Safety abroad

Participation in the study placement abroad does involve certain inherent risks and you must take responsibility for yourself and watch out for your own safety. It is also advisable to take out adequate personal travel and health insurance.

**Incidents should be reported to the local police, the host university and UL International Office as soon as possible. The emergency number in all EU countries is 112.**

If required, the list for Irish embassies in European countries is available on the following website: <https://www.dfa.ie/embassies/irish-embassies-abroad/>

1. **General safety**

* Common sense and caution should be exercised at all times while abroad. Stay alert and trust your instinct.
* Take out travel insurance and private medical insurance
* Be aware of your surroundings and possible dangers: only carry a small amount of cash with you, avoid badly lit and empty streets at night. Keep valuables in a safe place in your room.
* If you are arriving at your destination late at night, book accommodation before you get there.
* Attend orientation, apply for the Buddy programme if offered, obtain local information.
* Contact home regularly and let your family know where you are, where you intend to visit next and if you make any changes to your plans
* Make sure you have your EHIC card on you at all times, just in case.
* Obtain the number of a GP who speaks English (from the International office of the host institution) and have emergency contact numbers at hand at all times.
* Save local emergency numbers on your phone and stick them on the wall in your room so that those numbers are easily accessible in case of emergency.
* If you feel in anyway uncomfortable in a situation, leave as soon as possible and go somewhere you know is safe or to a more public place where you will find someone you can trust.
* Stay in a group when going out at night, take identifiable taxis, do not carry much cash or valuables, be wary at all times
* Reduce alcohol consumption to avoid high-risk situations and remain vigilant of potential danger
* Avoid travelling in a car with a driver who is not well known to the passenger(s)
* Inform the International Office at the host University and UL immediately in emergency
* Enter your local telephone contact on the UL student portal

1. **Money and theft**

* Take care with displaying valuables; wallets, cameras, mobile phones etc should be hidden from view.
* Passport and money (kept in several places and taken as travellers cheques where practical) should be kept separately inside zipped pockets.
* Only carry a minimal amount of cash, sufficient to reach the destination
* Only change money and traveller's cheques in banks and authorised foreign exchange offices
* Never leave your luggage unattended, especially in airports, train stations and bus stations
* Report if any theft to the police immediately, you'll need this to claim against your travel insurance
* If your bank card is stolen, contact your bank to cancel it immediately
* Turn on the tracking device on your phone ([*Find My iPhone*](http://www.apple.com/icloud/find-my-iphone.html) or [A*ndroid Device Manager*](https://www.google.com/android/devicemanager)). If your phone is stolen, contact your network provider straight away, so they can block it and stop anyone else using it.

1. **Protect yourself**

* Be aware of local laws in the countries you visit. For example, in some countries, drinking alcohol is illegal. Also try to respect local customs with the way you dress.
* Never get involved with drugs when abroad. Never agree to carry anything through customs for another person. Also, don't drive someone else's car across a border: in both cases you might be smuggling an illegal substance without realising it.

1. **Travelling alone**

### On the bus

* If you are travelling alone on a bus, sit near the driver so you can complain if anyone harasses you
* Try not to use bus stops that are isolated or badly lit
* Let a friend or family member know your travel plans so they know how you are getting from one place to another

### Walking

* Try and always walk in well-lit, populated areas
* Avoid narrow streets, bushes and entry ways or taking shortcuts
* When walking alone, walk with confidence and at a steady pace
* If you are lost, walk as if you know where you are going and go into a shop or doorway to look at maps
* Walk so that you are facing traffic coming towards you
* Only take lifts from someone you know well and who is fit to drive
* If a car stops to ask for directions don’t approach it, answer from a safe distance to avoid being pulled into the car

### Taking a taxi ​

* If you take a taxi make sure that it is a licensed taxi before getting in
* Try to book in advance, wait for the driver to say your name or ask for evidence of which taxi company they work for
* Ask for the cost of the journey before you get in so you can check if you have enough money

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