

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



SECTION 4: STUDENT BEHAVIOUR & EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT



ADVICE FOR STAFF

Explicating Student Responsibilities

- Conflict, miscommunication and misaligned expectations can occur when program participants are unclear about their responsibilities. As part of trip preparation, make students' responsibilities explicit so that they have a clear idea of what is expected of them. Provide students with a handout or program handbook that outlines the following:
 - Responsibilities relating to enrolment and getting organised for the trip (i.e., practical pre-departure preparation and paperwork).
 - Responsibilities relating to learning about the culture and history of the places they are intending to visit.
 - Responsibilities relating to conduct and behaviour.
 - Responsibilities relating to academic preparation, group work and assessments.
 - Responsibilities as ambassadors of their university.

- Responsibilities upon returning from their trip (e.g., participation in de-briefing, providing feedback, and participation in the promotion and preparation of future programs).
- Tips on how to be a responsible traveller in Asia (i.e., how to make good decisions, understanding the long-term impact of decisions, and awareness of damaging tourism practices).

Explicating Staff Responsibilities

- Part of managing students' expectations also involves articulating the responsibilities of staff members who manage the trip (i.e., what staff can and cannot be expected to do). It's a good idea to outline the role and types of tasks that staff will be involved with. This can include:
 - General duty of care
 - Academic responsibilities
 - Administrative and practical responsibilities
 - Risk management and critical incidents
 - Conflict resolution

Managing Expectations

- Managing students' expectation is a crucial component that can influence the success of the program. There are different ways students' expectations can be managed. Here are some examples:
 - Avoid 'over-selling' the program as this can lead to a misalignment between program aims and actual outcomes. There is a limit to what can be experienced and achieved on a short-term study tour. Students will appreciate a realistic description of what they can reasonably experience during the trip.
 - Facilitate group discussions as part of preparation activities, or via an online discussion forum, around the topic of what students can expect from their trip.
 - Source or create a list of case studies featuring problems, issues and group conflict scenarios than can arise. Ask students to discuss how these problems might be overcome.
 - Have students develop and ratify their own Code of Conduct.
 - If no collegially developed Code of Conduct is created, ensure that students are provided with a document that clearly outlines their responsibilities (including pre-

departure responsibilities, personal responsibilities and expectations relating to behaviour while on the trip).

- Provide post-trip de-briefing and a forum to receive feedback and evaluation.

De-Briefing

- De-briefing students when they return from their trip is another important way of effectively managing student expectations regarding their involvement in the program.
- It is an important part of the study tour program as it allows for students to do the following:
 - Share and reflect on their experiences.
 - Manage any cultural re-adjustment or traumatic in-country incidences that may have eventuated.
 - Provide feedback to the program organisers.
 - Consolidate their assessments and group work projects.
 - Discuss the value and potential applications of their newfound intercultural experiences.
- You might like to create a post-trip strategy which can include the following:
 - Post-trip de-briefing seminars.
 - Creating feedback and evaluation forms for students to fill out upon return.
 - Requiring students to submit a post-trip reflection essay.
 - Enlisting students to join a community of program alumni who can participate in future program promotion and participate in trip preparation events.
 - Inviting guest presenters (e.g., from other university departments, cultural groups, industry, professional organisations) to attend debriefing seminars to speak to students about the professional and educational value of their intercultural sojourns.
 - Holding social functions (often held as part of, or following, the de-briefing seminar).
 - Recognition of students' participation in the program (e.g., awards, certificates).
 - Using mediums (such as Facebook or a mailing list) for program alumni to keep in touch with each other and with the contacts they have made at their host institution. Future participants of the program can then be integrated into this existing community of contacts and alumni.

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

Knowing Your Responsibilities

- All trip participants should be aware of their responsibilities in preparing for their trip, responsibilities while on their trip, and responsibilities upon returning.
- Being aware of what is expected of you and of others will help promote a more organised and cohesive program, and will help to minimise confusion, uncertainty and conflict. Here are some responsibilities relating to students:
 - Ensure that you have completed all administrative and practical requirements for the trip well in advance (e.g., enrolment, visa applications, travel bookings).
 - Ensure that you have completed all health-related requirements for the trip, well in advance (e.g., vaccinations).
 - Attend all preparation seminars, workshops, online and face-to-face activities (including social activities) as all these have a part to play in preparing you for your trip.
 - Make sure you have a copy of all guides, handouts and other materials given to students by the program organisers.
 - Do your own research into the history and culture of your intended destination/s.
 - Learn some useful words and phrases in the host country's language/s.
 - Be aware of what it means to be a 'responsible traveller', especially when travelling to Asia.
 - Be aware of all academic and assessment tasks relating to your program and plan ahead accordingly.
 - You will have responsibilities as an ambassador of your university and are encouraged to be aware and respectful of the host country's laws and customs.
 - Be aware of your university's expectations relating to conduct and behaviour of its students.
 - If you are residing at, enrolling, attending or working at a host institution, you are subject to the rules and regulations of that institution.
 - You will likely be required to participate in some post-trip activities such as debriefing seminars, providing evaluation and feedback, and possibly assisting in the promotion of future trips.
 - Ask questions if you do not know the answer – program organisers are there to help.

Additional Points to Consider...

In addition to your core responsibilities, there are other pertinent points to consider in relation to behaviour and conduct:

- Are you aware of what is expected of you regarding appropriate conduct and behaviour? – if not, it's a good idea to speak to the program organisers about making this clear to all students.
- Do you know what to do in the event of an emergency?
- Do you know what to do if you are faced with a problem issue or experience conflict with your fellow travellers, or the program organiser?
- Staff also have responsibilities before, during and after the trip. If you unaware of what staff responsibilities and tasks might be and feel that this is a source of uncertainty for you, it's a good idea to speak to your program organisers for more information.

USEFUL LINKS

- Responsible Travelling in Asia
<http://goasia.about.com/od/Planning/a/Responsible-Travel.htm>

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

See the OMBP Guide 'Section P' and 'Section Q' for resources and templates associated with:

- Managing expectations
- Conditions of participation
- Exchange program checklists
- De-briefing, re-entry and program evaluation
- Example letter of student achievement



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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