

10 Steps to Going Abroad



1. Start Planning Early

Check potential dates with your venue and put together a timeline of key dates and deadlines. Consider organising your trip through a tour operator, such as Venture Abroad or organise yourself. Consider a reconnaissance trip or ask your accommodation for key local information, such as supermarkets, hospitals and transport links. It is sometimes useful for an advance party to be built into the planning, to prepare for the arrival of the main party.

2. Be Youth Led

Involve young people in programme planning; nobody knows better than them what they want to get from the trip. Consider getting young people to design a badge, Necker or clothing for the trip as this helps bond the group and make them stand out in crowds,

3. Do the paperwork – Part 1

Send Part A of the Visits Abroad form for outline approval by your District Commissioner. This is provided by your ACC(I). Check POR or ask your ACC(I) if you are unsure about the paperwork or any other aspects of the trip.

4. Budget

Budget carefully and consider drawing up a fundraising plan. Make sure you have a contingency fund for emergencies or if there is an increase in cost due to the change in the interest rate. Negotiate with suppliers, as many are happy to give a discount for Scout trips.

5. The Legal Bits

Make sure each person has a passport with six months to run (after the end date of the trip) and check for non-UK passports as they may need a visa. Ensure you have insurance in case a company goes bust or there is an incident on the trip. Unity (Scout Insurance Services) can provide advice on this. If travelling in Europe, make sure everyone has an EHC card which is in date.

6. Risk Assessment

You need to assess the risk of international travel as well as the programme both prior to and during your trip. This can also include checks for nervous or first-time flyers. As part of this you will also be expected to produce a critical incident plan for your ACC(I). Involve your young people to help them to take responsibility for their own safety.

7. Pre-trip Bonding and Planning

Make sure everyone knows each other; both leaders and young people. Identify individual leadership styles to avoid clashes. Practice camps are a real way to get a feel for how the group will be on the trip, especially key when there is a mixture of Groups. Ensure your young people know what will be needed for the trip and prepare a kit list well in advance.

8. Do the Paperwork – Part B

You will also need to send copies of the rest of the documents required by the ACC(I) in order that they can recommend final approval. A night's away permit is required if the trip is for more than one day and a NAN should be completed. You should check the rules for undertaking adventurous activities abroad. Ensure that you set up a robust In Touch system. Make sure your home contact has copies of passports, insurance documents and contact details for everyone. Parents can therefore contact them if there are any problems and then your home contact can communicate this back to you.

9. Share with Parents

In the run up to the trip have a single point of contact so that all messages are consistent. Parents like to be informed during the trip, so consider a private page for whilst you are away that can have updates posted for parents to see that everyone is happy.

10. Share with Others

The rest of your Group will want to know that the trip went well. Any company or Fund which supported the trip either through grants, fundraising or sponsorship should also have a summary of the trip, as they will want to know that their funds were well used. Sharing your experiences with your District or County will also encourage others to consider similar trips. Consider making a night of it with a presentation of photos, videos and feedback from the young people.

Find Out More

Assistant County Commissioner – International

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