PREFACE

Dear Colleague

Working abroad is a 'different' experience. You will come across different management styles, different management structures, a different culture, alternative food and, it is hoped, a new and exciting lifestyle.

The purpose of this Handbook is to provide new UK staff, both academic and administrative, with information and advice to assist those in the early stages of their time in Egypt. It gives general information about Egypt and introduces the British University in Egypt (BUE).

This Handbook should be read in conjunction with our practical guide to working at BUE and living in its accommodation, entitled: Welcome to BUE & El Sherouk

Every attempt has been made to ensure that the context of both this Handbook and the Welcome document is accurate and up-to-date. BUE cannot, however, be held responsible for any errors in information, advice and guidance offered in good faith.

The BUE is a non-profit, private, Egyptian University which offers university degrees in the British academic tradition. It aims to contribute to education and scientific research in Egypt, thereby making available experts and technicians in the business, scientific and other academic specialisms needed by society. It aspires to use the latest and most modern academic techniques developed in Britain. The BUE also seeks to strengthen ties with other universities, scientific agencies and commercial organisations in Egypt and other Arab and foreign countries. Further information is available on the BUE Website: www.bue.edu.eg

Wishing you a very warm welcome to The British University in Egypt.
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Section 1: Introduction to Egypt

Geography & Demography

The Arab Republic of Egypt covers an area of approximately 1,001,450 sq km and occupies the northeastern corner of Africa. It borders Libya to the west; Sudan to the south; and Israel and Palestine in the northeast. To the north, it faces the Mediterranean; to the east, the Gulf of Aqaba and Red Sea.

The vast majority of Egypt's 87 million people, however, live in the fertile Nile valley and delta: an area which represents only around 6% of the total land area. Egypt's major cities are the capital, Cairo, which has a population of over about 20 million, and Alexandria on the Mediterranean coast.

Currency

The unit of currency is the Egyptian pound (L.E.), which is comprised of 100 piasters. Notes are in denominations of L.E. 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, 5 and Coins are in denominations of 100, 50, 25 piasters.

As of Feb 2015 the exchange rate was approximately $1=7.6, £1= 11.8 and Euro 1=8.6. Currency exchanges are open until 10.00 pm and can be found all over Egypt. Please check the current rates in your local bank.

Principal Religions

About 94% of Egyptians are Muslims (primarily Sunni), and Islamic practice is widely observed. Of the remainder, around 5% are Coptic Christians. Other Christians, such as Greek Orthodox and Catholics represent around 1% of the population. Freedom of worship is exercised.
**Language**

The official language is Arabic, but English and French are widely used.

**Time**

Egypt is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+2 GMT).

**Climate**

Egypt is hot in the summer months, particularly in July and August, which can also be quite humid. Winter months are appreciably cooler, and windy days in January or February can be relatively cold. Throughout the year, Upper Egypt is significantly warmer than Cairo; Alexandria generally milder. Average monthly temperatures for Cairo (in Centigrade) are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
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**Official Public Holidays**

The dates of official public holidays of the University for the academic year are set as per the University Calendar.

**Further Reading on Egypt**

Appendix A provides a list of useful and interesting books on Egypt. You may wish to purchase some of these prior to your arrival, although a good range of books on Egypt is available locally.
Section 2: The British University in Egypt

Since 1998 the British and the Egyptian Governments sought the formation of a British University in Egypt. The vision was to provide a UK style education to produce graduates of UK quality that both Egyptian and British companies would be confident in employing in key sectors of the Egyptian economy.

A group of UK universities led by Loughborough University (LU) gave advice on the academic direction, teaching and quality management processes for the new institution, thus ensuring the ‘British’ quality of the education. Funding for the University has been provided by a group of Egyptian businessmen who are now the founders of the BUE.

BUE degrees are fully accredited by the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education. BUE has also established a formal partnership with London South Bank under which it validates BUE undergraduate programmes in the Faculties of Business Administration, Economics and Political Science, Engineering and Informatics and Computer Science. BUE has also achieved formal validation with Queen Margaret University (QMU) for degrees in the Faculty of Nursing. Graduates receive a BUE and a London South Bank or QMU degree leading to dual awards of the two universities. In addition, BUE has formed a relationship with Exeter University in the area of Arab and Islamic Studies.

Students of the BUE will enjoy strong links with business partners in Egypt and in the UK, leading to training opportunities, internships and field studies in Egypt and abroad.

The Academic Programme

The academic programme of the BUE follows the British model, in which students receive a combination of lectures, tutorials and laboratory sessions. However, their own guided efforts are central to their learning, taking the form of projects, group work and other assignments. The focus is thus on the student’s acquisition of the necessary skills for independent learning.

In order for students to have the best chance of succeeding in their chosen degree courses, a Preparatory Year Programme has been developed. This is taken by all students and assists them in moving from a school mode of study to the challenges of University-level work. English, mathematics and IT modules are required of all students in the Preparatory Year as well as modules specific to their degree studies.

It is expected that additional degree programmes will be added in the coming years.

Section 3: Living in Cairo & Recreational Facilities

Availability of Goods in Cairo

All essential items can be found, though from time to time there are shortages or interruptions in the supply of some specific brands or imported goods. A number of
new shopping malls are now open which generally include shops, restaurants, cinema, supermarkets and underground car parks.

**Clothing**

You should bear in mind that, whilst summers are hot in Cairo, in winter, it becomes relatively cold. Sweaters, heavier jackets and overcoats, suits and dresses should be packed in addition to light summer clothes. Clothing which is reasonably priced can be purchased locally. As in most predominantly Islamic countries, women are expected to dress modestly in public; shorts and ‘strappy’ sundresses are not usually acceptable. Fashionable shoes and sandals for both men and women are available in Cairo and are cheaper than in Europe. Some international designs are available. Sports clothes and equipment are also available.

**Food**

Fresh fruits, vegetables and meat are very good, plentiful and inexpensive. Uncooked fruit and vegetables should be thoroughly washed before eating. You are not allowed to import foodstuff, although a small amount for personal use may be carried in your accompanied luggage.

**Goods for Children**

1- **Clothing**

Sweatshirts, jogging suits and anoraks are suitable clothing for winter months, with plenty of light cotton clothes for summer. Children's casual summer clothes are widely available and inexpensive. High quality children shoes are increasingly available, but not in different width sizes. Children at the British schools wear a uniform, which can be obtained directly from the school.

2- **Toys**

Children’s books, toys and playthings are widely available.

3- **Baby Foods**

The supply of baby food is reasonably consistent. Many types of powdered milk, which are inexpensive, are available as are baby cereals. "Milupa" foods are also available, but while the range of sweets is wide, there are few savory varieties. Baby juices and vitamins are easily found.

**Health**

It may take a while to adjust to a new environment with different food and sanitation standards. Most people develop minor stomach upsets during this period of adjustment. High standards of hygiene, however, can help to reduce this problem and inexpensive remedies are best purchased locally.

**Food Preparation**

Special care is required for the preparation of fresh fruits and vegetables. Some sources advise these be soaked for 15 minutes in a diluted potassium permanganate solution
Diarrhea

Diarrhea can be a common health concern in Cairo, especially in the summer season. It can result from poor diet, food spoilage or excess alcohol consumption. Avoid eating non-packed foods or foods that are improperly prepared (i.e.: from street vendors). It is generally advisable not to drink or (initially) to cook with tap water and to use bottled mineral water instead, which is available in all supermarkets.

Diarrhoea is generally easily treated, but in case of severe vomiting or if the diarrhoea persists for more than 24 hours, contact the University Clinic or International Medical Center.

Vaccinations

No certificate of vaccination is required if you enter Egypt directly from the UK or the US. However, it is a wise precautionary measure if you obtain immunisation against hepatitis, tetanus and cholera. Children should have received the usual vaccinations against diphtheria, measles and BCG.

Medication

Over-the-counter medications are generally available in major pharmacies without prescription, as well as medications for common ailments and flu. Other medications such as anti-depressants require the prescription of a certified physician.

Pharmacies are generally open from 9 AM – 11 PM, daily. There are a number of 24 hours pharmacies widely spread over Cairo.

Education

Egypt has an old tradition of teaching foreign languages at its schools, particularly those run by religious institutions. Currently you will find a large number of 'foreign language schools' which teach a foreign language, plus a number of International schools teaching a foreign curriculum including American, British, French and German schools.

The website www.schools-in-egypt.com provides more information about schools in Egypt.

Mobile Phones and Internet

Mobile phones are widely used in Egypt and are easy to purchase. Currently there are three companies Mobinil, Vodafone and Etisalat operating in Egypt, offering competitive subscription packages (both pre- and post-paid), as well as mobile handsets

For further details, please visit the stores directly, which are found in major malls

High-speed Internet connection is available on Campus. Home connections are available through Dial-up with subscription fees. The latter are available through Internet service-provider companies, such as TE Data.
Churches & Mosques

In Egypt, there are a large number Mosques and also Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant churches, reflecting the diversity of the city's indigenous and foreign religious community.

Restaurants

Eating out in Egypt is mostly inexpensive and there are a variety of choices. The restaurants’ phone numbers and addresses can be found on the website: www.cairodining.com

There is also a thriving UK expatriate community centred at The British Community Association Clubhouse- 11, Mohamed Youssef El-Kadi St., Heliopolis. Tel.: 2918533 10 a.m - 3 p.m

There are a number of restaurants offering a variety of cuisines in nearby hotels.

Entertainment & Travel

As a cosmopolitan city which attracts a very large number of tourists, Cairo has facilities for recreation which should suit most tastes. There are, of course, the attractions which the tourists flock to see—ranging from the antiquities of Pharaonic Egypt to the excellent sub-aqua diving in the Red Sea, as well as theatres, cinemas, libraries, restaurants, nightclubs and sports clubs. It is advisable to read Egypt Today magazine for information about museums, art galleries, the Opera House and theatres. In addition there are a number of clean comfortable cinemas in Cairo, most showing a mixture of up-to-date English and Arabic films. There are a variety of interesting places to visit around Cairo like Giza/Sakarra Pyramids, Khan El Khalili, Egyptian Museum, and around Egypt like Luxor, Aswan, Sharm El-Sheikh, and Hurghada.

Arabic Courses

As well as increasing your effectiveness in your job, an ability to speak some Arabic will make your and your family's stay in Cairo far more enjoyable. Staff and their families are, therefore, encouraged to study the language. Arabic Courses can be taken in many institutes like International Language Institute in Heliopolis.

Newspapers and Magazines

English newspapers and magazines can be bought and ordered locally. There are a number of bookstores in Cairo, well-stocked with books, newspapers and magazines in different European languages.

Sports Clubs

There are a number of sports clubs in El Sherouk and Cairo offering a wide range of sporting activities including tennis, swimming, squash, riding, golf, shooting, etc. In addition, some of the hotels in Heliopolis offer club memberships which allow access to their sporting facilities, mainly swimming pools and tennis courts.
There are also new sport clubs in New Cairo which offer superb leisure facilities and amenities including a fitness center, spa, swimming pool, tennis, golf and squash courts. They also include day care and resort guestrooms.

**Home Entertainment**

Television programmes are mainly in Arabic though there are foreign language programmes, principally in French and English. You can subscribe to foreign channels with a special decoder or invest in a satellite dish. The transmission of the Egyptian television is in colour and the "PAL" system is used.

To subscribe for cable TV, contact CNE.
Appendix A

Readings about Egypt

- Travel Aid "Guide to Egypt " - Michael Von Haag, (Travel Aid)
- Blue Guide to Egypt - Veronic Seton Williams and Peter Stocks, (Ernest Benn)
- Thornton Cox Traveler's Guide to Egypt - Penelope Turing, (Geographic)
- Egypt Travel Guide (Lascelles)
- Dollar wise Guide to Egypt - Nancy McGrath, (Frommer)
- Fodor Guide to Egypt - Kay Showker, (Hodder & Stroughton)
- Universal Pocket Guide to Egypt, (Lascelles)
- Encyclopedia Guide to Egypt, (Nagel)
- The Baedeker Guide to Egypt
- Land of Egypt - Jasper More, (Batsford)
- Cairo - Malise Rutheren, (Time Life Books [the Great Cities])
- Sakkara - Jill Kamil, (Longman)
- The Blue Nile - Alan Moorehead, (New English Library)
- The White Nile - Alan Moorehead, (New English Library)
- Africa - The Nile Route - Kim Naylor, (Lascelles)
- The Pyramids of Egypt - I.E.S. Edwards, (Pelican)
- The Alexandria Quartet - Lawrence Durrel, (Faber)
## Appendix B

### Emergency Numbers

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The British University in Egypt</td>
<td>(02) 26875890/1/2/3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19283 (HOTLINE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>123</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Medical Center</td>
<td>Tel: (02)24775902 -03 -04 -08</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fax: (02)24774615</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emergency Police</td>
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<td>900122</td>
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<td>Tourism Police</td>
<td>126</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Brigade</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic Treatment Centre, Ain Shams University</td>
<td>(02)22840902</td>
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