

Generic Preparation Guide for Staff & Students Going on Short-Term Study Tours to Asia



SECTION 2: HEALTH, SAFETY & RISK PREPARATION



ADVICE FOR STAFF

Information & Communication

- If preparation workshops or seminars are being held, be sure to cover health, risk and safety information. You may wish to invite a Travel Doctor to speak to students about health, medical and vaccination matters.
- Topics related to this category of preparation which are typically covered at seminars/workshops and in handbooks/handouts include:
 - Registering the intended travel with DFAT's Smart Traveller website.
 - Applying for health and travel insurance.
 - Undertaking pre-trip medical and dental check-ups.
 - Advice relating to medicines rules and restrictions pertinent to the destination in question, vaccinations that may be required, and the necessary documents to bring to provide evidence of prescriptions.
 - Safe sex reminders.

- Drugs and alcohol reminders.
 - Food safety advice.
 - Hygiene and health advice.
 - Personal safety and risk advice.
 - Any other sources of advice and support available to students who have concerns about travelling (e.g., organisers may wish to inform students of counselling services provided by the university should students feel they need to utilise the service before, during or after the trip).
- Ensure that students are aware of emergency services and emergency contact numbers at their intended destination. You can list these contacts in the handbook or handouts provided to students.
 - Create a Risk Management & Critical Incidents Plan.
 - Develop a plan for how tour participants are to keep in contact with each other during the trip. This will necessitate being aware of internet, wi-fi and telecommunication facilities (and potential problem issues) at your intended destinations. This information should be added to any handbooks and handouts.

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

Insurance

- You need to apply for health and travel insurance prior to your trip. Allow time to look up quotes from different insurance providers to find a policy that suits you.

Health & Medication

- Visit a doctor for a general check-up and to obtain advice regarding appropriate vaccinations well in advance of your departure date.
- It is a good idea to visit a dentist for a check-up prior to your trip as unforeseen dental emergencies while abroad may be very expensive, or the particular destination may not have the dental facilities readily available to assist you.
- Pack a travel medical supplies kit to bring on your trip. A travel doctor or GP can advise you regarding packing the appropriate medical supplies to bring with you. Alternatively you may wish to purchase a kit (e.g., gastro kit).

- When bringing medication to a foreign country, be aware of any rules and restrictions relating to medicines and prescriptions.
- If you are taking prescription medication with you, make sure you bring proof of your doctor's prescription and if possible, a letter from your doctor explaining what the medication is for (i.e., your diagnosis and treatment).
- If you wear eye-glasses, bring a copy of your optical prescriptions in case you lose your glasses and urgently require a replacement pair.

Personal Safety

- DFAT's Smart Traveller website is an excellent source of information, links and advice relating to all aspects of travellers' personal safety.
- If the topic of personal safety is not covered in preparation activities or in handbooks and handouts, you should research your destination in advance to find out what personal safety factors you need to take note of. This may include being informed about:
 - Safe and reliable public transport or private transport options. Print out transport timetable information in advance, if this is available.
 - How to avoid theft and robbery.
 - How to avoid common tourist scams and tricks.
 - Terrorism and kidnapping alerts.
 - Safe consumption of alcohol.
 - Safe sex.
 - The dangers of consuming illicit drugs.
 - How to look out for your fellow travellers.
 - Potentially unsafe locations and venues.

Communication

- Find out about internet services and wi-fi availability at your intended destinations, so you are aware of potential issues in keeping in touch with fellow travellers using the internet, as well as any issues in contacting Australia.
- Ensure that you have been provided with emergency contact numbers to ring in Australia. If you have been given a handbook or handouts by the program organisers, they should include:
 - Important university phone numbers and email addresses
 - DFAT's 24-hr Consular Emergency Service & Referral

- Be aware of how you will keep in contact with the program organisers and fellow travellers while you are on your trip (e.g., via mobile phone, Facebook, instant messaging or other mediums agreed upon). Always make sure someone knows where you are and how they can contact you.
- Provide your friends and family in Australia with a sheet listing your important contact details while on your trip, so that can reach you if they need to.
- Phone cards can be purchased prior to your trip and may be used to make calls from your intended destination.
- Determine whether it is advisable to purchase a SIM card while in Australia, or when you are at your intended destination. Compare prices to find a package that suits your destination and needs.

USEFUL LINKS

DFAT

- 24-hour Consular Emergency Centre in Canberra can be contacted for assistance from anywhere in the world on +61 2 6261 3305
- To register under Smart Traveller
<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/registration-help.html>

Health & Safety

- The Travel Doctor (vaccination advice and current health alerts)
www.tmvc.com.au
- Jet Lag remedies
<http://goasia.about.com/od/healthandsafety/a/Jet-Lag-Remedies.htm>
- Travelling safely in Asia
<http://goasia.about.com/od/healthandsafety/a/Travel-Safety-in-Asia.htm>
- Tips and reminders relating to personal safety and risk
<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/tips/partying.html>
- Tips and reminders relating to safe sex
www.health.wa.gov.au/docreg/Education/Prevention/Sexual_Health/Protection/HP5541_going_overseas.pdf
- Common scams to be aware of in Asia
<http://goasia.about.com/od/asiascams/tp/Scams-in-Asia.htm>
- Travel Doctor website

<http://www.traveldoctor.com.au/>

- Travelling overseas with prescription medication

<http://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/medicare/travelling-overseas-with-pbs-medicine>

Communication

- SIM cards for use overseas

<http://www.travelsim.net.au/>

<http://aussiesim.com.au/>

<http://www.gosim.com/?gosimrow>

Coping with Stress

- Tips for stress management

<http://www.headspace.org.au/media/150419/hints%20to%20avoid%20harmful%20stress.pdf>

<http://www.headspace.org.au/media/201720/hsp023%20self%20help%20tips%20fa2%20web.pdf>

- Resources, forum and support for stress management

<http://au.reachout.com/managing-stress>

- Dealing with travel anxiety

<http://traveltips.usatoday.com/overcome-travel-anxiety-1654.html>

<http://travelwithkate.com/2014/04/21/5-tips-for-dealing-with-travel-anxiety/>

Useful Resources from the Outbound Mobility Best Practice Guide

The complete OMBP Guide for Australian Universities can be found here:

www.studyoverseas.gov.au/sites/studyoverseas/resources/Documents/ombpgau/OMBPG.pdf

Browse the OMBP Guide 'Section I' for resources and templates associated with:

- Crisis management
- Critical incidents plan
- Contact details form
- Destination safety profiling
- Program policies relating to:
 - Natural disaster

- Mental and physical illness
- Pandemic
- Terrorist attack



The *Generic Preparation Guide for Staff & Students Going on Short-Term Study Tours to Asia* is brought to you by the *Ready for Take-Off: Preparing students for intercultural learning in Asia project*. To find out more about the project, you can:

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