

ON-SITE ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

When you first arrive in your host city, you are likely going to be jet-lagged and a bit overwhelmed by all the new sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and activities. In most cases, you will be expected to learn a lot of important information in a very short period of time, such as: how to finalize your registration, how to find the doctor, where your classes are, etc. Your on-site host should provide you with a structured orientation program to help you get started. You may also want to be prepared with your own checklist of questions that you will need answered during your first few days or weeks.

The following checklist may help you as you begin your semester at your host institution.

Housing

- What are the rules of your housing unit?
- Are there any restrictions you need to be aware of? Are there appliances that are not allowed?
- Is there phone access? Internet access?
- Are there rules for cleaning?
- Can you have visitors?
- Are there specific visitation hours?
- Who do you contact if there is a problem with your housing unit?
- Who should you contact if you are having difficulties with a roommate or host family?

Registration and Classroom Expectations

- How do you finalize your registration?
- What is the process for changing a class after you attend the first session?
- What is the process of requesting a transcript to be sent to your home university?
- What are the classroom expectations?
- How should you dress for class?
- Is it unacceptable to bring drinks or food into class? In most cases, this is not acceptable.
- How should you address the professor?
- How will you be evaluated?
- Are there rules on attendance?
- Who should you contact if you need academic support?

On-site Contact Person

- Is there a 24/7 contact person available on-site?
- Is there a policy on notifying the on-site contact of any travel outside the city or country?

Health Information

- Where do you seek medical attention?
- Who should you contact if there is an emergency?
- If you are covered under a national insurance program, what do you need to know before securing medical attention? Is there a registration process?
- Is there a national emergency number (like 911 in the US) in the event of a crisis? Is it reliable?
- Is there a local cuisine that you should indulge in? Are there foods that you should avoid?
- Can you drink the local water? If not, is there a brand of bottled water that is safest to drink?

Local Environment

- What transportation system is most reliable?
- Is there a specific cab company that should be used?
- Can you purchase bus tickets in advance? Can you purchase tickets while on the bus?
- Can you purchase a weekly or monthly pass?
- When do buses, trains, or trams stop running?
- Is it safe to travel after dark?
- Are there areas of town that should be avoided?
- Where can you find a local map?
- Is there a local travel agency that can help you with weekend travel plans?
- Where should you go to purchase a cell phone?

Local Laws and Norms

- What is the legal drinking age?
- What other laws should you be aware of?
- What are the common mistakes made by visitors?
- Is there an appropriate way to greet someone?