Placement Abroad Pre-departure Checklist

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# Guidance

Before undertaking an internship abroad you the student must complete and return for approval this form to the EASTBIO at [placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk](mailto:placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk) in advance of your placement, ideally a month prior to traveling for your placement. To do so, you should contact the relevant student services at your host academic institution dealing with key aspects of the placement abroad such as visa, insurance, work placements, etc. as early as possible; you must ensure to allow for plenty of time to collect all the information necessary as well as delays along the way. Please also ensure that your PhD supervisor has been given copies of the items listed on the form and has been made aware of your plans about an internship abroad, suitable timings, etc.

## Suitability of Overseas Organisation for Placement

EASTBIO DTP will be extra diligent regarding proposals for placements outside of the UK. All overseas placements/PIPS must be a *minimum of 12 weeks* long. There are some basic questions we need you to answer about the organisation, the work project, accommodation and travel plans for an overseas placement. It is important to remember to get everything in writing and approved prior to going on your placement. Note that if any uncertainty exists around the safety or suitability of the host organisation or country *the placement will not be approved*. You are reminded that your host academic institution carries responsibility for your during your PIPS and, therefore, written evidence of due diligence and risk assessment processes have been provided and checked.

PhD students should be aware that overseas placements may take longer to organise and are expensive. Before you commit yourself, there are some important questions to ask the organisation. If you receive too many vague or unsatisfactory answers to questions, think twice about going.

* If it is possible, speak to someone (a student/ graduate) who has worked for or gone to this organisation recently.
* Check whether the organisation will provide any support with the additional PIPS expenses (typically, travel, accommodation and subsistence) and do some research to establish whether there are alternative sources of financial support available to apply for, via your host institution, your PhD supervisor, or online. Note that EASTBIO DTP has only a limited budget of £1,000 per studentship for additional expenses.
* Ask what sort of insurance does the organisation provide? Does it cover repatriation if you become ill? Does it cover personal injury? Will there be an English-speaking representative of the organisation nearby? Will they offer an induction or training for the internship project?
* If in doubt, share the information you hold about the host organisation and ask the Careers Service if they have come across that organisation in the past, and seek their feedback.

The University has a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their students whilst they are undertaking a placement overseas. The University of Edinburgh’s [Study and Work Away Service](https://www.ed.ac.uk/global/study-work-away) details important information relating to vaccinations, insurance and emergency contact information covering the entire planning framework of placements, from risk assessment to concluding a placement. Please seek out information from the International Office of your host institution. There is also a duty placed upon the PhD student who is travelling to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

Individual institutions may have their own risk assessments so, if appropriate, fieldwork risk assessments must be completed and returned to the health and safety manager in your host institution locally.

**Please note:**

EASTBIO students on a tier-4 visa must be aware of limitations in the location of their placement so as to avoid the risk of breaching their visa restrictions. Students must be matriculated on a PhD programme integrated with an internship if they are to have access to the DTP PIPS Scheme and the option of selecting a placement abroad. If they are not, they are not allowed to pursue a placement outwith the UK. If you are unsure about your status, please consult the EASTBIO DTP Manager at [placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk](mailto:placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk).

## Personal Safety while travelling abroad:

**Plan to stay healthy**

* Check if your medication is legal the country you are visiting. Pack it in your hand luggage.
* If you are taking prescribed medication, take a copy of the prescription with you, and find out if you will need to take a doctor’s letter with you.
* Pack a first aid kit and find out about how to prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis n(DVT), in particular on long haul flights.
* Pack a torch (and spare batteries/charger) and take an alarm/ whistle for emergency situations.

**Healthcare in the EEA**

[www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/Pages/EEAcountries.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/Pages/EEAcountries.aspx)

If you find yourself in an emergency situation during your visit to Europe dial 112. The European emergency number is valid in all EU/EEA member states and is free of charge. You can use it to reach emergency services such as ambulance or police from any telephone or mobile phone free of charge.

**Healthcare outside the EEA**

[www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/NonEEAcountries/Pages/Non-EEAcountries.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/countryguide/NonEEAcountries/Pages/Non-EEAcountries.aspx)

## Before you go

* Make sure you have enough money to cover emergencies. Check the expiry dates on your credit/debit card(s) and notify your bank of your travel plans.
* Take another means of identification (preferably with a photograph).
* Make sure you have all the necessary phone numbers for the contacts at your destination and know where to go on your first day.
* Take a copy of your passport (including pages with relevant visas), insurance details and pack it separately from your passport, and make sure the next of kin page is completed in your passport.
* Pack a travel adaptor and chargers for your electronic products.
* Make sure our mobile phone is authorised for overseas use.
* Get a guidebook /phrasebook /map and find out about your destination. Make sure you know about local laws and customs.
* Whether you are travelling or living overseas, note the details of the nearest British Embassy or Consulate. In the event of any major crisis, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) can provide advice and travel updates on [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk), as well as on their Facebook [www.facebook.com/fcotravel](http://www.facebook.com/fcotravel) and twitter advice sites.
* Make sure you have suitable clothing for the country you are travelling to.

## During your placement

* Keep your passport secure at all times.
* If your passport or valuables are stolen abroad, report it at once to the local police and obtain a statement as you will need one to claim against your insurance. You will need to cancel any cards or travellers cheques, so take relevant phone numbers.
* Keep your money safe. Do not openly display your cash, keep it in a secure place e.g. inside pocket, and be aware of pick-pockets and scams. Be careful when using ATMs.
* Leave valuable at home. Never leave your possessions unattended, even for a moment. Opportunist thieves thrive on such situations and it only takes a second to steal your property.
* Be discreet and careful when providing personal information and your journey. If you are returning home late night consider the possible risks (e.g. availability of public transport). Leave your itinerary and estimated time of return with the hotel reception or other trusted point of contact and ask them to contact the police if you fail to return on time.
* Always know where you are going and which stop you need. At night or in unfamiliar areas attach yourself to groups or people and walk purposefully to your destination or arrange to meet someone.
* When using a taxi, make sure it is a licensed company and where possible, know/agree the fare beforehand. Whenever possible, book by telephone and ask for the drivers name, model and colour of car. For extra security text the plate, licence number and journey details to a family member or friend and let them know when you’ve arrived.
* When travelling by public transport have small change ready for your fare, wait where it is well lit and there are other people. If you feel uneasy move to another seat/carriage or get off at the next stop. Avoid train compartments with no access to corridors or other parts of the train and empty carriages. If there is an incident act immediately – alert the driver / guard/ conductor or pull the emergency alarm or if you’re on the platform look for a member of staff or ‘Help Point’.
* Don’t leave valuable items in cars and keep your belonging out of sight. Always leave your car in a place that will be lit after dark and as close to your destination as possible. In multi-storey car parks leave it as close to the exit as possible near ground level and away from pillars. Have the key ready when you return to the car.
* If you are driving abroad, use reliable hire company and be aware of local driving rules.
* As you would be in the UK, be alert and observant, and report any unattended items or suspicious activity by individuals to the local police or appropriate authorities. You can call 112 to contact the emergency services in any EEA country and several other countries.

***Drugs***

Avoid any involvement with illegal drugs – the penalties are severe and could include the death sentence. Don’t carry parcels or luggage through customs for other people.

***Jet lag***

The symptoms of jet lag decline after a few days as the body clock synchronises with the new time clock. Some recommended ways of speeding this up are:

* Adopt the new local hours of sleeping, for being awake and for being active. Rest in a quite darkened room when it is bedtime, even if you do not feel tired.
* Avoid taking naps – they will mislead the body and delay the adaptation process.
* Eat the right meal at the right local time.
* Avoid driving cars or using dangerous machinery, if at all possible, whilst suffering from jet lag.

## General advice about what to do in an emergency

If people are injured or there is a threat to life, make sure the emergency services have been called and follow their advice.

* Never put yourself or others in danger – try to remain calm, use your common sense and think before you act.
* Check injuries – remember to help yourself before attempting to help others.

***Go in, Stay in, Tune in***

If you are not involved, but close by an incident and /or believe you may be in danger, in most cases and unless there is a reason not to go inside, for example fire, the advice is:

* Go inside a safe building and stay inside until you are advised to do otherwise
* Tune in to local radio or TV or social media for more information

***Fire prevention and safety***

* Reduce fire hazards
* Most fire deaths and injuries occur while people are sleeping. Plan an escape route should a fire break out at night
* If there is a fire, get out, stay out and call the emergency services
* Never use the lift
* If moving or trapped in smoke stay close to the floor where the air is cleaner
* If a door feels hot, do not open it, as it probably means there is a fire on the other side
* Remember – never re-enter the building until the Fire and Rescue Service has made it safe

***Minimise the risk of terrorism when you are abroad***

You can take a number of common-sense precautions to minimise the risk of being caught up in terrorism when you are abroad:

* Regularly check the FCO travel advice for the country you are visiting – subscribe to their email alerts, and watch/read news about the country and region
* Be vigilant in public areas and places that attract foreigners and Westerners – embassies, hotels, restaurants, bars, and businesses
* Look out for anything suspicious. Report it to the local police immediately – many terrorist attacks are foiled by the vigilance of ordinary people
* Try to avoid routines that make you an easier target – vary the time and route of your regular journeys.

***Chemical or biological incidents***

* Move away from the immediate area quickly but calmly. If you are underground, return to ground level as most chemicals are heavier than air and sink downwards.
* Alert the emergency services if they are not already at the scene. Make yourself known to the emergency staff and follow their instructions.
* Don’t leave the scene until the emergency services tell you to decontaminate to avoid spreading it to other people.

***Bombs***

* If there is a bomb warning at your place of work, follow the advice of those in charge.
* If a bomb goes off in your building, look for the safest way out. If you are trapped in debris stay close to a wall and tap on pies so that rescuers can hear you and do not use matches or lighters in case of gas leaks
* If a bomb goes off outside your building, stay inside (away from windows, lifts and outer doors) in case there is a second bomb in the area.
* If you saw the explosion, stay in the area in a safe place and tell the police what you saw.

## Useful Links

University of Edinburgh:

[**https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/business-travel/travel-safety/travel-plan-risk-assessment**](https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/business-travel/travel-safety/travel-plan-risk-assessment)

[**Study and Work Away Service**](https://www.ed.ac.uk/global/study-work-away/before-you-go/accommodation) **&** [**Support**](https://www.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/atoms/files/sway_pre-departure_2023.24.pdf)

# Checklist Form

*Please read the guidance above and complete this form in consultation with the relevant local support services at your host institution and your PhD Supervisor. Once completed, please submit the form to* [*placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk*](mailto:placements@eastscotbiodtp.ac.uk) *at least a month before you travel for your PIPS; although you don’t need approval by EASTBIO, we need to ensure that all due diligence processes have been followed prior to the internship starting.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **Verified the Status and Reputation of Host Organisation Overseas** | |
| Does the EASTBIO partner university have an existing relationship with the proposed Host organisation? | YES  NO |
| Can the Host organisation provide independent verification of their status, for example the company registration details? | YES  NO |
| Have other actions been taken by you the student to confirm the Host organisation’s authenticity? Please note actions below: | |
| Have the following resources been consulted by you the student to confirm the stability of the country where the placement will be based?   1. Foreign Office Travel Advice   [www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/](http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/)   1. The International office of your host institution | YES  NO  YES  NO |
| If there are travel restrictions, do they affect the areas you will be in during the placement?  *\*If you answered ‘Yes’, please contact the* DTP Manager *before arranging visas, etc.\** | YES  NO |
| List any risks which have been identified via the consultation process above, and subsequent mitigating actions:  1.  2. | |
| * **Received approval for the ‘PIPS Memorandum of Understanding’ or ‘Collaborative Studentship Placement Memorandum of Understanding’** | |
| Do you the student speak the native language? | YES  NO |
| Have you the student confirmed that someone in the host organisation will act as a translator if required?  *\*If you answered ‘Yes’, please provide details:* | YES  NO |
| Have you the student completed research into the working culture of the country where you will be completing your placement? | YES  NO |
| Has the Host organisation completed and signed the ‘PIPS Memorandum of Understanding’ or ‘Collaborative Studentship Placement Memorandum of Understanding’ (as applicable)? | YES  NO |
| Have you received email approval from the EASTBIO DTP about your ‘PIPS Memorandum of Understanding’ or ‘Collaborative Studentship Placement Memorandum of Understanding’ (as applicable)? | YES  NO |
| Has the Host organisation provided written confirmation of their employer liability insurance?  *If ‘No’, please provide more details about this:* | YES  NO |
| Has the Host organisation provided you with funding to support your travel and accommodation costs? Please note that for Collaborative (CASE) placements, it is essential that the non-academic partner provides such costs.  *\*If ‘yes’, please provide details:* | YES  NO |
| Will you the student have access to e-mail and telephone during the placement abroad?  *\*If ‘yes’ please provide details:* | YES  NO |
| * **Obtained the following placement pre-departure items** | |
| **A passport** valid for 6 months beyond the expected date of return from the project?  *\* please insert passport number:*  *\* please insert passport expiry date:*  Have you given a photocopy of your passport to your PhD Supervisor? | YES  NO  YES  NO |
| Is a visaor other relevant entry permitand /orwork permitrequired?  If ‘yes’, have you given a photocopy of the document to your PhD Supervisor? | YES  NO  Not Applicable  YES  NO |
| * **Liaised with the host university Insurance office to take out appropriate insurance cover** | |
| Have you the student liaised with the local Institution Insurance Office to take out appropriate insurance cover?  *\*If ‘yes’, please insert Name of Insurer:*  *\*If ‘yes’ please insert Insurance Policy Number:* | YES  NO |
| Have you the student informed your insurer that you are undertaking an internship? | YES  NO |
| Does your policy provide the minimum cover level required for the following:   * Medical expenses: £2 million (£5 million recommended for worldwide); Personal liability: at least £1 million; cancellation or curtailment: should match the cost of your trip and be above £1,500; baggage and belongings: at least £750 * An air ambulance, in case you need to be flown home? * All medical bills? * Any pre-existing medical conditions? * In the event of death, bringing the body home? | YES  NO  to all questions |
| Does your insurer have a 24-hour emergency line and hold membership of the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS)? | YES  NO |
| Do you have cover for undertaking any potentially hazardous sports / activities? | YES  NO |
| * **Consulted the relevant University Guide on “**[**Health and Safety while travelling on university business**](https://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/Safety/ra/FA1_notes.pdf)**” and taken appropriate (institution specific) measures** | |
| Have you the student consulted with your local Institution equivalent of “Health and Safety while Travelling on University Business” and taken appropriate Institution-specific measures? | YES  NO |
| Have you the student completed relevant local University’s procedures for undertaking overseas fieldwork/placement (e.g. risk assessment form)?  *\*If ‘yes’, please provide details:* | YES  NO |
| Have you the student received all recommended immunisations required for the area you are visiting?  [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx)  [www.masta-travel-health.com/](http://www.masta-travel-health.com/) | YES  NO |
| Have you the student read the NHS advice on obtaining medical treatment in the host country?  <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx> | YES  NO |
| If you are currently taking any prescription medicines, have you arranged to take sufficient to last you through the internship overseas and have you also checked that these are legal in this country? | YES  NO |
| * **Taken a note of the University Security number for contacting in an emergency outside normal office hours** | |
| The University’s Emergency Management Team can arrange immediate support in any emergency situation experience, including if necessary, immediate return to Scotland.  *\*Please provide details* *of the Emergency support available outside office hours at your local Institution or University* *of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, St Andrews, Stirling:* | YES  NO |
| * **Provided the PhD supervisor with a copy of travel itinerary, contact details and other key documents** | |
| You the student has provided your PhD supervisor with the following items:   1. A photocopy of the approved ‘PIPS Memorandum of Understanding’ or the ‘Collaborative Studentship Placement Memorandum of Understanding’ (as applicable) 2. Details of travel itinerary and overseas accommodation address/ email / phone number? 3. A list of emergency contacts details? 4. A photocopy of passport? 5. A photocopy of entry/work permit and/or visa? 6. A photocopy of insurance details? | YES  NO  to all questions |

By signing below, the parties acknowledge the information set out in this Placement Abroad Pre-departure Checklist before commencement of placement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The PhD Student**   * *Confirms that* *the above statements are true to the best of their knowledge.* * *Confirms that they are* *aware of the emergency support available from their local academic institution.* * *Has read and understands the information on ‘Personal Safety While Travelling Abroad’* * *Agrees to stay in regular contact with PhD supervisor, peers and family during placement abroad.* * *Agrees to notify the PhD Supervisor and/or EASTBIO DTP Manager immediately of changes relevant to any of the above information.* | |
| Name |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date (DD/MM/YY) |  |
| **The Students PhD Supervisor**   * *Confirms receipt of pre-departure items 1-6 listed above* * *Agrees to stay in regular contact with the PhD student during their placement abroad* | |
| Signature |  |
| Name |  |
| Date (DD/MM/YY) |  |
| **The EASTBIO DTP Manager**   * *Acts as a central point of contact for the Student, the host academic institution and the Host Organisation involved in the overseas placement* | |
| Is the proposed organisation suitable for a student placement? If any of the above answers are “no”, then appropriate actions should be identified, below, to minimise risk:  1.  2.  3. | YES  NO |
| Signature |  |
| Name |  |
| Date (DD/MM/YY) |  |

***Thank you for reading this guidance carefully and completing and submitting the Checklist to EASTBIO to confirm that you have addressed the procedural requirements that will ensure a successful placement abroad.***