Introduction

It is a tremendous opportunity to spend a period abroad during your degree. You will benefit enormously from the academic and personal experiences gained from your period abroad. In addition, many employers, both in the UK and worldwide, appreciate the added value that graduates with such experience bring to the workforce.

Summer schools are not all work! You will gain as much personally from the social aspect of this period as from the academic content. A thorough investigation into your host university, city and country before you leave the UK will make sure that you are well-prepared for the culture you will find there and that you are ready to participate in all aspects of being abroad.

Your summer school placement is something that you will need to think about and prepare for. It will require flexibility, new skills and considerable perseverance. You will learn to see your own culture in a new perspective and to look at problems in a new light. You will gain the confidence to handle new and challenging situations.

We hope that you will find the following information helpful. Of course, it does not tell you everything you need to know to make your summer school placement a success. It may not all sound very important at the moment but taking note of the advice you are given and thinking seriously now about what you are going to do whilst abroad and why, can make your life much easier and more rewarding during this important time.

Wishing you an enjoyable and rewarding time abroad...

All at Global Opportunities & Exchanges
**Upcoming meetings**

**Drop in sessions**
These are hour-long sessions held in a computer room, which you can utilise to spend time on your application to your university or discuss any issues with a member of staff from Global Opportunities & Exchanges. Attendance is not mandatory but we encourage you to come along at any point during the slot.

Wednesday 07 March  
14:00 to 15:00  
G25, Floor G, Hicks Building

**Pre-Departure Meeting**
This meeting is compulsory and will give you key information about preparing for your summer school and practical hints and tips for whilst you are there.

Wednesday 02 May  
14:30 to 15:30  
Workroom 4, 38 Mappin Street

**Money**

**A few tips:**

- Don’t forget to do a Money Plan for your time abroad. This will help you budget and make the most of your experience: [http://ssid.sheffield.ac.uk/money-planner](http://ssid.sheffield.ac.uk/money-planner)

- Tell your bank which country you will be going to as well as the duration dates, so they don’t freeze your account due to “suspicious” activity

- Consider taking a credit card – obtain this in advance if you don’t already have one

- Investigate a pre-paid money card, these can be cheaper to use

- You can normally withdraw money from your UK account using cash machines where you see the Cirrus or Maestro symbols. It is usual to be charged a small amount for doing this, so try to withdraw money less frequently and in larger sums. Do be careful when carrying large sums of money around though.

**Travel**

**Global Scholars scholarship winners** must forward the official acceptance letter/email, summer school course name and exact duration dates to Global Opportunities as soon as they are issued. We will then contact you about your travel arrangements.

If you wish to add on personal travel time either before or after your summer school, you may. However, if this increases the overall price of your travel booking, you will be asked to pay the difference. That is, the cost including personal travel minus the cost without personal travel.

You will be able to get quotes at the time of booking from our Travel Agent (Key Travel) to help you make a decision.

**Self-funded students** should also confirm receipt of the official acceptance, summer school course name and exact duration dates to Global Opportunities & Exchanges by email as early as possible.

You will make your own travel arrangements and can choose any travel company to do that. We advise you to make your travel bookings as early as possible once the host university has issued an official acceptance. We cannot make recommendations.
Some general advice:

- What about travelling with other Sheffield students? Find out who else is going to the same destination and contact them as early as possible to make joint arrangements.
- Try to arrive during business hours so that staff might be available.
- Download a map and some basic directions before you leave the UK.
- Find out if there is a “meet and greet” service that you can use.
- An International Student Identity Card may help get you discounts for items not covered by the scholarship.
- You must hold a current passport, which should be valid for at least 6 months beyond your return date.

Insurance

University of Sheffield Insurance Policy

All students are covered by the University’s travel insurance when they are being sent abroad by the University for an exchange, work/teaching placement or summer school. Travel and personal accident cover is available for study related travel which involves an overnight stay, a flight or rail travel.

Personal travel can be covered for up to 2 weeks outside of the official summer school duration dates so long as it takes place within the same country. The additional time must be included within the start and end dates when registering for the policy.

Before you go abroad, you must complete a short on-line form providing details of the country in which your summer school will take place as well as your arrival and departure dates. Once completed, you will then be able to download your insurance certificate to print off and take with you.

The form can be accessed through the insurance web pages, and guidance on how to complete the form is here.

The insurance web pages also include information on the cover provided, exclusions and details of any excesses in the event of a claim. Note that the cost of routine GP appointments (if applicable in your host country) is not covered in the policy.

You must keep a note of First Assist’s emergency number and carry it with you at all times. They will be able to provide advice in the event of an incident while you are abroad.

Policy number: RKK699045 (Royal Sun Alliance)
Helpline: +44 (0) 20 8763 3155 (24 hours a day, 365 days a year)
Helpline: international.ops@firstassist.co.uk

There is no charge for University travel insurance.

European Summer Schools Only - European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

Students who are EEA/EU nationals and who are normally resident in the UK, but are spending time in another EEA/EU country during their studies on a recognised UK course must apply for a special version of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) covering the duration of the period abroad. This entitles you, and any dependants that accompany you, to state-provided healthcare during your period abroad.

You must apply for a ‘student EHIC’ using a paper application form, which can be found here. This covers you for the duration of your summer school. If you already have an EHIC that you have previously obtained for personal travel, you must send it away with your application for the summer school dates to be added to it. It will then be returned to you and will be valid for both your summer school period and any personal travel you undertake outside of the course dates.
If you have any queries on the above, we advise posting them on the EHIC Facebook page.

Whether or not you have an EHIC, you must also register for the University of Sheffield’s travel insurance.

**Visa and Immigration**

It is your responsibility to check with the appropriate embassy in good time as to what type of visa you may need and how to apply for it.

The embassy always has the most reliable and up-to-date information on this, so it should be your first port of call for all queries relating to your visa application.

Your host university’s web pages will normally contain some guidance on this too.

**Immunisation and Health**

- When you are abroad, carry copies of medical insurance documents with you at all times, as proof of ability to pay.
- You do not generally need immunisations, but please check with your doctor/GP practice in good time before travelling.
- If you have an unusual medical condition, take copies of medical records. Also take with you prescriptions for medications and a GP/hospital letter confirming your condition.
- If you take regular medication, take a sufficient supply. Some medicines may not be available overseas or can be very costly. One example is the female contraceptive pill. It is NOT free in some countries and can be costly.
- If you wear glasses/contact lenses, take spares of these as well as a prescription in case you need to obtain emergency replacements.
- Dental care is not generally covered and can be very expensive so it is advisable to get all dental work done prior to departure.
- If you have a long term medical condition or a disability (including dyslexia or other learning disability), you must discuss this with the University of Sheffield DDSS and the GOE team. This is so that your host university can be informed in advance and put appropriate support and resources in place for you.

**Accommodation**

- This is normally included within the summer school package.
- Be aware that, in some countries, the range of university accommodation can be limited and that some students are housed in nearby hotels and youth hostels.
- If there is a separate application, please ensure you complete the required paperwork and by the set deadline.
- Accommodation standards can vary from country to country. Your summer school housing might be of a lower standard than you are used to in the UK. Be prepared to potentially share a room. Be open-minded. It’s only for a short amount of time and it’s all part of the experience.
- Please be aware also that the location of the accommodation may require you to take public transport to and from the university each day.
- If you have pre-arranged your accommodation, make sure that you know exactly when and where to collect the keys.
Keeping in Touch

Once you know your new address, please ensure that you inform the relevant people e.g. University Health Service or doctor, bank, family, friends etc. You can update the term-time address on your university record here:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/record/pin

We advise that you keep checking your Sheffield email account throughout your period abroad.

Student Exchange Ambassadors – Peer to Peer Support

We have 30 Ambassadors who have spent a semester or a year abroad. They are available to offer you support as they have first-hand experience of spending time abroad. To find out information about them and their contact details please see:

http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/globalopps/seap/ourambassadors

Previous Summer School participants

There are a number of students who have undertaken a summer school and we can put you in touch with them if you have specific questions. You can also read some of their feedback on our Summer School web pages:

http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/summerschools/globalscholars/studentprofiles
http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/summerschools/partneruniversities

Settling In

It’s not always easy settling into a new environment. Cultural differences can take time to get used to – and this is very normal. Considering the following observations before you go away should go some way to helping you maintain a balanced perspective during that initial phase of adjustment:

- Registration and general bureaucratic procedures may seem arduous and frustrating. Be prepared to devote time and energy to these matters
- Teaching and working styles may be very different in your host country, i.e. in some countries, lectures are frequently very busy and it may be necessary to arrive early to secure a seat
- Academic and support staff may be less available than in Sheffield.
- Making new friends can take time. Try to get involved in any activities that are offered and make an effort to get to know your classmates.
- Be adaptable and remember that one of the reasons you are spending time abroad is to gain experience of life in another culture
- Please see also the leaflet ‘Planning for Time Abroad: Taking Care of Yourself’, produced by Student Support & Guidance for further advice

Personal Safety

Much of this comes down to common sense, and being alert to local circumstances, especially when they differ from what you are used to. However, below are some guidelines to observe for helping you to avoid finding yourself in a difficult situation:

- Check Foreign Office guidelines and advice for visitors (via the FCO website) if events in the news about a particular country worry you
- To avoid attracting attention, notice how the locals dress and behave, and copy them
- Don’t be afraid to change seats on a bus or train if someone makes you feel uncomfortable
- Don’t hitch a ride
• Arrange to meet people in public places (bars, cafés) until you know them

• When you go out alone, let someone know where you’ve gone, and who with

• Only go back to someone’s flat or house if you feel absolutely safe with them

• Make sure you have enough cash for a taxi at the end of a night out

• If anything does happen while you are abroad, be aware that we are not automatically informed. If you require any personal support please contact the Student Support team and/or Global Opportunities & Exchanges:
support@sheffield.ac.uk
globalopps@sheffield.ac.uk

All this said, it is important not to be paranoid. Most cities are generally no more dangerous than Sheffield. The greatest risks usually come from resisting opportunist grabs for personal property (cameras, phones, etc.): don’t jeopardise your personal safety for the sake of material possessions.

**Emergency Situations**

The majority of students experience a smooth and enjoyable period abroad and it is important not to be overly worried about potential dangers such as natural disasters, civil unrest or terrorist attacks. That said it is sensible to prepare yourself in case you do find yourself in an emergency situation. The advice below does not cover all potential scenarios but should be followed as general guidance for critical situations:

• Consult the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) travel and safety advice either online or via social media channels: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

• Set up email alerts so that you are automatically notified when the FCO advice on your host country is updated

• Follow any instructions issued by the local authorities and/or your host university

• Do not get involved in public protests or enter public spaces where there is evidence of civil unrest

• As soon as you are able to, and so long as it is safe to do so, let your immediate family know that you are safe. Memorise at least one of your closest relatives’ phone numbers

• Enter an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact in your mobile phone or keep one in your wallet

• Check social media channels to see if there are any "check in pages". A post on social media is also a quick way of letting your family and friends know you are safe.

• In the case of major incidents, a member of staff from the University of Sheffield will normally contact you to check on your welfare or an incident management web page may be set up, please check the website regularly. You must reply to any emails of this nature as quickly as possible so we know you are safe.

• Should you need to contact the University of Sheffield urgently during evenings or weekends, please call our emergency number 00 44 114 2224085

• Find out and make a note of your host country’s emergency services number before you go abroad. Put it into your mobile phone for easy access.

• If you are out of the country in question at the time of the emergency and have concerns about returning, please consult the FCO web pages in the first instance. If the delay has a significant impact on your period abroad, then you must notify your academic department as soon as possible
Remember that in emergency situations, the local authorities and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office should be your first points of contact.

**Paperwork whilst abroad**

Global Scholars winners are required to:

- Obtain evidence of having completed the summer school
- Complete an on-line report form to provide feedback on the experience

Global Opportunities & Exchanges will provide the above forms for you to complete closer to the time.

**After returning to Sheffield**

It is of enormous help to future students to be able to access peer-to-peer support from returning summer school students.

Please share photographs, blogs and reports with us so that we can publish partner university and student profiles and provide helpful hints and tips for future participants.

Global Scholars students are required as a condition of their scholarship to act as ambassadors of the programme and be willing to speak with the next year's cohort of scholarship winners.

**Useful websites:**

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<tr>
<th>International student identity card</th>
<th><a href="http://www.ISICcard.com">www.ISICcard.com</a></th>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign Travel Advice</td>
<td><a href="http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice">www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lonely Planet</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lonelyplanet.com/">www.lonelyplanet.com/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Sheffield Student Support</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/">www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/</a></td>
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<td>University of Sheffield (SSID)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/">www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/</a></td>
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**24/7 Emergency Contact Information (University of Sheffield):**

Out-of-hours: 0044 (0) 114 222 4085

**GOE Contact Details**

Email: globalopps@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: 00 44 (0) 114 222 9871 / 00 44 (0) 114 222 6269 / 00 44 (0) 114 222 1253

*Global Opportunities & Exchanges operates an appointment system. If you wish to speak to us in person, please arrange this with us in advance by telephone or email.*