

Student Exchange Programme

Pre-Departure Briefing
For Austria and Switzerland



- 🌀 Introduction
- 🌀 Student Exchange Programme (SEP)
- 🌀 Pre-trip Preparation
- 🌀 Find out about...
- 🌀 What to Bring
- 🌀 Pre-departure Checklist
- 🌀 Once You're There
- 🌀 Preparing for Home
- 🌀 Important Contacts and Links
- 🌀 Question & Answer

Who Are We?

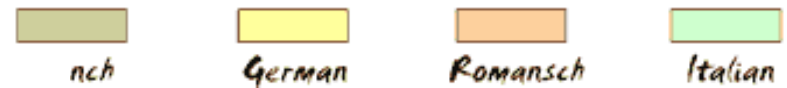
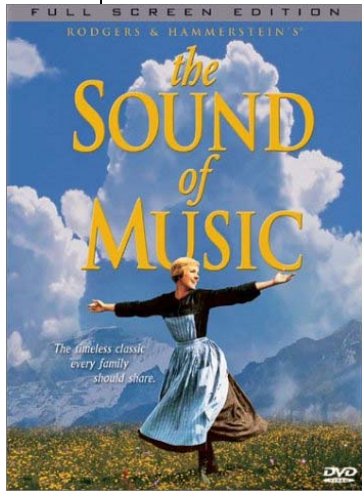
International Relations Office (IRO)

OUR MISSION

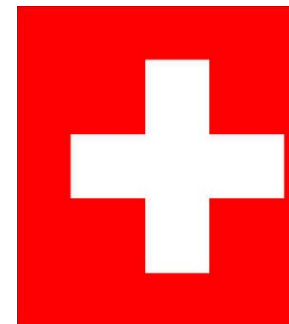
Forging international partnerships
that make NUS
a world-class knowledge enterprise



Student Exchange Programme (SEP)



Languages Spoken in Switzerland
(Approximate Boundaries)



What does SEP entail?

- ✧ Do 1 or 2 semesters at an overseas partner university
- ✧ Do full-time study with credit transfer
- ✧ Pay only NUS tuition fees
- ✧ Partner university gives tuition fee waiver
- ✧ Pay own airfare, personal expenses, health insurance, books, other individual costs

SEP Eligibility

- ✧ Be a full-time undergraduate
- ✧ Completed at least 2 semesters in NUS upon admission to partner university
 - ✧ SEP not allowed in final semester (3-year course) or final year (4-year course)
- ✧ Have a minimum CAP of 3.0, without any grade below 'C' in any module
- ✧ Have the requisite language skills where applicable (through LPP or otherwise)



Paperwork

- ✧ Singaporeans and students of other nationalities need to apply for a visa/residence permit at the Austrian Embassy or Swiss Embassy
- ✧ Apply early as the application may take up to 2-3 months
- ✧ Take note of visa requirements in host and neighbouring countries as some may require visas even for transit purposes



Paperwork (con't)

- ❧ Documents needed:
 - ❧ Passport with at least 6 months validity
 - ❧ Proof of acceptance at partner university
 - ❧ Proof of financial support
 - ❧ Proof of accommodation
 - ❧ Insurance coverage
- ❧ For a full list of required documents and more specific information, please refer to the Innsbruck International Student Guide [here](#) or the Swiss Embassy website [here](#)



Paperwork (con't)

- ❧ All NSmen are required to:
 - ❧ Notify MINDEF if they are travelling overseas for more than 24 hours and less than 6 months.
 - ❧ Apply for Exit Permit (EP) if they are travelling overseas for 6 months or more. Those who travel overseas with a valid EP need not make further notification to MINDEF Notification Centre (MNC).
 - ❧ http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/mindef_wbsites/topics/nsmen/admin/Exit_Permit.html



Accommodation

- ✧ Make sure you have applied for accommodation - sometimes applying for SEP does not mean you have applied for housing
- ✧ If housing is only provided during the semester, find alternative lodging during the periods before and after term
- ✧ Check if school hostels provide daily/weekly/monthly rates outside of term time
- ✧ Check your housing contracts properly - what you are liable for
- ✧ If documents are in German, make sure you understand them fully before signing

Finances

- ✧ Do your sums and make sure you have enough money for the duration of your exchange
- ✧ Get an international bank draft in Euros (Austria/Switzerland) or Swiss francs (Switzerland). Note that this may take up to 10 days to process
- ✧ Fees will be charged by banks for telegraphic transfers and cheques
- ✧ Advisable to have a credit card with you in case of emergencies (ensure that your card has a PLUS or CIRRUS sign at the back so that you can draw local currency from foreign ATMs)



Insurance

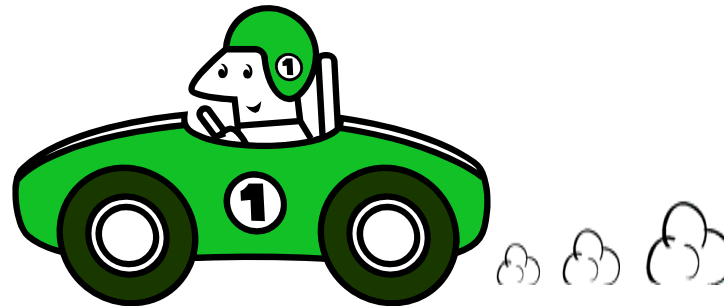
- ❧ Get travel insurance in case of lost baggage or delayed flights
- ❧ Medical insurance should be compulsory in your Austrian/Swiss university. If so, either get that or obtain a waiver using your Singapore-bought insurance.
- ❧ Take note that claims may be easier to make with Austrian/Swiss insurance.

Travel plans

- ✧ Buy your flights early online or through a travel agent
- ✧ Check for student fares with your travel agent
- ✧ Sign up for frequent flyer mile programmes to accumulate mileage
- ✧ Take note of the time you will be arriving at your destination. If it is late at night, are you comfortable getting around the city alone and do you have somewhere to stay?
- ✧ Consider traveling in groups
- ✧ Check your airline's baggage allowance before packing!

Find out about..

- 🌀 The weather - Should you be wearing tee shirts or wool coats and mufflers? Can you deal with the low humidity?
- 🌀 Time difference
- 🌀 Exchange rate
- 🌀 How to report the loss of your passport or credit cards
- 🌀 How to get around



- 🌀 Basic greetings and German/French phrases if you have not learnt the language

1. Important Documents

- ✧ Passport
- ✧ Letter of acceptance from partner university
- ✧ Study Plan
- ✧ Proof of funding
- ✧ Accommodation Letter
- ✧ Copies of NUS transcript and GCE 'O' and 'A' level certificates
- ✧ Copies of your insurance policies
- ✧ Exit permit for NSmen

Please make copies of all important documents and keep separate sets in different places. It is also a good idea to leave one set at home so that these documents can easily be sent to you in the event that you lose those with you.

2. Other Essentials

- ✧ Enough cash to last you until your bank draft is approved
- ✧ Medication for personal use (prescription drugs should be kept in their original packaging with your name on it, and be accompanied by a doctor's note)
- ✧ Travel adaptors and multi-plug adaptors
- ✧ Laptop, camera and cell phone chargers
- ✧ Umbrella or raincoat
- ✧ First-aid kit



3. Daily necessities

- ✧ Toiletries, alarm clock, hairdryer, clothes, footwear
- ✧ Take note that the products you are used to may not be available overseas, or may be very expensive

4. Fun Stuff

- ✧ Digital camera
- ✧ Photos of friends and family
- ✧ Souvenirs from Singapore
- ✧ Singaporean food or spices
- ✧ These will help you to show others what life in Singapore is like



Pre-departure Checklist

Docs and Prep

- Valid passport and visa
- Proof of acceptance at PU
- Study plan
- Proof of financial support
- Proof of accommodation
- Insurance
- Bank draft/credit card/cash
- Confirmed flight ticket
- Emergency Contacts
- Vaccinations and checkups
- Driver's licence
- Exit permit for NSmen
- Passport photographs

Things to Bring

- Appropriate clothing
- First aid kit
- Medication
- Adaptors and chargers
- Microphone
- Umbrella/raincoat
- Proper footwear
- Toiletries/alarm clock/ hairdryer
- Footwear
- Digital camera
- Photos and souvenirs
- Foodstuffs
- German/French phrasebook



1. First things first

- ✧ Check in with the partner university international office
- ✧ Attend the orientation for exchange students
- ✧ Acquaint yourself with the student services
- ✧ Singaporeans should register themselves on the [MFA website](#), other nationalities should contact their country's diplomatic missions
- ✧ Update your contact details at the [RO website](#)
- ✧ Find out who you should call in times of emergency - police, ambulance, or campus security
- ✧ Call home! Ensure that your family members can contact you and inform them if you are going to travel - we do not want them calling us about your whereabouts.

2. Settling In

- ❧ Familiarise yourself with your new surroundings
- ❧ Keep yourself updated with the daily local news
- ❧ Talk to new people - don't keep to yourself
- ❧ Take note of your exam dates. If your semester overseas overlaps with the new NUS semester, start making alternative arrangements to sit for your exam early or do assignments in lieu of the exam. If neither option is possible, apply for an extension of your leave of absence from NUS



3. Safety

- ❧ Be safe - don't wander around alone and beware of pickpockets - guys should keep their wallets in their front pockets and girls should keep their bags tightly clasped under their arms. If confronted, give up your valuables and do not resist.



4. Culture Shock

- ❧ Anxiety and feelings (of surprise, disorientation, confusion, etc.) felt when people have to operate within an entirely different cultural or social environment, such as a foreign country.
 - ❧ 1. Honeymoon Phase
 - ❧ 2. Negotiation Phase
 - ❧ 3. Adjustment Phase
 - ❧ 4. Reverse Culture Shock

4. Culture Shock

a) Honeymoon Phase

- ❖ Differences between the old and new culture appear wonderful and new
- ❖ E.g. in moving to a new country, an individual might love the new foods, the pace of the life, the people's habits, the buildings and so on.

4. Culture Shock

b) Negotiation Phase

- ❖ Differences between the old and new culture become apparent and may create anxiety
- ❖ Long for food the way it is prepared in one's native country, may find the pace of life too fast or slow, may find the people's habits annoying, disgusting, and irritating etc.
- ❖ Mood swings or depression

4. Culture Shock

c) Adjustment Phase

- ❖ After 6-12 months, one grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines
- ❖ Know what to expect in most situations and the host country no longer feels all that new
- ❖ Things become more "normal"

4. Culture Shock

d) Reverse Culture Shock

- ❖ Returning to one's home culture after growing accustomed to a new one can produce the same effects as described above, which an affected person often finds more surprising and difficult to deal with as the original culture shock.

4. Culture Shock: The Solution

- ❖ Learn as much as you can about Germany and its culture before you leave. This way, the country and its people are more familiar upon arrival and you will be more aware of and prepared to deal with differences.
- ❖ Be open-minded and tolerant/accepting of unfamiliar aspects
- ❖ Avoid offending others and taking offense: If you make a mistake, apologise!

- ✧ Say your goodbyes and thank you's (Intl Office included!)
- ✧ Confirm your returning flight details
- ✧ Request for your transcripts to be sent to NUS RO (take note of the contact details of the person in charge of this)
- ✧ Ensure your credits are transferred
- ✧ Bid for next semester's modules in CORS
- ✧ Apply for NUS on-campus housing if necessary
- ✧ Upon your return, please remember to fill in the SEP Student Feedback Questionnaire [here](#)

Important Contacts and Links

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- 🌀 [NUS International Relations Office](#)
- 🌀 [List of SEP Coordinators and Administrators](#)
- 🌀 [SEP FAQs](#)
- 🌀 [Austrian National Tourist Information](#)
- 🌀 [Austrian Federal Railways](#)
- 🌀 [Switzerland Tourism](#)
- 🌀 [Swiss Federal Railways](#)
- 🌀 [Deutsche Bahn](#)
- 🌀 [Skype](#)

Questions?

Please check out the IRO website
www.nus.edu.sg/iro

