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1. Introduction

Many staff and students travel and work overseas during the course of their time at SOAS. The majority of the tasks undertaken are no more risky than the equivalent activity in the UK, however at times the work may take place in countries or parts of countries where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against travel. **However, no member of staff or student will be expected to travel to a country where there are legitimate concerns about personal health or safety.**

This policy and guidance outlines the steps needed for safe management of these activities. It applies to work carried out by staff (working alone or with colleagues), by students and staff (as part of a course of study), or by students (carrying out research, either alone or with others, or on work placement). It should be noted that SOAS extends the organisations legal duty of care standards as applied in the UK to those travelling abroad and will provide information, training, support and equipment to minimise the risk to SOAS staff and students as far as is reasonably practicable.

This guidance will be reviewed periodically or as required by the Director of Governance and Legal services and Health and Safety manager and discussed with the safety committee as dictated by incidents, accidents or any other event that necessitates that review ne undertaken.

All staff/students travelling abroad will be required to complete the risk assessment and travel safety and security form, found here: [SOAS Travel Risk Assessment](#)

A copy should be retained by the department/supervisor and a further copy sent to the Insurance inbox: insurance@soas.ac.uk for insurance purposes.

For information on booking flights, claiming expenses and levels of insurance cover, employees should refer to the School's Travel and Subsistence Policy.

2. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a prerequisite for a staff member or student being permitted to travel on behalf of SOAS. Department heads/line managers/supervisors are responsible for ensuring that those travelling complete a risk assessment prior to travelling.

The risk assessment will initially be completed by the traveller, here; [SOAS Travel Risk Assessment](#) and then reviewed by their department head/line manager/supervisor, who if required, can provide further input.

****the only exception to this being students from the doctoral school whose risk assessment is included in their fieldwork application form****

For insurance purposes if travel is to one of the sanctioned territories (listed in the insurance section) or will involve being overseas for a period exceeding one year, please ensure that risk assessments are completed at least 3 weeks prior to travelling.

Please note that the risk assessment template included in the form is not exhaustive. Travellers are required to consider the advice given and based on the hazards associated with their trip, add or remove information as applicable. The Health and Safety manager will also be available to provide further guidance on how risk assessments are produced, should there be a requirement.

As with all work-related UK based travel, all overseas work-related travel and its associated work activity must be risk assessed in advance of travel commencing. Sufficient time should be allowed in advance of travelling for this risk assessment to be carried out and for any issues to be addressed.

The School also has a duty in relation to the proposed travel to, 'so far as reasonably practicable', make an assessment of employee 'fitness for travel' and general capabilities prior to travel commencing. This is of particular importance as overseas travel may potentially impose additional health related risks. The assessment is crucial to ensure that any pre-existing health conditions are not compounded by the overseas travel or work related activity.

Where an employee knows that they have a pre-existing medical condition or other related issue that may affect their ability to travel or work abroad, they should seek advice from the School's Occupational Health service before travelling.

To arrange an Occupational Health appointment, employees should contact the Human Resources Directorate at least one month before travelling, to allow time for the appointment to be scheduled and the report to be received.

When assessing the risk involved in any trip abroad it is important to consider the following factors **(please note this list is to be used only as a guide and is not exhaustive)**:

- a) Use www.fco.gov.uk for guidance on any risks that may be pertinent to your specific area of travel and factor their advice into your risk assessment. In addition to this, consult colleagues who have travelled to the respective destination previously
- b) Look at the risks involved pertaining to:
 - Work Related, for example physical injury caused by the work activity
 - Exposure to known endemic illness in a given destination

- Risks relating to personal safety, such as local criminal or political activities, terrorism and civil unrest
- Personal attack/kidnap *please note that the school does not expect anyone to travel to a destination which puts them at a high risk of kidnap*
- Driving
- Animal/insect bites
- Minor injuries
- Conflicts or problems in neighbouring countries or regions
- The health of those travelling and whether they are indeed “fit to travel”
- Any pre-existing medical conditions that a person may have
- Sunburn
- Contaminated water/food
- Theft of personal effects, such as passport, bank cards, mobile phones and travel tickets for example.
- Natural disaster

3. Insurance

A travel insurance policy is permanently in force for business related travel by employees and students undertaken on behalf of the School. Employees and students may apply for an insurance travel cover note and other documentation from their Department administrator, the Doctoral School, or directly from insurance@soas.ac.uk. Employees and staff should take this cover note with them whenever they are travelling abroad on School business. Questions regarding cover and special circumstances should be sent to insurance@soas.ac.uk. The travel cover note gives you the emergency contact numbers and the policy number.

You should contact insurance@soas.ac.uk if you are travelling to one of the sanctioned territories listed below:

- **Ukraine (Crimea)**
- **Russia**
- **Cuba**
- **Iran**
- **North Korea**
- **Sudan**
- **Syria**

There may be reduced cover if there are sanctions imposed against a country that you are visiting

You should also contact insurance@soas.ac.uk if you are travelling to any destination for a period of more than a year.

If you need to make a claim against the policy, please email insurance@soas.ac.uk at your earliest opportunity. Losses should be reported immediately to the local police or the transport carrier. Receipts should be obtained to support the claim on return to the UK.

Our insurers (RSA) provide 24/7 medical assistance and country specific guidance whilst abroad. You can access this service, by downloading the Travel Oracle App. Further information regarding this app is provided on the insurance cover note.

Insurance cover is conditional upon the traveller complying with the relevant SOAS Overseas Travel Policy guidance and the completion of the risk assessment, travel safety and security form.

4. Travel Itinerary and Contact Details

Staff/students travelling overseas on School business should ensure that details of their travel itinerary and next of kin are available in an emergency via the Risk assessment and travel safety and security form [SOAS Travel Risk Assessment](#)

The travel itinerary will detail flight numbers, departure times, accommodation addresses, telephone numbers and any host details.

5. Travelling Alone

It is recognised that in some situations it is not reasonably practicable to avoid travelling alone when abroad on School business. It is important therefore that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the traveller remains in control of their situation and feels able to make informed judgements in response to situations as they arise. The traveller should be able to make contact with someone from SOAS at any time, day or night, should an emergency arise. The lone traveller should ensure that they have a mobile phone that is suitable for international roaming, that they have a suitable adaptor enable them to recharge it and that they have sufficient minutes/credit to cover calls. It is also recommended that an alternative method of communication be sought as a provision should the mobile network fail or phone be stolen, for example a fax facility at a hotel or an internet café. Department heads/line managers/supervisors should be kept informed of when staff/students are due to arrive at various destinations on their trip, including when they arrive safely back at home or work.

If travelling to an area without mobile coverage, department heads/line managers/supervisors should, as part of the risk assessment process, decide whether the procurement of GPS communication device such as a satellite phone or personal locator beacon is needed.

See Appendix 1 for further advice on measures that can be taken to reduce the risks to those travelling alone.

6. General Health Advice

Department heads/line managers/supervisors should ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that staff and students travelling on SOAS business take advice on the potential health risk associated with travel, be that from their own GP or the schools occupational health service. This should be sought in good time so that any recommended immunisations can be given and/or prophylactic drugs prescribed. Some immunisation is mandatory depending on the country and records must be checked by department heads/line managers/supervisors, prior to staff/students travelling. The Fit for Travel web site can be used to check which vaccinations are needed for specific destinations: [NHS Fit for Travel](#) _

COVID 19 – GLOBAL PANDEMIC - Department heads/line managers/supervisors should ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that travellers are aware that COVID pandemic is ongoing and no travel is risk free and that disruption is possible. Travellers must check FCO guidance in relation to your destination to see if travel restrictions have been imposed. If travel is permitted they must ensure that they read and adhere to the FCO guidance for their destination and make sure they are prepared for travel and have information on the current entry requirements and any other local measures. Please ensure that travellers have signed up to relevant COVID mail alerts for Travel Advise to ensure they are informed of any changes while travelling

In addition travel to a some destinations may require a long haul flight, staff and students, should familiarise themselves with guidance on how best to minimise the effects of such travel, link as follows [Flight Health Tips](#).

Depending on the destination, SOAS, after consideration by the health and safety manager, may be required to provide:

- A basic first aid kit,
- Isotonic drinks or tablets
- Water purification tablets or filters
- Sun protection
- Diarrhoea treatment
- Insect repellent
- A mosquito net
- Anti-malaria drugs
- Antihistamine tablets or cream

Also if hospital standards are low, SOAS may also need to provide a sterile medical equipment pack containing:

- hypodermic syringes
- dressings
- sutures
- blood plasma
- single-use thermometer

Staff/Students can also refer to the Department of Health's website [Department of Health](#) before travelling for up to date healthcare advice, including pre-travel check-ups, food safety and DVT.

7. Contacting British organisations while abroad

All staff/students are expected to make themselves aware of the contact details for the British embassy or consulate for the country or region that they are visiting. The following link should be used to obtain this information prior to travelling and should be programmed into mobile devices . [British Embassy & Consulate](#). *If you are not a British national, please obtain the contact details of the relevant embassy*

8. Accident Reporting

All accidents, near-miss incidents and diseases which occur during staff/students travel abroad should be reported via the School Incident Report Form - [Accident/Incident Report form](#).

It should be noted that even an injury which appears at first sight to be trivial should be reported, since 'trivial' injuries can occasionally develop into more serious situations. 'Near miss' incidents should also be reported to ensure, where possible, control measures, procedures, etc. are put in place to ensure similar incidents are avoided. **Serious incidents must be reported immediately using the contact information provided on the travel insurance card. Additionally, in the event of a serious injury or fatality the following School services must also notified:**

- **Human Resources: Alix Langley (HR Director): al63@soas.ac.uk**
- **Out of Hours: Staff should report to their line manager/department head and students to their personal tutor/supervisor**

9. Monitoring

Prior to travel to any destination, department heads/line manager/supervisors/those travelling should regularly check travel advice for the country in question [Foreign Travel Advice](#) and subscribe to email alerts for updates: [Foreign travel advice email signup](#).

10. Terrorism

At present, terrorism is a global concern which can occur at any time and British nationals/ex-pats have been the target for such attacks.

These attacks are most likely to involve:

- Suicide attacks
- Bombings
- Kidnappings
- Hijackings
- Shootings
- Attacks on commercial aircraft/ships
- Use of chemical weapons

The British government have issued the following guidance on how to minimise your threat from terrorism:

- Watch and read the news regarding the country or region that you are visiting
- Be vigilant in areas that attract foreign nationals and westerners, such as bars, markets, sports events and restaurants
- Look out for anything suspicious and as you would at home, report it to the police
- Be clear about any routes that you are using and have a plan of action to follow in the event of an incident
- If you can, avoid regular routine as this can make you an easier target. Vary the time and route of your regular journeys
- Keep a charged mobile phone with you that has emergency contact numbers programmed in
- Be discreet on social media about yourself and your plans
- Tell colleagues, neighbours, hotel staff, where you are going and when you expect to be back
- identify places like police stations, hospitals, official buildings along your route where you could seek refuge in an emergency

11. Communications

Department heads/line managers/supervisors should arrange a timetable for their staff/students to contact them to confirm that they are ok, whether it is via email, phone or VOIP services such as Skype. They should get in touch even if they have nothing to report. Staff and students should also contact managers/supervisors if there are any last-minute changes to their plans. Many countries don't have

good communication networks in outlying areas, although even the less well-developed countries have reasonable networks around larger cities. If staff/students are using a mobile phone abroad make sure that it will work in the country they're visiting. Advice should be sought from travel companies or mobile phone service providers.

Prior to using mobile phones abroad staff/students should check the following for their devices ask that students do the same:

- That they're suitable for international roaming
- That the handsets will work in the relevant country
- That staff/students have a suitable adaptor for the charger
- That there's enough credit on the phone to cover international calls
- That there is a back-up communication plan if the phone is stolen or the network fails – for example, check that they can send and receive faxes at their hotel.

Should department heads/line managers/supervisors need to contact staff/students, they should consult the completed Risk assessment/Travel Safety and Security form to obtain the required details.

Please note VPNs are currently illegal in a handful of countries and in these instances users should exercise caution and operate offline as far as possible, email may also be monitored. Please check before travel. Whilst not guaranteed to be secure, if you have access to end-to-end encryption communications (such as WhatsApp) this is your safest method of communication – these services are generally not illegal though local law enforcement may be attempting to block them.

For further advice contact the SOAS IT Service desk before travelling on helpdesk@soas.ac.uk

12. Local Travel

Staff/Students are required to plan in advance how they will travel locally when they arrive at their destination.

Driving in some countries can be particularly risky because of poor roads or a high crime rate, in such cases it is recommended that a reliable local driver is hired, if possible.

If staff/students are going to drive themselves, they should seek information regarding local traffic laws and the state of the roads prior to making their trip. It is recommended that where possible, hire cars and drivers should also be booked prior to leaving the UK.

If SOAS staff/students are using public transport, they should, if possible, get route plans, timetables and tickets before they travel. They should also find out how the local transport system works – do you buy tickets before you travel or on the bus or train? Do you have to validate the ticket?

As many transport providers show real-time travel information on their websites, staff and students should, where possible, make sure that they know where to find this information

It is also prudent for staff/students to arrange travel from airports/stations etc. Ideally, they should get a local contact to meet them personally, but if this isn't possible, ask a local contact to recommend a taxi company.

13. Personal Security

There are a number of security risks that SOAS staff and students can face when travelling and working abroad, ranging from violent attack, kidnapping, extortion and petty street crime. Department heads/line managers/supervisors are required to ensure that the Risk assessment and travel safety and security form [SOAS Travel Risk Assessment](#) has been completed by those individuals that are travelling. The traveller should also seek to familiarise themselves with the following information (further guidance can also be found in Appendix 1):

- The security background of the country including the immediate region of visitation
- The cultural background (including religious influences and customs) and standards of social behaviour
- Crime and the police (including how to approach the police, what they'll listen to, the extent of their influence and local power)
- Security resources that local residents can call on
- Personal security awareness and procedures at work, at home and on the move
- If you're travelling to a potentially unstable country – even for a short stay – always register with your country's consulate or embassy.

14. Crises Management

Occasionally disruptions to SOAS activities taking place outside of the UK can occur. These disruptions may be the result of many varying factors ranging from natural disasters, accidents, outbreaks of disease, crime and economic instability, all of which can result in an emergency situation. Details of how a crisis/emergency situation will be managed should be documented in the risk assessment under the appropriate heading. The risk assessment template provides examples of management controls but is not exhaustive and emergency plans and control measures should be based on individual trips.

15. References/useful Contacts

- For medical and emergency assistance from our insurers_RSA (partnered by Healix) call [+44 \(0\) 2086 084 100](#) (Lines open 24/7) or email rsa@healix.com. Quote our policy number (available on the insurance) and explain that you/the patient is insured with RSA and have an insurance policy with LUPC
- Health Protection Agency (2009)-Advice and Information for Travelling Abroad- [Public-Health England](#)
- Currency information-Familiarise yourself with the currency of the country that you are visiting: [Currency Information Currency Converter](#)
- Foreign and Commonwealth Office-[FCO Travel and Living abroad](#)
- Rape and Sexual Assault Overseas: Advice on personal safety and information for victims- [GOV UK Rape and sexual assault abroad](#)
- Victims of Crime Abroad - [GOV UK Victim of Crime Abroad](#)
- In Prison Abroad – [GOV UK - Arrest or Detention](#)
- World Health Organisation-[WHO Health Topics](#)
- Travel Health Advice (detailed advice on various travel related issues) [Travel Health](#)

APPENDIX 1

Traveller safety advice and best practice

1. When travelling by car

- Plan trips to minimise driver fatigue, it is recommended that a 45-minute break should be taken after any continuous driving period of 4.5 hours and a minimum break of 30 minutes is taken after any continuous driving period of 2.5 hours
- It is good practice to carry out a pre-trip check of the vehicle e.g. tyres, lights, seatbelts, brakes, fuel levels, windscreen wash and wipers function correctly and ensure defects are rectified before travelling
- Consider whether or not weather conditions may have an adverse effect on travel
- Ensure a breakdown service is available and you know how to contact them
- If you are unfamiliar with the area that you are visiting, plan your route in advance to reduce the likelihood of getting lost
- Tell people at your destination what time you expect to arrive
- Carry a mobile phone for use in an emergency
- It is advisable to understand local driving practices, check on local police methods and carry money in case of incurring a fine
- Carry a local map and be aware of “no go” areas
- For those not conversant in the local dialect it is a good idea to learn some local phrases in case you breakdown or have an accident
- If making an unfamiliar journey check ahead for petrol stations on route if undertaking a long trip
- Be observant of following cars particularly in unfamiliar or sparsely populated areas
- Lock your vehicle even if you are only leaving it for a few minutes and keep passenger doors locked while driving.
- It is recommended that any car used should carry emergency equipment (fire extinguisher, first aid, spare bulbs and warning triangles) in many countries these items are a legal requirement
- Do not get out of the vehicle if unsure of your surroundings
- Be wary of locals pointing out “problems” with the car, carry on to the next busy public place and inspect the vehicle there
- Ensure that appropriate supplies are procured to maintain hydration when driving in a hot climate.
- Always leave enough room between you and the car in front to drive out if you’re approached by potential hijackers. Do not wind your car window down fully when conversing with unfamiliar people or persons. All School employees using hand-held and hands-free mobiles (or similar devices) whilst driving under the scope of their employment, should only do so when their vehicles are parked in a safe place and the engine is switched off.
- Where possible keep bags, mobile phones and other valuables out of sight. These can be easy pickings for snatch thieves in traffic jams or at traffic lights;
- It is a good idea to keep doors locked, windows and sunroofs closed especially in stop/go traffic. Particularly in areas known for car jacking
- Always lock your car and place all valuables out of sight
- After dark, park in a well-lit place, as close to your destination as possible.
- In a multi-storey car-park, reverse your car in, leave it as close to the exit as you can, near ground level and away from pillars;
- Have your key ready when you return to the car and check the back seat for intruders before you get in
- If a car pulls up in front, forcing you to stop, leave the engine on. If the driver gets out and approaches you reverse and get away. Activate hazard lights and sound your horn continuously.

- If you see an incident or someone tries to flag you down think before leaving your car. The incident may not be genuine! It may be safer and more practical to use a mobile phone or the nearest payphone to report what you see.

2. Your destination

- Use apps or guidebooks to familiarise yourself with the country's geography, transport, culture and so on, if you have no prior experience of travelling there
- If you are not conversant in the local language it is worthwhile learning some basic phrases that may prove useful in an emergency

3. Documents

- Carry a valid passport that has at least six months left before it expires and has two spare pages for entry stamps.
- Remember to take the schools insurance card with you
- Always take several forms of identification and keep them separate from your passport. Take photocopies of your passport (including the page that shows your visa) as well. If possible, scan them too and keep a copy with you on a USB stick.
- Check your journey and check-in times against a prepared itinerary and reconfirm flight times a couple of days before departure
- Avoid quick changes on flights or trains, especially if you have to wait to reclaim your bags.
- Use a flexible ticket if you're travelling to a higher-risk country.
- Find out whether you need an international driving permit for your destination of travel

4. Clothing and Luggage

- Identify any specialised clothing that may be needed with enough notice to allow the school to supply it for certain destinations it is advisable to dress casually keep expensive phones, watches and jewellery out of sight
- Put your name and address or a business card inside your luggage in case the label falls off.
- Avoid using soft-sided bags as they're easier to break into.

5. Money

- There are a plethora of apps available such as XE, that can provide exchange information if you are unfamiliar with the currency of the country that you are visiting. .
- Where possible it is a good idea to avoid carrying a large amount of cash, but carry enough money to cover emergencies. Keep it in various places to make sure you don't risk losing it all at once.
- Keep your funds in a variety of forms – cash, (preferably in an international currency, such as US dollars) and payment cards.
- Avoid forms of payment that aren't commonly used where you're going. For example, check whether credit or debit cards are widely used before you go.
- If you can using debit cards, as they don't have the same level of protection as credit cards.
- If you have access to a hotel safe, it is good practice to keep spare money, valuables, USB sticks and your passport in there

6. Communication

- Make a note of your phone number, the handset serial number and the helpline you need to call if the phone is stolen.
- Phone cards can be procured in many countries and can be useful if your mobile phone is stolen as an alternative method of communication.

7. Food and Drink

Many infectious diseases (e.g. cholera, hepatitis A, B and E, Listeriosis and Typhoid fever) are transmitted by contaminated food and water. The local standard of safety depends on how food and drink are prepared and handled. Some simple precautions can reduce the risk significantly:

- Eat only food that's been thoroughly cooked and is still hot
- Avoid cooked food kept at room temperature for several hours
- Avoid food bought from street vendors
- Avoid uncooked food, apart from fruit and vegetables that can be peeled or shelled
- Boil water for drinking or brushing teeth if you're unsure of its safety. If you can't boil it, use a disinfectant tablet or a certified and well-maintained filter, or stick to bottled water
- Avoid ice unless you know it's made from treated and chlorinated water.
- Cold bottled and packaged drinks are usually safe, as long as they're sealed.
- Hot drinks are also usually safe.

8. Medical Provisions

If you're taking prescription drugs with you, make sure you have enough for your trip and take a note signed by your doctor saying what they're for – they may not be available or recognised locally.

- Depending on the destination of travel it may be prudent to take a first aid kit for minor cuts and bruises. This could prove particularly useful in more remote locations
- If you're visiting somewhere with poor medical care standards, it's a good idea to take a medical kit with basic sterile equipment (syringes, sutures and dressings).
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, consider taking spare pairs, packed separately.
- Ensure that you have the required clothing and repellents to prevent bites and stings
- If the travel destination necessitates, ensure that you carry sun block with a SPF factor high enough for your skin type

9. Culture

- If you are unfamiliar with local traditions, customs, laws and culture, use guide books, apps or websites to learn more about them
- It is useful to learn key phrases in the native language or at least take a phrasebook.
- Respect local customs and dress codes. For example, it's illegal to import or consume alcohol in some countries. Consider what to wear to fit in and dress appropriately, particularly when visiting religious sites, business contacts and rural communities.

10. Hotel Safety

- If possible, find out about the hotel and the area it's in before you arrive. Avoid ground floor rooms as these are most likely to be broken into. Always lock the door and use the safety chain and window locks if fitted.
- Use the spyhole, if there is one, before opening the door to someone, and phone reception if you're unsure who's there.
- If your room doesn't have a chain or spyhole, ask to change to a room that does. If you're staying for a longer period, consider moving to a hotel that has these features.
- Find the nearest fire alarm and extinguishers, and make sure you know your emergency exit route. Follow the emergency route to the final exit and make sure you can actually get out of it easily.
- Get reception to call you if you have visitors and meet them in a public area rather than your room particularly if you are unfamiliar with them.

11. Taxis and Drivers

- If you're not confident about driving or there's a high risk of car-jacking or kidnap, hire a reliable driver.
- If possible, book taxis through your hotel or a reliable local contact.
- Make a note of the taxi company and the driver's name, car registration, make and colour, and the approximate fare when you book, and check them again before you get into the taxi.
- Travel in a licensed taxi with a meter, and make sure the driver uses it.
- Don't get into a cab if there's another passenger already there.
- Always ask drivers who are to meet you at the airport to use your organisation's logo on the meeting card. (This makes it harder for other people to copy your name and try and get your attention before your official driver.) Before getting into the car, make sure they know your name and either put your luggage in the boot yourself or watch as the driver does it.

12. Personal Security/Travelling Alone

- Carry a copy of emergency contact names and phone numbers, including details of your country's consulate and your credit card company's hotline.
- If travelling to an unfamiliar destination make sure you know what route you're taking in advance and how long you expect the journey to take.
- If you have a meeting or you're away from your base, tell your hotel or another contact person when you expect to return.
- Be aware of 'no go' areas and stay away from them. Keep to well-lit streets and always walk on the outside of the pavement, purposefully and confidently. - Don't display obvious signs of wealth, such as expensive watches or jewellery.
- Dress as simply and in keeping with the local population as possible
- shoulder bags worn across your body are for security and theft reasons are preferable to those worn over the shoulders
- Avoid walking around alone if possible, and be aware of who's around you.
- Don't get a map out in public – walk into a shop or a hotel lobby and then look at the map.
- Be alert with strangers and cautious in conversation. Don't give away personal information.
- Avoid making eye contact with strangers and be wary of people asking you whether you've dropped something.

- Carry two wallets or purses. Prepare one as a 'dummy' to be handed over if you're threatened – it should contain around US\$50 and some local currency, together with a couple of old receipts, expired credit cards and a few banknotes from your home country. The other one is your real wallet or purse – keep this safely on your body and only carry the money you need for one day.
- Don't carry anything that could be deemed to be a weapon, for example a Swiss army knife
- Keep copies of important documents and information – including your passport, insurance policy, 24-hour emergency numbers and ticket details – in a safe place.

13. Incidents and Accident

If your luggage has been tampered with, report it to the police immediately.

- Never take on a mugger – quickly give them what they demand. Ideally, hand over your 'dummy' wallet or purse.
- If you're robbed or have an accident, report it to the police – even if they can't do anything, you'll need the crime number to claim on the insurance.

14. When using public transport

Whilst the vast majority of public transport is in complete safety, taking simple precautions can give reassurance and help reduce risk:

- Have the right change ready for your fare, rather than producing a purse or wallet which may attract attention
- Know where you are going and which stop you need;
- When getting off a bus, train or subway system at night or in an unfamiliar area, attach yourself to groups of people and walk purposefully to your destination. Ideally, where possible, you should arrange for someone to meet you;
- When waiting for a bus after dark, stand in a well-lit place near groups of people;
- On an empty bus, or late at night, sit near the driver or conductor;
- On trains, sit with other people, try to avoid travelling in compartments with no access to corridors or other parts of the train;
- If you use the subway system, wait in a well-lit place near groups of people and avoid empty carriages.

APPENDIX 2

Staff/Student missing abroad reporting procedure

Step 1

Staff member or student fails to make contact with department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person at agreed periodic (as decided pre travel) Department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person suspects staff member or student is missing.

Step 2

Department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person informs the director, the secretary, the head of communications and insurance@soas.ac.uk

Step 3

The department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person then takes the following steps;

- a) Call hotel, lodgings, host, to ascertain whether they know where they are.
- b) Double check travel itinerary.
- c) Call any hosts, host organisations or people that you know they were visiting.
- d) Check their social media accounts, if they have them, this may give an indication of where they have been most recently. Try to contact them via this platform.
- e) Contact next of kin, perhaps they have been in touch with them. Inform next of kin of intended next steps.
- f) If possible call police or hospitals in the area of travel to see if they may have been hurt or in trouble.

Step 4

If after carrying out those steps, the person has not been located, the department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person should prepare the following information:

- a) Full name as shown on passport
- b) Date and if known, place of birth
- c) Insurance details
- d) Travel itinerary
- e) Time, date and place of the last contact received from them

Step 5

The department head, line manager, supervisor or nominated person should then contact the following people:

- a) Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on 020 7008 1500, they will be able to talk to the British embassy in the country concerned and help in a number of ways. The British embassy will check if the person has “come to notice” which means if they have been made aware of any arrest, accident or hospitalisation. If the missing person is not a British national the Line manager, supervisor or nominated person should contact the relevant embassy in the UK and request their assistance.
- b) The local police force, the metropolitan police. Ask to speak to an international or Interpol Liaison Officer, or someone who at the very least has experience of missing abroad cases. They will inform the UK national centre Bureau of Interpol