



Odessa Language Study Centre

Students Guide

2024



ODESSA LANGUAGE
STUDY CENTRE

Welcome

Congratulations! You have just made a major decision to take a Russian language course at The Odessa Language Study Centre (OLSC) in Odessa, Ukraine. This guide will give you useful information about Ukraine. It will prepare you to make the most out of your language course experience. You probably already have a picture in your mind of the life in Ukraine. This picture may have come from films or television. Or you may expect Ukraine to be similar to your own country. After reading this booklet, you will know what to expect when you attend OLSC. Hopefully, your expectations will be realistic and you will be able to take advantage of the many opportunities ahead.

In this booklet, we have tried to answer the questions you may have about living and studying in Ukraine. Certainly, there may be more questions you would like to ask. Please feel free to talk to your OLSC Manager when you arrive. They look forward to helping you adjust to the life in Ukraine and seeing that you have an enjoyable, rewarding stay at OLSC.



Social concerns

Adjustments and Culture Shock

In addition to the usual stress and fatigue of adjusting to living in a different time zone (or "jet lag"), which may last several days, most people who go to live in foreign countries experience "a culture shock". Culture shock is a normal reaction to confronting a strange culture and affects people in different ways. You may feel uneasy or exhausted. Meeting new people and speaking Russian all day requires a lot of energy and you will probably need more sleep than usual.

Some other signs of culture shock are: disorientation, fatigue, irritability, self-doubt, homesickness, nervousness, and lethargy. You may dislike the new culture or feel disappointed. If you experience these feelings, remember that they are natural and will pass. You may sometimes think that if you have these feelings you shouldn't be here and should go home. But don't make any sudden decisions. Most students experience these feelings. Talk to your Manager at the school or to your host family if you are in homestay. They understand what you are feeling.

The most successful students are those whose attitudes towards people, new cultures, and new experiences are open-minded and positive. These students are likely to pass through culture shock with little difficulty and enjoy their stay in Ukraine. The difference between one's expectations and reality contributes to culture shock. The following information tells you what to expect from your course.

Accommodation

A range of living options

OLSC offers several housing options. But whichever you choose, you can count on a clean, comfortable, safe environment in which to relax, socialize, and study.

Host Family

Most OLSC students choose to stay with one of our carefully-selected local host families (all of whom receive regular visits from our Managers). If you stay with a host family, your accommodation is paid from Sunday to Saturday. Your host family will welcome you to their lives, sharing their meals and way of life. You will have a single room in the family apartment.

Your host/s can be families with children, families without children, older married couples or single people. Your host family will do all they

can, to make sure your stay is as pleasant as possible.

Host family accommodation is ideal for:

- younger students,
- students looking for a more affordable accommodation option,
- students who want meals prepared for them,
- all students who enjoy family life.

Premium Host Families

At OLSC we have families who offer extra comfort and convenience, for example, superior single bedrooms, a private bathroom, or a shorter journey to school. This option is more expensive, but advantageous for certain students.

Premium host families are ideal for:

- adult students who enjoy family life,
- business students who are tired of staying in hotels.

We count on your cooperation while living with your host family and ask you to take the following points into account:

DAY OF ARRIVAL

Please inform the school by e-mail or phone about your exact time of arrival **at least one week before you are due to arrive**. If you do not give your time of arrival, it cannot be guaranteed that your host will be at home when you arrive and the transfer will be arranged (if you order one). Also, please provide phone number by which you can be reached in case of emergency.

BATHROOM AND SHOWER

Please remember that your host family also needs to use the bathroom. So please do not spend hours in it. Please ask your host family, when would be the most convenient time for you to use the bathroom, and do not waste or use an excessive amount of water. Your host family will appreciate it, if you leave the bathroom in the same conditions as you found it. If you are not sure how a piece of equipment works, please don't be embarrassed to ask your host family. Bed linen will be provided, but please bring your own towels.

LAUNDRY

You will be able to wash your laundry in your host family's laundry room or washing machine. Some host families are also prepared to wash your laundry along with their own. But please, do not abuse of this service (not more than once a week), check with the host family what the best is

for you and them. You might be asked for a small charge for this service or to buy your own detergent.

MEALS

Your host family will provide breakfast and evening meals. In Ukraine, lunch is usually taken between noon and 2 pm and supper between 6 pm and 8 pm. Please agree upon evening meals time with your family on the first day of your stay. If you are going to miss a meal, please inform your host family within a reasonable delay.

For lunch there is a wide variety of restaurants, cafés and snack bars near the school in the city centre. We will give you some tips on where to find delicious food on your first day with us. Please don't forget to let your host family know if you have special dietary requirements or allergies.

GENERAL

Please do not leave the lights on if there is no need for it. Ask the host family if you are allowed to help yourself in the fridge. In case you are hungry during the afternoon or once you come back late evening you can buy some biscuits instead of using the host family's reserves. Please respect the schedules given by the host family for your nights out. Do not make noise when you come back late! Remember that some hosts have to get up early in the morning to go to work. We also kindly ask you not to lend the keys to anyone and do your best not to lose them. If the keys are stolen or lost you will be charged for its replacement or the change of lock.

GUESTS are generally not allowed to stay at the host family's house. Anyway, if you wish to invite a friend, you first have to ask your host family for permission and pay the expenses for overnight accommodation at the school's secretary.

INTERNET

Some host families do have an internet connection, others don't. Please ask your host family whether you are allowed to use their internet. You can also use the internet at the OLSC school.

DAMAGES

If you damage anything in your host family's home, please tell your hosts so that they do not have any unpleasant surprises. You will have to pay for any damage you cause. The school cannot be held responsible for any damage you cause in your host family's house.

LANGUAGE

Use the opportunity to speak with your host family in Russian as much as possible. This will help you to improve your language skills rapidly. Please also make an effort and try to speak in Russian with the other students in the host family (if there are ones), and not in English or any other language.

CONTACT

If you have any problems during your stay, it is very important that you let a member of OLSC staff know. The majority of problems can be solved very easily if we are informed early enough.

Apartments

Apartments for our students are available in various locations in Odessa. In general, self catering apartments are mostly suitable for students who wish to be independent rather than constantly interact with the family in homestay; business students; adult students who prefer the privacy and freedom of preparing their own meals.

Advantages of our self-catering apartments:

- Independence
- Privacy
- Highest level of comfort
- Located in various areas of the city
- Regularly checked by the staff

DESCRIPTION OF SELF-CATERING APARTMENT

During your stay you will be accommodated in 1-bedroom apartments, which also have a living room, a kitchen and a bathroom. Some of the apartments have balconies. All the apartments are centrally located within walking distance from the school. They are usually equipped with fridge, washing machine, TV, furniture and other kitchen utensils needed for your comfortable living.

DEPOSIT AND CONTRACT

The student is asked to pay a deposit on his first day at school of EUR 150 - to cover possible loss or damage to the contents. The student will be given a receipt for the deposit.

The student also has to bring the contract, which is given together with the keys, signed back at the reception on his first day at school. If the student notices any damage on his arrival, he has to inform the school office.

The deposit will be refunded the last Friday of his course, subject to a satisfactory property inspection and bedding in good order, as supplied. This inspection will be held on the Friday morning before departure. **If the room is not clean at this moment or if any damage is done to the room or furniture, we will take money from the deposit.**

DURATION

Reservations for self-catering apartments are made by the week. The stay starts the Sunday before the first day of the course and ends the Saturday after the last day of the course. If you have any other plans concerning duration of your stay, please inform OLSC staff accordingly in advance.

ARRIVAL TO THE APARTMENT AND KEYS

Whether you have chosen a self-catering apartment as your accommodation we **highly recommend you to book a transfer** for OLSC staff to organize for you in order to avoid problems with finding the address and obtaining the keys. Our drivers will provide you with keys, a map with the school and your accommodation indicated, and instructions how to get to school.

However, if you do not wish a pick-up to be organized for you, OLSC Managers will provide you with the exact address and details about getting to the place and how to get the keys.

LIVING IN SELF-CATERING APARTMENTS

- You can prepare and eat your meals in the equipped kitchen of the apartment or use a wide variety of restaurants, cafés and snack bars near the school in the city centre.
- Food can be bought at supermarkets and food shops of Odessa any day of the week, including Sunday. They are usually open till 23:00 p.m.
- You can smoke in the apartment, nevertheless we kindly ask you to use the ashtray and not to throw cigarette buds out of the windows and balcony (if there is one).
- You can invite friends and guests to your apartment, however according to the regulations of Public Order applied in Ukraine loud music, noise and other activities that might disturb people around you are allowed till 23:00 p.m. To avoid conflicts with the neighbours and police, please make sure that your behavior coincides with these regulations. You will also be held responsible for any damage your guests cause in the apartment.
- Most of the apartments offered by the school have wireless Internet

connection free of charge. However, during high season we cannot guarantee that your accommodation will have Internet access.

- Cleaning and change of bed linen will be provided by the school every week during you are at school. You will have to schedule the visits of the cleaner with the OLSC Manager.

DAMAGES

If you damage anything in your apartment, please inform the school so the landlords do not have any unpleasant surprises. You will have to pay for any damage you cause. The school cannot be held responsible for any damage you cause in the apartment.

KEYS

When you leave the apartment it is imperative to return the keys. In case you have booked a return transfer you can give the keys to the driver who takes you to the airport/station. Otherwise you have to make necessary arrangements with the OLSC Manager to be sure that there will be a person responsible to take the keys (e.g. the cleaner, the landlord, the manager).

DO NOT leave the keys in the door of the apartment and in any case DO NOT leave the apartment door open. We also recommend you to keep the door always closed even when you are at home.

CONTACT

If you have any problems during your stay in one of our apartments, it is very important that you let a member of the OLSC staff know. The majority of problems can be solved very easily if we are informed early enough.

Shared apartments

Using a shared apartment is the best way to combine proper independent living with acceptable accommodation price and also a perfect opportunity to share the experience and spend free time with familiar people. Our school offers few centrally-located apartments which comprise single bedrooms for several people. Kitchen and lavatory facilities are shared. Bed linen and weekly cleaning is provided by the owner. The apartment is shared only with the students of our school.

Advantages of our shared apartments:

- Independence
- High level of privacy
- Excellent opportunity to get along with other students of our school

- Obtaining new friends from all over the world
- Sharing household chores
- Regular cleaning & staff checks

ARRIVAL TO SHARED APARTMENTS AND KEYS

Whether you have chosen a shared apartment as your accommodation **we highly recommend you to book a transfer** for OLSC staff to organize for you in order to avoid problems with finding the address, obtaining the keys and bothering other students. Our drivers will provide you with keys, a map with the school and your accommodation indicated, and instructions how to get to school.

DESCRIPTION OF SHARED APARTMENTS

During your stay you will be accommodated in 2 to 4-bedroom apartments, a single room for each student. Some of the apartments also have living room or studio-kitchen. You will be sharing an equipped kitchen, common room (if there is one) and bathroom (bathtub and toilet) with a maximum of four other students. All the apartments are within 15-20 minutes walking distance from the school.

DEPOSIT AND CONTRACT

The student is asked to pay a deposit on his first day at school of EUR 150 - to cover possible loss or damage to the contents. The student will be given a receipt for the deposit.

The student also has to bring the contract, which is given together with the keys, signed back at the reception on his first day at school. If the student notices any damage on his arrival, he has to inform the school office.

The deposit will be refunded the last Friday of his course, subject to a satisfactory property inspection and bedding in good order, as supplied. This inspection will be held on the Friday morning before departure. **If the room is not clean at this moment or if any damage is done to the room or furniture, we will take money from the deposit.**

ROOMS

Most of the rooms are equipped with single beds, double beds or futons adjustable for sleeping, a closet, a desk or small table and a chair. The mattress covers, duvet covers and pillowcases are supplied and changed every week or two weeks.

KITCHEN AND MEALS

You can prepare and eat your meals in the kitchen equipped with an oven, fridge and freezer, pots and pans and other kitchen utensils. At the

end of your stay, please throw away your food. The new students will appreciate it.

The students are responsible for the cleanliness of the fridge. Food can be bought at supermarkets and food shops of Odessa any day of the week, including Sunday. They are usually open till 23:00 p.m.

We also recommend washing the dishes personally after meals or taking turns to perform this chore.

SMOKING

All the shared apartments offered by the school are non-smoking!

However, the school staff is unable to control smoking in the apartments all the time. Therefore we kindly ask you to smoke on the balcony (if there is one) and put the cigarette butts in ashtrays. Do not throw them or any other trash from the balcony. The neighbors will appreciate it.

OVERNIGHT VISITORS

No one is admitted at the apartment because of security reasons!

Please note that your rooms are single rooms and are assigned **for one person use only**. If you have some relatives or friends coming to visit you, please make a notice at school, so the OLSC Managers could make necessary arrangements for you. Sharing your room with your guest will require extra charge. **All shared apartments of the school are intended only for those persons who had booked them!**

According to the regulations of Public Order applied in Ukraine loud music, noise and other activities that might disturb people around you are allowed till 23:00 p.m. To avoid conflicts with the neighbours and police, please make sure that your behavior coincides with these regulations.

DURATION

Reservations for the shared apartments are made by the week. The stay starts the Sunday before the first day of the course and ends the Saturday after the last day of the course.

LAUNDRY

A washing machine is available in the apartment for your laundry at no charge. However you must buy your own detergent.

BATHROOM

In order to allow to all residents to use the bathroom before going to school, we kindly ask you not to spend hours and to use the water sparingly. We also ask you to keep the bathroom clean for the other

students. Please bring your own towels. No towels are provided in the apartment.

INTERNET

The wireless Internet connection is free of charge, however it is available not in every shared apartment that we offer. You can always use wireless at school.

CLEANING

Your sheets will be changed every week. All students must keep the apartment clean and tidy during their entire stay. It is very important that the apartment is clean at the end of your stay. The whole apartment including common rooms will be cleaned only once a week by our service.

Student must leave areas as he finds them, especially the kitchen. The student is individually responsible for keeping his bedroom tidy between weekly cleanings. On the final day, the student has to leave the room clean and tidy, ready for the cleaning and next student.

LIFE IN SHARED APARTMENT

Each student is required to have due regard for the people living in the building and apartment.

- o Avoid excessive noise that may bother the neighbors, especially from 11 pm to 8 am.
- o Keep the stairways, hallways and surroundings of the building clean and do not leave anything in these areas (bicycles, dustbins, etc.).
- o Do not damage the appearance of the building and common areas by putting up stickers or other advertising in the hallways or on the post boxes.
- o Refrain from shaking rugs, brooms and brushes in the stairways and landings, out the windows or off the balconies.
- o Do not throw anything out of the windows or off the balconies.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Your flat mates will be international students speaking different languages and also with different level of Russian. We suggest you to speak Russian as much as possible, as practicing the language will reinforce your efforts in class.

KEYS

When you leave the shared apartment it is imperative to return the keys. In case you have booked a return transfer you can give the keys to the driver who takes you to the airport/station. Otherwise you have to make

necessary arrangements with the OLSC Manager to be sure that there will be a person responsible to take the keys (e.g. other students that live with you, the cleaner, the landlord). DO NOT leave the keys in the door of the apartment and in any case DO NOT leave the apartment door open. We also recommend you to keep the door always closed even when you are at home.

DAMAGES

If you damage anything in the shared apartment, please inform the school so the landlords do not have any unpleasant surprises. You will have to pay for any damage you cause. The school cannot be held responsible for any damage you cause in shared apartments.

CONTACT

If you have any problems during your stay in the shared apartment, it is very important that you let a member of the OLSC staff know. The majority of problems can be solved very easily if we are informed early enough.



Before you leave

If you have changed the date of your departure, warn the Administration office to this effect.

Make sure you have paid for any extra days of accommodation.

Make sure you have enough money to get to/from the airport in case you do not have a transfer.

If you have arranged an airport transfer, check the time in the Administration office.

Calendar

OLSC does not follow any strict semester system. Russian language courses are offered all year-round. Depending on the time of enrolment, there may be additional cultural programmes available. The course programme remains the same irrespective of the actual enrolment time.

Access to Facilities

OLSC educational facilities include modern classrooms, with video showings, a selection of audio and video materials, fiction and non-fiction books, and movies; a lecture room and special rooms for individual tuition.

At the school, the use of the telephone (for local calls), fax, computers, wireless internet is provided free of charge. In case you need to make an international phone call you will be charged a small fee in local currency (about 20 UAH).

Local Transportation

The system of public transportation in Ukraine is very different from that of foreign countries. While most Americans and the larger part of Europeans are used to depending on their own cars for transportation, it is common in Ukraine to use the public transportation means. OLSC Russian language school is situated in the centre of the city and the developed transportation system allows the students to reach it from virtually any point in Odessa. You will receive complete details on public transportation services when you arrive at the school.

The First Day of School

On Monday, the first day of your course, you will meet a Manager in a designated room for the orientation. You will be sent the course confirmation form with all course facts in advance. You will be given specific information on your schedule and other details of your course.

Your schedule on that day will include:

- a welcome talk with the school Managers,
- a placement test of grammar and listening skills,
- information about classes,
- information about the school and area,
- an overview of school activities and excursions,
- a collection of any outstanding payments,
- lessons according to the course schedule,
- a city tour (optional; might happen on the second or third day at school).

On the same day (Monday) or on Tuesday morning, you will see a schedule indicating your course, classroom number, study level, teacher, and the hours you are to attend your class. You will be assigned the most appropriate class schedule for your language level.

Courses

Learning Russian at OLSC

One of the biggest difficulties for international students is the difference in the approaches taken to language instruction in, for example, American and European language schools. At OLSC, we are trying to focus the activities in the classroom on using language in realistic situations rather than studying about the language, combining that with large amounts of additional materials – video programmes, audio presentations etc. To achieve the greatest success, it is important that you adapt to a way of studying language that may be quite different from that in your own country.

In the traditional classroom, teachers dominate the class time with explanation, correction, and practice exercises. In this type of class, students are expected to be fairly passive. In our language classroom, you are expected to be very active. How much you learn depends on your own effort. You are expected to participate by asking many questions, giving real responses of feelings, attitudes, likes and dislikes, and continually interacting with the teachers and other students. This kind of classroom experience imitates Russian language use in the real world outside the classroom.

You will soon find that you may have fun learning Russian and still achieve success. Your Russian experience in the classroom will be immediately useful in Ukraine and applicable later in jobs, schools, and

meetings with Russian-speaking people all over the world.

Class Schedule and Group Formation

The number of students in a class is kept deliberately small (maximum of 8 or 10 during high season) to ensure the best care and attention and rapid progress. The formation of groups is based on the results of preliminary testing. The school also offers private classes (1-1) as well as group tuition. Morning, afternoon, and evening classes are available at different levels of intensity. One-to-one lessons are scheduled freely depending on effective learning and teacher/student availability.

The standard course consists of 20 hours weekly, including a daily coffee break, which students spend with each other or with their teachers. Extra hours are also possible. The Intensive course consists of 30 hours per week. In addition, the teachers set daily homework and independent activities. All lessons are 45 minutes long.

Textbooks and Student Materials

During the first day of class, you will be given a textbook and other instructional material in your classes. All other materials and books will be provided for use during your course programme and must be returned at the end of the course unless instructed otherwise by the teachers.

Certificate of Completion

All students are eligible to receive a Certificate of Completion describing the course type and its length. In order to receive this certificate, you must successfully complete the course work in all of your classes, as indicated by a passing grade. You must also maintain 90% attendance in all classes.

Terms & Conditions

1. The contract with the students is concluded prior to course commencement.
2. The list of the group may be modified during the course.
3. All student groups are homogeneous.
4. OLSA follows intensive communicative methods of teaching.
5. All misplaced students may be subject to a transfer to a different group.
6. Change of the teacher is discussed with the students of the group beforehand.
7. During the course, the students fill in enrolment, interim, and final questionnaires. The aim of this is to determine the level of conformity

of the student's demands and their fulfillment during the course.

8. All students' disputes are solved by the manager and the administration of the Centre.

9. The manager of the Centre informs the students about all new video and audio materials, and books. The students can find the information of the Centre on the message board.

10. In addition, the students can get reference books, video tapes in the original.

11. Students are permitted to use reference literature, additional video and audio materials in their preparation for the lessons at the Centre.

12. Ways of solving disputes:

- The student appeals to the office manager
- The student lodges a complaint to the Executive Director of the Centre
- The student appeals to the Juridical Department of the Centre

13. The student who does not abide by the Rules of the Centre (see Rules of Education at OLSC) may be expelled without any refund or compensation.

14. Any student missing more than a half of the course for a valid reason must submit an explanatory note and the documents to the manager to confirm the reasons for his absence.

15. During the course, the lessons in the group may be conducted by teacher trainees but no more than 9 lessons per course.

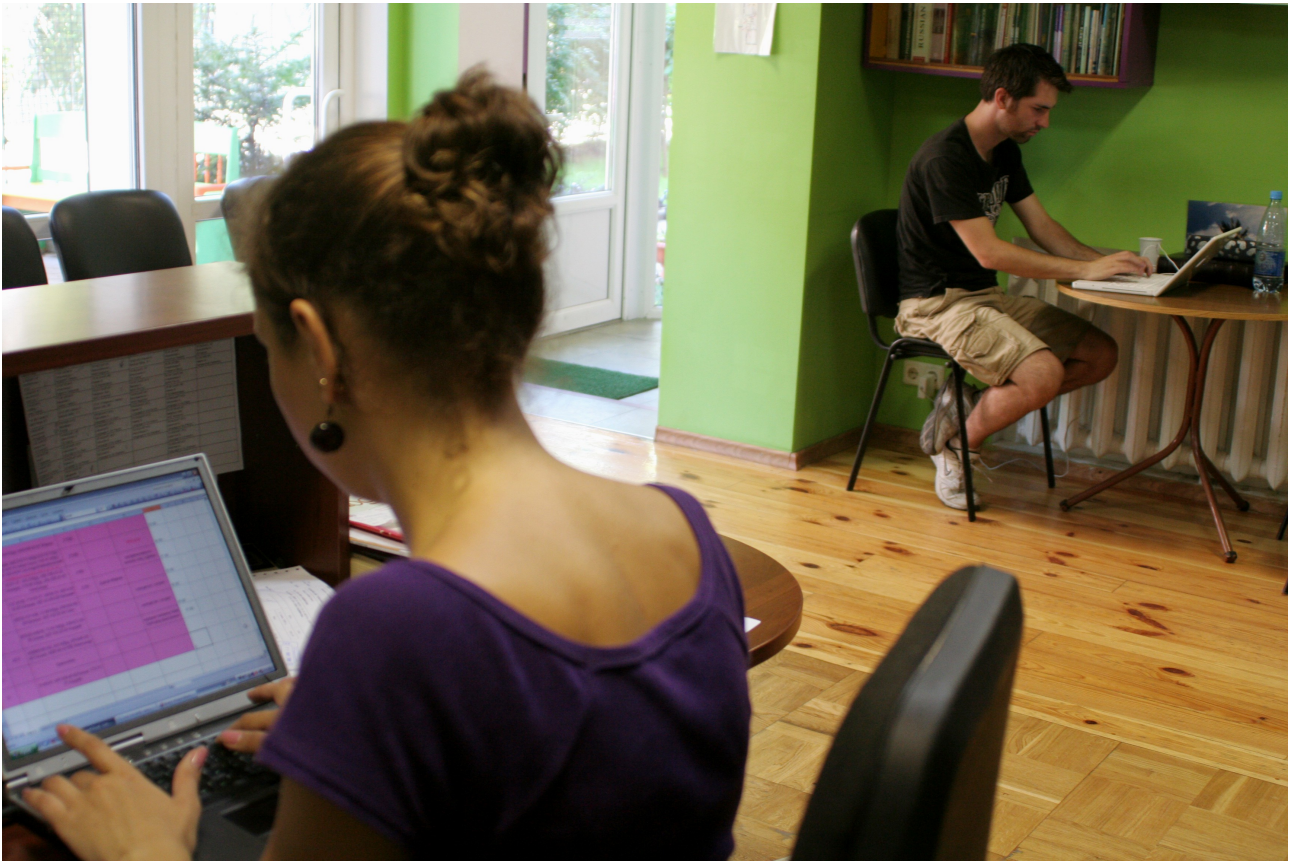
16. System of grades:

Test Results	Certificate Grade
Excellent	A
Very Good	
Good	B
Satisfactory	C

17. Students can get first medical aid at the Centre.

18. Students can use the Internet and send emails free of charge.

19. Official holidays at the Centre are New Year, Christmas, Easter and May holiday.



Changing Course Plans

Extensions

Although OLSC programmes are designed for you to learn as much as possible during your stay, sometimes students feel the need to extend the course by some additional weeks. If you feel this option may be appropriate for you, please notify your School Manager as early as possible. The Manager will advise you of the additional costs for the extension.

Payments for classes and accommodation are due and payable, in full, one week (seven days) before the extension begins.

Cancellations

'Cancellation' refers to those cancellations made before you leave your own country. Cancellations must be in writing and received by an Odessa Language Study Centre representative at least 14 days before your course start date in order to receive a full refund of your course fees. The application fee is non-refundable. If this is not done, you will forfeit one week of your course fees.

Terminations

If you decide to terminate the course that you have already started, there is no refund.

Failure to follow Ukrainian laws and/or school rules is a reason for dismissal without any refund.

Ukrainian Laws and Customs

Depending on your home country, you may find Ukraine more or less strict than your own country. It is a safe guess that you will not find it the same.

Our country's traditions of democracy place much responsibility on the individual. To make the system work, each individual must obey the laws and respect the customs. It is important that you understand the laws, rules, and customs you may encounter.

Laws

Breaking a law can result in a jail term or a fine. As a foreigner, you will be subject to criminal responsibility under the laws of Ukraine.

Sometimes you can lose your immigration status and be deported. The laws may differ significantly from those in other countries and may not afford the protection available to the individual under your country's law. Penalties for breaking a law can be more severe than in your country for similar offences. Persons violating Ukrainian laws, even unknowingly, may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Ukraine are strict, and convicted offenders can expect jail sentences and heavy fines.

Examples of important laws:

- driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is a very serious crime,
- buying, selling, and using drugs is illegal,
- hooliganism, physical fighting with another person is illegal.

Rules

Rules are the "laws" of the school. All the students must obey the school rules.

Customs

Customs are accepted ways of behaviour in a country. Knowing the customs of Ukraine will help you feel comfortable with people. Some important customs to know include:

- Independence: The responsibility for taking care of oneself goes along with freedom and individuality. Be aware of your surroundings, especially in cities, and don't venture out by yourself in unknown neighbourhoods.
- Lines: Always stand in line and wait your turn when buying tickets, doing banking, etc.
- Friendliness: People around you are eager to communicate in public places. This is a good way to practice Russian. Of course, as anywhere else, caution should be exercised when dealing with strangers. Be careful when giving out your address or telephone number, or accepting an invitation. Although most Ukrainians are open and friendly, some may be reluctant to talk to strangers. Do not try to force the conversation.

Smoking

Rules, laws, and customs govern smoking behaviour. Although laws vary, often you are not allowed to smoke in public places. The most appropriate and safe way of behaviour is to ask others, "Do you mind if I smoke?"

Leisure

OLSC arranges a full schedule of activities and excursions, for example:

- Weekend excursions to Uman, Belgorod-Dnestrovskiy, Vilkovo, Shabo.
- Sail-boat trips,
- Symphony Orchestra concerts,
- Catacombs,
- Champagne factory tours,
- Jazz festivals,
- Visiting museums and art galleries,
- Visiting different performances in Odessa theatres,
- Other exciting leisure activities available in our city.

Cultural and educational excursions are integrated into each course programme.

Health and Insurance

The Odessa Language Study Centre and its representatives are not liable for damages, injuries, illnesses, or violations to people or goods, however these may occur, unless such liability is legally imposed. Each student is responsible for providing insurance for such risks.

Practical Matters

Pocket Money

It is recommended that you have your budget approximately 70-100 EUR for every week of your course. This should cover personal expenses, laundry, local travel, and OLSC activities. You may need additional money if you plan to rent a car, take weekend trips or travel.

Ukraine is a cash economy.

While Travellers' Checks and credit cards are gaining wider acceptance in larger cities, acceptance of credit cards is not nearly as widespread as in the United States or in Western European countries. Expect credit card use to be limited to better hotels, upscale restaurants, international airlines, and the rapidly growing, but still select number of up-market stores. When bringing U.S. dollars or Euro into Ukraine, ensure that bills are in good condition because those that are worn, torn or written on may not be accepted.

Travellers should also note that customs regulations prohibit sending cash, travellers' checks, personal checks, credit cards, or passports through the international mail system. Customs authorities regularly confiscate these items as contraband. Exchanging U.S. dollars, Euro or other currencies into the national Ukrainian currency "hryvnya" is simple and unproblematic, as licensed exchange booths are widespread, and exchange rates are normally clearly advertised. Exchanging U.S. dollars or Euro into Ukrainian currency or other currencies is legal only at banks, currency exchange desks at hotels, and licensed exchange booths; anyone caught dealing on the black market can expect to be detained by the local militia.

It is also highly recommended that you carry with you a copy of your passport: first page and the page with entry stamp from Ukrainian passport control, indicating the day of your arrival. This will help to deal with militia's questions about your identity and the term of your stay in Ukraine.

ATMs (a.k.a. Bankomats) are becoming available throughout Ukraine, particularly in Kyiv, Odessa and in other larger cities. In smaller cities and towns, ATMs are still virtually non-existent. Most ATMs disperse cash only in the local currency, hryvnya. However, because the incidence of credit card and ATM bankcard fraud is high, it is strongly recommended that visitors and permanent residents of Ukraine refrain

from using credit cards or ATM cards. The difficulties of a currency shortage can be avoided by coming to Ukraine with a sufficient supply of hard currency to cover necessary obligations during travel. Funds may be transferred by wire; advances may be drawn on credit cards at secure locations and travellers checks may be cashed at many locations.

Telephones

Public telephones are card operated. Card operated telephones are widespread in larger cities. Most telephone numbers have six digits but some have seven digits as well. Area codes have four digits (when the number has six digits) or three digits (when the number has seven digits).

Dialing Instructions

Local calls - just the number (six or seven digits)

International calls - 0038 + area code (if outside your own area code) + number.

You may consult your school manager as to purchasing phone cards for international and long distance calling.

Electrical Current

Standard voltage in Ukraine is 220 Volts/50 AC cycles. This may be different from the electrical current in your country. Therefore, we advise to bring your own converter if you plan to take any electrical appliances with you. It may be difficult to find a suitable power converter in Ukraine.

Wiring Money

There are several ways to have money sent to you during your stay:

Western Union - widely available throughout the country, MoneyGram - available in selected bank institutions.

Tipping

Standard tips for restaurant service, haircutters, and other services is 10-15% Tipping is not necessary in taxis and self-service restaurants.

Clothing

You are not expected to wear any special uniforms when attending classes at OLSC. However, you may bring some nice clothes for going out to restaurants, nightclubs, etc. Such places may have special dress code rules.

You may also bring clothes for outdoor or sports activities. Odessa often experiences snow in winter, so bring warm clothes. Spring and summer are typically very warm. Be prepared for occasional rain during all seasons.

Weights and Measures

Ukraine follows the metric system of measurements.

To convert centimeters to inches, multiply by 0.39.

To convert inches to centimeters, multiply by 2.54.

Liquid

29.5 milliliter – 1 ounce

0.48 liter – 1 pint

0.95 liter – 1 quart

3.8 liter – 1 gallon

Temperatures

Ukraine follows the Centigrade temperature scale.

To convert Fahrenheit to Centigrade, use the following formula:

$$C = \frac{(F - 32) * 5}{9}$$

To convert Centigrade to Fahrenheit, use the following formula:

$$F = \frac{(C * 9) + 32}{5}$$

Travel Checklist

- Valid Passport (with Ukrainian visa)
- School confirmation letter
- Flight documents
- Luggage clearly tabbed with your name and OLSC address
- Health and Travel Insurance Documents
- Confirmation that OLSC received your flight information (if you have purchased airport transfer service)