



University  
of Glasgow

# Travelling overseas on University business

Travel and safety guidelines for  
staff and postgraduate students



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## **Travel and safety guidelines for staff and postgraduate students**

This guide is designed to help staff and postgraduate students prepare for an overseas trip. It gives practical advice about travelling and working on behalf of the University in an unfamiliar country. It also highlights some of the safety and security issues.

Implementing the safety advice contained in this guide should be one of your first priorities when preparing your overseas trip. By doing so, you will enjoy a positive and rewarding trip.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>page</b>
<b>Section 1 – Before you go</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Permission to travel on University business</li><li>• International Officers</li><li>• Risk assessment for overseas travel</li><li>• Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office advice</li><li>• Unsafe countries</li><li>• Traveller's profile form</li><li>• Visas and passports</li><li>• Insurance</li><li>• Booking flights and accommodation</li><li>• Money matters</li><li>• Vaccinations</li><li>• Laws and customs</li></ul>	
<b>Section 2 – Getting there and travelling about</b>	<b>6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timing</li><li>• Airport pick-ups</li><li>• Taxis</li><li>• Using public transport</li><li>• Driving</li></ul>	
<b>Section 3 – In an emergency</b>	<b>8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Emergency contacts</li><li>• Lost and stolen property</li><li>• Travellers cheques and credit cards</li><li>• Luggage</li><li>• Laptops and mobile phones</li><li>• Cancellation of trip</li><li>• Cutting your trip short</li></ul>	
<b>Section 4 – Further information and useful links</b>	<b>10</b>

## Section 1 – Before you go

### Permission to travel on University business

Staff or postgraduate students should seek permission from the head of their department before preparing for travel.

### International Officers

The International & Postgraduate Service has International Officers with responsibility for different countries worldwide.

You should arrange to meet with the International Officer for the country you will be visiting. Information regarding your visit will be shared with the University's Regional Champions and the Internationalisation Project Manager. This will enable optimum advantage to be drawn from your trip and provide a chance to find out about all current University activity in the area of your proposed travel.

For more information see [www.glasgow.ac.uk/international](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/international)

### Risk assessment for overseas travel

Reasonable control measures must be in place to protect staff and students from harm when travelling overseas on University business.

Carrying out a risk assessment involves the careful examination of what could cause harm to those travelling overseas; and it means that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent possible harm.

The need to carry out such a review extends to overseas travel and departments should ideally complete a risk assessment for all activities abroad.

For routine travel (such as a conference trip to a developed country) a simple assessment is all that is required.

A more detailed risk assessment **must** be undertaken for journeys that will involve greater risks, including trips to destinations/areas where the Foreign & Commonwealth Office advises against travel (or 'all but essential' travel), or where the planned activities are deemed to be potentially hazardous. In such instances, authority for the trip **must** be given by the Secretary of Court/Dean of Faculty.

Assessments should be based on previous knowledge, information from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (see below), travel agents and contacts in the area being visited.

The production of the risk assessment should actively involve both the relevant supervisor/line manager and those who will be practically involved in the activities abroad in order that information and training needs can be adequately discussed.

A sample risk assessment template for overseas travel is available at:

[www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/riskoverseas.htm](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/riskoverseas.htm)

## Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice

The most recent advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) should be taken into account when assessing the risk of travel to a country; for FCO advice, see: [www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country).

You should follow the guidelines below when acting on FCO advice.

Where the FCO advises:	This means
Against <b>all travel</b> to a country	Do not go
Against <b>all travel</b> to <b>parts</b> of a country	Do not go to respective parts
Against <b>all but essential</b> travel to a country	Seek permission from Dean of Faculty/ Secretary of Court
Against <b>all but essential</b> travel to <b>parts</b> of a country	Seek permission from Dean of Faculty/ Secretary of Court

## Unsafe countries

For staff or students travelling to countries deemed unsafe by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office the most recent advice from the FCO must be taken into account. If travel is absolutely necessary, you must complete a risk assessment form, which must then be approved by the Dean of the Faculty or the Secretary of Court as appropriate (administrative staff will be expected to gain permission from Secretary of Court; academic staff and students from the relevant Dean).

Advice from local contacts in the destination country will not be accepted as permission to travel.

You must inform the insurance section of the Finance Office so they can clear the travel with the insurer. Travelling without the permission of the University and the insurer may invalidate University insurance.

In the case of kidnapping, ransom or extortion, travellers are ordinarily covered up to £250,000. University insurance does not cover kidnapping, ransom or extortion incidents in the following countries:

- Colombia
- Mexico
- Iraq
- Nigeria
- Philippines
- Venezuela
- Yemen.

You are advised against using airlines which are on the European Union's banned airlines list. You can see the full list of airlines at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/list\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/air-ban/list_en.htm).

## Traveller's profile form

The University's recommended agent, Ian Allan Travel, has a traveller profile form which you may complete prior to travel. This can be obtained from Ian Allan Travel, telephone: **0845 872 6008**. The information provided on the form will be used in the event of an accident or emergency. Please note that the Ian Allan travel form must not be used as a substitute for the Finance Office insurance section's form.

If you are a UK national, it is also advisable to register with LOCATE, an FCO service which lets the embassy in your destination country aware of your visit. In case of an emergency, the embassy will have a record of your travel plans and contact details. For more information or to register, visit [www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/locate](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/locate).

## Visas and passports

You are advised to check whether an entry visa is required for the proposed country of travel. Visa regulations often state that passports must be valid for a period of at least six months beyond the proposed dates of travel. There should also be sufficient space for visas and stamps in your passport. Visas commonly take up to three weeks to obtain and you are therefore advised to allow time for this process. Once the visa has been obtained, you are advised to make a photocopy of it.

You are also advised to photocopy all the pages in your passport that have entry clearances or immigration stamps on them and pack this separately from your passport. You are advised against carrying passports around as a means of identification while you are overseas, excluding entering or exiting a country. It is recommended that alternative photographic identification be used, such as a valid driving licence, on a day-to-day basis.

If your passport is lost or stolen, contact the police and your country's embassy immediately and give them the passport details. Contact details for the British embassies are available on the Foreign & Commonwealth website at [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel). All other nationalities are advised to keep contact details of their nearest embassy for each destination.

## Insurance

It is essential that travel insurance is arranged **before** departing the UK to insure you against injury and your belongings against damage and theft.

You must inform the insurance section of the Finance Office of your intended trip and make them aware of pre-existing medical conditions prior to travelling as this information **must** be disclosed to the insurers. This can be done via the online form for travel insurance cover.

Please consult the insurance section of the Finance Office for clarification on the procedure for taking out University insurance.

The online form for activating the University's travel cover can be accessed at [www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/travins.htm](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/travins.htm). Please complete this form at least seven days prior to departure. Details of the University insurance cover can be found at [www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/index.htm](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins/index.htm). **Please note that staff and postgraduate students who do not submit the online form from the Finance Office will not be covered by the University's travel policy.**

The policy will cover staff and postgraduate students whilst on a journey either outside the UK; or within UK (but only if it involves air travel or an overnight stay).

You must advise the insurance section of the Finance Office should the dates of your travel subsequently change from those originally provided.

If you are travelling to a European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, you should ensure that you also hold a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This entitles you to reduced-cost, or sometimes free, medical treatment. Further information can be found at: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Healthadvicefortravellers/index.htm](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Healthadvicefortravellers/index.htm).

### **Booking flights and accommodation**

The University's preferred agent for the booking of flights is **Ian Allan Travel**. Telephone: **0845 872 6008**; emergency out of hours number: **01908 009046**.

You are advised that all travel on behalf of the University is normally on economy class basis only. If you wish to book flights in another class you must obtain permission from your Head of Department or Dean of Faculty.

Many countries require entry visas, which must be applied for well in advance of departure. Visa stipulations commonly state that passports must be valid for at least another six months beyond the dates of travel; for more information, see "Visas and passports" on page 4.

### **Money matters**

If you are travelling on University business, you should be clear which department or faculty is funding the trip. If the funding of the trip is shared between faculties or departments, you are required to provide clear information on this. You are required to arrange sufficient subsistence funds for the trip at least seven days prior to departure.

You are advised to take a credit card or additional travellers cheques to cover unforeseen expenses and emergencies. You are expected to produce receipts for any purchases or expenditure related to business expenses. Claims can only be made for expenses incurred on University business. You must find out about your department's policy on entertainment expenses. Please note that all travel on behalf of the University is on the basis of economy class only.

### **Vaccinations**

You are advised to book an appointment with your GP's surgery well in advance of departure. Please book an appointment as early as possible, up to six weeks prior to departure, as some medicines must be taken in advance of departure.

Costs incurred may be reimbursed by the University; for more information contact your Head of Department.

### **Laws and customs**

You should familiarise yourself with the laws and customs of the country you are visiting. Important information can be found at [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel).

## Section 2 – Getting there and travelling about

### Timing

Allow plenty of time for traffic jams and other unforeseen delays that might be incurred on the journey between hotel and airport or institution. Your hotel should be able to advise on estimated times of travel.

### Airport pick-ups

When arriving in an unfamiliar city or arriving late at night, you should make arrangements to be met and collected from the airport. Hotels can arrange transport if advised of arrival details in advance. The previously arranged transport will wait in the arrivals hall, normally holding a board to identify themselves. If an airport pick-up does not arrive, find the airport information desk. The desk will either contact your hotel or give advice on a reputable company who is permitted to work at the airport. If you are approached in the terminal building without having made previous arrangements to be met, you must never agree to go with the person in question, even if he or she can identify you by name.

### Using taxis

Always use a licensed taxi – never agree to travel in an unlicensed taxi with an unlicensed driver. When returning to your hotel late at night, be cautious of leaving the taxi until it has stopped at the hotel door. Avoid risking safety by agreeing to take shortcuts. In certain countries it is not advisable to take taxis at all.

The International Officers (see page 2) can advise on the safest mode of transport for the country you are visiting.

### Using public transport

Where possible, travel by taxi rather than walk the streets with a road map and your luggage. If travel by train or metro is necessary, avoid empty carriages and sit near groups of people in a well-lit area.

When travelling by train, you are advised to store luggage as close as possible, and within eyesight. When using a luggage rack, check your belongings regularly, especially when the train stops at a station. You should advise a contact of your route and arrival times when travelling a long distance by train.

Avoid walking any distance alone after getting off a train, bus, metro or out of a taxi. Walk close to a group of people or, ideally, arrange to be met at the destination station. Avoid listening to personal stereos, and having long conversations on mobile phones while you are walking or waiting.

## Driving

Seat belts must be worn at all times.

Do not use a mobile phone while driving.

Do not drive while under the influence of alcohol and observe all speed limits. Handbags or briefcases are safer if placed on the floor or behind seats instead of on the passenger seat.

Do not leave valuables in the car – take them away or lock them in the boot out of sight.

When travelling in a car alone, lock all the doors and keep the windows closed while driving.

If you are hiring a car, you are advised to purchase breakdown cover and keep the number of the breakdown service with the vehicle at all times.

If you are travelling long distances, you are advised to take a fully charged mobile phone in case of emergencies.

Remember to download maps of pick-up and drop-off points at your destination in advance of your journey.

## Section 3 – In an emergency

### Emergency contacts

You should contact the local police and embassy immediately in case of an emergency. You are advised to keep a note of your country's local embassy, high commission or consulate phone number. Details for UK nationals are available on the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's website at [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel). Upon arrival in a country, you should find out how to get in touch with the local emergency services.

You are advised to save 'ICE' (in case of emergency) contact number(s) on your mobile phones prior to travel. Against this name in the phone's address book, enter the number of the person who will be your contact 'in case of emergency'. This will aid emergency ambulance and hospital staff in quickly locating and contacting next of kin.

In the event of an emergency, you are advised to seek help from the University Insurers **Ace Europe, Business Class Assistance**, by providing them with a contact address, telephone/fax number or telex reference, and your personal travel policy number. You are also advised to keep the insurance provider's name and policy number **saved on your mobile phone** in case of emergency:

**Ace Europe, Business Class Assistance**

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7173 7872

Address: **Ashdown House, 125 High Street, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1DQ.**

If it is a medical emergency, Ace Europe will liaise directly with the medical professionals involved and settle all hospital expenses incurred. Medical treatments of a minor nature should be settled personally by you, and then claimed back with receipts upon return to the UK. Claim forms can be obtained from the Finance Office.

For non-emergency minor crimes, you should contact the local police or ask the hotel to contact them to fill out a police report. A police report is required in order to claim insurance for minor crimes.

### Lost and stolen property

You are advised to keep a photocopy of passports and credit cards and a list of any valuables carried for the duration of travel. Upon arrival in the hotel, you are advised to keep passports, travellers cheques and any other valuables locked away in the hotel safe, and not in the hotel room.

### Travellers cheques and credit cards

You should store travellers cheque numbers separately from passports; make a note of the serial numbers for travellers cheques, and pack this separately from the cheques themselves. In the event of loss of travellers cheques or credit cards, the local police and the cheque or card-issuing organisation should be contacted in the first instance. You are also advised to keep University contact numbers on your person for phoning for advice, or to inform the University of any change in travel plans as a result.

## Luggage

Your luggage should be labelled appropriately with an address and phone number so that, in the event of loss, clear contact details are available to enable the authorities to forward the luggage to you. Lost luggage should be reported in the first instance to an official. Delayed luggage can be couriered to a hotel. You are advised to keep all receipts for any essential items purchased in the case of luggage delay or loss. Similarly, receipts should be kept for any costs incurred in reproducing lost or stolen marketing material. Insurance claims for loss or damage to business equipment carry a £100 excess charge. Reasonable care should be taken to protect your belongings.

If your belongings are stolen, you must inform the police – a crime reference number is essential for insurance claims. You are advised to keep bags/briefcases and coats/jackets on your person or out of sight, and not hanging on the back of a chair. Please note that there are circumstances on the homeward journey under which luggage will be covered by airline policy and not University insurance. In the event of luggage loss, receipts are not necessary for every bag packed but you are advised to keep a list of valuables and their approximate value. There are limitations to such claims.

Some hotels will allow travellers to leave luggage in a supervised area, usually for a small fee. In these situations an attendant will usually produce a receipt for collection of the items later. Please be aware that, in some cases, accidental loss of luggage and University equipment is not covered by University insurance.

## Laptops and mobile phones

Laptops are covered by University insurance – the Finance Office website offers comprehensive information about University policy relating to laptops; visit: [www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins).

You are advised not to display laptops in public places unless required for marketing purposes, for example, at an exhibition. You are also advised against displaying mobile phones. Laptops and mobile phones should not be left unattended. Be alert and brief when using a mobile phone in public.

## Cancellation of trip

You are entitled to cancel the trip at any stage prior to departure. It should be noted however that expenses will be incurred by the department/faculty except in the case of:

- Personal illness (this requires confirmation in writing from your GP)
- Immediate family crises
- Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice not to travel.

## Cutting your trip short

You are entitled to curtail your trip. It should be noted however that expenses will be incurred by the department/faculty except in the case of personal crises, for example, immediate family illness or property damage.

## Section 4 – Further information and useful links

### **Foreign & Commonwealth Office**

'Know before you go' is an ongoing travel safety campaign run by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). It encourages British nationals to be better prepared for their overseas trips with a view to avoiding common travelling traumas, risks and dangers.

Visit: [www.fco.gov.uk/travel](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel).

### **British Council**

The British Council is the UK's international liaison for educational links and cultural relations around the world. Their website and individual country pages contain useful information on market areas and country profiles. Visit: [www.britishcouncil.org/new](http://www.britishcouncil.org/new).

### **Health advice for business travellers**

'Fit for travel' is a public access website provided by NHS (Scotland) which gives travel health information for people travelling abroad from the UK. Visit: [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk).

### **International & Postgraduate Service**

[www.glasgow.ac.uk/international](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/international)

### **Finance Office (insurance section)**

[www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/finance/staff/ins)

### **Ian Allan Travel**

Telephone: 0845 872 6008

Emergency out of hours number: +44 (0)1908 009046

### **Ace Europe, Business Class Assistance**

Ashdown House, 125 High Street, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1DQ

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7173 7872

## Notes

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General switchboard  
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[www.glasgow.ac.uk](http://www.glasgow.ac.uk)

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