



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Global
Opportunities
& Exchanges.

Risk awareness guidance

These guidance notes have been produced to give you ideas of some of the issues you may need to consider when planning your for your time abroad, and whilst you are abroad.

The process of completing the form should help you to prepare for a safe and positive time by identifying potential challenges you may face, and possible ways of reducing risk and ensuring your own safety and wellbeing.

Global Opportunities & Exchanges are coordinating the risk awareness forms, with the School of Law and School of Languages and Cultures helping to spot check forms for students taking a period abroad as part of their degree.

If you are from one of the above departments, you should contact your year abroad coordinator if you are particularly concerned about a risk you have raised in your form:

SLC - slc-yearabroad@sheffield.ac.uk

Law - law.exchanges@sheffield.ac.uk

All other students, either taking a period abroad as part of their degree or a short period abroad, should contact Global Opportunities & Exchanges:

globalopps@sheffield.ac.uk

This form covers several important areas, though not all of these may be relevant to you, depending on the activity you will be undertaking abroad or your destination. If a section is not relevant, you can enter N/A.

You should evidence that you have considered the risks you could face for each section, and give examples of how you would minimise these risks.

The form asks you consider the areas which are the most crucial when you spend a period abroad. However, this is not an exhaustive list and if you feel there are topics missing you can add them to the Personal Research section at the end of the form.

Any personal or sensitive information stated in the form will be held in the strictest of confidence and will not be shared beyond relevant staff coordinating the periods abroad unless explicit permission is given. The data collected in this form will be deleted at the end of each academic year.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) [webpages](#) provide a lot of information, and are a good starting point for researching some of these areas.

Once you have completed the free University of Sheffield insurance policy, you are advised to download the RSA travel app, through Apple or Google Play store. This app provides country and city specific alerts whilst in country.

Working environment

What environment will you be working in? ie lectures; a laboratory or engineering environment; in a school; office work etc. Detail any risks associated with this.

- What is the environment you are going to be studying or working in?
- A University - is it lectures only or are there other activities such as laboratory work, field trips or activities in workshops?
- A workplace - what are the work activities of the company? Is it field-based, or in a classroom, office, or laboratory etc?

Personal characteristics

How may your personal characteristics be perceived in your host country? These can include: gender identity; race; religion and beliefs; sex and sexual orientation, and politics. You are not obliged to disclose these details, but you should evidence you have considered them.

- In the UK some personal characteristics are legally protected, but this is not always the case in other countries. Students may experience negative attitudes, discrimination, or even physical harm due to some characteristics in other countries.
- We strongly encourage that you research your host country's attitude towards things such as gender identity, race, religion and beliefs, sex and sexual orientation, and politics.
- You should think about how you may need to adapt your behaviour to help minimise any negative impacts.

Health

Consider pre-existing health conditions you may have, seen or unseen, which may require medication or alternative arrangements in your host country, or any current health risks that may exist in your host country. This can include diet, allergies and any vaccines needed for the host country, as well as mental health. Those travelling to Europe, have you registered for a student EHIC?

- If you have a pre-existing health condition, seen or unseen, have you consider any medication or regular medical treatment you may require whilst abroad and the availability of this?
- Have you spoken to your GP or the University Health Service who may be able to advise you?
- If you have a disability, have you contacted your host university/organisation to disclose requirements you have? You do not have to share sensitive information, but by making your host aware of these can help them make adjustments for you.
- All students should bear in mind that medicines in the UK may be called something different or have a different formulation in other countries.
- For those students with mental health requirements, have you researched alternative networks or services which will be available to you whilst you are away from your usual resources?
- All students should research the local cuisine and consider how compatible it is with any dietary requirements. You may need to consider getting an allergy card that translates what you can't eat into the local language, or selecting accommodation with cooking facilities so that you can cook for yourself.

- Students who are studying or working in the EU (where applicable) have you registered for free a student European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) through the NHS?

Support needs

Do you have learning support needs, and have support arrangements in place in the UK for these? Have you communicated these to your host university/organisation? Are there further considerations you need to think about?

- If you have specific learning support needs in Sheffield, have you made your host university/organisation aware of these? You do not have to share sensitive information, but by making your host aware of these can help them make adjustments for you.
- Do you have specialist equipment you need to take with you?
- If you already see DDSS, have you spoken to them about adjusting your learning support plan for whilst you are abroad?
- If the host university/organisation are not able to make adjustments, have you considered what other measures you can put in place?

Personal security

The potential for crime, hostility or physical/mental violence whilst abroad, and what to do in a situation. Do you know the emergency contact numbers for your country. This can be from prior knowledge of the country or FCO advice.

- Some areas or countries may have increased risk associated with them, often in the form of military, political or civil unrest. Although the University of Sheffield would not expect its students to undertake any activity where they would knowingly be at risk, situations can change.
- The FCO, RSA travel app, embassy or consulate of the country will be able to advise you on what to do if such a situation arises.
- Do you know emergency contact details for local services such as police and ambulances?
- Do you know where your nearest hospital, GP or police station is in your host city?

Accommodation

Where is your accommodation in relation to your place of study/work? Is it a shared property or privately owned? If you've not yet arranged your accommodation, have you got short term plans, and what will you consider when arranging your accommodation?

- Have you considered where your accommodation is in relation to the University or place of work?
- Is it a reasonable distance away from the university/place of work?
- What type of area is it in? (Residential, commercial, urban, suburb, student area etc.)
- Is it privately run or owned by the host university?
- Are you sharing it with other students or members of the public?
- If you have not booked your permanent accommodation before arriving in country, you should consider where you are going to stay in the short term as well.

Transport

Details of transport used to travel to the host country, and on a day to day basis (ie public transport, own vehicle, license requirements for the country, or as a pedestrian). Any transport used for trips, such as car shares.

- Consider the transport you will use to get to your host destination.
- Public transport in certain parts of the world can be one of the highest risk activities you undertake. Have you considered what transport you will use day to day?
- For road trips or short vacations in country, how are you travelling for these? Do you know how safe or reliable car-shares are? If you hire a car, do you know the driving laws of the host country?
- If you plan to walk or cycle in your host country, you should check there are safe routes to use, especially at night.

Finance

Consider how you will cover the costs of your period abroad, for both planned costs and unforeseen expenses. Is the country cash or card dominated?

- Have you completed the University Money Planner for your time abroad?
- Have you researched what bank account to use abroad, and any documents you need to open an overseas one?
- Do you have a plan of how you will deal with unexpected costs or if a payment is late?
- Have you considered a credit card for emergencies?
- Do you know if payments in the country are mainly done by card or cash, and what the transaction fee is for taking out cash?

Climate and time difference

What differences in temperature, humidity, altitude, seasons and time are there? Is the area prone to natural disasters? How will you acclimatise or respond to these?

- You should consider the local climate, and how this may be different from what you're used to.
- Do you know if the area experiences extremes of climate, or geographical differences such as earthquakes, and have you prepared for this?
- Have you considered the time difference and potentially different seasons?
- Have you prepared appropriate clothing and equipment for the climate?
- If there is a big time difference, have you thought about best times to communicate with the UK?

Culture

Have you considered other cultural differences such as; attitude towards drugs and alcohol; food; appropriate clothing or behaviour in public vs private spaces; local laws and customs; registering with local police if necessary, and national holidays.

- Have you researched local laws and customs thoroughly?
- Have you thought about how you may need to adapt how you dress in some areas?
- Have you considered different attitudes to alcohol consumption and diet?
- Are there potentially politically sensitive issues?
- Do shops, public services or cultural sites have different opening times on different days?

Insurance

Have you taken out the University of Sheffield travel insurance and know the conditions of the policy?

Have you taken out personal insurance for other travel outside of your host country, for extreme sports or for your mobile phone?

- All students are required to take out the free University of Sheffield insurance which covers you for emergency health and travel.
- Does your host university or company require you to take out additional insurance?
- Have you got personal insurance for possessions not covered by the University of Sheffield insurance?
- If you plan to travel outside of your host country, do you have additional insurance?

Personal research

If there are other things you have researched and would consider to be potential risk which have not been raised on this form, then list them here.

- If there are other considerations which have not been raised elsewhere in the form, then list them in this section.