

Pre-departure guide

Short-term global experiences / preparing for your trip





Congratulations on being accepted to participate in a short-term global experience.

The Global Experiences Team, within the Student Employability Centre, has developed this guide to assist you with preparing for your experience and to provide some useful tips when planning your travel.

We encourage you to read this guide carefully and contact the Global Experiences Team if you would like any additional information.

We wish you all the best for your short-term global experience!

Good luck and stay safe.

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1 Next steps with UQ

Before you go, ensure that you have submitted the following documents to UQ:

Host acceptance

Once you have received your official acceptance letter from the host program, upload a copy to your **online application**.

Travel details

To be covered by **UQ's Corporate Travel and Health insurance** and access International SOS, you must submit your confirmed travel details to International SOS and complete the Travel Details section of your **online application**. Failure to provide us with your confirmed travel details may jeopardise your

ability to receive coverage under the UQ Corporate Insurance policy.

Please review the information provided on the Global Experiences website and follow the instructions under "International SOS/MyTrips".

If your travel plans change, be sure to amend your travel details in your **International SOS profile**.

Please note: UQ does not recommend booking and paying for your flights before you are accepted by the host and have a visa secured, if required.

2 Learn about your destination

Knowing more about your destination and preparing yourself for the cultural differences will help you settle into your new surroundings. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Check out **Smartertraveller** and access their top tips on travel information and advice for your destination.

Buy a guidebook such as *Lonely Planet* and research their top tips of what not to miss in your city.

Purchase a local phrasebook and brush up on some key sentences to impress locals when you first arrive.

Search your city centre, accommodation and host university locations on Google Maps to get a feel for distances; don't forget to locate the international airport too!

Find out if the host university provides a meet and greet or welcome service. If not, you will need to organise your own transport upon arrival.

Check the climate at your destination for the duration of your short-term program and pack accordingly.

If you have particular dietary requirements, research your options before you go so you know

where to find a decent meal when hunger strikes.

Take note of cultural norms and expectations before you touch down to prepare yourself for any surprising forms of address.



Kevin, EWB Humanitarian Design Summit, Cambodia



Natasha Natamihardja, Engineers Without Borders, Humanitarian Design Summit, Nepal

3 Travel documents

It is important to leave plenty of time to arrange your travel documents, such as your passport, visa and tickets for travel.

Passport

Before you arrive at the airport in Australia for your departure, make sure that your passport is current and that it will not run out for at least six months after the date that you return to Australia.

Make a copy of the ID page of your passport and ensure you always have access to that copy – scan it to your email account, leave a copy with your family or a friend in Australia, and have it hidden somewhere in your hand luggage. If you lose your passport and you don't have access to your passport number, the renewal/replacement process will take much longer.

Be aware of where the nearest Australian consulate/embassy is to your host location in case of emergency.

Visa and host university

Check with your host program, the host country consulate/embassy or your travel agent to find out about the visa requirements and costs.

If you require evidence of support from UQ, you can **request a UQ Global Experience Confirmation Letter** for your visa application.

Don't leave your visa until the last minute as it can take up to 90 days to process. You should apply for a student visa as soon as you have received your acceptance letter for your activity. Depending on the type of visa you require, it is likely that you will not be able to apply for your visa until you've received your host acceptance.

You may also need a visa for any other countries you plan to travel to or through while you are overseas, so make sure you check out those embassy/consulate websites as well.

UQ is unable to provide visa advice as we are not the visa issuing

authority. Please contact the consulate/embassy of your host country if you have any specific questions about getting a visa.

Document tips

It is risky to pay for your tickets before you have been accepted into your program and secured a visa if required.

Keep your official acceptance letter in a safe place, and ensure that you have a copy with you in your hand luggage when entering your destination.

4 Organising and packing

Before you go:

- Hostel membership (YHA or IH) for cheap accommodation
- International Student ID Card (ISIC) for tourist discounts on flights and activities
- International bank or travel card so you can easily access money.

Your hand luggage:

- Air ticket and evidence of return ticket
- Passport and visa
- Any electronic equipment (laptop, phone, camera), their power cords and foreign power adaptors
- Official acceptance letter from the host university
- Travel insurance details and contact information
- Financial statements (e.g. bank statements)
- Immunisation document
- Receipts for all prescriptions and letter from doctor about medical conditions.



Travel tip

Don't take more than you can comfortably carry by yourself



Handy cultural tips

- It is better to buy goods at big department stores, as the quality of the purchases can be guaranteed and you don't have to worry about the things such as receiving fake change.
- In order to access Google, Instagram and Facebook, students in China require a VPN: UQ students can download a free UQ VPN for fast and reliable access.

5 Financial planning

Preparing financially for your short-term program is important. Make sure you are aware of all of the costs involved in a short-term program and plan ahead to consider how you will fund your experience.

Budget

Know how much you have to spend while you are travelling and create a budget based on suggested costs of living.

Keep in mind the exchange rate and how it might fluctuate during your travel time.

Banking

Notify all financial institutions in Australia (banks, credit card companies) about your travel plans if you plan to use your Australian account/cards while overseas.

Be aware of any fees associated with international withdrawals/purchases etc. from an Australian account/card.

How to take your money overseas

Travel Cards are pre-paid debit cards for travellers and some do not have any exchange rate or withdrawal fees.

Electronic transfers from your Australian account to a local bank are useful for transferring large amounts of money, but can be costly.

Traveller's cheques may not be that common any more, but they are a safe way to travel with money.

Debit and credit cards are useful when making larger payments for travel bookings. Visa and Mastercard are more widely accepted than American Express.

Centrelink

If you receive assistance from Centrelink, you can arrange to continue to receive these payments while you are overseas if you are completing your short-term program for-credit. You can **request a Global Experience**

Confirmation letter from UQ once you have been officially accepted by your host university. If you are participating in a short-term global experience as a not-for-credit student, you are unlikely to still be eligible to receive payments. You will need to clarify this with Centrelink and can still **request a Confirmation letter** to have your personal situation assessed. Please **contact Centrelink** for more details concerning your eligibility, and payments. Note that Rent Assistance is not generally paid while you are on a global experience.

Be aware that it can take the Global Experiences Team several days to draft your letter, so be sure to plan ahead.



Medical tips

If you take prescription medication, it is a good idea to carry a supply to cover the period you are away. You may need a letter from your doctor to enable you to take the medication through customs.

Visiting a doctor before you leave for your exchange is strongly encouraged. The doctor will provide information about required vaccinations and health advice for your destination.

Oliver Craven-McLeay, UQ Abroad, Hong Kong

6 Health and safety preparations

Making sure you are fit and healthy for your short-term experience is important to ensure you get the most out of your time abroad. It's also important to know where to go for help if you do need it while overseas.

Register with Smartraveller

Registering with Smartraveller will help you gain access to consular services should you need help while overseas.

Non-Australian citizens should register with consular officials from their home country.

Check the travel advice on the **DFAT website** before travelling.

If the security situation increases to level three or four prior to your departure or while you are in the country, the program to that region may be cancelled. If you decide to

ignore the advice and travel in that country, please be aware that your travel insurance may not be valid.

Privacy of information

The University of Queensland complies with Australian and Queensland privacy laws and guidelines. The University of Queensland treats information it collects as confidential. Information supplied by you will only be used for the administrative or educational purposes of The University of Queensland or in accordance with a specific consent given by you.

The University of Queensland will not make available to a third party any personal information supplied by you unless you have consented to the disclosure.

Power of Attorney

It might be worth considering giving a family member or trusted friend **Power of Attorney** before you leave for your short-term experience, so that they can sign important documents while you are overseas or take action if an emergency arises.

Keep Global Experiences informed

If you have any concerns before, during or after your experience, please contact **Global Experiences** or telephone **+61 7 3365 2852** during Brisbane business hours.

7 Travel and health insurance

It is essential that you have sufficient travel insurance for the entire period you are travelling.

International SOS

UQ has now partnered with **International SOS** to strengthen our capabilities to meet The University's duty of care while offering support when students are undertaking University approved travel.

International SOS will offer UQ travellers 24/7 pre-departure medical, safety and security information and advice. International SOS will also provide both routine and emergency assistance when UQ's people are travelling. In addition, International SOS will help UQ locate and confirm the safety of its travellers in times of crisis both domestically and internationally. There is no additional cost to UQ travellers to access International SOS

UQ Corporate Travel and Health Insurance

UQ exchange students are covered by UQ's Corporate Travel Insurance:

- only in the country of their short-term global experience
- for direct travel to/from the host country for the duration of the program

To access the Student Travel Insurance Summary see **UQ's Corporate Travel and Health Insurance**. Please note this page is password protected and you will be required to log in using your UQ username and password.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition, you must complete the 'Fit to Travel Report' found in the **Policy Summary**.

In order to be covered by **UQ's Corporate Travel and Health insurance** and access International SOS (ISOS), you must complete

the following steps:

- **Create an account/register** with ISOS
- Create your profile
- Create new trip and enter your travel details
- Complete the **Travel Details Form** via your online application

A detailed step-by-step user guide from ISOS can be found **here**.

Field trips

If you are participating in a field trip as part of your short-term global experience, you must enter your itinerary into your International SOS account. Failure to inform UQ of this travel may result in not being covered by UQ's insurance.

Making a travel insurance claim

If you need to make an insurance claim:

1. Complete a **Travel Insurance Claim Form**.
2. Obtain the relevant supporting documentation (e.g. police report, carrier document, invoices, medical reports, proof of ownership etc).
3. You will need to request a **UQ Global Experience Confirmation Letter**, if you have not already.
4. We recommend you lodge your claim within 30 days of the incident/illness/loss to ensure you have the opportunity to obtain any additional supporting documents required by the insurer.
5. Email your claim to **insuranceclaims@uq.edu.au**.

Additional private travel insurance

- Taking out additional coverage with UQ's insurer, Chubb Travel Insurance, is possible and up to you to organise through

Chubb's website.

- Please note: If you take out cover with a different insurer you will have to check their terms and conditions, as some insurers will only provide cover if they are insuring the whole trip.
- Students travelling in a country where they also have citizenship may not be covered for medical expenses while overseas or medical evacuation.

Mandatory host university/country health insurance

Despite already being covered by UQ's insurance, some programs or countries require students to purchase a mandatory local health insurance package to meet student visa requirements.

If your host university/country does not require you to purchase additional insurance, you may be required to present proof of what is covered in the UQ policy (a Certificate of Currency) in order to be exempt from purchasing your host university's insurance policy. If you require a Certificate of Currency or insurance waiver, please:

1. Request a **UQ Global Experience Confirmation Letter**
2. Email **insurance@uq.edu.au** and request a Certificate of Currency or for the waiver form to be completed, attaching the Confirmation letter to the email.

In the event of a medical or other emergency overseas, contact International SOS.

Phone: **+61 2 9372 2468**

(reverse charge available)

Email: **sydney@internationalsos.com**

You will need to provide UQ's Membership Number **12AYCA778031**.

Please save this phone number in to your mobile phone.

8 Keeping safe while overseas

You need to make sure that you take every precaution to keep safe while overseas. It is important that your family, your government representative, your host program contact and UQ know how to contact you.

Please ensure that you complete the following checklist:

- Register with your nearest government representative. Australian citizens can register online via **Smartraveller**.
- Update your address on **mySI-net**.
- Register for International SOS and submit your travel itinerary.
- Download the **International SOS Assistance App**.

Safety tips

- Keep valuables out of sight, avoid displays of wealth and be vigilant about your personal security in public places.
- Take particular care when travelling after dark, especially if you are alone. You should avoid places known for criminal activity and deserted areas.
- Take advice from locals about the unsafe areas of their city.

Lost or stolen passports

- If your passport is lost or stolen you must report it to the nearest Australian consulate and/or local police as soon as possible.
- You can report the loss online.
- Get a copy of the police report or report number.
- To get a replacement, you must

complete an application and have proof of your Australian citizenship. Citizens of other countries will need to follow the instructions for lost passports of their country of citizenship.

- Remember, your passport is your most important legal document while you are overseas. Guard your passport carefully.

What to do in an emergency

- In the event of an emergency overseas, follow the instructions of the local authorities in the first instance.
- Contact your family, UQ and your activity contact to inform them of your wellbeing, whereabouts and plan of action.
- Contact International SOS on **+61 2 9372 2468** (reverse charge available) or via email to **sydney@internationalsos.com**. Provide UQ's Memberships Number: **12AYCA778031**.
- In any emergency where an operator or message taker is involved, please be prepared to provide the following information:
 - your name
 - where you are
 - nature of the emergency
 - telephone number and where administrator(s) may contact you
 - until when/for how long you will be in that location, and
 - when you will call back if you have not been called.
- In the event of an emergency the Global Experiences Team will follow The University of Queensland's Critical Incident Management Policy (PPL 7.60.01).





9 Course and credit information

If you are completing your short-term program as a for-credit student then please familiarise yourself with this section. If you have any queries please contact the Global Experiences Team.

Pre-approved credit

In order to receive your 'pre-approved' credit for participation in the short-term program, you must successfully complete the courses you have previously had approved by your UQ faculty.

Course changes

If the course you completed during your short-term program has changed, or changes from the course you have previously had approved, you must inform both the Global Experiences Team and your relevant UQ faculty and request an updated credit assessment.

If you change your program between having your credit approved and returning from your short-term program, this may impact your previously completed credit assessment.

If the credit weighting of your course changes you must notify UQ immediately.

Transcripts

You will need to provide evidence of your successful completion of the short-term program in the form of an official academic transcript. This transcript must include your name, the title and credit weighting of the course(s) you completed and the grade you obtained. Your official transcript may be presented to you at the end of the program, or sent to you via post. Make sure you have nominated a suitable address for the transcript to be sent to. It is your responsibility to obtain a relevant academic transcript.

Once you have received your official transcript, upload a copy to your **Short-Term Global Experiences Application** in order to complete the credit transfer process.

Enrolment at UQ

If you are participating as a short-term program as an **exchange student**, then you will still be enrolled at UQ during your program.

Before you leave, you will need to ensure that you are correctly enrolled on **mySi-net**.

Please note: If you are participating as a Study Abroad student, you will not be enrolled at UQ.

For exchange students, the Global Experiences Team will enrol you in course codes (e.g. EXCH1021, EXCH1022), which show you are on exchange and the number of units you have enrolled in. UQ will notify you as soon as you are enrolled.

However, it is your responsibility to check that you are enrolled correctly by the appropriate UQ census date or you will be charged a late fee.



Jocelyn Bardot, Volunteer, Vietnamese Women's Museum, Vietnam

10 Making the most of your time overseas

An overseas experience will have an enormous effect on you, especially a short-term program which will be jam-packed with experiences, learning, and activities.

Top tips

Keep a diary, journal or blog.

Take lots of photos and create a visual diary of your experience. Remember to **tag @uqsec** and **#uqabroad**.

Reflect on the differences and similarities you find in the people, the environment and the culture.

Employability

Think about how you would tell a future employer about what you gained from the experience.

How has this experience developed your skill set? Think of examples of situations abroad that you can refer to in interviews.

Self reflection

Reflect on the experience and the things you have learned: other cultures, yourself, your own culture/country or family, your degree, your interests and your skills.

Consider creative and engaging forms of communication in these reflections so that you can begin to translate your experience to a range of audiences (your friends, your family, your professors and your future employer/s).

UQ takes your safety seriously. Please familiarise yourself with **UQ's OH&S guidelines** before you travel.

Appendix i: useful websites

The University of Queensland
uq.edu.au

Occupational Health and Safety
uq.edu.au/ohs

Queensland websites

Courier Mail
couriermail.news.com.au

QLD Government
qld.gov.au

Australian government organisations

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
dfat.gov.au

DFAT Passport Service
passports.gov.au/Pages/home.aspx

Medicare
medicareaustralia.gov.au

Travelling with prescription medicine
humanservices.gov.au/customer/subjects/australians-overseas

Centrelink
humanservices.gov.au/customer/dhs/centrelink

Australian Taxation Office
ato.gov.au

Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection
border.gov.au

Smartraveller
smartraveller.gov.au

OS-HELP
my.uq.edu.au/information-and-services/manage-my-program/financial-matters/fees-and-loans-domestic-students/os-help

Travel websites

The Weather Channel
weather.com

Currency Converter by OANDA
oanda.com

Lonely Planet
lonelyplanet.com.au

Travel Tips
smartraveller.gov.au/guide/all-travellers/everyone/Pages/advice-for-all-travellers.aspx

Hostelling International
hihostels.com

Maps of the World
google.com/maps

iPhone Apps

Trip it (travel organiser)

TripAdvisor
(finds Hotels, Flights, Restaurants)

Lonely Planet Guide

iHandy Translator Pro

Zomato (restaurant guide)

Qantas Frequent Flyer

Kayak
(Flights and Hotel search)

FlightBoard (live flight arrival and departure status)

Allergy FT (allergy food translator)

The Student Employability Centre would like to acknowledge that The University of Melbourne's Global **Mobility Pre-departure Guide** has been used as a reference to create this guide. The Student Employability Centre would also like to thank Mathew Merryweather, Next Byte, The University of Queensland, for his suggestions for useful iPhone apps.

Appendix ii: pre-departure checklist



Documents

- I have a current passport that is valid for at least six months after my return date.
- I have a student visa or know what is necessary for residency permit/study requirements.
- I have two copies of each of the following documents (one in my hand luggage and one scanned to my email):
 - Airline ticket/e-ticket/travel bookings
 - Passport ID page
 - Student visa
 - Credit/debit cards
 - Accommodation address
 - Letter of acceptance for my activity
 - Certified copies of ID-related documents such as my birth certificate, proof of citizenship
 - Any required prescriptions and a doctor's letter for each
 - Bank details
 - Extra passport photos.



Travel

- I have booked my ticket but have not paid in full until after I have received my acceptance letter for my activity.
- I have adequate travel and health insurance that covers me for item loss, theft or natural disaster, and I have looked into purchasing additional travel and health insurance for the entirety of my trip.
- I have arranged how I will get from the airport/train station upon arrival.



Health

- I have identified any required immunisations for my destination and have had them administered.
- I have had a medical, dental and optical check-up before I leave.
- I have a doctor's letter that lists my medications (the trade and generic names) and the dosages (if necessary).
- I am carrying an adequate supply of medications to cover the period I am away.
- I have my Medicare card with me for countries that have a reciprocal healthcare agreement.



Jane Hall, Winter French in Lausanne, Switzerland

**Stay safe
and have a
great time!**



Finances

I have authorised someone (parent, guardian or relative) to act on my behalf for financial matters through a Power of Attorney.

I have notified my bank to let them know I will be using my credit card overseas.

I have sufficient local currency to pay for my transport and tip from the airport to my accommodation on arrival.



Other important steps

I have an appropriate adapter so that I can use my Australian appliances overseas.

I have checked whether global roaming can be activated on my phone (and what the additional charges may be).

I know what options I have in my host country for mobile phone communications.

I will update my new postal address, residential address and contact number in mySI-net once I have settled in.



CREATE CHANGE

Student Employability Centre

Phone: +61 7 3365 9075

Email: uqabroad@uq.edu.au

Web: employability.uq.edu.au/short-term-experiences

Please note that this guide is subject to change
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