



St Mary's
University
London

St Mary's University presents

Liberal & Creative Arts London Summer School

5th June-20th July 2026

About St Mary's University London

We can't wait to see you in London for the 2026 edition of the Liberal and Creative Arts Summer School! Now in its fifth year, this six-week programme will give you the opportunity to study on our friendly campus and discover the rich culture of London and the surrounding area.

Founded in 1850, St Mary's is the only Catholic university in London and the largest in the United Kingdom. Located just 30 minutes from the bustle of central London on the picturesque river Thames, St Mary's is an ideal place to spend your summer abroad. Offering a welcoming environment and convenient links into London and the rest of Europe, our tranquil green campus has everything you need to feel at home.

We're offering six modules that bring to life the philosophical, economic, geographical, historical, and literary elements of the creative arts and humanities in London. Linked to the modules are a range of field trips to take learning out of the classroom and introduce you to some of the

city's famous galleries, museums, theatres and sites of cultural importance. Modules will meet for approximately six hours per week, and you may choose to take one or two during the six weeks.

There is no scheduled teaching on a Friday ensuring you have plenty of free time to explore London or spend long weekends visiting the many European Cities which are only a couple of hours flying time away. Roundtrip transfer from Heathrow Airport, bespoke orientation sessions and cultural walking tours introducing you to aspects of London that lie beyond the beaten track are all included in the programme.

The school also offers you a great base to explore the rest of the UK and Europe. We work with tour operators to bring you offers of trips around the UK, while many of our students in previous years have made the most of London's excellent connections to visit cities across Europe at weekends.





Academics

At the heart of the Liberal & Creative Arts Summer School is an exploration of what it means to be human and the interconnections between our shared past, present existence and future potential. The modules will emphasise the important role the arts & humanities can play in illuminating economic, political, environmental, social and technological problems.

Each of the Summer School modules will meet two times per week, with a morning and afternoon session on different days. Modules will be taught in lectures, workshops and seminars enhanced by guided independent learning. There will be an afternoon field trip each week that is open to students on all modules.

Each module will allow participants an opportunity to engage in critical and creative thinking, philosophical debate and analytical research as they explore their chosen subject.

Credits, study time and level

All modules are validated by St Mary's University as part of the suite of BA degrees offered by the School and offer 20 credits in the UK system. This normally converts to 5 US credits or 10 ECTS, but please do check the conversion rate used by your university prior to enrolment.

Our Global London programme offers a short course, designed specifically to encourage US students to 'top up' their primary module choice with an option that enables them to accrue 6 US credits across the Summer School.

All of our modules are validated at UK level 5 or 6, with no pre-requisites. You should expect around six hours of contact time and six hours of independent study every week for each 20 SMU credit/5 US credit module.

Modules

Brief descriptions of each module can be found below. The full syllabi are available at www.stmarys.ac.uk/liberal-arts-summer-school

History, Cultural Studies, Sociology, Literature

Enlightenment to Romanticism

The Enlightenment period was a moment of scientific discovery, rationality over superstition and the advancement of technological innovation. This course explores the cultural, intellectual and political development of Western Europe through the advent of the Enlightenment up to the age of Romanticism by examining the literary and historical contexts of the age. This interdisciplinary course studies theological, literary and historical texts through close analysis. This module includes a trip to the British Museum and the Foundling Museum.

Contemporary History, Cultural Studies, Sociology

Popular Culture and the Humanities

West London boasts a wealth of culture embedded in the arts and humanities, including sites steeped in Rock and R&B music history. Just a stone's throw from the St Mary's campus, Eel Pie Island attracted popular artists like The Rolling Stones, The Who, and Pink Floyd. Eric Clapton busked in nearby Richmond, and Twickenham served as the backdrop to the Beatles' film *A Hard Day's Night*. As well as the popular culture aspect of this course, aesthetic, sociological and cultural conventions will be considered to gain an in-depth knowledge of the historical context of the Humanities. The course is run by one of the world's eminent experts on The Beatles, Dr Richard Mills, and includes a walking tour of London highlighting popular music and culture.

History, Literature, Cultural Studies, Art History

Renaissance London

The Renaissance began with the Tudors in the 1500s and ended at the beginning of the Civil War in 1640. To understand this significant period in English history, students will undertake an interdisciplinary study of London's society and culture, engage with a variety of literary and historical sources and consider the culture and society of the period from a wide range of perspectives. Students will visit Hampton Court Palace to witness the physical and spatial legacy of the Tudor times and enjoy active learning outside of the classroom.

Literature, History, Media Studies, Cultural Studies

In and Out of the Gothic

St Mary's University is part of Strawberry Hill House, built by Horace Walpole and famed as the home of the Gothic. It was here that the first Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, was set. This makes St Mary's the perfect setting for exploring the Gothic revival through the arts and humanities to its later reimagining in popular culture. Starting with its roots in Romantic aesthetics and culture, the module considers the Gothic novel, art and architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is followed by a study of popular cultural Gothic, including film, television, music, subcultures and online communities. The module will consider questions of cultural value in relation to adaptation of Gothic across cultural forms as well as identities of Gothic representations and audiences. This module includes a tour of Strawberry Hill House.

Performance, Literature, Cultural Studies

London Theatre*

London is one of the world's great cultural venues and this module looks explicitly at the way in which the city shapes and maintains its understanding of itself through its theatrical output. Exploring both the heritage and current eco-systems governing the production and presentation of performance, you will interrogate key narrative and stylistic themes, building an enhanced understanding of the innate theatricality of London as well as exploring the value of the city as a major creative force, shaping itself, through its theatrical output. Each week you will visit a play or entertainment and write a review. Assessment is by a portfolio of these reviews.

*A £350 supplement is required for this module to cover the cost of 8 theatre visits.

History, Literature, Film and Media Studies, Cultural Studies

Global London: Representing the City

This module is designed as a 'top-up' course for international students. When taken alongside one of our other modules it means you will complete six US credits over the course of the Summer School. This means that, in principle, you will be eligible for US Federal Funding (though please discuss this with the mobility officer at your home institution, as regulations vary).

Abbey Road Studios



Photo courtesy of David Ramírez / Unsplash

The module will explore the global dimensions of London as it is represented in literature, in history, in film, and through the material culture of its architecture and museums. You will consider a number of texts that illustrate the transnational and global trends that have shaped life in the UK's capital city at various points. It will provide an introduction to key methods of critically reading and evaluating texts to support you in your learning across the programme.

Schedule

Arrivals for the Summer School will be on Friday 6th June and departures will be on Saturday 20th July. The schedule below is provided to give an idea of the structure of the programme and is subject to change. A final schedule will be provided to enrolled students in May.

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	10am-1pm Popular Culture 10am-1pm Enlightenment to Romanticism	2-5pm In and Out of the Gothic 2-5pm London Theatre
Tuesday	10am-1pm Renaissance London	2-4pm Global London (weeks 1-5)
Wednesday	10am-1pm In and Out of the Gothic	2-5pm Enlightenment to Romanticism 2-5pm London Theatre
Thursday	10am-1pm Renaissance London	2-5pm Popular Culture

Popular culture field trips will take place during the afternoon session of each module during Weeks 1 through 5 as follows – Week 1: In and Out of the Gothic; Week 2: Aesthetics; Week 3: Shakespeare’s London; Week 4: Popular Culture & the Humanities; and Week 5: Enlightenment to Romanticism.



Bedroom in Halls



Wiseman Halls



Accommodation and meals

Summer School Students are housed in twin rooms, close to all campus facilities. Each room is set up with a desk, chair, wardrobe, shelves and sink. Shared kitchenettes contain a refrigerator, microwave, kettle, toaster, iron and ironing board.

Accommodation includes a meal plan covering breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday. Meals are provided at the Refectory which boasts a range of healthy meals catering for vegetarian, vegan, halal, gluten-free and other dietary needs. There are many pubs, cafés and restaurants nearby, as well as supermarkets and convenience stores within easy walking distance from campus.

Airport pick-up service

You don't need to worry about getting to campus. St Mary's will arrange a free airport pick up service from Heathrow Airport arriving by 12pm on Friday 5th June 2026. We will also arrange an early morning coach back to Heathrow Airport on Saturday 19th July 2026. It is suggested that you book your return flight for after 10am. Students arriving and departing outside of the suggested times should plan to arrange their own transportation to and from campus.



Summer school students chat with James Cordon at the Old Vic Theatre

Orientation and social programme

Throughout the six weeks, St Mary's offers activities included in the programme price to help you get to know each other and your new city. These include:

- Virtual pre-arrival session to prepare you for your experience
- Round-trip transfer between Heathrow Airport and campus on arrival and departure days (at specified times)
- In-person orientation session to help you settle in at St Mary's
- Welcome reception
- Walking tours of Twickenham and Kingston
- Five academic field trips
- Opportunity to join London Theatre students on theatre visits on cheap ticket deals

In addition, staff will be on hand to point you to your next adventure. Fancy a picnic in the park or a visit to one of London's iconic outdoor markets? Perhaps you'd like to enjoy the great outdoors with boating on the Thames or hiking in a nearby area of natural beauty. There's always something new to discover in London.



Optional social programme

We work with established tour operators to bring you offers for additional social activities. The availability of these tours is subject to change, and we will confirm what is available closer to the time, but students in previous years have taken some of the following trips.

You are also welcome to organise your own excursions independently, and students often take advantage of London's excellent transport connections to visit cities in Europe on the weekend, which are just a short flight away.

Greenwich Boat Cruise

Board your boat at Westminster Pier for the best view you can get of Tower Bridge before travelling east towards Greenwich – the village in the Big City. Hear tales of London's maritime past and present and enjoy a walking tour of the Royal Naval Hospital and College. Finally, we climb the hill for one of the best views in all of London. Put one foot in the Western Hemisphere and the other in the East as you enjoy the view! Entry to the Observatory is included so you can learn what Greenwich Mean Time is all about. Afterwards, relax and enjoy wandering around the vintage stalls of Greenwich Market.

Oxford and the Cotswolds

Visit England's oldest university town. See the river where Lewis Carroll took the real Alice in Wonderland, the Hogwarts dining hall (when available) and the colleges where CS Lewis and JRR Tolkien taught. Paired with the enchanting Cotswolds countryside, this is a perfect day!

Central London



Wales



Stonehenge



Oxford



Stonehenge and Bath

Visit the enigmatic Stonehenge. Was it built as a healing temple, a calendar or perhaps a burial place? Solve the mystery before travelling on to Bath, a golden-hued city that will take your breath away. Here you'll visit the Roman Baths and experience high society living. Gorgeous!

Wales

This two-day trip lets you enjoy warm Welsh hospitality, visit the enchanting cities of Cardiff and Caerphilly, take in gorgeous abbeys, castles in the countryside and learn about the rich history of mining at the Big Pit Museum before heading back to London.

Dover and the White Cliffs

The White Cliffs of Dover were recently recognised by the Lonely Planet as one of the best places in the world to visit! Rising 350 feet on the coast of the Strait of Dover, the Cliffs are one of England's most spectacular natural features steeped in historical and wartime significance. Experience the sweeping views and a lovely coastal walk during this unforgettable trip.

Brighton

Enjoy a quintessential day at the seaside! Located on England's southern coast, Brighton is a cool little city bursting with charm. Fill your day browsing in independent shops, visiting an unique museum, enjoying a carnival ride on the pier, and sampling fresh fish and chips or delicious vegetarian dishes. There's no better way to spend a summer day!



How to apply

Please register your interest on our website and we'll get in touch with updates.

www.stmarys.ac.uk/liberal-arts-summer-school

If you are studying at one of our partner universities, please make sure you indicate this on your application in order to be eligible for the 10% partner discount.

If you apply and pay your deposit before the Early Bird deadline, you'll receive 5% off the advertised fee.

Application deadlines

Early Bird deposit deadline .. 10th April 2026
Application deadline 1st May 2026
Full payment deadline..... 15th May 2026

A £500 deposit is due within one week of being accepted to the programme. Please see the [website](#) for application and payment terms and conditions.

Admissions requirements

- Completion of at least one academic year at university level
- A minimum GPA of 2.7 or equivalent
- Participants must be at least 18 years of age

English language requirements

Students from non-English speaking countries must have an overall 6.0 IELTS score with no component of the assessment below 5.5. Please see our [English language requirements](#) for other assessment methods we accept.

The price is inclusive of tuition for one or two modules, shared two-person occupancy room in Campus accommodation, 10 meals per week, return transfer from Heathrow Fees

Fees

Airport, orientation and social activities, five academic field trips and on-site programme support.

Course Costs

One module

20 SMU credits / 5 US credits
£5,225 / £5,575*

Two modules

40 SMU credits / 10 US credits
£6,775/ £7,150*

*Higher fee for London Theatre module

Additional fee for Global London top up module (allowing students to follow a 25 SMU credits / 6 US credits pathway)
£240

Partner discount

Students who normally study at one of our Study Abroad partners are eligible for a 10% discount off the advertised price.

Early Bird discount

Apply and pay your deposit by 10th April 2026 to receive 5% off the advertised fee. Students studying at one of our partner universities may receive both discounts. (Discount does not apply to the top-up fee for the Global London booster module.)

Visa requirements

Standard Visitor Visa

This visa is for students who are planning on studying at St Mary's for less than six months. Most students can obtain this visa from a border agent when they enter the UK.



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