UQ Student Employability Centre

PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE

Short-Term Programs / Preparing for your trip
Congratulations on being accepted to participate in an international short-term program.

UQ Abroad, within the UQ 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 to contact UQ Abroad if you would like any additional information.

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

Good luck and stay safe.

Pictured on cover: Zoe, Sun Yat-Sen University, China and Kevin, EWB Humanitarian Design Summit, Cambodia
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1. NEXT STEPS WITH UQ ABROAD

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

**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 the UQ Corporate Travel Insurance, you must provide us with your travel details.
Once you have confirmed your travel plans, complete the travel details form via the online application.
You must upload your travel details no more than 10 days prior to your departure.
If your travel plans change, be sure to update the form online.

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

**PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION**
UQ Abroad will hold a special pre-departure orientation for short-term program participants. Details and booking information for the session can be found by logging into your online application form.

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:

Checkout Smartraveller 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 phrase book and brush up on some key sentences to impress locals when you first arrive.

Google-Map your city centre, accommodation and host university location to get a feel for distances; don’t forget to locate the International Airport too!

Find out if the host university provides a meet & greet or welcome service or whether 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.
It is important to leave plenty of time to arrange your travel documents, such as your passport, visa and tickets for travel.

**PASSPORT**
Make sure before you arrive at the airport in Australia for your departure, that your passport is current and that it will not run out for at least 6 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, e.g., scan it to your email account, leave a copy with your family or a friend in Australia, have it hidden somewhere in your hand luggage, etc. 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 emergencies.

**VISA AND HOST UNIVERSITY**
Check with your host program, the host country’s consulate/embassy or a travel agent to find out about the visa requirements and costs.

Don’t leave your visa until the last minute because it can take up to 90 days to process or may require you to travel to the consulate/embassy which may not be in Brisbane. As soon as you have received your acceptance letter for your activity, you should apply for a student visa. 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 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 Abroad is unable to provide detailed advice on visas as we are not a ‘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 know you have been accepted into your program and can receive 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.
BEFORE YOU GO
- Hostel membership (YHA or IH) for cheap accommodation
- International Student ID Card (ISIC) for tourist discounts on flights and/or activities
- International bank or travel card; so you can easily access money

YOUR HAND LUGGAGE
- Plane tickets (and evidence of return flight)
- Passport and visa
- Letters of acceptance into your activity
- Travel insurance details and contact information
- Financial statement
- Approved application from credit form
- Immunisation documents
- Prescription medicine
- Receipts for all prescriptions and any medical advice about relevant medical conditions

YOUR CHECKED LUGGAGE
- Travel guide books and local phrase books
- Sleeping bag
- Over-the-counter medicines

TRAVEL TIP
Don’t take more than you can comfortably carry by yourself

Emily, Short-Term Program (China)
FINANCIAL PLANNING

Preparing financially for your short-term program is important. Make sure you are aware of all 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, so that you are not left without sufficient cash.

Keep in mind the exchange rate and how it might go up and down 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/withdrawal fees associated to them.

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 anymore, but they are a safe way to travel with money.

Debit and Credit cards are useful when making larger payments for travel bookings etc. 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 Centrelink letter from UQ Abroad 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 Centrelink 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 UQ Abroad several days to draft your Centrelink letter, so be sure to plan ahead.

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/Facebook etc students in China require a VPN: UQ students can download a free UQ VPN for fast and reliable access.
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 THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN TRADE (DFAT)

Registering with DFAT 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 3 or 4 prior to your departure or while you are in the country, the program to that region may be canceled. If you decide to ignore the advice and travel in that country, please be aware that your travel insurance may not be valid.

If you are concerned for your safety, please contact Chubb Assistance on +61 2 8907 5995.

PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

The University of Queensland complies with Australian and Queensland privacy laws and guidelines. The University of Queensland treats information collected by it 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.

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

**UQ CORPORATE TRAVEL AND HEALTH INSURANCE**

- Short-term program participants are covered by the UQ Corporate Travel Insurance only for the direct travel to/from the host country for the duration of their program. If you are unsure if your travel to/from your host country is covered by the UQ insurance, please contact the Insurance Office.

- In order to be covered by the UQ corporate travel insurance, you must ensure that your travel details are updated via the online application no later than 10 days before your intended date of travel.

- You will receive your Insurance Reference Number from the UQ Insurance Office no later than 10 days before departure. If you have not received your Reference Number, please contact the UQ Student Employability Centre.

- In the event of a medical or other emergency overseas, you should telephone CHUBB Assistance on +61 2 8907 5995 (reverse charge call from anywhere in the world) and advise that you are covered under The University of Queensland Student Travel Insurance Policy. You will need to provide the Insurance Policy Number, which can be found in the Policy Summary.

- The items covered by this insurance include medical expenses overseas, medical evacuation, luggage, personal effects, credit cards and specific items (eg, laptop computer). A more detailed document of the coverage and the excess can be found in the Policy Summary.

- If you need to make an insurance claim, follow the instructions outlined on the FBS website. Make sure that you attach all documents related to your claim and forward the paperwork to the Insurance Office, Finance and Business Services, Level 3, JD Story, The University of Queensland, St Lucia, QLD 4072, Australia. The claim, if approved, (minus the excess) will be paid directly into your bank account.

- 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.

- If you have a pre-existing medical condition, you must complete the ‘Fit to Travel Report’ found in the policy summary.
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 The University of Queensland know how to contact you.

- Please ensure that you complete the following checklist:
- Register with your nearest government representative. Australian citizens can register online at the Smartraveller website.
- Update your mailing address on My-SiNet.
- Update your travel details via the online Short Term Global Experiences Application.
- Regularly check the travel advice on the DFAT website.

SAFETY TIPS
- Keep valuables out of sight, avoid displays of wealth and be vigilant to 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 avoid 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.
- Telephone Chubb Assistance on +61 2 8907 5995 (reverse charge call from anywhere in the world) and advise that you are covered under The University of Queensland Student Travel Insurance Policy. You will need to provide the Insurance Policy Number, which can be found in the Policy Summary.
- 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
  - Tel. Number and where administrator(s) may contact you
  - Until when/for how long you will be in that location
  - When you will call back if you have not been called
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 UQ Abroad.

**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 UQ Abroad and your relevant UQ Faculty and request an updated credit assessment.

If you change your UQ 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 Abroad 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 during your program you will still be enrolled at UQ.

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, UQ Abroad will enrol you in course codes (example: EXCH 1021, EXCH 1022) which show you are on exchange and the number of units you have enrolled in. UQ Abroad 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.
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 full of intensive emotions, 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

Comment on the differences and similarities you find in the people and the systems.

EMPLOYABILITY

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

How is the experience developing your transferable skills and providing you with examples of situations 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).
Appendix I
Useful Websites

Australian Government Organisations

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

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

Medicare
www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

Travelling with prescription medicine

Centrelink

Australian Taxation Office
ato.gov.au

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

Smartraveller
smartraveller.gov.au

OS-HELP

Travel Websites

The Weather Channel
weather.com

Currency Converter by OANDA
oanda.com

Lonely Planet
lonelyplanet.com.au

Travel Tips
travellingwell.com.au/traveltips.html

Hostelling International
hihostels.com

Maps of the World
maps.google.com.au

iPhone Apps

Trip it (Travel Organiser)

TripAdvisor (Finds Hotels, Flights, Restaurants)

Lonely Planet Guide

iHandy Translator Pro

TripDeck (Travel Itinerary Manager)

UrbanSpoon (Restaurant guide)

Qantas Frequent Flyer

Kayak (Flights and Hotel search)

PackTM (an app to help you pack!)

FlightBoard (Live flight arrival and departure status)

Smart Traveller App

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

The UQ 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 UQ Student Employability Centre would also like to thank Mathew Merryweather, Next Byte, The University of Queensland, for his suggestions for useful iPhone apps.

Queensland Websites

Courier Mail
couriermail.news.com.au

QLD Government
qld.gov.au

Broncos
broncos.com.au

Lions
lions.com.au

APPENDIX I
Useful Websites

The University of Queensland
uq.edu.au

UQ Employability Grant
employability.uq.edu.au/uq-employability-grant

Occupational Health and Safety
uq.edu.au/ohs

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APPENDIX II
PRE-DEPARTURE
CHECKLIST

DOCUMENTS

- You have a current passport which is valid for at least 6 months after your return date.
- You have a student visa or know what is necessary for residency permit/study requirements.
- You have an International Student Identity Card (useful for public transport, art galleries, museums etc).
- You have two copies of the following documents (one in your hand luggage and one scanned to your email):
  - Airline ticket/e-ticket/travel bookings
  - Passport ID page
  - Visa
  - Credit/debit cards
  - Accommodation address
  - Letter of acceptance for your activity
  - Certified copies of ID-related documents such as your birth certificate, proof of citizenship
  - Any required prescriptions and a doctor’s letter for each
  - Bank details
  - Extra passport photos

TRAVEL

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

HEALTH

- You have identified any required immunisations for your destination and have had them administered.
- You have had a medical check-up before you leave.
- You have had a dental check-up before leaving and will have no major dental work due while overseas.
FINANCES

You have authorised someone (parent, guardian, relative etc.) to act on your behalf for financial matters.

You have notified your bank to let them know you’ll be using your credit card overseas.

You have sufficient local currency to pay for your transport and tip from the airport to your accommodation on arrival. You might like to wear a money belt to keep your valuables safe.

OTHER IMPORTANT STEPS

You have an appropriate adapter so you can use your Australian appliances overseas.

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

You know what options you have in your host country for mobile phone communications.

Once you have your new number and address, please update it to mySI-net.

Stay safe and have a great time!

Please note that this guide is subject to change
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