



## UK

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## OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

**Please read thoroughly; extremely important**

Greetings from the Visions in Education Operations Department! We are delighted that you have elected to travel with us and hope that your upcoming trip will be your best school trip yet. This memorandum is to notify you of the items required to ensure your trip runs successfully. Please read carefully and let us know if you have any questions or need our assistance in any way.

**Please be aware that all documents have a specific due date. If documents are not submitted in their entirety with all elements completed by the due date, you will not be eligible to qualify for our cash back scheme. We very strongly urge you to collect passport copies when signing pupils up for the trip so as not to jeopardise potential benefits.**

Prior to your travels, there will be three documents that you will need to submit. Here is a breakdown with additional details:

### **Passenger Information Booklet**

The Passenger Information Booklet (PIB) is vital and mandated in its entirety for all travelling groups. Regardless of whether travelling by motorcoach or flight, to Europe, the Americas or beyond, it must be filled in and submitted no later than the due date specified. This form is then submitted to the airlines, our resort partners, your destination manager and your Visions Ambassador.

It is vital that this form be submitted prior to or no later than the due date. If we do not have the form filled out in its entirety, you may jeopardize your booking and your airline seats if travelling by flight. We have found that the best practice is that when students are initially signing up for the trip, they submit a copy of their passport at this time so you have all the relative information necessary. It is equally important that if anyone travelling needs to renew their passports, it is done in a timely manner to ensure that **final passports will be returned prior to the due date assigned**.

Please be aware that if travelling via flight, this document is submitted directly to the airlines by Visions in Education. If you have a change to any passenger (including a passport number or expiration date), the airlines will charge a fee to make the revision. The general fee is between £100/\$150 - £200/\$300 per change, dependent upon the airline, and you will be responsible for submitting any fees necessary prior to the re-issue of tickets. If one member of your party is delayed it can result in that party member not being able to be ticketed and therefore, unable to travel with your group.

The general due dates for the PIB are below. Please be advised that in some instances, flight requirements may mandate that an earlier due date is necessary. If this is the case with your booking we will advise you accordingly. The dates listed here are the absolute latest dates we may accept your documents.



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<u>Departure Date</u>	<u>Document Deadline</u>
Groups departing in September	1-June
Groups departing in October	1-July
Groups departing in November	1-August
Groups departing in December	1-September
Groups departing in January	1-October
Groups departing in February	1-November
Groups departing in March	1-December
Groups departing in April	1-January
Groups departing in May	1-February
Groups departing in June	1-March
Groups departing in July	1-April
Groups departing in August	1-May

Once opened, please read the very first tab thoroughly and note there are several tabs in the booklet. The tabs may be found at the bottom of the sheets. Simply toggle between them to input any relative information. Here is a brief overview:

#### TAB 1 – WELCOME

This page contains essential notes. Please ensure it is read thoroughly. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

#### TAB 2 – PARTY DETAILS

This is general information about your booking and also emergency contact information for a person who is not travelling with your party. For your Reference Number, please list your VIE booking number. For your tour name, please list your destination or if an educational programme, please list the actual name of the trip you will be taking.

#### TAB 3 – PARTY INFORMATION

This section breaks down all required information necessary for travel. There are a few key details that we need to draw your attention to:

- All names must exactly match the names shown on the traveller's passport. No nicknames please.
- If any person travelling has a middle name shown on his/her passport, this must be shown.
- If travelling to the USA, please note that the column for the ESTA confirmation number of each passenger must now be submitted to the airlines in advance of travel.
- The 'Age in Years' refers to the age that the person will be when travelling.
- For WINTER SPORTS:
  - For 'Ski or Board' please list the single type of snowsport in which the passenger will be participating.
  - Important Note: All ski resorts require a minimum of 8 boarders of similar ability level to comprise an instruction group. If you do not have 8 members of similar ability level, please consult us but be aware that in some cases, the boarders may be required to switch to skiing.
  - For 'Ability Level' please list 1, 2 or 3 (1 = beginner, 2 = intermediate, 3 = advanced).
  - For Boot Size, Height & Weight, **please use the conversion charts** and links as shown on the Conversions tab. It is imperative that the measurements that are shown for your group are in the correct sizing as per your destination. (i.e. if travelling to the USA, all measurements including height, weight and boot size should be shown to match American standards.)
  - It is important that **both pupils and adults** fill out the ski information as it is not only used for class break-outs but also used to set bindings properly. The only exception would be for an adult that is bringing his or her own equipment with them.

#### TAB 4 – CODE OF CONDUCT

All travelling schools are required to sign off on our Code of Conduct policy. A best practice is to review this with your students and their parents during a time when you are meeting to ensure that everyone is aware of conduct expectations.

#### TAB 5 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please use this tab to share any additional information you would like sent to the airlines, transportation companies, hotels, resorts, or ground information teams.

There may be additional tabs also shown for reference including due dates as well as size conversions.

It is extremely important that you **double-check all data for accuracy** to ensure you will not be required to pay any additional fees for changes.

If for any reason, you do need to make a change to your PIB after your due date, please notify us and we can assist you. Please be aware that all changes **must be submitted on your PIB** and highlighted.

Unfortunately, we may not update your PIB on your behalf. This ensures that all changes made are 100% accurate and represent your needs. Please do not send in any changes that are not accompanied by a revision to your PIB.

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN PASSENGER INFORMATION BOOKLETS THAT ARE NOT 100% COMPLETED. ONLY SUBMIT THESE ONCE THEY ARE TOTALLY COMPLETE, INCLUSIVE OF ALL DETAILS REQUESTED. UNFORTUNATELY, WE MAY NOT ACCEPT PARTIALLY COMPLETED PIBs.**

It is also important to note that we must receive the completed form **in its entirety please**. Although we appreciate efforts to send us periodic updates, we are unable to submit the form to relevant suppliers until it is totally complete. Please check for your specific due date to ensure that all information is gathered and recorded prior to this date.

No changes may be accepted to any PIB within 30-days of travel. The only exception will be in the event of a documented medical emergency.

## Rooming List

The process for Rooming Lists varies according to your destination.

**European Destinations:** In Europe, hotels generally do not provide a rooming break-out until a few days prior to travel. Due to this, your Resort Manager or a member of our Operations team will send this to you as soon as received from the hotel.

**Americas and Worldwide Destinations:** Your quote that has been issued to you is based on the specific amount of rooms your group will utilise and how many people are occupying each room. Please check your Option/Provisional Letter to determine your assigned rooming. If for any reason you need to change the rooming assigned, please let us know at your very earliest convenience so we can then enquire if additional rooms will be available and also revise your costs based on your independent needs. Approximately 3-months prior to travel, you will be issued a rooming list. Upon receipt, please determine which student and staff members will be placed in each room. The completed version will be required to be emailed back to us within 60-days of departure. Unfortunately, hotels will not disburse actual room numbers until physical check-in.

## Copy of the key pages of your school's Travel Insurance Policy

A copy of the key pages of your school's insurance documentation will be required to be submitted to us by the same due date indicated for your PIF. This may be emailed to us, or sent via fax to 01300 350107. If sending via fax, please ensure that the policy clearly states your school's name so it may be tracked accordingly.

If your school is based in the UK and you need to purchase insurance through Visions, we will be happy to assist you with this. Insurance must be purchased and fully paid for no later than the time your second deposits are received. Please enquire about rates and other necessary items when initially booking your trip.

## Additional Information

### The Student Travel Forum & Quality Badge

Visions in Education is an Assured Member of the School Travel Forum (STF) and in booking with us you can be secure in the knowledge that we:

- Understand and facilitate the needs of educational travel
- Have effective Safety Management Systems in place, specifically focused on travelling with young students
- Offer fair terms and condition and the best financial security

**To ensure our health and safety standards are maintained our systems and procedures are fully audited annually by independent experts.**

STF membership is the benchmark for good school tour providers; consequently it is an Awarding Body for the prestigious 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge.'

The Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) endorses the Quality Badge and requests Local Authorities to recommend the use of Badged Providers and require the minimum of additional paperwork where Quality Badge accreditation is in place.

This means that you can book your trip with confidence, meet your due diligence and reduce the amount of External Provider paperwork necessary.



### The Student & Youth Travel Association

Visions in Education is also proud to be a member of SYTA – The Student & Youth Travel Association. Comprised of specialised school tour operators from around the world, SYTA is a non-profit,

professional trade association that promotes student & youth travel while seeking to foster integrity and professionalism among student and youth travel service providers. SYTA members are committed to developing, promoting, and sharing resources for safe and responsible student travel.

SYTA members are also dedicated to the continuous enhancement of Student Educational Travel Safety by sharing best practices amongst members to enhance the overall safety standards of the industry. SYTA is committed to providing access to the latest safety technology advancement, practical training, and continued involvement in global legislation aimed at improving student travel safety.



## Flights

If travelling via flight, please know that your specific flight details are generally available approximately 60-days prior to departure. Please also understand that although we always try to ensure your preferences are achieved, we may only guarantee that flights are ticketed as per the general itinerary noted (departure from a general area – i.e. London, not Gatwick or Heathrow specifically). Additionally, we are not able to guarantee direct flights as a standard practice. If you prefer to ensure a direct flight, please discuss this with your Travel Advisor. In most cases, if a direct flight is requested and available, additional fees will be assessed by the airlines.

Please also be aware that although airlines will give us general routes, flight numbers and timings, these are not guaranteed until approximately one week prior to travel when final tickets are issued. Airlines reserve the right to make changes to layover cities, timings and flight numbers until final tickets are issued. This said, if we are able to let you know specific flight details earlier than normal, please understand that these may change up to the time of travel as they are at the discretion of the airlines. The airlines are also responsible for deciding how long of layover times will be required in specific cities and a variety of other factors.

Finally, whilst we try our best to arrange group seating on all flights where possible, this is on a request basis only and as much as we would like to, it cannot in any way be guaranteed as it is up to the individual airline.

If you have any questions regarding flights or UK Coach transfers, please contact our UK flight/transport department directly:

Alan Garner, IAG Flights  
[alangarner@iagflights.com](mailto:alangarner@iagflights.com)  
Telephone 01444 225618

## Airline Baggage Limits

Baggage weight and size restrictions vary and are subject to change. We have listed the most recent weight and size maximums below however we urge you to check your group ticketing details for the most up-to-date information as these do tend to change frequently. If these should change and we are made aware by the airline, we will of course advise you personally. Please understand that it is your responsibility to be aware of limits or pay any applicable fees for oversized or overweight items.

### **European Destinations:**

Aer Lingus: 1 bag of 20kgs

Air France: 1 bag of 20kgs

Alitalia: 1 bag of 20kgs

British Airways: 1 bag of 20kgs

Easyjet: 1 bag of 20kgs

Jet2: 1 bag of 22kgs

KLM: 1 bag of 20kgs provided all passengers are members of KLM's Flying Blue

Lufthansa: 1 bag of 20kgs

Monarch/ZB: 1 bag of 20kgs

Ryanair: 1 bag of 15/20kgs (dependent upon destination; please check with your travel advisor)

Thomson Airways: 1 bag of 20kgs

### **Worldwide Destinations:**

Aer Lingus: 1 bag of 20kgs

British Airways: 1 bag of 20kgs

Delta Airlines: 1 bag of 23kgs

Icelandair: 2 bags of 23kgs each

Lufthansa: 1 bag of 20kgs

United/Continental Airlines: 1 bag of 23kgs

US Air: 1 bag of 23kgs

Virgin Atlantic: 1 bag of 23kgs

## **Ferries – UK to Europe**

All passengers should be awake and with shoes on (also access to coats in case of inclement weather) 30-minutes before arrival at the port city. All passengers should be in possession of their own passports as well.

The UK Borders Agency also insists that all passengers disembark the coach for passport inspections. As long as all passengers are fully awake and in possession of their own documents this will make the transition through the Port easier for them.

Groups are only permitted to travel on their booked sailings. In Calais, P&O are utilising the old Hoverport as a parking area (with only minimal facilities) if groups arrive early. Therefore, when travelling, please consult your bus driver for the best times to ensure an easy transfer as these may vary from what is shown on your itinerary due to current circumstances. All groups should arrive no more than 2-hours prior to their booked sailings back at Calais.

## **Luggage Handling**

All passengers should be able to handle their own luggage independently. Luggage handling fees are not included in the cost of your trip. If you would like to add on luggage handling, please let us know and we will be happy to determine associated costs on your behalf.

## **Changes within 30-days of Travel**

If for any reason you opt to change or add services that may result in increased fees within 30-days of travel, please be advised that we will require you to sign a Credit Card Authorisation Form and submit your Credit Card details **before** we may implement changes. This may include items such as passenger name changes, additions of activities and/or transportation over the original package, or other changes implemented by you. Please understand that this will only be requested when you request a change. All billing will be authorised by the Party Leader and all schools will have an opportunity to

pay by BACs transfer or cheque, however if the payment is not received in time, the credit card submitted will be charged for the relevant fees and any credit card charge fees that we incur.

## European Health Insurance Card

We'd like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of all UK/EU groups travelling within the EU to have a EHIC. This is free and allows free medical care at point. For more information, visit <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/Pages/about-the-ehic.aspx>.

## Waivers

If you are travelling to a destination located in the Americas (USA, Canada, Costa Rica, Mexico or Ecuador), please know that waivers will usually be required for your school. Waivers are forms that will need to be signed by each parent/legal guardian in order to allow your students to participate in some activities. Please check with us to determine if waivers will be required for any of your activities. If they are, these will be emailed to you. When you travel, each student will need to be able to produce the signed copy of the waiver to participate in the activity.

**If you are travelling to/within the Americas and have not received the waivers required for your tour, please contact us directly!**

## ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation – travel to USA only)

In addition to ensuring that all passport requirements are met, persons visiting the USA must apply online for ESTA prior to travel:

### **ELECTRONIC SYSTEM for TRAVEL AUTHORISATION - ESTA**

<https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> & [www.usembassy.org.uk](http://www.usembassy.org.uk)

All passengers eligible for travel to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must receive online approval a minimum of 72-hours prior to departure. The Visa Waiver Programme offers entry into the US without the need for a visa to travellers from selected countries. UK passport holders may travel under this programme, however if a different passport is held you will need to check with the US Embassy about eligibility. The current list of countries covered can be found on the website shown above. Boarding/entry on arrival in the US may be denied if you have not received approval.

The website itself is clear and concise, and takes you step-by-step through the process of registering your details in order to travel to the USA. Application takes just a few moments; please ensure that you have your passport in hand when logging in. If you get a new passport after receiving approval (lost/stolen/expired) you **MUST** re-apply as the document details will have changed. You will not be able to travel without your approval matching exactly the details shown in your passport.

All passengers to the USA must have an ESTA approval code a minimum of 72-hours prior to departure in order to board the plane. Failure to do so may result in denied boarding and/or entry. An approval does not guarantee entry at Customs & Immigration. It is up to all groups to ensure that each passenger has completed the form and received the necessary approval before travel. To apply, general costs are \$15 USD and the ESTA approval is valid for a 2-year period.

## Passport Questions

We understand that many groups will have passport questions regarding international students you may have attending your tour. Unfortunately, government regulations change frequently so in order to ensure you have the most up-to-date information, it is best for you to refer parents with questions



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to a website operated by your home country for the latest information. Unfortunately, due to the frequent changes, we are not able to advise on this subject directly.

## Visits to Milan, Venice, Florence, Athens and other 'Tourist Tax' Cities

If you are on a tour and have elected to include a day trip option to a major European city, please know that most will require additional tourist tax to be paid. At times, these fees may be waived if you are travelling as a school for educational purposes. To apply for fee waving, we will require a letter, written on your school letterhead, showing all passenger names in order to qualify for tax-free tourism. Prior to your trip, you will be sent a sample of the required letter to use to ensure you have met all requirements. This will need to be received 30-days prior to travel. If you elect not to submit this, please be advised that you may be required to pay mandated tourism taxes upon arrival.

## Coach Company Requests

If you would like to request the use of a specific motorcoach company, please alert our transport team to this at your very earliest convenience. While we cannot guarantee any specific provider, we can certainly make the request for consideration.

## Dietary Requirements

Please be advised that while every effort will be made to meet specific dietary requirements, these may not be guaranteed. Please reconfirm all dietary requirements to hotel management upon arrival. Meal providers are generally able to cater to Vegetarian requests however others such as Vegan, Celiac, Organic and religious preference diets generally require that specialty food is brought by the participant. Unfortunately, dislikes may not be catered for and no discounts are available for those that require specialty foods. Please consult us if you have a specific question regarding airline or ground arrangements. We will be happy to assist in any way we are able. Please review the type of meal service that will be provided during your tour. If you are on a dine-around programme, it is always best to be prepared as select meals may not be adequate for all needs.

## Itineraries

Please be advised that your final itinerary will be made available to you approximately 2 weeks prior to travel. If you receive flight changes after this time, this will not be shown on the initial itinerary. Also, please be aware that we will be unable to send any itineraries if we have not received **all required documents** and payments. This includes your completed Passenger Information Booklet, your Rooming List if travelling outside of Europe, and your Insurance documentation.

## Cash-Back!

In order to reward you, we are pleased to offer a cash-back scheme which entitles you to earn cash to use while in resort. Please consult your Provisional Booking Letter for specific details. In order to qualify for this scheme, please know that 2 items must be achieved:

- We must receive all financial payments on time in accordance to the specific due dates shown in your finance confirmations.
- We must receive all required forms (your completed Passenger Information Booklet, your Rooming List if travelling outside of Europe, and your Insurance documentation) by the specific due dates in accordance to your month of travel. Please be advised that all forms must be 100% completed before we are able to accept them.

We urge you to ensure you know the specific due dates as late entries for either of the above requirements will make your school ineligible for qualification. As always, if you have any questions or if we may assist in any way, please do not hesitate to ask us! Unfortunately, there will be no extensions given for meeting qualifications.





## Seatbelts on Coaches in North & Central America

Please be advised that in the Americas, coaches do not have seatbelts. If this is a condition of travel, please alert us when booking and we can attempt to source this on your behalf. Current fees for motorcoaches outfitted with seatbelts generally run from £200+ in additional costs which would be billed to your school.

## Staff Contacts

Our staff always look forward to serving your school. If we may answer any questions or assist in any way, please contact us! Our Operations staff are available in both the UK and America to best serve all schools with extended hours.

To comply with data submission regulations, we must advise you that all documents required should be sent via email straight to our Operations team and **not copied to other sources**. This will assist in protecting against compromising data. When submitting your documents, please do not copy anyone other than our Operations department member assigned to your tour. For secure submission we also suggest using password-protected data.

General Staff Contacts for Operations include:

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, PERFORMING ARTS, SPORTS & CULTURE TOURS

Itinerary planning, data submission, rooming and general questions:

Travelling to European destinations: **Mike Lucas**, [michaellucas@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:michaellucas@visionsineducation.co.uk)

Travelling outside of Europe: **Rachel Neimeyer**, [rachelneimeyer@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:rachelneimeyer@visionsineducation.co.uk)

Request billing invoices, financial queries, or change in numbers:

**Corinne Simmons**, [corinnesimmons@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:corinnesimmons@visionsineducation.co.uk)

### SKI TOURS

Itinerary planning, data submission, rooming and general questions:

Travelling to European destinations: **Mike Lucas**, [michaellucas@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:michaellucas@visionsineducation.co.uk)

Travelling outside of Europe: **Bill Wellington**, [billwellington@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:billwellington@visionsineducation.co.uk)

Request billing invoices or financial queries:

**Carol Wood**, [carolwood@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:carolwood@visionsineducation.co.uk)

Request a change in numbers:

**Sonya Woodbridge-Cox**, [sonyawoodbridgecox@visionsineducation.co.uk](mailto:sonyawoodbridgecox@visionsineducation.co.uk)

### FLIGHTS & TRANSPORTATION

- UK-based flights, UK motorcoaches & ferry queries
- UK transportation needs

Alan Garner, Transportation Executive, [alangerner@iagflights.com](mailto:alangerner@iagflights.com)

If originating outside of the UK, please contact your assigned Operations person as international flight bookings may vary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. We know you want to minimize any potential issues and/or delays so appreciate your assistance. As always, if we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us directly.

Kind regards,

*Michele Hammock*

**Michele Hammock**

**General Manager / International Director**

Visions in Education

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