



**November  
2019**

# Agenda

1. Introduction to International SOS
2. Preparing for SEP
3. What to expect at your destination
4. Settling in
5. Homecoming
6. Q&A + Networking



# TOP REASONS FOR GOING ON SEP

(as reported by students)

- 1 To experience a different culture
- 2 Personal development
- 3 To experience a different education system



## AFTER THEIR SEP EXPERIENCE...

~99% Felt more capable of taking care of themselves

~99% Felt more willing to try out new things





# SATISFACTION SURVEY

## AY2018/19

99%

were either extremely satisfied or  
satisfied with their exchange

98%

would recommend SEP to other  
students



# *LIFE CHANGING STUDY EXPERIENCE*

An illustration of a person with dark hair and a blue shirt, seen from behind with their arms raised in a celebratory gesture. They are standing on a green hill. The background is a solid red color with several white, fluffy clouds. Above the person's head is a small sunburst icon with radiating lines. The entire scene is framed by a white filmstrip border on the left and right sides.

**PRE-DEPARTURE VIDEO**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ZI4ckH5Sc0>

## Preparing for SEP

# ROAD MAP

- Set personal goals
- Find out about host destinations
- Plan itinerary
- Work out budget

After applying with  
your host university

While waiting for  
your acceptance  
package

- Read pre-departure guide
- Attend country briefing

- Follow instructions in acceptance package (read carefully & meet deadlines)
- Apply for visa
- Book accommodation
- Make travel arrangements

Upon receiving your  
acceptance package



# STUDY PLAN

- Complete the module mapping process via the NUS Student Information System (select Self Service – External Study).
- Include some spare modules in your study list in case you are unable to secure your preferred modules or when your enrolled module(s) has been cancelled.
- Should there be any changes to your study plan, seek approval from your home faculty immediately.

# PASSPORT & FLIGHT



- Ensure that passport is valid for 6 months after your intended date-of-return from SEP.
- Do **NOT** confirm flight booking until you have received the acceptance from the host university and gotten your visa.
- Arrive at least 2 weeks before study period and attend orientation programme.



## Preparing for SEP

# VISA (The Netherlands)

- MVV-provisional residence permit: <https://www.netherlandsandyou.nl/travel-and-residence/visas-for-the-netherlands/long-stay-visa-mvv>
- Application for MVV is initiated by host university
- Proof of financial ability is necessary; take note of advice by host university on minimum amount required (eg. about 870 Euros per month x 6 months for SEP)
- Student submit documents and make payment (MVV fee is about 320 Euros) through host university
- Students who are Chinese Nationals are required to apply for Nuffic Certificate prior to MVV application: <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/#tab-visa-requirements>, <https://ind.nl/en>
- Nuffic certificate advice for Chinese nationalities: write to Nuffic to seek waiver of TOEFL and IELTS, mentioning waiver by host university and language of instruction in NUS is English; waiver is not guaranteed, please courteous and polite when seeking waiver
- Host university will inform you about MVV approval; visit the Dutch Embassy to get MVV in your passport before leaving Singapore

# HEALTH & INSURANCE

### The Netherlands

Health insurance is compulsory in the Netherlands, liability insurance can be mandatory

- Check your host university's website for insurance requirement, otherwise, you should subscribe to a private insurance plan that offers sufficient coverage during your stay



## Preparing for SEP

# CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO BRING – DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Valid passport and visa
- ☐ Proof of acceptance by PU
- ☐ Study plan
- ☐ NUS transcripts (to facilitate module registration)
- ☐ Proof of financial support
- ☐ Letter confirming accommodation
- ☐ Receipts of payments made (housing, admin fees, etc.)
- ☐ Medical records (including vaccinations)
- ☐ Insurance
- ☐ Forms of identification (ISIC youth card, driving license, etc.)
- ☐ Bank draft/ credit card/ cash
- ☐ Confirmed flight ticket
- ☐ List of emergency contacts

**Please remember to make a copy of all important documents.** Keep separate sets in different places. You might also like to leave a set at home, so that these documents can be easily sent to you in the event that you lose those with you.

## Preparing for SEP

# CHECKLIST OF THINGS TO BRING – NECESSITIES

- ☐ Appropriate clothing
- ☐ First-aid kit
- ☐ Medication
- ☐ Adaptors and chargers
- ☐ Umbrella/ raincoat
- ☐ Appropriate footwear
- ☐ Toiletries
- ☐ Hairdryer
- ☐ Digital camera
- ☐ Photos and souvenirs of home/ Singapore
- ☐ Foodstuff
- ☐ Passport photos

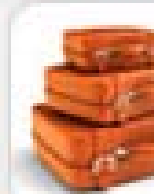




# DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER WITH MFA!

- Singaporeans/PRs should register themselves with Singapore MFA at [https://eregister.mfa.gov.sg/eregisterportal/common/pr\\_eLoginEregisterView.action](https://eregister.mfa.gov.sg/eregisterportal/common/pr_eLoginEregisterView.action).
- NS men must notify MINDEF of their trip and apply for the Exit Permit if required at [www.ns.sg](http://www.ns.sg).
- International students should contact their country's diplomatic missions.

### 3 Simple Steps on how to eRegister



**Step 1:** Decide if eRegistering for individual or group



**Step 2:** Proceed to eRegister



**Step 3:** Receive email/SMS acknowledgement

## Preparing for SEP

# USEFUL RESOURCES

- Partner university specific information:  
<http://www.nus.edu.sg/gro/student-exchange.php>
- Partner University application instructions and university information:  
<https://share.nus.edu.sg/ng/Partner%20Univerisity%20SEP%20application%20material%20for%20s/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
- Read seniors' reports of host university:  
<https://share.nus.edu.sg/ng/SEP%20Report/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
- On being prepared while overseas:  
[https://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/dam/mfa/images/Consular%20Information/for\\_singapore\\_citizens/advice\\_for\\_singaporeans\\_going\\_overseas/Travel%20Notice%20Booklet/2012/MFA%20Booklet%20English.pdf](https://www.mfa.gov.sg/content/dam/mfa/images/Consular%20Information/for_singapore_citizens/advice_for_singaporeans_going_overseas/Travel%20Notice%20Booklet/2012/MFA%20Booklet%20English.pdf)



## What to Expect at Your Destination

# ABOUT THE NETHERLANDS



- Also called Holland
- The country is known for being tolerant, open minded (“let people be”), direct and being punctual
- Boasts many great student cities (Utrecht, Eindhoven, Leiden)
- A quarter of the country lies below sea level
- Very strong cycling culture



# What to Expect at Your Destination

## WEATHER (WINTER / SPRING)

- Winter (Dec to Feb) and Spring (Mar to May)
- Air will be dry – put on lots of moisturiser.
- Have a good coat with you; the weather can change rapidly and it can be expensive to buy winter wear at your host country.
- You may experience gloominess because you are not used to the short days and cold weather.
- Weather gets warmer towards the end of your SEP, but still cold by Singapore's standards (max. hovers around the low 20s celsius).





# What to Expect at Your Destination

## LIFESTYLE

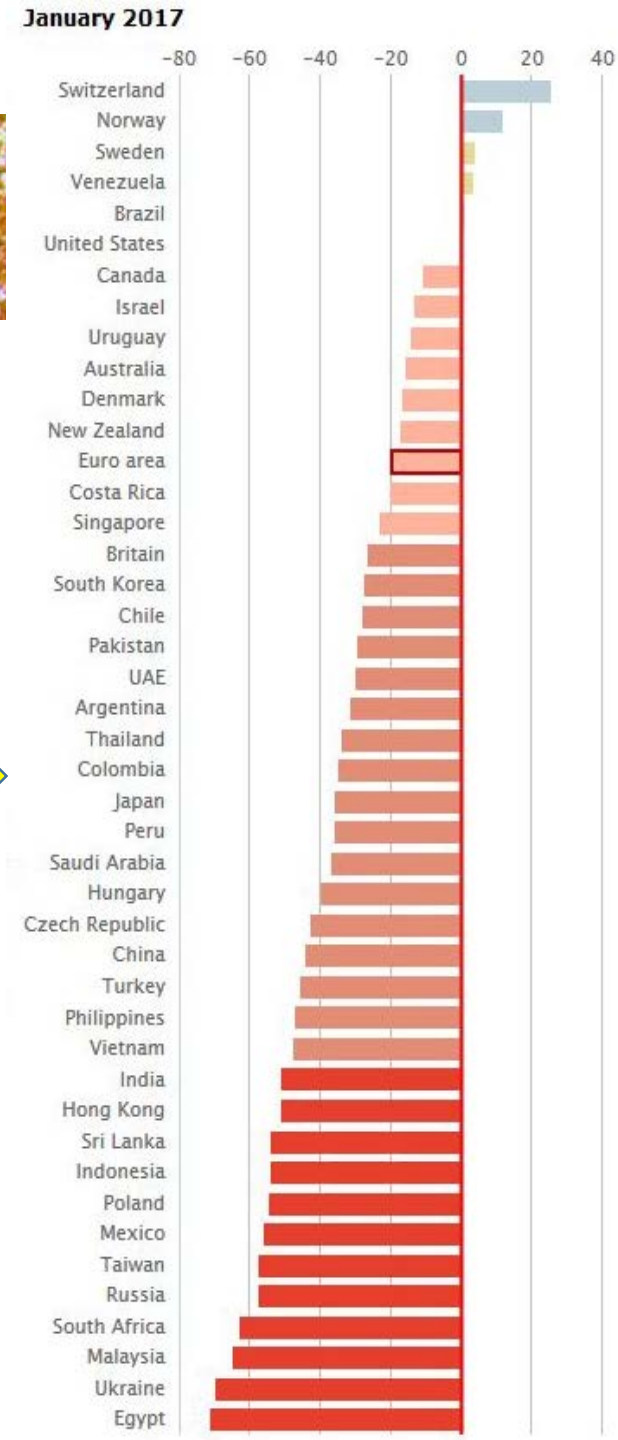
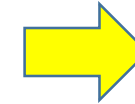
- Pace of life is slower with shorter working hours and a weekend spent with a long brunch or just chilling out is not unusual
- Punctuality is a norm and if you are late, you are supposed to have a better reason than just “I lost track of time”
- Locals are generally helpful but might not take the initiative to make small talk so be thick-skinned, smile and start a conversation
- The Dutch are generally direct, honest and straight to the point
- Walking and cycling culture is very strong
- Partner universities usually have student clubs, organise excursion activities, have sports activities from the beginner's to advanced level - don't miss the opportunity to exercise and make friends

# What to Expect at Your Destination

## COST OF LIVING

- You should work out a budget covering accommodation, food, transport, clothing & entertainment.
- Estimated cost of living:  
**The Netherlands @ €900 - €1,500 per month**  
(approx. SGD 1,500 – SGD 2,500)  
  
**1 Euro = S\$ 1.50**  
*Exchange rate as of November 2019 (via Google)*
- You can save money by shopping at local supermarkets, buying tickets in advance and taking budget airlines.

The Big Mac Index



## What to Expect at Your Destination

# COST OF LIVING – SENIORS' TIPS

- Cook!
- Enjoy student discounts/privileges (with your student card)
- Consider eating in school
- The nearest grocery store might not be the cheapest
- Plan your trips in advance to save cost
- Source for alternative means of traveling (e.g. bus rides instead of flights, buying a bike, etc.)
- Use apps that will give you discounts



## What to Expect at Your Destination

# ACCOMMODATION – SENIORS' TIPS

### Apply as soon as you receive email on school accommodation

Accommodation (especially for city campuses) are in short supply and run out quickly

### Get in touch with host university if unable to secure school accommodation

Airbnb is not your only option; the International Office in general are willing to help you/suggest housing if unable to secure school accommodation.

### Keep your room neat

- Not every hostel has a housekeeping service
- Some hostels conduct spot checks
- You might forfeit your deposit if you leave your room in a mess when you leave

### Check the location of your room

There might be different campuses and hostels located across the city – make sure you know where you're staying before signing on.

## What to Expect at Your Destination

# ACADEMIC CULTURE – SENIORS' TIPS

### Different academic culture

- Lecturers expect a 2-way conversation, and students are not afraid to speak up during classes
- You are expected to learn independently, do your own readings and not just rely on lecture notes
- You can take a module and drop it weeks later without penalty

### Don't assume that classes will be easier

- It's still possible to fail classes while on exchange
- In some schools, there is the option of an intensive, shorter period modules
- You might have an oral exam instead of a written one
- Notes are written on chalkboard and not uploaded
- Longer school term with more covered

### Secure modules and keep track of school work

- Map extra modules – the module list can vary greatly from year to year, or change when the semester starts
- Check if you might need to email the lecturer or just turn up in classes to secure the module, in addition to/in lieu of registering online
- You might need to register for modules twice (module conducted across two blocs)

# What to Expect at Your Destination

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- Singapore Embassy in Belgium  
(serves The Netherlands)

**Address:**

*85 Avenue Franklin Roosevelt  
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium*

**Phone:**

001-32-(2) 660-2979

001-32-(475) 618-265 (emergency contact)

**Fax:**

001-32-(2) 660-8685

**Email:**

[consvc@mfa.sg](mailto:consvc@mfa.sg)

**Website:**

<http://www.mfa.gov.sg/brussels>



## Settling In

# FIND OUT MORE ABOUT...

- Climate and time difference
- Exchange rate and cost of living
- Regional map and local transportation
- Cultural similarities and differences
- Health and safety
- Meet and greet services
- Living and studying at host university
- Expectation and academic assessment at host university
- Activities for exchange students at host university

## Settling In

# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SEMESTER

- Don't just stick to Singaporeans! Make an effort to meet different people and be open-minded about differences.
- Even while having fun, make sure you are aware of any important academic dates and not miss any deadlines!
- Take note of your exam dates. If your semester overseas overlaps with the new NUS semester, start making arrangements for early exam or alternative assessments. If neither is possible, apply for an extension of your leave of absence from NUS.
- Activate the email account given by your host university to receive important notices and announcements.
- Check both host university and NUS email frequently.
- Always stay in touch with your family and friends back home.
- If a problem arises, try to resolve it. However, if you are unable to, ask for help.

## Settling In

# MITIGATING CULTURE SHOCK

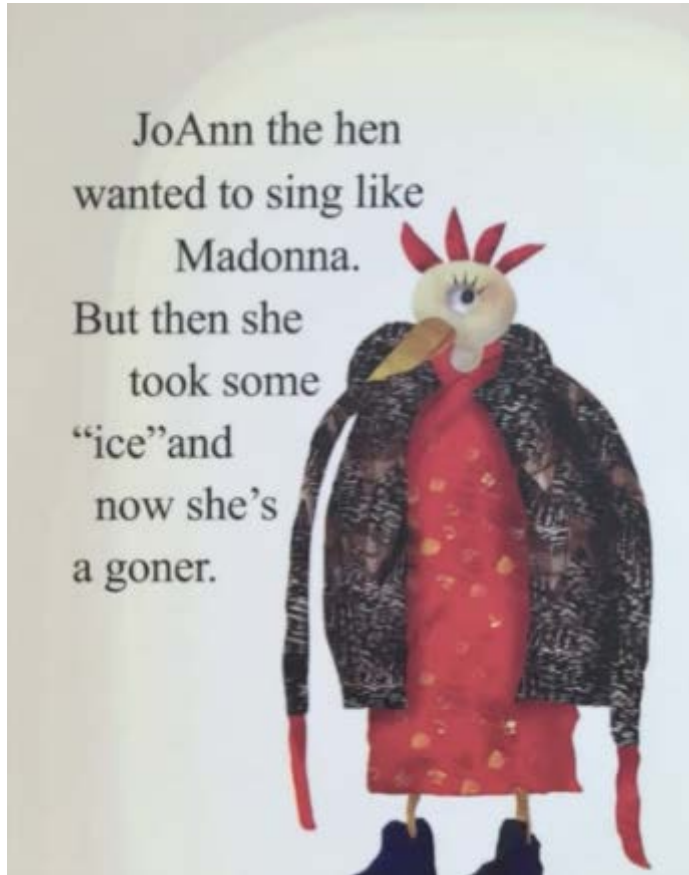


- Recognise feelings of surprise, disorientation, confusion, etc. is normal and okay
  1. Honeymoon phase
  2. Negotiation phase
  3. Adaption phase
- Talk to friends or a counselor
- Keep in regular contact with friends and family back home
- Join university and community activities



## Settling In

# EXPECTED CONDUCT



- Respect others and behave respectably too.
- You are representing yourself, your school and your country.
- Obey laws and regulations of host country, host university, Singapore and NUS.
- Read rules and regulations at host university and ensure that you do not violate them. (e.g. rules on plagiarism and cheating)
- Do not be pressured into anything. Just because everyone is doing it, doesn't make it right. Be comfortable being your own person.

*Anti-drugs campaign by Singapore's Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB)*

Hotline for Central Narcotics Bureau: 1800-325-6666 | Website: [www.cnb.gov.sg](http://www.cnb.gov.sg)

## Settling In

# SAFETY

- Safety should be the priority in all that you do.
- Assess the risk of what you are about to do and try to minimise and even avoid unnecessary risk.
- If confronted, give up your valuables and do not resist as your safety is the most important.
- Ask locals about any dangerous areas or locations that should be avoided.



## Settling In

# SAFETY: “RUN, HIDE, TELL”

In the event of an attack, adopt the following:

### 1 RUN (if escape is possible)

1. Consider the safest route
2. Move quickly and quietly
3. Stay out of view of the attackers
4. Insist others leave with you
5. Leave your belongings behind

### 2 HIDE (if escape is not possible)

1. Find cover from gunfire and stay out of sight
2. Lock yourself in, but do not get trapped
3. If you are unable to lock the doors/entrances, place objects such as tables or cupboards behind the doors or entrances to prevent access of attackers
4. Move away from doors
5. Be very quiet and switch your phone to silent mode

### 3 TELL

- Provide details about the attackers (Total number of attackers, Equipment or weapons being carried, Look of the attackers, Location of attackers (where they are now and moving towards))
- If it is safe to do so, stop others from going towards danger areas
- Follow the police’s instructions and do not make any sudden movements



# USEFUL CONTACTS

- Make your own list of emergency contacts
  1. Embassies/ High Commissions: [www.mfa.gov.sg](http://www.mfa.gov.sg)
  2. Local emergencies numbers
  3. Credit card and bank telephone numbers
  4. Insurance hotlines
  5. NUS Emergency contact: +65 6874 1616 (24 hours)
  6. International SOS

## Homecoming

# BEFORE LEAVING YOUR HOST UNIVERSITY



- Say your goodbyes and 'thank you's
- Complete ex-matriculation process at host university
- Make sure your room is in a presentable state before leaving
- Follow NUS' deadlines for CORS module bidding and application for on-campus housing
- Prepare and submit your SEP report



## Homecoming

# THINGS TO WHEN YOU RETURN

1. Submit your SEP report
2. Join the Welcome Back Session (to accumulate point for the Outstanding NUS Exchangers Award)
3. Complete the SEP Evaluation Survey
4. Join the Peer Advising Programme
  - Advising Programme seeks to build a community of Peer Advisors (PAs) consisting of students who have been on SEP and are keen to contribute.
  - Link up with our Peer Advising Leaders (PALs) to find out more:



[peeradvising@nus.edu.sg](mailto:peeradvising@nus.edu.sg)



<http://tinyurl.com/peeradvisingNUS>



<http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/sep/pals/pals.html>



[@NUSPeerAdvisors](https://twitter.com/NUSPeerAdvisors)

5. Help out at SEP outreach activities and help your juniors prepare for their SEP journey ahead



# Take part in The ONE Award

- ❑ Represent NUS at your exchange university's exchange fair/ information session
- ❑ Join the NUS SEP Ambassador Training before leaving (*compulsory*)
- ❑ Join the Welcome Back Session upon return (*compulsory*)
- ❑ Participate in exchange events and activities upon return
- ❑ Collect your card at the SEP Ambassador Training and start accumulating points to be awarded the Outstanding NUS Exchanger Award





# SEP Ambassador Training

## SESSION ONE

Date : Monday, 9 Dec 2019

Time : 2pm – 4pm

Venue : Global Lounge  
Shaw Foundation Alumni House, L1

## SESSION TWO

Date : Wednesday, 11 Dec 2019

Time : 2pm – 4pm

Venue : Global Lounge  
Shaw Foundation Alumni House, L1



# RECAP

- 1) How many months from your SEP return date, must your passport remain valid for?
- 2) Which of the 4 seasons are you unlikely to experience during your SEP semester?
- 3) Name the 3 steps to ensure personal safety in the event of an attack.
- 4) When are the 2 ambassador training dates?
- 5) Where is the Singapore embassy that serves the Netherlands, located?
- 6) Name two activities that will contribute towards qualification of the ONE Award.



# WELCOME TO YOUR BIG ADVENTURE!

THE WORLD IS YOUR OYSTER – GO OUT THERE AND OWN IT!

