

International Site Visit Checklists

The University of Pennsylvania provides a variety of international opportunities for students, faculty and staff across the globe. To effectively manage foreign travel risks and ensure the university meets its due diligence requirements when establishing partnerships and selecting program locations, each school is responsible to continuously assess the appropriateness of the site in terms of security and compliance. A successful risk assessment process involves regular site visits to inspect facilities, meet with local staff and student participants and collect information to identify and analyze risks.

This document contains nine checklists which can be used together or separately as a means to systematize your risk assessment process. A completed checklist can help determine the suitability of a new program, create new policies and procedures for current programs, update emergency contingency plans and inform future travelers. The checklists should be used in conjunction with other risk identification tools such as surveys, interviews, inspections and document collection.

If you have questions about this document or need assistance with preparing for a site visit, please contact:

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Section I: General Conditions; Accommodations & Facilities

1.1	What type of accommodation (hotel, homestay, dormitory, campsite, etc.)?	
1.2	What floor is the accommodation on?	
1.3	Is there an elevator/staircase?	
1.4	Is the accommodation wheelchair accessible?	
1.5	Are the bathrooms and shower facilities ADA accommodated?	
1.6	If using academic space (classroom, conference center), is the space wheelchair accessible? Is there an elevator?	
1.7	What is the general condition of the accommodation and/or academic space? Consider integrity of structure, cleanliness, lighting, furniture, and cracks/leaks in walls/floors.	
1.8	Are there concerns for adequate and reliable power (generators, government control, brownouts, etc.)?	
1.9	Are there any concerns for adequate and reliable cell phone or wireless internet service?	
1.10	Is the water potable? Do students/visitors have adequate access to drinking water?	
1.11	Is there an adequate amount of windows, natural light and proper ventilation?	
1.12	Other important features to mention about the accommodation and/or academic facility?	

*Where possible, take photos of accommodations, facilities and items in need of repair.

Section II: Safety & Security; Location

2.1	Is the country currently under U.S. State Department Travel Warning or Travel Alert ?	
2.2	Is the location considered Heightened Risk Travel ?	
2.3	Are there any travel risks* specific to this location (crime, terrorism, civil unrest, natural disaster, public health, kidnapping, etc.) that are of particular concern to you?	
2.4	Are there any “no go” areas in/around this location (regions, borders, neighboring states/countries, etc.)?	
2.5	Are there any safety concerns in this location regarding attitudes towards U.S. citizens, foreign nationals, women, LGBTQ, religious groups, ethnic minorities, etc.?	
2.6	What type of transportation is recommended when traveling long distances to/from this location?	
2.7	Is self-driving recommended for visitors? Are there dangers related to self-driving?	
2.8	How would you describe the neighborhood (urban, suburban, residential, etc.)?	
2.9	Would you describe the neighborhood as safe (lighting, pedestrian traffic, vehicle traffic, etc.)? Why or Why not?	
2.10	Is there any neighborhood or local spot that would be considered a “no go” area (park, plaza, nightclub area, beach, etc.)?	

2.11	<p>Is there reliable fire and/or police response?</p> <p>What is the emergency number/911 equivalent?</p>	
2.12	<p>Is there any concern for dealing with local law enforcement?</p>	
2.13	<p>Can students/visitors travel by foot after dark?</p>	
2.14	<p>Should students/visitors take public transportation alone? After dark?</p>	
2.15	<p>Can students/visitors hail taxis easily in the street?</p> <p>Is there a suggested taxi service?</p>	
2.16	<p>Any other safety concerns specific to the region and/or neighborhood?</p>	

*Contact [Jaime Molyneux](#), Director of International Risk Management, for travel safety guidance including regional assessment, pre-trip orientation and emergency planning.

Section III: Safety & Security; Accommodations

3.1	Is there 24/7 security guard or concierge?	
3.2	Is an ID required to enter accommodation?	
3.3	Is a key required to enter accommodation?	
3.4	Are there security cameras? If so, how many and where are they?	
3.5	How many locked doors are there between street and accommodation?	
3.6	Do any doors have deadbolts?	
3.7	Are all entrances/exits well-lit?	
3.8	Can guests access the building? Describe the process.	
3.9	Does the building have the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ clearly marked fire exits▪ fire extinguishers (inspect expiration date)▪ smoke detectors	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ smoke/fire alarms ▪ security alarms ▪ sprinklers system ▪ emergency lighting ▪ carbon monoxide detectors 	
3.10	Are there any exposed electrical wires or other visible fire hazards?	
3.11	How many stairways are accessible if needed (at least 2)? Is there an outdoor fire escape?	
3.12	Are there emergency and fire evacuation plans posted? If so, where?	
3.13	<p>Are their rules against the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ candles ▪ incense ▪ smoking 	
3.14	Is there a balcony? If so, is there any visible fall hazard on the balcony (solid railing, locked access doors, no cracks in foundation, etc.)?	
3.15	Will students/visitors be housed on the ground or 1 st floor?	
3.16	Do windows or doors on the first floor have bars, safety gates, or exterior blinds?	

3.17	Are there any concerns regarding animals in the accommodation or surrounding area (pests, stray or wild animals)?	
3.18	If homestay, who is responsible to vet the host families? What is the process?	
3.19	Any other safety concerns in the accommodations?	

*Where possible, take photos of security measures and items that pose security risk.

Section IV: Emergency Preparedness & Insurance

4.1	<p>What type of insurance is required for this trip or international program (either by Penn or local partner)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -local health insurance -emergency evacuation/repatriation -general liability -automobile -property -trip cancellation/interruption -other 	
4.2	<p>Do all travelers have International SOS wallet cards; understand the services provided, and how to contact International SOS?</p>	
4.3	<p>Have all travelers <u>completed</u> their trip registration in the Global Activities Registry, including flight itineraries?</p>	
4.4	<p>Is there a pre-departure orientation that covers health matters, safety precautions and emergency procedures?</p>	
4.5	<p>Is there an orientation <u>on-site</u> (in host country) that covers health matters, safety precautions, and emergency procedures?</p>	
4.6	<p>Who is the on-site contact (in host country)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee/faculty leader from Penn • Employee/faculty from host institution • Student leader • Independent contractor/tour operator • Other? 	

4.7	Provide the on-site contact's name, job title, local phone number and email address.	
4.8	<p>In the event of an emergency,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who is the 24/7 responder on-site (provide name and number)? ▪ Who is the 24/7 responder at Penn (provide name and number)? ▪ Do all travelers have these emergency phone numbers? ▪ Do on-site personnel know who to contact at Penn to report an emergency? ▪ Do on-site personnel have an emergency communication plan? Retain a copy. ▪ Do on-site personnel have an emergency evacuation plan? Retain a copy. 	
4.9	Are students/visitors provided with wallet cards or travel guides which include emergency procedures and important phone numbers? Retain a copy.	
4.10	Can on-site personnel quickly access students'/visitors' flight itinerary, emergency contact information and medical information? Is this information stored in a confidential manner?	
4.11	Is there a process in place regarding when/how/for what reasons Penn would be notified of an incident involving a Penn traveler? What is the process?	

*When possible, gather orientation materials, PowerPoint presentations, handbooks, emergency plans, important phone numbers, liability forms, travel guides, wallet cards, etc.

Section V: Health Matters

5.1	Are there any public health concerns specific to this location?	
5.2	Which vaccinations are recommended or required for travel to this location?	
5.3	Is tap water suitable for drinking?	
5.4	What is the nearest hospital/emergency room (approved or recommended by International SOS)?	
5.5	Does the standard of healthcare meet U.S. standards? Would surgery and/or treatment of a complicated illness be recommended in this location?	
5.6	Are emergency medical technicians or ambulances available and reliable?	
5.7	<p>Is there adequate access to the following (ISOS recommended)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ general medicine doctors ▪ gynecologists/women's health clinics ▪ dentists ▪ pharmacies ▪ mental health professionals 	
5.8	Are students/visitors required to complete a medical form prior to travel? If so, who reviews these forms? Are the forms saved in a confidential manner?	

5.9	Are students/visitors permitted to drink alcohol while visiting this location?	
5.10	Will the student/visitor be engaging in any extreme sports (mountain climbing, water sports, bungee jumping, sky diving, scuba diving, etc.)?	

Section VI: Internships and Volunteer Opportunities Abroad

Additional Considerations

*Complete the above checklists in addition to the special considerations below for internship and volunteer opportunities abroad.

6.1	Name of company or organization?	
6.2	Has this company/organization worked with Penn before? If so, in what capacity?	
6.3	Describe the type of work being done?	
6.4	Is academic credit being given at the conclusion of this opportunity? Which school at Penn is awarding the credit?	
6.5	Is this a paid or unpaid opportunity?	
6.6	Is a work permit or visa required? Who is responsible to handle work permits/visas?	
6.7	Who is responsible for the safety and well-being of the intern/volunteer in the event of an emergency? Is there a 24/7 emergency responder on-site? If so, who?	

6.8	How will the intern/volunteer travel to and from their activity site? How long is the commute? Any concerns for safety during commute?	
6.9	Does the company or organization provide housing?	
6.10	Does the company or organization provide any type of insurance?	
6.11	Number of employees at activity site?	
6.12	Who is the main contact at the company or organization (name, title, contact information)?	
6.13	How was this opportunity established (partner, alumni, donor, etc.)? Who is the main contact at Penn?	
6.14	Who will supervise the intern's/volunteer's work (name, title, contact information)?	
6.15	Type of activity site (office, school, outdoor, laboratory, etc.)?	
6.16	Describe the responsibilities of the internship or volunteer position.	
6.17	How many hours per day and per week is the intern/volunteer expected to work?	

6.18	Is there a designated workstation for the intern/volunteer?	
6.19	If an office environment, list the work resources provided (desk, chair, telephone, computer, other)?	
6.20	If non-office environment, list the resources and equipment available to intern/volunteer.	
6.21	Does the workstation and equipment appear to be in good condition?	

Section VII: Living Amenities

7.1	How would you describe the location of the living accommodations (urban, suburban, residential, etc.)?	
7.2	How close are grocery stores or markets?	
7.3	What types of useful stores/amenities are within walking distance (pharmacy, grocery, post office, ATM, café, etc.)?	
7.4	What types of entertainment facilities are near the housing (restaurants, movie theater, sports arena, music halls, tourist attractions, museums, pubs and clubs, other night life)?	
7.5	Are international phone providers available in the area?	
7.6	Are affordable cell phones available to purchase or rent?	
7.7	Is cell coverage widely available?	
7.8	Is there access to public computers or will students/visitors need to provide their own?	
7.9	Are mailing services readily available and reliable?	
7.10	Are credit cards widely used? Do credit cards require chips or PINs to use in country?	
7.11	Can students/visitors access cash through ATMs or banks? Are international banks present?	
7.12	Can funds be wired to the location (Western Union or other services)?	

7.13	Is public transportation available and reliable (taxis, buses, and trains)? What are the costs?	
7.14	How will students/visitors travel between housing and program/activity site?	
7.15	What is the distance to the closest airport (international and domestic)?	

Section VIII: Legal & Finance

8.1	Where is the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate?	
8.2	Do all Penn students/staff travelling to the foreign location have current passports (valid 6 months or more)?	
8.3	Are there visa requirements to enter the foreign location?	
8.4	Will the partner assist with the coordination and application of appropriate visas?	
8.5	Are there relevant immigration laws to be aware of?	
8.6	Are residence permits required?	
8.7	Are students/visitors required to register with local officials (police station or regional government)?	
8.8	Are there appropriate licenses/approvals for research, study, or interactions with required host country government or organizations?	
8.9	Are there local tax issues to be aware of?	
8.10	Are there relevant local employment rights or benefits to be aware of?	
8.11	Are there relevant privacy laws to be aware of?	

8.12	Is there an adequate understanding of host country safety/workplace requirements?	
8.13	Will the host country banking system impact how US funds are sent and managed in-country?	
8.14	Will funds be needed in-country to conduct project activities?	
8.15	Is it necessary for Penn to hire foreign-based counsel to advise the activity?	

Section IX: Agreements, Contracts, and Vendors

9.1	Do we have an established partner or relationship with a local institution or organization? If so, please list and indicate contact person.	
9.2	What types of agreements or contracts are in force?	
9.3	Will the partner assist with any local registration requirements?	
9.4	What forms must be signed by Penn personnel (staff, students, and/or visitors)?	
9.5	Will an international subcontract be needed to accomplish program objectives?	
9.6	Will an MOU be developed with any foreign-based entity to support this activity?	
9.7	Does the contract cover general liability insurance and dual indemnification for Penn and the foreign partner?	
9.8	Are there insurance requirements by the host country that will apply to any aspect of this activity?	
9.9	Are human subjects' reviews (IRB) required by Penn, the sponsor and/or foreign-based collaborator?	
9.10	Does the agreement address policies for complaints, including incident reporting?	

9.11	Does the agreement address disciplinary action policies? Are they consistent with Penn policies? How are they enforced?	
9.12	Will staff who are citizens of the foreign location be hired to work on the project?	
9.13	Will Penn project staff be present at the foreign location during the project or activity?	
9.14	Will technology or communication equipment be shipped from the U.S. to a foreign location?	
9.15	Do the facilities (e.g., classroom, office, lab, and clinical facility) at the foreign location need additional provisions (safeguarding, refrigeration, equipment etc.)?	
9.16	What research resources are available to Penn staff, students, or visitors (computers, library, labs, or other space)?	
9.17	Are any 3 rd party vendors being used for services? If so, who and for what service?	
9.18	How was the 3 rd party vendor selected? Describe the vetting process.	
9.19	Is the 3 rd party vendor thoroughly licensed?	
9.20	Are there any legal issues with local partners or 3 rd party vendors?	

9.21	Do the local partners or 3 rd party vendors have the appropriate equipment and resources to provide service?	
9.22	Does the partner or host institution provide off-site excursions using a 3 rd party vendor?	
9.23	What type of excursions? Where is the location, how will the party travel, etc.?	
9.24	Will any ground transportation be contracted (international company or local hire)?	
9.25	Are more resources needed about the foreign location to answer this checklist, plan the activity and/or develop the budget?	