

## **UEA Study Abroad is committed to widening access to study abroad opportunities.**

We understand that each student will be looking for different criteria and support in a study abroad destination. The Study Abroad Team encourages you to research each country's culture, attitudes, beliefs, customs, and more before selecting a preferred destination. We want you to be able to participate as much as possible in the host culture, and feel adequately prepared for your upcoming experience, which can be both personally challenging and rewarding.

**Below are suggested questions/aspects to ask yourself when considering how your individual identity may inform your time abroad.**

### **Please note:**

UEA Study Abroad is aware that they cannot speak on behalf of all identities, or on behalf of all students who hold any of the identities below. This information is based on our experiences, research, and feedback we collect from those who go abroad. We are always open to learning and expanding our knowledge when it comes to best serving our students, their interests, and making study abroad experiences better for all.

If there is an identity not yet reflected that you would like to see on this page, or if you hold one of these identities and feel any changes should be made to more accurately reflect your experiences abroad, please contact us.

Some of the resources we share links to have been produced by external organisations and UEA has no control over content.

### **Similar resources**

If you want to learn more about wellbeing concerns or general safety while you're abroad, please go to these pages:

[Accessing Wellbeing Support while Abroad](#)

[General Safety Abroad](#)

### **Gender Considerations**

Attitudes towards gender roles and norms can be very different in your host country from those in the UK or your home country. While some countries have more fluid perceptions of gender, in other countries, fixed gender roles are an integral part of local customs and/or laws. Depending on where you go, you may be treated differently (or be expected to treat others differently) based on cultural attitudes regarding gender roles and gendered rights.

Finding ways to engage with these differences and to learn from them is an important part of cross-cultural understanding. However, being sensitive to cross-cultural differences does not mean you need to tolerate behaviours that you find offensive or

that make you feel unsafe. Below are some aspects to consider about gender when thinking about where you might like to study abroad.

**Aspects to consider:**

- Which genders are recognised in your host country?
- What are the gender roles in your host country?
- How are the expectations and attitudes towards gender similar or different from those in your home community?
- Do legal rights differ by gender in your host country?
- How do individuals express their gender in your host country (clothing, language, appearance)?
- What gender-inclusive accommodations do you require? What kind of housing situation would you prefer? What kind of housing options are available at the locations you're interested in?
- What are the cultural norms for friendships and dating?
- How are issues such as gender-based violence, sexual harassment, or sexual assault understood and responded to in your host country, socially and legally? What are the laws or legal attitudes and processes?
- Would you be prepared to modify your wardrobe, mannerisms, and behaviour to better fit in with the local culture if necessary?
- Ask returned students or the study abroad team at UEA for information on traditional gender roles and expectations of the local culture, and if there are things to watch out for/pay attention to
- How does religion play a role in how people are expected to dress in your host country?
- How do your personal values compare with your host country's citizens' attitudes about socially accepted gender roles? Are there aspects of your personal values that you are willing to compromise on in order to make safe and culturally informed choices?
- When possible, travel in pairs or groups. If unable to do so, be sure to let someone know where you are going, your plans, and when you anticipate your return. If you have a method of communication, make sure others are able to reach you if need be or check-in periodically
- If relevant, from what you've learnt about your host country, what do you need to consider in terms of your physical safety while abroad?

## Resources

- [10 Travel Tips for Transgender and Non-binary Travellers](#)
- [Resources for Gender and Gender Expressions Abroad](#) - Boston University's extensive list of resources for different genders and gender expressions

## Who can I contact if I encounter discriminatory behaviour abroad?

- Your host university (the study abroad team, student support team, a professor or academic advisor)
- The nearest British embassy: [List of British embassies, high commissions and consulates abroad](#)
- Safe spaces available in the student community
- UEA Security (available 24/7): [+44 \(0\)1603 592222](#)
- Student services at UEA
- Call or email us, the UEA study abroad team, during working hours: [+44 \(0\) 1603 591871](#) / [studyabroad@uea.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@uea.ac.uk)

**For more information specific to trans, non-binary and genderqueer identities, please look at the LGBTQIA+ section.**

## International students

### LGBTQIA+ Students

Before going abroad, it is important to note every country has different laws, policies, and cultural attitudes toward people who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQIA+. Be sure to take this into account when selecting a study abroad location and program so that you can have a positive, safe, and rewarding experience. We recommend researching program locations to get a feel for what life will be like in this country. Learning about the culture, attitudes, and beliefs around the LGBTQIA+ community can help you feel better prepared for your upcoming experience abroad.

### Aspects to consider

- What are the attitudes toward sexual orientation and gender identity in your host country?
- How is the LGBTQIA+ community defined and perceived? What is the local law enforcement attitude?
- Are there any restrictions on freedom of association or expression for LGBTQIA+ people in the host country?

- What is the age of consent for sexual behaviour? Does it differ for heterosexual versus same-sex couples?
- How do individuals express their gender in your host country (clothing, language, appearance)?
- Is it safe for you to be out while abroad? If you choose a destination where you will need to hide your identity for legal or cultural reasons, how will this impact you and your overall study abroad experience?
- Would you be prepared to modify your wardrobe, mannerisms, and behaviour to better fit in with the local culture if necessary? Are you willing to conform to and follow the cultural customs in the host country, or do you need to choose a different destination?
- How open are you now, or are you willing to be, about your sexual orientation and/or gender identity?
- If you choose to come out while studying abroad, how will that be different from doing so in the UK?
- What type of housing options are available? If you live in a campus apartment or a residence hall, will you be assigned by legal sex? How will this impact you?
- What gender-inclusive accommodations do you require? What kind of housing situation would you prefer?
- Does the university you are interested in have safe spaces and/or an LGBTQ+ society?
- Are there resources and welcoming environments available for the LGBTQIA+ community in the host country?
- How do your personal values compare with your host country's citizens' attitudes about socially accepted gender roles? Are there aspects of your personal values that you are willing to compromise on in order to make safe and culturally informed choices?
- If you are transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming and the gender identity and/or name on your passport does not reflect your identity, some nomination and application documents may need to use the name and gender as stated on passport. How would you feel about this?

## Resources

- The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) offers the [Map on Sexual Orientation Laws in the World](#) to help travellers

understand the level of protections a country has and their attitudes towards the LGBTQIA+ community

- [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#) - Provides advice to British LGBT travellers abroad
- [An LGBT Student Guide to Studying Abroad on GoAbroad.com](#) - Wide range of articles providing many different perspectives on studying abroad
- Diversity Abroad: [LGBTQ+ Students Abroad](#)
- [World Professional Association for Transgender Health \(WPATH\)](#) – Medical information and resources for trans people, as well as a global medical provider directory
- [Rainbow Europe](#) - Highlights the different Human Rights laws for LGBTQ+ across Europe
- [10 Travel Tips for Transgender and Non-binary Travellers](#)
- IES Abroad: [Student Blogs about Studying Abroad as an LGBTQ+ Student](#)
- [Understanding gender in a foreign language](#): an article exploring gender and genderqueerness in relation to gendered languages
- [Country-specific Identity Resources](#): categorised by country, a list of blogs, YouTube videos and articles to read about travelling as an LGBTQ+ individual
- [LGBTQ+ Travel Safety Index](#) - a thoroughly researched and extensive resource that looks at all countries' individual laws and gathers data from a variety of trusted international sources to create a safety index per country for various aspects of LGBTQ+ identity. Also includes travel tips from LGBTQ+ travellers (trans safety tips included) and further resources - just scroll down.
- [Global Trans Rights Index](#) - a thoroughly researched and extensive resource that looks at all countries' individual laws and gathers data from a variety of trusted international sources to create a safety index per country for transgender people. Also includes further resources - just scroll down.

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### **What support is available from UEA?**

Our team of study abroad advisers help students through the process of choosing a destination, applying to the university, and preparing to move abroad. We're also there while you're away with any questions or concerns.

We offer a range of preparation and community sessions:

- One-to-one appointments.
- Drop-in campus presence in the Student Information Zone.
- Preparation workshops.
- Information lectures.
- Community coffee mornings.
- Buddy scheme with returned and visiting study abroad students.
- Social events.

Each School of Study has a study abroad academic coordinator who advises on academic aspects, including choosing and approving classes you take abroad and reviewing your transcript.

Student Services at UEA can also support you in preparing to move and communicating any reasonable adjustments you have here at UEA to the university abroad.

### **What support is available while I'm abroad?**

You are still a UEA student during your year or semester abroad, so you can continue to access any support facilities available to you from UEA. You also have access to all the services available at your university host abroad – their international/study abroad office, student support services, and academic guidance.

Our partner universities know UEA well and they are there to support you while you study with them – they are always on hand to help you overcome challenges and enjoy your time abroad.

It's easiest if you get in touch directly with support services at your host university abroad while you're there. This will make communication quicker and more direct. If you don't know who to speak with at your host university, ask us at [studyabroad@uea.ac.uk](mailto:studyabroad@uea.ac.uk).

Our host partner universities abroad may have their own governing principles, for example around academic teaching, assessment methodology and third party contact (please see the link to UEA's third party contact guidelines below under question 'Can a third party (e.g. parent, carer or guardian) contact you about my study abroad placement if I'm abroad and it's hard to get in touch?'). Students studying at a host partner university are required to abide by their governing principles.