

Pre-Departure Checklist for Students with Disabilities

Boston College Office of International Programs

Boston College's Office of International Programs (OIP) is committed to working with students to ensure reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities while abroad. Planning ahead is critical, and the following information and checklist were created to help prospective students with disabilities investigate and plan for any potential study abroad needs and situations. The considerations listed are not all-encompassing, as study abroad programming is individualized. Please [contact the Office of International Programs](#) with any questions.

Essential Steps

- ❑ Explore study abroad program options and possible accommodations in other countries such as: accessible housing, public transportation, assistive technology, admission of service animals, etc.
 - Not all program sites abroad are equipped to accommodate students with disabilities in the same way. OIP advisors can provide further information about a specific program site, as well as additional resources.
 - Consider - does the program/location you wish to participate in meet your needs?
- ❑ Consider sharing information about your disability and/or accommodation needs with your OIP Advisor:
 - It is your choice whether or not to share information about your disability. If you choose to do so, this will not affect students' chances of being accepted into a study abroad program.
 - If you will be requesting accommodations for your program, you are **strongly encouraged** to [contact your OIP Advisor](#) about the program you are planning to complete and talk about your disability as you begin to consider program options.
 - A number of programs/BC partner universities abroad require advanced notice and a formal request for accommodations submitted by the OIP. With early notice and careful planning, most students are able to receive similar accommodations to those available at BC.
- ❑ Arrange and confirm program accommodations
 - Ensure that you know what your approved BC academic and/or housing accommodations are. If you do not know what accommodations you are approved for, please contact the Disability Services Office at disabsrv@bc.edu to obtain a copy of your official Accommodation Letter.

- Work with your OIP Advisor to inquire about appropriate arrangements and establish whether reasonable accommodations can be made at your host institution/on your program.
- For a number of programs, students are responsible for making payment for their housing directly with the host institution or program provider. Estimated program cost is typically budgeted based on double-occupancy rooms. Be sure to ask if there is additional cost associated with special accommodations, e.g. single room.
- ❑ Investigate overseas support
 - Who will be your primary contact at the host institution/program in case of accommodation questions, concerns, or emergency?
 - Research available resources at the host institution in addition to community resources that address medical and psychological support
- ❑ Before leaving for your program, **research your host culture** and find out as much as you can about **how they view disability** so that you can prepare:
 - Consider: How you will answer any questions related to your disability in the language of your host country - prepare key vocabulary beforehand
 - Bring translations for your condition or allergy in the local language(s) where you will be traveling, so that you can explain your condition in an emergency.
 - How will you ask for help, if needed?

Additional Considerations

- Consider possible consequences of stress from cultural adjustment and reliance on different medical practices.
- If you anticipate a need for counseling/therapy while abroad, contact your OIP Advisor in advance, for resources and guidance in establishing care with a locally certified specialist at your program site abroad.
- ❑ Transportation
 - International Transportation Needs and Logistics
 - ❑ Research - What are the airline's accommodation capabilities and policies?
 - ❑ Refer to the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) [guidelines for traveling with disabilities and medical conditions](#) for information about screening procedures at airport security in the U.S.
 - Public Transportation - Host Country
 - ❑ Consider - What kind of travel will you be doing while in your host country? What kinds of accommodations will be required during your travels? Will you be able to participate in co-curricular program activities?

- Research accessible transportation resources and community support within your host country
- Many countries' public transportation is inaccessible for people with physical disabilities and mobility aids. If this is the case, consider - will covering costs of private taxis be feasible when necessary?
- Medications
 - Boston College partners with [Cultural Insurance Services International \(CISI\)](#) to provide health and emergency services to BC students while traveling and living outside the United States. All BC students who study abroad will also be enrolled in the CISI insurance plan for the duration of their program. See the [OIP website](#) and the [Student Handbook](#) for further information
 - If you take prescription medication, [research](#) your host country's drug/medication laws - a number of medications are restricted or controlled substances abroad
 - If you will be bringing any medication abroad, keep it in its **original container with the label**
 - Bring copies of your prescriptions with their generic names
 - Pack your medication in your carry-on in case your checked luggage is lost or delayed
 - If you take injectable medications, research whether or not disable syringes will pass security checks at the airport
 - Be aware that some countries may restrict the import of syringes
- Classwork/Academic Accommodations
 - If you are currently approved for academic accommodations through [BC's Disability Services Office](#), ensure that you know which accommodations you are approved for
 - If you do not know what accommodations you are approved for, please contact the Disability Services Office at disabsrv@bc.edu to obtain a copy of your official Accommodation Letter.
 - Be aware of the nature of required coursework and consider whether your accommodations will enable you to succeed in that environment. Work with your OIP Advisor to arrange and implement accommodations abroad
 - Research - Are audio or visual course materials accessible to you (e.g. captioned)?
 - Deaf/HOH students - will you need CART/video captioning/sign language interpreting? These services often take time to set up. Be sure to approach your OIP advisor early with your accommodation needs.
- Service Animals

- Do laws in your host country support service animals? If not, how will this impact access?
- What are airline regulations for traveling with a service animal?
- Is there a quarantine period for service animals traveling to or from your host country?
- For more information, please refer to information from NCDE on [traveling internationally with a guide dog or service animal](#)

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