



Safer Journeys

A teacher's guide to planning and preparing for educational trips and expeditions

Version 4

Welcome

I am delighted that you have chosen to arrange your adventure through STC Expeditions.

Adventure travel is exciting, and hugely educational. It can teach both adults and students much about the world, having the potential to change our viewpoint on the cultures, environments and religions we encounter. It is this powerful learning experience that makes the trips we arrange so rewarding – for you and more importantly, for your students...

Whilst the benefits are great, adventures can also be intense experiences – particularly for teachers and group leaders with concerns over safety and their responsibilities. We have put together this guide to help you with the preparation and planning of your trip. We have included personal tips, recognised good practice advice and a variety of sources of further information. We hope it will provide a comprehensive source of advice and inspiration in the build up to your travels.

Shortly before you depart, we will also be sending you our teachers' travel manual. This second guide covers policy points and advice in relation to the operations and safety management of the trip whilst you are overseas.

Our experience in arranging adventures and expeditions, the careful planning of itineraries and a commitment to dealing only with the best in-country partners, all contribute to ensuring that any risks within your journey are kept to a minimum. We do not anticipate any problems (and neither should you!) but the old saying "expect the best and prepare for the worst" is always a good mantra to follow.

Whilst not all our expeditions and educational journeys involve climbing we love this quote from one of Britain's greatest alpinists. We follow it and we believe if you do too, you won't go too far wrong.

"...remember that courage and strength are nought without prudence, and that a momentary negligence may destroy the happiness of a lifetime. Do nothing in haste; look well to each step; and from the beginning think what may be the end." **Edward Whymper, *Scrambles in the Alps***

We hope you find this guide useful. Should you have any questions regarding any of the information here, or anything specific to your own itinerary, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Bon voyage!



Adrian Ferraro
Operations Director
STC Expeditions
6B, King St Business Centre,
Exeter, EX1 1BH
Tel: 01392 660056
Email: schools@thestc.co.uk
Web: www.thestc.co.uk



Contents

Welcome.....	2
Overview.....	4
Section 1: Working together (STC & You)	4
Who does what?.....	5
Section 2: Documentation & Support.....	6
Pre-Booking.....	6
Booking Confirmation	7
Pre-Departure.....	7
Travelling Teachers' Pack.....	7
Non-Travelling Teachers Pack.....	8
Students	8
Section 3: Group Meetings	9
Rules	9
Finances.....	10
Maximising the educational benefit.....	10
Planning your communications	12
Section 4: Key Planning for the trip.....	14
Participants & Staff: Travel health.....	14
Vaccinations.....	14
Insurance & Contingency	14
Passports and Visas	15
UK Travel	16
Kit	16
Final documentation & departure day.....	16
Section 5: Sources of information.....	18
Passport & Visa resources:	18
Expedition Advice and Resources:	18
Travel Safety advice, medical resources & training:	18
Electricity, Climate, Currency, Time and Female travellers.....	19
Kit, Maps and Travel Guides:	19
Teacher checklist.....	20

Overview

If you haven't run a trip before or you have run trips alongside other teachers you may not have had the chance to look at all aspects of planning an overseas adventure. If that's the case, this booklet will hopefully help you to achieve that warm and fuzzy feeling before you depart, knowing that you've covered all bases.

Alternatively, you may be very experienced in planning and running trips but may just need that extra voice over your shoulder, just to check that nothing has been missed. While working with us in the build up to your trip, this booklet will help you to know our processes and hopefully help you tick off the checklist at the back of this document.

Section 1: Working together (STC & You)



When a school works with a third-party provider like STC Expeditions, it's important to know who does what and where certain responsibilities lie. In terms of communication, we ideally like to have one main point of contact at the school so we can establish a clear line of communication throughout.

Unless agreed in writing before booking, trips delivered by STC Expeditions have the following hierarchical responsibilities:

Role / Organisation:

Venture Provider: Has overall responsibility of the trip. Ensures all safety elements including pre-departure, in country and post trip have been covered. Ensures the leadership team are competent and the necessary communication is in place.

School: To ensure emergency contacts are available whilst the venture is underway, liaising with STC and parents at appropriate times and potentially having a standby teacher ready to replace any teacher who cannot continue on the trip for any reason.

Responsibility:

STC Expeditions

**School
(EVC/Senior Leaders)**

Venture Leadership Team

Venture Leader: The person in charge of the safety and overall decision-making whilst on the venture. Their decision whilst on venture is final.

Lead Teacher: To develop the trip prior to departure and be lead voice on behalf of the school whilst away. Knows participants and supports the *Venture Leader* with their decision-making processes, especially with pastoral care. Enforcing school and STC policies whilst on the Venture.

Support teachers/Adults: To support the *Lead Teacher* and *Venture Leader* in their decision-making process, providing key support to operational capabilities and policies where needed.

STC Leader

**School Lead teacher
(usually the teacher
we work with to
develop the trip)**

**Travelling
teachers/Adults**

Who does what?

At STC Expeditions we have a comprehensive quality assurance system to ensure all preparations, planning and operations for a trip are covered. As every school works slightly differently in their trip management processes, good clear communication between you and us is vital!

Below is a guide as to what STC Expeditions will do in relation to this trip, and what we require you (or the school) to do:

STC	School (Lead Teacher)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clear, comprehensive documentation to ensure all participants understand the nature of the Venture and how to prepare ✓ Participation information collection through our online booking portal ✓ Safety management system operated in line with the British Standard 8848:2014 ✓ Medical clearances conducted by our external travel health professional ✓ Visa & Vaccination advice specific to your trip ✓ Risk Assessments (Trip specific) and Threat Assessments (Country Specific) provided in a timely manner ✓ Financial Protection: ATOL licence No. 11054 ✓ 24 hour Operational support whilst your group are overseas ✓ Emergency and crisis management throughout, including emergency medical insurance cover and repatriation. ✓ Conducting Pre-Departure training, dependant on physical and cultural grading of the Venture ✓ Dedicated planning manager with country specific knowledge ✓ Information accessible to all participants ✓ Financial advice to raise funds for the Venture including kits discounts and deals ✓ Operational support with help to sign off trips with local authority and/or EVC's ✓ Permeant operations team in your destination to support the Venture ✓ Experience STC Leader – qualified, experienced, trained by us, reference checked and able to lead using local knowledge of the destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure all participants attend pre-departure meetings and training ✓ Developing support for the Venture and communicating team aims with participants ✓ Ensuring paperwork requirements and payment deadlines are met ✓ Effectively communicating with STC Operations team to ensure a smooth SLT/EVC sign off ✓ Encouraging and motivating team with fundraising and any school organised training programmes ✓ Booking meeting rooms in school for Pre-Departure briefings and communicating to parents ✓ Communicating with the school leadership team and supporting teachers ✓ Risk assessing known behavioural issues within the participant group and assessing group dynamics ✓ Being an active member of the leadership team on the Venture ✓ Ensuring one teacher within the leadership team holds an appropriate and in date first aid qualification. STC includes the cost of 1 space on a course if needed ✓ Checking final STC paperwork ✓ Ensuring final travel packs are disseminated to the team (ICE cards and travelling/non-travelling teacher packs) ✓ Providing pastoral support for STC Leader's decisions and participant care ✓ Ensure the school has an allocated standby teacher to replace any that may be repatriated should ratios be drastically affected



Professional Medical Clearances

James Moore: James is our travel medicine and travel health advisor.



James has provided medical cover and leadership for numerous expeditions across the globe including post tsunami Sri Lanka, Papua New Guinea for Ben Fogle's Extreme Dreams series, Joanna Lumley's Nile TV series and the Jungle Marathon in Brazil. His most recent adventure included medical cover for a school expedition of more than 50 students to Malawi. He also worked with the BBC to film penguins in the remote South Atlantic on Zavodovski Island.

He has more letters after his name than he knows what to do with, with Diplomas in Travel Medicine, Tropical Nursing and a degree in Emergency Care. He is a Member of the Faculty of Travel Medicine, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons Glasgow. He has written for several journals and is a contributing author to the Oxford Handbook of Expedition and Wilderness Medicine. He also sits on the 'medical cell' of the Royal Geographical Society.

Section 2: Documentation & Support

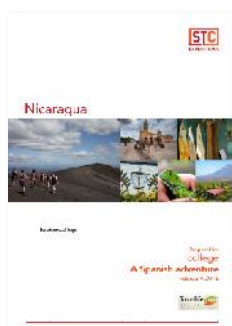
We work extremely hard to get the right paperwork out to you at the right time. We, like you, don't want to drown in paperwork, and whilst you might on occasion think we're too thorough, we like to ensure we cover all bases.



Pre-Booking

By now, you would have had all your pre-booking information and links to the STC portal. The documents you should have had are:

- N **Quotation document:** A full quote with all inclusions and exclusions of the trip. The quotation will be based on a minimum number of participants and may have different prices for different group sizes.
- N **Sample Risk and Threat assessment:** A first draft risk assessment based on your initial itinerary and destination.
- N **Safety Management System:** How we structure our operational safety management.
- N **STC-School Contract:** Two paper copies of the contract between STC Expeditions and your School. If you have not already returned a signed copies of this, please do so now.
- N **Presentation and launch:** Hopefully you will have met one of our friendly team at a parent/student information evening.



Booking Confirmation

Now you are at the booking stage, there will be a few things to action. We will send you a steady amount of information to keep the team interested and motivated over the next 5 months to 2-year period, depending on the time until your departure.

Either with this pack, or soon after booking, you will receive:

-) **ATOL Certificate:** *Proof that your money is protected*
-) A request for **preferred departure dates.**
-) **Kit List:** *Tailored to your trip, including discounts and advice to make your lives easier (and less costly)*
-) **Pre-Departure Information:** *Your finalised itinerary and further travel advice*
-) **Medical Vaccination brief:** *Specific to your journey and destination*
-) **Flight Itinerary:** *also showing luggage allowance*
-) **Trek and/or Cycle training plans:** *If relevant to your itinerary*
-) **Accommodation, Activity and Transport audits:** *Upon request. We don't usually send these out, but they are available if you need them to help sign off your trip.*
-) **Stashing the Cash:** *STC's own fundraising advice, this is not just for charitable causes! This document is so participants can raise their own funds to pay for the Venture*



Pre-Departure

Teachers who are used to travelling and delivering trips for their respected schools are well used to getting ready for a big adventure. And potentially drowning in paperwork! Having to print off multiple itinerary copies and pass around information to all the relevant parties, making sure participant lists are up to date, flight tickets are printed and all the extra little bits that go with it, may be something you've had to do in the past, but...

STC DOES ALL THIS FOR YOU!!!



Final Travel Packs: What you get

Approximately three weeks prior to departure, you will get a pack in the post with a wealth of information, tips and advice along with all necessary supporting documentation for your trip. Also included within this is a medications pack with general medications along with a range of Prescription Only Medications (POM). These medications are regulated through UK law and STC policies so please ensure you read the documentation within the pack when it comes through.

Travelling Teachers' Pack

For every teacher accompanying the trip, we provide the following:

-) **Teachers' travel manual:** *Our guide and policies on in country operations and safety management. If you want to know our policy on some matter, then look in here.*
-) **Crisis information sheet:** *This includes accommodation addresses and contacts, emergency contact information in your destination and the UK, insurance details, flight information and a flow chat of what to do in an emergency.*
-) **Risk assessments and threat assessments:** *As detailed above.*
-) **Participant information:** *All participant information, Next of Kin, medical information, etc.*
-) **STC Travel Survival Guide:** *A booklet of how to travel safely and more responsibly.*



-] **E-Ticket:** *So you can get on the flight!*
-] **ATOL Certificate:** *Lead teacher only gets a copy of your ATOL certificate*
-] **PDI:** *Your Pre-Departure Information document with itinerary and specifics*
-] **STC contingency plan:** *Lead teacher only will get a copy of our generic contingency plan*
-] **EVAC Plan:** *A day to day run down of local clinics and full hospitals available along your route.*
-] **Medical cards:** *Lead teacher only, if required, will get our handy medical flash cards. These are quick reference cards to help with any pre-existing medical conditions you may have within your group.*
-] **Pre-Printed passport stickers** – one for each person, so you can easily identify each passport
-] **Pre-Printed luggage label inserts**
-] **Finance & Tipping Advice:** *Our little guide to help you/the team budget your tipping through your itinerary*

Medical Pack: Our in-country STC Leader will have a group first aid kit, but the lead teacher gets our STC Medications Pack containing approved medications prescribed by our medical advisor. Contents includes: EpiPen, Inhalers, Pain relief, antibiotics, allergy and skin medications. The pack contains a full instruction manual, medication logs and prescription authorisation paperwork.



(Please ensure you read and understand these manuals).

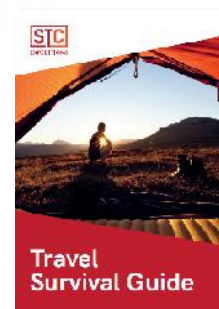
Non-Travelling Teachers Pack

All non-travelling teachers (school UK emergency contact) will be given a pack containing the following:

-] **Crisis information sheet:** *This includes accommodation address and contacts, emergency contact information in your destination and the UK, insurance details and flight information.*
-] **Participant information:** *All participant confidential information, Next of Kin, medical information etc*
-] **EVAC Plan:** *A day to day run down of local clinics and full hospitals en-route*
-] **Communications and Crisis guide:** *What to do if there is a problem while the group is overseas.*

Students

-] **Free T-Shirt:** *Everyone loves a freebie! Make sure to put your t-shirt sizes on the booking form*
-] **In Case of Emergency Cards:** *Phone numbers for all relevant contacts (in country operations, STC leader, STC emergency, insurance and embassy)*
-] **STC Travel Survival Guide:** *Our pocket sized booklet to help you be a more savvy traveller*
-] **Luggage Label:** *Does what it says on the tin*



"We had a fantastic trip. This was very largely due to the STC Chinese leader, Charlie Yang, he was absolutely flawless, unflappable and delightful. Everyone in our group will have positive, life-long memories of Summer 2017 in China, so thanks to you all at STC for your part in making our trip so outstanding."

Adam Box, Queen Elizabeth School - China Jul '17

Section 3: Group Meetings

Now is a good time for the team to pull their finger(s) out and get tuned in to how they can start working together as a team and think about their pre-departure research and planning.

Our feedback shows that those who put extra research and fundraising into a trip benefit both emotionally and financially from this effort. It makes sense. You put the hard work in to raising the funds, so you will want to make your money goes as far as possible.

Why do you need to get together and what do you need to think about?

There are a few key areas to plan for and consider in the run up to your trip:

-)] **Rules:** Set a code of conduct for the group and respect each other's perspectives
-)] **Finances:** Tipping, Visas, Contingency, Vaccinations and fundraising
-)] **Maximising the Educational Benefit.** Ensuring your trip has the greatest possible reach.
-)] **Communications and Marketing:** How to shout about your trip, the fundraising events, the educational aspects.
-)] **Destination research:** Find out about the culture, history, language, do and don'ts of being a tourist.

"Absolutely worth it! Best experience ever, ever, ever and if you are passionate and start early; fundraising is achievable"

Molly – Ghana, 2017

"It is more enjoyable when you know you have earned it"

Isabel – Borneo, 2017

Rules

Rules and boundaries are an important part of ensuring a safe trip. They help to develop the expectations of both individuals and the group and create clear lines to students as to what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour. You will no doubt have a set of school trip rules already set up (if you don't, you *really* should!) but you may feel this trip warrants extra rules on top of these.

STC standard trip code of conduct

On our booking form, all students signed up to abide by the following code of conduct. [If, during the trip, they do not adhere to this code of conduct they risk being sent home on the next available flight at their own (or parents') expense with no right to a refund for unused services.]:

-)] I will take reasonable care of myself and others.
-)] I will follow instructions from the leadership team and will bring any concerns about my safety, health and wellbeing and those of others, to the attention of the leadership team or supervisors.
-)] I will not smoke, drink alcohol, take any unprescribed substance, enter into sexual relations with any person or participate in any illegal activity while I am participating on this trip or travelling to and from the trip.
-)] I will respect others' rights to peace and quiet at the appropriate times (e.g. bed time) and act in accordance with local customs and culture.
-)] I will look after property and equipment loaned to me and respect the belongings of others.
-)] I will not compromise the safety of any student, staff member or any other person on the trip.

Finances

In addition to the trip cost there are a number of financial elements that the team will need to plan for. The earlier the team prepares, the less stress it will cause. One thing you do *not* want to do is ask parents 2-3 months before the trip for an extra £100-£200 because it has been missed out of the planning stage.



Contingency - Why do you need contingency budget?

Some insurances don't kick in until a minimum 'spend' or excess. For instance, if £75 is the excess then you will have to pay up to £75 before any claim can be made. What happens if a passport is lost? Or someone needs walking down off a mountain by a teacher to rest for a few days before the group return? Having access to some reserve cash may be required for those unexpected eventualities!

Some teachers add a little contingency when setting the price of the trip upfront. This way the school holds onto the contingency budget and STC gets the trip cost. Others get the students to raise the funds OR just ask the parents for the funds. Whichever way you do this is up to you.

Tipping – How much and when?

Your Pre-Booking Information Pack (PBIP) and Pre-Departure Information (PDI) will state a **maximum amount** required. This is a guideline!! Depending on where you are travelling to, tipping may be expected or a 'nice to have', make sure you know which one!

In your final teacher travel pack, you will have a document giving average tipping amounts in country. Getting the participants to manage this in country and be responsible for it is a good idea. You may also like to get your STC Leader to help manage a tipping kitty. At the end of the day, it's the students' money and they should decide who gets what.

Raising the money

STC understand the word 'fundraising' is usually associated with charitable causes, however, we're talking more here about the students paying their own way but 'raising the funds', not 'fundraising'. The more effort they put in, the more they will throw themselves into the trip. Setting up Facebook pages so the team can share experiences or add in fundraising events like cake sales, raffles and other events is a great way for sponsors to see how the group are getting on.

See STC's '**Stashing the Cash**' (available on your online portal). We also have deals and discounts available with sites such as Easyfundraising (a cashback site), Cotswold Outdoors (15% off RRP) and Outdoor hire (Kit hire 10% off):

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/the-stc>

The extra fundraising you have conducted prior to a trip could pay for tips and maybe additional drinks, extra meals or little presents on the last night's meal.

Maximising the educational benefit

As an educationally focused company, we believe we have a responsibility to try to push the educational benefits of our trips to as wide an audience as possible. This applies to those going on the trip, and also those back at home - both prior to and during the trip.

Modern communication and technology provide opportunities to broaden the trip/expedition experience to a wider base than just those travelling. It also allows for the possibility of community interaction between those travelling and those back home. Given some effort and commitment, the potential for the whole school to become involved in the learning opportunities provided by your trip is massive, if you can create networks and partnerships within school.



Questions to ask yourself (and your head teacher!)

-) Is your adventure or expedition only benefitting the students on the trip?
-) How can your trip help educate those staying at home?
-) What would be the total audience from a school's combined social media network?
-) How could that network be harnessed to promote learning opportunities from the trip?
-) What could be achieved if the whole school were part of the wider expedition team and all the resources within a school were utilised to the full? For instance:
 - o Could the art department help with designing an expedition logo?
 - o Can the business studies team help with entrepreneurial fundraising schemes?
 - o How can the geography, history and language departments collaborate so everyone benefits?

Multiple expedition teams

Do school expeditions place an overemphasis on the field team?



Image courtesy of 'digital explorer'

Planning your communications

Social media on trips abroad is a much-loved topic of debate in our office. However, no matter how much we bounce the arguments around, there is no doubt that it can be an excellent tool before, during and after your trip. It can have its downsides too.

Pre-Departure

Blogs

Taking students on the trip of a lifetime is something which should be shouted from the rooftops! Rather than posting one article on the school website why not set up a team blog for the trip? This can act as an excellent way for the group to promote what they are doing and quite possibly help to attract sponsorship for the trip as it acts as a platform to advertise sponsors.

A good blog is easy to create and could act as a useful tool to bring the group together prior to departure by working together to build and keep it up to date. Moreover, if done effectively, it could encourage students to research their trip more, allowing them to become more knowledgeable in the area (making the trip all the more educational for them) but could also encourage them to share their knowledge through various channels – even a school assembly!

And remember, blogging is changing. Traditional written sites such as wordpress.com or blogspot.com are all free and simple to use but maybe some of your students would be more interested in setting up a YouTube video blog with updates of their fundraising, packing tips and all of the behind the scenes action before they leave!

Blog Topics / pages:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
|) Participant bios |) Fundraising events |
|) About the destination |) Packing tips |
|) Any project work/trekking/expedition activities |) The purpose of holiday |
|) vaccinations (biology teachers delight!) | |

Social Media



Twitter: Set up a trip twitter account, great for short, sharp tweets and photos. Parents can follow to see how the group are getting on.



Facebook: Setting up a 'group' for all the participants to chat to each other, think about security settings on here such as closed or invite only plus who will be the admin? Facebook pages are great to set up for the trip, here you can get parents to follow or invite your sponsors, posting fundraising events and trip updates.



Instagram: Have you got any budding photographers in the group? Get them posting some of the groups best pictures, another way for parents and sponsors to follow.

During the trip

While we understand that you and your students may wish to keep your social media profiles updated while you are away we do ask you to consider if this is really necessary. We at the STC believe that part of the joy of travel is the ability to switch off from modern technology and live in the moment, connect with the local people and thrive in the beauty of the places we are in.

If you do wish to post updates why not set a limit such as one post every other day? This way you will still be charting the groups' progress without ruining the purity of your journey. We also ask that you consider how your updates may affect people at home. It can be easy for something to be misinterpreted and cause undue stress and worry for parents and we prefer to go by the mottoes 'no news is good news'. Why not save the photos and video clips for your return home?

Use of mobiles: Restricting the use of mobile phones on a Venture pays dividends on the group dynamic. Participants engage with the itinerary, each other and the local community much more if they understand what is going on around them and communicate with each other in person rather than on their phones. Think about the rules regarding this you have (hopefully) set up in the group meetings pre-departure and enforce them on the Venture.

Remember: Some countries have blocks on some social media software OR you may be out of phone/WiFi signal for some period so log the days pictures and notes on what happened for later.

Diaries: A great way to record what is going on and bring everyone back to basics. Try to get the team to make a small note each day so they can share experiences or have a life-long travel diary memento. Take 20 mins at the end of each day for participants to have some time to themselves and write their experiences.

Post trip

It doesn't (or at least shouldn't!) all stop, post trip. It's always good to share and review any venture. You'll discover that STC asks for feedback on all of our trips. It's also good to review and look back on your own journey.

Have a get together with the group, maybe go out for a meal together and think about the following:

-) Photos! Maybe not all of them though...
-) Thank you to the sponsors
-) Trip reviews
-) Adjusting to life back at home!
-) The groups' achievements: project work, expeditions, learning outcomes
-) Plans for the next adventure!



“A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles”

Tim Cahill

Section 4: Key Planning for the trip

As the lead teacher there are a lot of things to think about. STC will be there to help you with the paperwork and administration. In this section, we go over some of the key planning areas that you will need to think about.

Participants & Staff: Travel health

STC conduct medical clearances on ALL participants including students and teachers. We may need to ask clarification questions if there are any conditions we need further information on. This ensures we are able plan for all individuals to take part in a safe and enjoyable environment.

As the lead teacher, we will be in touch with you prior to the trip to discuss any students that have medical conditions (physical or mental) to make sure you are aware of these individuals and happy with their care plan. Please be aware that we may already have been discussing a potential care plan with the student/parents already and we may have been asked to keep this confidential until nearer the date of departure. We may also ask you for a behavioural risk assessments on any individuals you may have a concern with and how best to manage their behaviour on the venture.

Vaccinations

Depending on where you are travelling to will depend on which vaccinations are essential, recommended or advised. Some vaccinations can be costly, others can be quite cheap.

STC will provide travel health advice from The Travel Health Consultancy. This will guide you as to which vaccinations you should be thinking about. If you are based in the South West, we can usually arrange group vaccinations for you at school or the individuals can source their own at local health centres.

Malaria

If the venture is travelling to a malarial area, then STC enforces that ALL participants **must** take anti-malarial prophylaxis unless this is against medical advice. Malarial prophylaxis can range from £10-£70 for around 1 months' supply depending on which medication you choose. We will provide a malarial log to help keep track of daily medication taking.

Altitude

If your itinerary is travelling to a high altitude (above 2500-3000m) then STC will provide acclimatisation medication in the form of Acetazolamide (Diamox) and will send out forms for consent from all participants prior to issue.

Training

STC provides training plans for all our trips that include physical activity such as trekking or cycling. These plans are designed to be followed over a 12-week period. Outside of these training plans it is a great idea to get the team together and conduct your own training to build the team dynamic nice and early. Over the years we have noticed that teams that have conducted their own training prior to a Venture have had a better bond and experience in country than those that have not. This is not saying that if you do not conduct any training you will have a worse time, however, prior training highlights any development points needed prior to travelling.



Insurance & Contingency

We have arranged specialist group medical travel insurance for all our clients. This includes cover for all activities featured as part of your trip. Full details of cover and conditions will be in the Policy Document, available upon request approximately one month before departure. The example cover and limits shown below apply to each Insured Person. This policy is primarily to cover emergencies overseas, but we are now including covid cancellation insurance for individuals as standard. It is each individual's responsibility to insure possessions when travelling with us, if you require cover for this.

Sums Insured	Up to	Excess
Cancellation	Value of Trip	£75
24 hr Emergency Medical, Repatriation Expenses	£10,000,000	£75
In Patient Hospital Benefit	£200	Nil
Criminal Injuries	£5,000	Nil
Personal Liability	£2,000,000	£250
Personal Accident	£25,000	Nil
Travel Delay - Delayed Departure or Arrival after 8 hrs	£100	Nil
Cancellation due to Delayed Departure	£2,000	Nil
Hi-jack of Aircraft	£3,000	Nil
Interruption of Transport	£300	Nil
Legal Expenses	£25,000	£250

Travel Insurance Tips

Best practice: It is best practice for the entire group to travel on the same insurance policy. In the event of a cancellation claim, this minimises time and the potential issues of dealing with multiple insurers.

Don't forget: Travel insurance covers you and the group prior to your departure, as well as whilst you are away. If an individual has to pull out for medical reasons, or the death / illness of a close relative, then cancellation fees imposed by STC Expeditions would usually be covered under travel insurance. Therefore, make sure your insurance is in place at the time of paying a deposit.

Passports and Visas

Visa applications can be a very complex process for some countries so make sure you understand the process from the outset. STC provide initial information within the PBIP which you should have already viewed. There are companies that can complete the process for you as a group, however, this can sometimes be two or three times more expensive than completing the process on your own.

Examples are:

-) Travcour
-) Visa Central

Our administration team will be in touch with any individuals whose passports will be out of date at the time of travel, so these individuals have enough time to renew their passports and apply for their visas.

STC Expeditions will provide any required addition information (e.g. letters of invitation or proof of accommodation) for the process along with a visa help sheet. Please ensure you leave enough time to apply, keeping in mind any participants who may be of a different nationality.

Visa Responsibilities

Each participant is individually responsible for acquiring the necessary visas for all countries visited during the trip (including any transit visas). The STC can accept no liability for the failure of any participant to obtain the necessary visas.

Visas on arrival:

In some countries, (e.g. Vietnam, Nepal) it is very easy to arrange visas on arrival in the country. This is often cheaper and easier than applying in the UK. Requirements vary between countries, but if planning to arrange a visa on arrival, make sure all group members have the number of required photos and any necessary supporting documentation.

Participant Photos

We recommend you carry with you when travelling a picture of all those students and adults in the group. This is useful in the unlikely event you have any missing persons. Scans of passport photo pages are also handy should a passport become lost or if hotels request passport copies for the stay.

UK Travel

If you are requiring a group transfer to/from the UK airport at the start and finish of a trip, do think about organising this nice and early. The school may be paying for this or have its own transport department, if not then additional funds may be needed.

Kit

STC provides a detailed kit list with advice on deals and discounts (see your Portal for more information). You may get better deals if you are buying as a group. If participants or parents do not wish to buy larger items, then there are sites such as www.outdoorhire.co.uk where items can be hired for short or long-term periods.



Finally, it is always good to do a kit check in the final month before departing with the whole group (make sure you leave enough time for anyone to get extra items)

Final documentation & departure day

STC will send a final travel pack with all the documentation you will need for the whole group on the trip. You should not need to take any extra documentation other than for your UK travel plans.

Your day of departure is pretty important, so it pays to think about it carefully and plan ahead: UK weather can be unpredictable and there have been instances where groups have been caught short due to freak weather storms. You may have to rearrange your UK travel plans which would be an additional cost. We have had to switch departure airports at the last minute due to cancellations and/or fog. What would happen if you get to the airport and you found one student had left their passport at home? It is worth thinking of contingencies.

Day of departure risk assessment

It pays to expect the unexpected. Ensure you have considered the above examples in your departure day 'risk assessment'. Can you think of any others? Anticipating some common mishaps can make all the difference. It is most likely everything will go absolutely swimmingly, without incident, but it pays to be prepared.

Flying and transiting airports

Once you have checked in, you are in the hands of the airline. Problems are actually pretty rare, but if there are delays, the airline may put you up in hotels and pay for extra meals (airline dependant). You should have a smooth journey so sit back and relax.

Top tips for happy flying

-) Take your shoes off once you are in your seat. Your feet will swell when in the air, so removing shoes helps avoid restriction.
-) Take a good book.
-) Aircraft are dry environments, so ensure you remain hydrated.
-) For overnight flights, consider taking ear plugs and a 'do not disturb' sign to hang around your neck.
-) Consider a neck pillow.
-) Take some cards and/or travel games.
-) Ensure your iPod (if taking it) is fully charged.
-) Get up and walk around every hour.

-) Dress comfortably in loose-fitting clothes — no skinny jeans or anything that could impede blood flow or cause your ankles to swell.

Sensible ways to help avoid DVT (deep vein thrombosis).

-) Hydrate well the night before the flight.
-) Do not drink alcohol during the flight.
-) Avoid diuretics such as coffee, soft drinks and even chocolate (all of which contain caffeine), during the flight.
-) Aisle seats or exit rows are good as you can get up and walk around whenever possible.
-) Follow the guidelines in the in-flight magazine for exercises to do in your seat.

Transiting Airports

Transfers in airports are straightforward so don't panic about how to get where. Just ensure the group are all together until you get to the next departure lounge/gate. If you want to plan ahead, all airports have websites with maps that you can download in advance to help you plan your route.



Section 5: Sources of information

Passport & Visa resources:

Identity and Passport Services:

Passport services for British and Irish Nationals resident in the UK. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/ips/

Visa Central:

Specialists in obtaining work and travel related visas. Our web-portal on the Visa Central site gives up to the minute information on visa requirements and application procedures.

www.visacentral.co.uk/stcvisas

Travelling within the EU – non-EU passport holders

The British council 'list of travellers' – means non-EU citizens can usually travel as part of a school group without the need for a visa. More information here:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/home-information-centre-list-of-travellers-scheme.htm>

Expedition Advice and Resources:

The Royal Geographical Society:

Registered charity and world leading learned society and professional body advancing geographical science throughout the world.

<http://www.rgs.org/>

Geography Outdoors:

Fieldwork and expedition advice from the Royal Geographical Society.

www.rgs.org/OurWork/Fieldwork+and+Expeditions/Fieldwork+Expeditions.htm

The Young Explorers' Trust:

Registered charity promoting safe and responsible expeditions for young people.

www.theyet.org/

Outdoor Educational Advisors Panel:

Clear guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom.

<http://oeapng.info/>

Travel Safety advice, medical resources & training:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'Know before you go' and Country Advice

Visit the 'Know Before You Go' Campaign website for useful information, advice and tips on planning your journey abroad. Visit the FCO Country advice pages for up to date travel safety advice.

www.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo & www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

Fit for Travel:

Provides free information about travel health, travel vaccines and specific information appropriate to your destination.

www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/

Travel Health Consultancy:

Advisers to the STC, schools and travellers on travel health, risk assessment, wilderness first aid courses and vaccination requirements. Also offer a mobile travel vaccination clinic for private groups and pre-travel risk screening and crisis management assistance.

www.travelhealthconsultancy.co.uk/

Malaria Hotspots:

Information on malaria including games and quizzes for children.

www.malariahotspots.co.uk/

Blood Care Foundation:

Membership organisation which ensures the supply of safe blood to their members throughout the world.

www.bloodcare.org.uk/

Medic Alert:

Bracelets and necklets detailing personal health conditions.

www.medicalert.org/home/Homegradient.aspx

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)

Useful guidance on group safety at water margins.

<http://www.rospace.com/leisuresafety/Info/WaterSafety/groupsafety-watermargins.pdf>

Electricity, Climate, Currency, Time and Female travellers**Global Electricity Guide:**

Really useful site giving details of electricity supply and plug formations for every country in the world.

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

World Climate

Provides statistics for weather for tens of thousands of worldwide destinations.

<http://www.worldclimate.com/>

Worldwide Currency Conversion

Helpful for converting any currency into another at prevailing exchange rates.

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/travel>

World Time

Gives you the precise time anywhere in the world.

<http://www.worldtimeserver.com/>

Journey Woman

Online travel magazine for female travellers, with tips and advice on clothing, kit and staying healthy and safe.

<http://www.journeywoman.com/>

Lonely Planet's Thorntree

An on-line forum for travellers with up-to-date advice and latest news from your destination.

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/thorntree/index.jspa>

Kit, Maps and Travel Guides:**Cotswold Outdoor:**

Outdoor, expedition and travel gear. STC Clients get 15% off here (see your trip confirmation documents for details)

www.cotswoldoutdoor.com/

Nomad Travel Stores:

On-line pharmacy and travel gear.

www.nomadtravel.co.uk

Stanfords:

Worldwide map specialists.

www.stanfords.co.uk/

Bradt Travel Guides:

Authoritative and highly regarded travel guides that often contain more in-depth background country information than the likes of Rough Guide and Lonely Planet. Bradt also have a wide variety of specialist guides to wildlife and trekking in certain regions.

www.bradtguides.com/

Responsible Tourism:

Culture Crossing:

An excellent country by country community-built guide to aid cross-cultural etiquette and understanding.

www.culturecrossing.net/

Tourism Concern:

Independent UK charity fighting exploitation in the global tourism industry.

www.tourismconcern.org.uk/

International Porter Protection Group:

Website of the international charity fighting for Porters' rights and well-being.

<http://ippg.net/>

Friends of Conservation:

The charity we support through our 50:50 CO₂ offset programme.

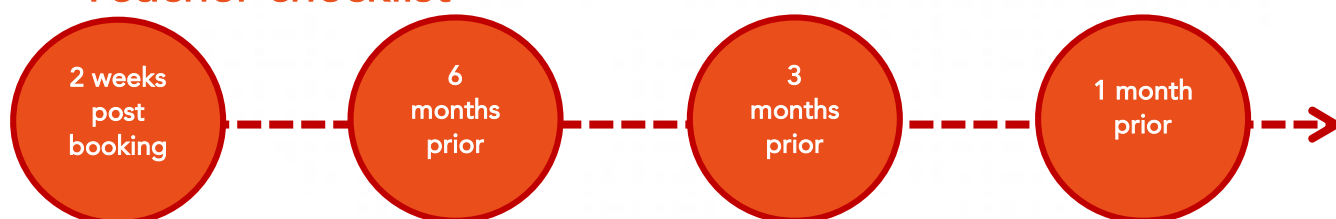
<http://www.foc-uk.com/>

Learning Service:

Tips and suggestions on how to 're-think volunteer travel' to ensure it's responsible.

<http://learningservice.info/>

Teacher checklist



✓	✓	✓	✓
J Names list cross referenced with STC <input type="checkbox"/>	J Check STC portal for PDI <input type="checkbox"/>	J Visa applications started <input type="checkbox"/>	J School emergency contacts arranged <input type="checkbox"/>
J T-shirt order done <input type="checkbox"/>	J Teacher 1 st aid qualifications up to date <input type="checkbox"/>	J Final updates on dietary and medical information to STC <input type="checkbox"/>	J Final travel pack received (hand out ICE cards and information) <input type="checkbox"/>
J School contract returned <input type="checkbox"/>	J Visa advice sought <input type="checkbox"/>	J Transport to/from airport arranged <input type="checkbox"/>	J Kit check <input type="checkbox"/>
J Group planning meeting <input type="checkbox"/>	J SLT/SMT sign off <input type="checkbox"/>	J Pre-departure evening by STC <input type="checkbox"/>	
J Travel insurance arranged (cancellation and personal baggage) <input type="checkbox"/>	J Conduct training / arrange STC to come in for Pre-Departure meeting <input type="checkbox"/>		
J Training dates arranged <input type="checkbox"/>			