.

## s t u d e n t s

1. Arrive **on time** with a book and pen(s).
2. If you are more than **10 minutes late**, you can't come in.
3. Respect the teacher. How? Listen, accept correction, and take part in classroom activities.
4. Respect other students. How? Listen, be polite, and respect other cultures and different opinions.
5. Respect the school. How? Take your **cups** and **rubbish** with you.
6. Do not disturb the teacher or other students with your phone.
7. Speak English.

## t e a c h e r s

1. Be in the class at **30 minutes** past the hour.
2. Have lesson material (pens, photocopies etc.) ready.
3. Give every student the same opportunity to speak.
4. Use **the board** to give clear presentations about language.
5. Give appropriate correction when students make a mistake.
6. Try to answer any general questions a student has.
7. Return written work in a week.
8. Provide a safe and comfortable environment.

If you think that a teacher or another student is not following these rules: speak to your class teacher; ask reception for a complaint form; or use our **tutorial service** to speak to Sarah, Lee or Erin privately.

# School Policies...

Please read our **learner contract** so you can enjoy your experience more.

## Attendance

You are expected to attend **100% classes**, if you're sick, please call or email [info@avalonschool.co.uk](mailto:info@avalonschool.co.uk).

If your attendance falls **below 80%** we will contact you. If it doesn't improve, you will get a **warning** and will have a tutorial. In certain cases you could be excluded from your class or the school. You **won't get a progress letter or certificate** if your attendance is low.

## Complaints

**If you're unhappy about something, please tell us.**

You can speak to your teacher, reception or management.

If you prefer you can **fill out a complaint form in reception** in English or your own language. You don't have to put your name on it, it can be anonymous.



You can also email us on [info@avalonschool.co.uk](mailto:info@avalonschool.co.uk).

After a complaint, a member of management will talk to you about a **plan of action** to solve the problem.

If you are still unhappy, you can email [tony@englishuk.com](mailto:tony@englishuk.com) at English UK.

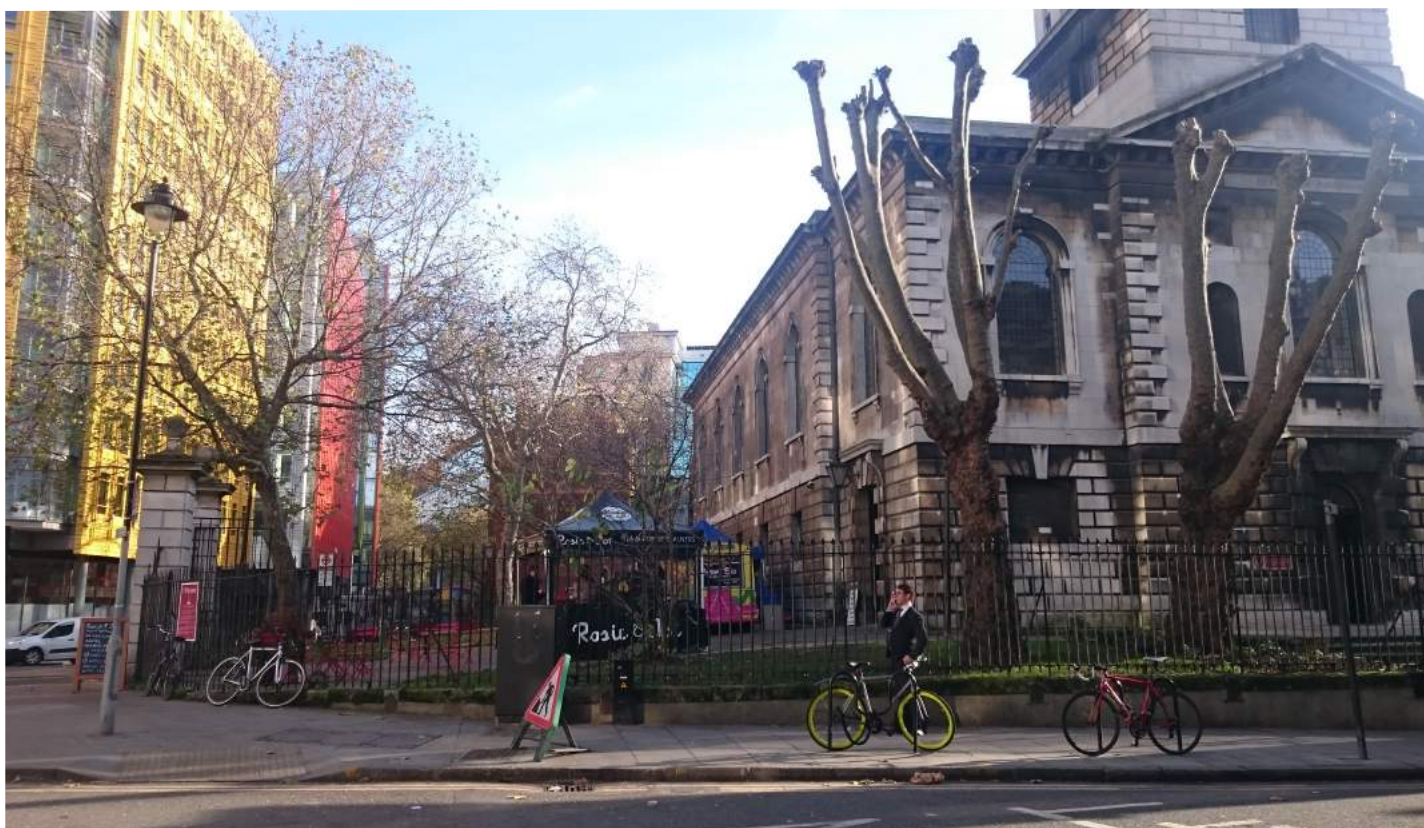
Please **speak to your teachers about class problems**, they will respect your feedback. If you think your level is wrong, or you would like to do more homework for example, please speak to your teacher.

# Health and Safety

If you have **an accident** or **feel sick** at school, please **tell reception**. You can also tell Sarah or Erin who are our two qualified first-aiders.

Many accidents can be avoided with care. Please be careful with hot drinks from our cafe. If you spill a drink, please tell reception so we can clean it up. If it is raining, our floors and stairs can become slippery. Please pay attention to wet floor signs.

**If you hear the fire alarm**, stop what you are doing, leave your bags etc. in the classroom and leave the building quickly and calmly with the teacher. Go directly down the main stairs, leave the school, turn right and walk to the **fire meeting point** on Flitcroft street in this picture.



Fire evacuation procedures are displayed on posters around the school. We will sometimes have fire drills (a practice of the procedure). You must follow the procedure and leave the building.

**If you see a fire or smell smoke, tell a member of staff immediately or sound one of the fire alarms that are in the building.**

# Everyday life...

If you unlock your **phone**, you can get a free SIM card from Avalon reception for UK calls at a cheap rate. For calls abroad we can recommend using Skype or a Lyca or Lebara Mobile Sim card, which are available in shops close to the school.

You can pay for most things with card in London but if you prefer cash, the nearest **ATM machine** to Avalon school is at Sainsbury's supermarket, Tottenham Court Road or Barclay's **bank**, Soho Square.

If you can work in the U.K and have a National Insurance number or you are a long-term student you may be able to open a **bank account**. Most banks in London are open 9:00 -17:00 Monday- Friday and Saturday mornings. Sign up for internet or telephone banking for a 24 hour service.

If you want to **study outside Avalon** and need somewhere quiet, you can register with a public library. To do this, you will need I.D and proof of address. You can find your local library on [www.gov.uk/local-library-services](http://www.gov.uk/local-library-services).



Stay healthy in London! There are many **parks** where you can play sports or **do exercise** but if you prefer the gym, many offer student discounts. The nearest sports centre to Avalon is;

Oasis Leisure Centre  
32 Endell Street  
London  
WC2H 9AG

You can find more gyms near where you live on [www.better.org.uk](http://www.better.org.uk).



There are many places in London for all faiths, please ask at reception for a list of **places of worship** near Avalon. We will try to provide a space for you to worship at school. You can also find a complete list [www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/community](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/community).

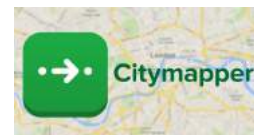
Need to **mail** something? Most post offices are open 9:00- 17:00 Monday - Friday and Saturday mornings. The nearest to Avalon is;

181 High Holborn  
London  
WC1V 7AP

**The nearest tube station is Tottenham Court Road** which is a 2-minute walk from school. You can also walk from Leicester Square, Gode Street or Holborn stations.

**The last tube is around 00:00, after this time you can use night buses.**

Plan your journeys on [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk) or download an app like **citymapper**.



To pay for all bus, tube and rail journeys you can use a contactless payment card or an oyster card. They cost the same but **an oyster card is better for long-term students.**

If you are studying for **14 + weeks with 15 + hours a week** you can **save 30%** on travel. Our receptionist will help you fill out an online application, the card costs £20 and takes 7 days to arrive by post.



If you are studying less and you don't have a contactless payment card, an oyster card costs £5 and you can "pay as you go" and add credit to it when you like. If you prefer you can add **travel cards** for a week or a month. This means you have **unlimited travel** in certain areas. For example, a weekly travel card for the tube for zones 1-2 costs £32.50.



You **cannot use cash on London buses** so you need to top-up before you get on the bus, you can do this at tube stations and some local shops. **Buses are cheaper than the tube.** What you choose depends on where you live, how long you will stay and what you prefer.

**To travel to and from London airports you can take the national express coach or in the train or tube.**

**Heathrow** 15 minutes by train to Paddington Station. Or take the Piccadilly line (maximum 90-minute journey).

**Gatwick** 30 minutes to Victoria Station.

**Stansted** 35-40 minutes by train on the Stansted Express to Tottenham Hale or Liverpool Street.

**Luton** 40 minutes by train to St Pancras International

All travel times are approximate, please check [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) and [nationalexpress.com](http://nationalexpress.com) for more details.

We can also pre-arrange **airport transfers** which are cheaper than taking a taxi from the airport.

# London life...

London is a **multicultural city** with something for everyone, from history and culture, to clubs, world cuisine and pubs.

London can be expensive, but you can also **enjoy London on a budget**. Most museums and art galleries are totally free in London and there are a lot of beautiful parks.



Here are our top 10 recommended sights!

## 1. **Southbank**

An area near the Thames where you can visit art galleries, London Dungeons and the London Eye. There are also great views of Big Ben, and the Houses of Parliament from across the river.

## 2. **Greenwich**

Another area by the Thames with a beautiful park, the Cutty Sark and the observatory. Take a Thames clipper boat there and back!

### 3. **The British Museum**

One of the best in London and it's free! Don't miss the Egyptian gallery.

### 4. **Camden Town**

A colourful mix of indoor and outdoor markets with a lot of character. You will find a lot of musicians, tattoo shops and alternative communities here. It's very crowded at weekends, go Monday-Friday.

### 5. **Spitafields Market, Bricklane and Shoreditch**

If you love vintage clothing, this is the perfect place for you. There are also art, craft, antique and food markets. Look at the street art in the local area.

### 6. **Borough Market and Tower Bridge**

A pretty food market under railway arches at London Bridge. You can find fresh organic food here and see a great view of Tower Bridge. Why not visit the Tower of London too?



## 7. **Regents Park**

Enjoy one of the most beautiful parks in London. Have a picnic, a walk or go to London Zoo inside the park.

## 8. **Primrose Hill**

Walk up from Regents Park and enjoy one of the most impressive views in London for free.

## 9. **The Shard and the Sky Garden**

See London from up high! See great views from both these landmarks, the sky garden is free!

## 10. **Hampstead Heath**

Relax in this natural green area, with forests, fields, lidos and ponds. There are also many traditional cafes, pubs and restaurants nearby.





## Shopping

London is famous for shopping and has a lot of choice. Try these places near Avalon;

Oxford Street

Regents Street

Carnaby Street

Covent Garden

John Lewis and Marks & Spencer's (department stores)

Liberty and Harrods (luxury department stores)

Primark (sells very cheap clothes and homeware)

Westfield (shopping centre in Stratford and Shepherd's bush)

Don't forget to check the [Avalon social calendar each month](#) for even more things to do! We also recommend checking [www.timeout.co.uk](http://www.timeout.co.uk) for more ideas.



**You can find all kinds of restaurants, pubs and bars near the school, here are some we can recommend;**

### **Pizza**

Soho Joe's (Dean Street)  
 Pizza Pilgrims (Dean Street)  
 Franca manca (Berwick Street)

### **Asian**

Seoul Bakery (Great Russell Street)  
 Centre Point Food Store (New Oxford Street)  
 Kanda-Ya (St. Giles High Street)  
 Itsu (New Oxford Street)  
 Chinatown (Gerrard Street)

### **Salads/Sandwiches**

Maoz- Falafel (Old Compton Street)  
 Pod- (St. Giles High Street)  
 Pret-a-manger (New Oxford Street)  
 Apricot (Charing Cross Road)  
 \*Meal deal (You can buy a salad/sandwich, a snack and a drink for £4 in most local supermarkets)  
 Costa Coffee/Cafe Nero

## Chicken/ Mexican

Nando's (Frith Street)

Chipotle (Charing Cross Road)

**Tipping** It's common to tip in cafes, restaurants and some bars but there is no obligation. We usually tip between 10-15% of the total bill. If you see "service charge included", you don't need to tip.

**Every two weeks Avalon school has a pub night.** We reserve a space in a local pub for students and staff. It's a great way to meet more Avalon students and practise your English outside of class. Please check the poster in the cafe. Try these other pubs and student bars too;

The Angel (St. Giles Street)

The Lamb and Flag (Rose Street)

The Princess Louise (High Holborn)

The White Hart (Dury Lane)

The George (Charing Cross Road)

Many have **student discounts** too...

Zoo Bar (Leicester Square) Happy Hour from 5pm-8pm

Walkabout (Temple) Cheap Monday nights

Simmons bar (Soho) Happy Hour 3pm-8pm Sunday- Friday



# Practical Information

## Emergency numbers (free)

**999 - Police, Fire Department and Ambulance Service**

**112 - European emergency number for all EU countries including UK**

The nearest police station is;

Agar Street

London

WC2N 4JP

02072401212

For accidents and emergencies **the nearest hospital is University College London** near Euston tube station.

Accident & Emergency

Ground Floor

235 Euston Road

London

NW1 2BU



## Personal Safety

London is not a dangerous city, but like all big cities **it's important to be safe. Here are some tips for your safety;**

Avoid walking home very late at night alone. Always go home with friends on well-lit roads.

- Keep your bags etc. close to you in public places
- Don't carry large amounts of cash
- Don't accept drinks from strangers
- Only use registered taxis black cabs or a large company, we recommend the taxi app UBER
- Use crossings to cross the road. Only cross when the green man is showing. Remember, cars drive on the left in the UK



## UK Law

You must be 18+ to buy alcohol and cigarettes. This includes buying drinks in a restaurant, pub, bar and club. **Carry your I.D with you so you can show your age.**

- You mustn't smoke in public buildings and also many entrances.
- The age of consent (the age you can legally have sex) is 16.
- You mustn't use, possess or sell illegal drugs.
- Read more about UK law on [www.bbc.co.uk/crime/law](http://www.bbc.co.uk/crime/law)

# Stay healthy...

If you feel too ill to come to school, email [info@avalonschool.co.uk](mailto:info@avalonschool.co.uk) or call the school.

For **non-urgent medical advice** (for a stomach ache for example), you can call the NHS (National Health Service) 24 hour helpline for free on 111 or visit [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk).

You may need to pay for NHS services. This depends on how long you stay and your visa. **European visitors can use their EHC card.**

If you need **non-urgent medical attention**, you can go to;

## 1. A GP (local doctor's surgery)

You need to register with your local GP and book an appointment. If you are in the UK for less than 3 months, the surgery may accept you as a temporary resident. Take your I.D and proof of address e.g. (a house contract) to register.

If it's an emergency, sometimes you may not need to register but it's better to register as soon as you arrive if possible.

## 2. An NHS Walk-in centre

You don't need an appointment but may need to wait a while to see the nurse or doctor.

The nearest is Soho NHS Walk-in Centre  
47 Shorts Gardens  
London  
WC2H 9AA

3. **An Urgent Care centre** (X-ray services available). Again you do not need an appointment but you may need to wait a while.

The nearest is University College Hospital  
235 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 2BU

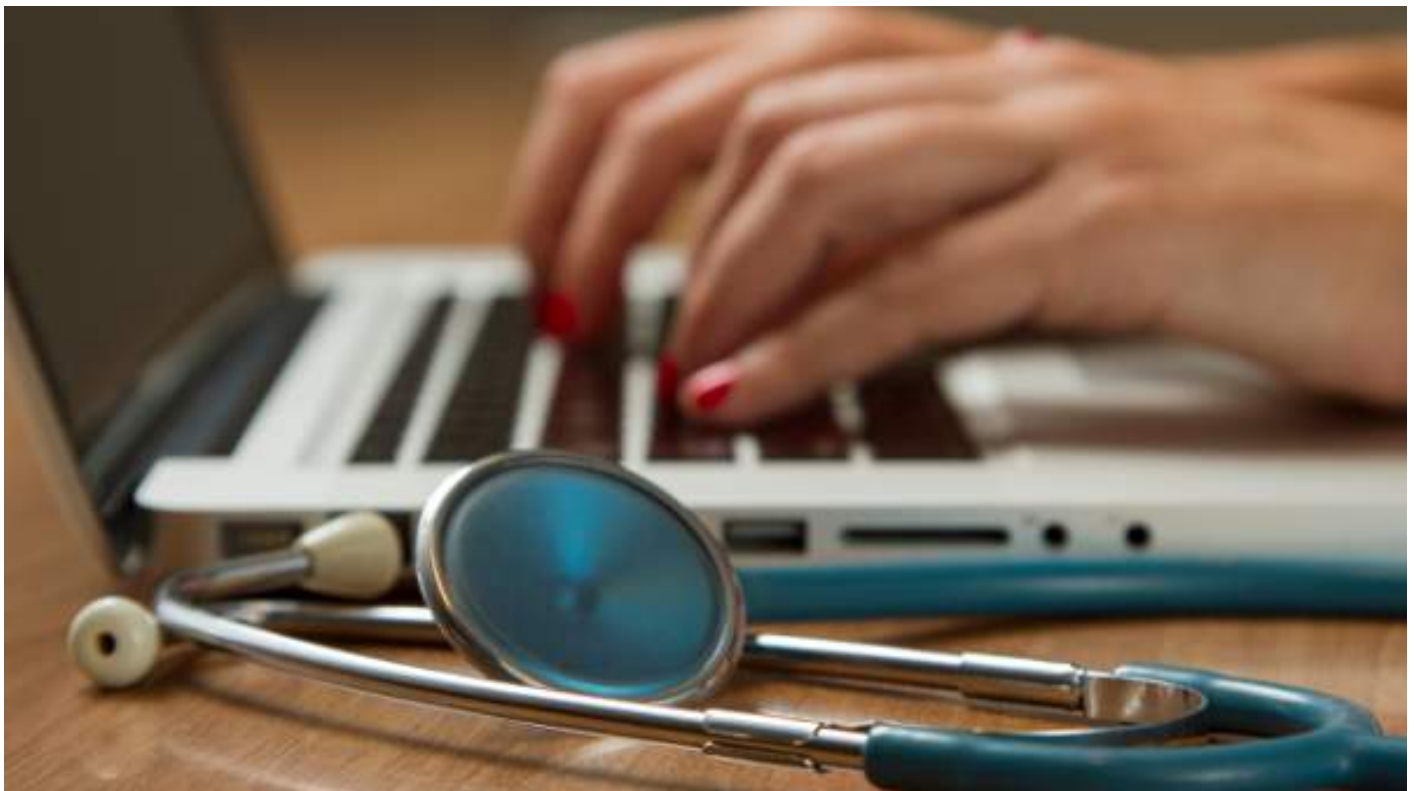
Both Walk-in and Urgent Care centres are open evenings and weekends. The NHS can provide an interpreter to help with English... [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

People usually pay for **dental care** in the UK but an NHS dentist costs less. Full-time students may pay less but you need to fill in a form in reception before you get treatment.

The nearest is Leicester Square Dental Clinic  
24B Lisle Street  
London  
WC2H 7BA

If you need advice about **sexual health** e.g. contraception, pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, you can go to a GUM clinic.

The nearest is Dean Street Express  
34 Dean Street  
W1D 4PR



**If you have any questions, problems or need any support while you are a student at Avalon, please come to talk to us. We want your time at Avalon and in London to be fun and educational.**