

Policy Name:	International Travel Policy		
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Volume:	2, President's Office	Responsible Executive:	Vice President, Academic & Research
Chapter:	4, International Travel Policy	Responsible Office:	Director, Human Resources
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Policy Statement

Students, faculty, and staff at NSCAD University travel internationally for various purposes including pursuing scholarly research and academic studies abroad, developing international partnerships, recruiting international students, and enhancing NSCAD's international presence and reputation. Given the global environment in which universities operate, NSCAD is committed to developing and strengthening connections with individuals and institutions around the world.

Reason for Policy

Although any travel, even within Canada, can present challenges, international travel can present unusual or heightened risks. An effective International Travel Policy improves the likelihood of safe and beneficial experiences for students, faculty and staff who travel internationally.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- facilitate the development and delivery of international University activities, including the pursuit of scholarly research abroad, in a safe, effective and efficient manner;
- mitigate the risks associated with travel outside of Canada for NSCAD University activities; and
- support the University's interests and academic mission when students, faculty and staff engage in international travel.

Policy Applies to

This Policy applies to faculty, staff, students, and other persons engaged in activities under the auspices of NSCAD University who are participating in University activities that involve travel outside of Canada.

Who Should Read this Policy

- All members of the university community
- All faculty, staff and students
- Deans, directors, and division heads

Contacts

- Human Resources Department (HR)
- Office of Student Experience (OSE)
- Office of Academic Affairs and Research (OAAR)
- Office of Finance and Administration (OFA)

Definitions

- a) **“Activity Sponsor”** means a University Employee who is responsible for the execution of a University activity involving students (e.g., a faculty member planning and accompanying field school students, or a Student Exchange Coordinator, or the Study Abroad Student Exchange Advisor).
- b) **“Emergency”** means Emergency as defined in the NSCAD Crisis Management Master Plan:
 - a. *An abnormal event or threat of an event of a severity and magnitude that it may result in deaths, injuries, threat of violence/disruptive behaviour, property damage and/or environmental damage or significant disruption to the University’s business continuity that will require a coordinated response beyond the routine procedures, resources, and/or authority of NSCAD University and its employees.*
- c) **“Pre-Departure Planning”** means an orientation program to provide NSCAD students, faculty and staff with information regarding travel logistics, cross-cultural communication, academic systems abroad, health and safety abroad, and other related topics. Pre-Departure Planning is provided to students by OSE.
- d) **“Traveller(s)”** means NSCAD faculty, staff, students and other persons engaged in activities under the auspices of NSCAD University who travel internationally for University activities.
- e) **“University Activity”** means an authorized activity carried out under the auspices of NSCAD University, including, but not limited to: recruitment, administrative missions and site visits, research projects, international development projects, credit courses, field study, exchange programs, study abroad programs, study through letter of permission, internships, practicums, placements, University-related community service, scholarly or administrative conferences or meetings, or sport or cultural activity.
- f) **“Travel Advice and Advisories”** are the Government of Canada’s official source of destination-specific travel information. They are available online from the Global Affairs Canada (GAC) website at <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>. They provide Canadians with official information and advice from the Government of Canada on situations that may affect their safety and well-being abroad. They may include an advisory for a country or region where security or medical conditions put Canadians at heightened risk. Destination countries and regions are assigned one of four possible risk levels, as follows:
 - I. *Exercise normal security precautions (“Level 1”):* There are no significant safety and security concerns. The overall safety and security situation is similar to that of Canada. Travellers should take normal security precautions.
 - II. *Exercise a high degree of caution (“Level 2”):* There are identifiable safety and security concerns or the safety and security situation could change with little notice. Travellers should exercise a high degree of caution at all times, monitor local media and follow the instructions of local authorities.
 - III. *Avoid non-essential travel (“Level 3”):* There are specific safety and security concerns that could put Travellers at risk. Travellers should reconsider the need to travel to the country, territory or region. If Travellers are already in the country, territory or region, they should consider whether or not they really need to be there. If not, they should consider leaving while it is still safe to do so. *This level constitutes an official Government of Canada Travel Advisory and is issued when the safety and security of Canadians travelling or living in the country may be compromised.*
 - IV. *Avoid all travel (“Level 4”):* There is an extreme risk to Travellers’ personal safety and security. Canadians should not travel to this country, territory or region. If they are already in the country, territory or region, they should consider leaving if it is safe to do so. *This level constitutes an official Government of Canada Travel Advisory and is issued when the safety and security of Canadians travelling or living in the country may be compromised.*

The Policy

1. **Safety of Travellers:** The safety of Travellers is a priority for the University. The assessment and management of risk and the safety of Travellers are shared responsibilities between the University and individual Travellers. The University provides up-to-date location-specific information, guidance and support for University-related international travel, in particular via a professional medical and security travel service. Travellers are responsible for availing themselves of this information, guidance and support when planning and during international travel for University activities.
2. **Refusal to participate:** Travellers will not be required to travel to a destination where they reasonably believe their personal safety may be at risk.

Authorization to Travel

3. **Restricted Travel:** International travel may be restricted if certain Travel Advisories are issued by GAC. Criteria for such restrictions vary according to the category of Traveller, as described below:
 - a. **Undergraduate student travel**
 - i. International travel by undergraduate students which is supported by an appropriate University legal agreement (ex: student mobility agreement) is presumed to be approved by the University. International travel which is not supported by a University agreement must be approved by the appropriate University authority.
 - ii. Undergraduate students traveling to a destination which GAC has assessed as a Level 2 risk must complete an appropriate risk assessment and security plan. This will be completed as part of the Pre-Departure Planning process pursuant to section D.5.a below.
 - iii. Regardless of whether there is a legal agreement pursuant to section 3.a.i., travel by undergraduate students to destinations which GAC has assessed risk at Level 3 or Level 4 is prohibited. This prohibition applies whether or not students would be accompanied by a faculty or staff member.
 - b. **Graduate student travel:**
 - i. International travel by graduate students which is supported by an appropriate University legal agreement (ex: student mobility agreement or research contract) is presumed to be approved by the University. International travel which is not supported by a University agreement must be approved by the appropriate University authority.
 - ii. Regardless of whether there is a legal agreement pursuant to section 3.b.i., travel by graduate students to destinations for which GAC has assessed risk at Level 3 or 4 is not supported by the University, unless there are exceptional circumstances, described in section 5.a., below
 - c. **Faculty and staff travel:**
 - i. Travel by faculty or staff to destinations for which GAC has assessed risk at Level 4 is not supported by the University, unless there are exceptional circumstances, described in section 5.a., below.
4. **Escalation of GAC Travel Advisory level prior to planned travel:** There may be situations where travel has been planned to an authorized destination but GAC increases its travel advisory to a restricted level prior to travel. Upon the request of the Traveler or Activity Sponsor, the relevant Dean (for faculty or graduate students) or Administrative Head (for staff) and the Vice-President Academic will consult with appropriate members of the

University community in as timely a manner as possible to determine whether and in what circumstances travel may proceed.

5. Authorization Process:

- a) Faculty, staff or graduate students who wish to request authorization to travel to destinations described sections 3.b.ii. or D.3.c.i. may submit a written request to the relevant Dean or Administrative Head and to the Vice-President Academic as early as possible prior to the anticipated departure. a. Written requests must address the following questions:
- Are the international travel and activities proposed required to fulfil the stated mandate of a University project or initiative?
 - Is the expected output of the travel and activities critical to the Traveler's professional success?
 - Have feasible, alternative locations and/or timings been considered?
 - Is there an agreement with a third party regarding the activity? Has the activity been funded by an external agency? Does the agreement or funding agency impose security planning requirements on the activity?
 - Has a security travel service safety assessment been completed consistent with that issued by GAC?
 - Has an appropriate risk assessment and safety plan been prepared?
 - Is there any other information which is relevant to the Vice-President Academic's decision?
- b) Expenditure of Funds: For clarity, whether funds have already been expended for international travel is not relevant to the decision under section 5.
- c) Consultation: The Dean or Administrative Head, as applicable, and the Vice-President Academic will engage with appropriate Members of the University Community in reaching a decision.
- d) Timely processing of requests: The Vice-President Academic will issue their decision in as timely a manner as possible in the circumstances.
- e) Risk Assessment and Security Planning: Travellers whose travel plans have been authorized by the above process will be required to complete an appropriate risk assessment and security plan and undertake Pre-Departure Planning, per section 7. This assessment and planning will occur in consultation with the University's relevant Dean or Administrative Head, and other appropriate individuals, as required.

Pre-Departure Responsibilities

6. Travel Registry: Travellers are required to register travel for University Activities outside of Canada using the [Travel Authorization Form](#) prior to departure.
7. Pre-Departure Planning
- a. Undergraduate and graduate students: Undergraduate and graduate students traveling internationally for a University Activity are *required* to undertake Pre-Departure Planning prior to departing for any international destination.
- b. Faculty and staff: Pre-Departure Planning and preparing an appropriate risk assessment and security plan is:
- i. *Strongly encouraged* for those travelling to a destination for which GAC has assessed risk at Level 2 and

Level 3;

ii. *required* for those travelling to a destination for which GAC has assessed risk at Level 4 and for which the Vice-President Academic has authorized travel.

Where an Activity Sponsor is involved, the Activity Sponsor is responsible for ensuring student awareness and compliance prior to international travel. Undergraduate and graduate students will not be permitted to travel until they have undertaken Pre-Departure Planning.

8. **Fitness for Travel:** Travellers are responsible to ensure they are physically and mentally prepared for international travel. Specifically, they are responsible for familiarizing themselves with possible health risks associated with the University activity and the travel destination, and for taking preventive measures including recommended vaccinations and medications.
9. **Continuous Monitoring of Travel Advisories:** Recognizing that the Travel Advice and Travel Advisories provided by GAC are subject to frequent updates, it is a Traveller's responsibility to monitor the relevant Advice/Advisories for the destination country or region, prior to scheduled departure and throughout their trip.
10. **Registration of Canadians Abroad (ROCA):** Prior to travel, Canadian Travellers are required to register their presence within the destination country using the Canadian Government's online Registration of Canadian's Abroad (ROCA) system at <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration>. Travellers who are citizens of countries other than Canada are required to register their travel with the foreign office of their country of citizenship, where possible.
11. **Documentation and Insurance:** Prior to travel, Travellers are responsible for ensuring they have:
 - a. Required travel documents (ex: passports, visas, permits, etc.) for their destination.
 - b. Trip cancellation and interruption insurance: This is mandatory for students and strongly recommended for faculty, staff. Faculty and staff who will travel to a destination for which GAC has assessed risk at Level 3 or Level 4 are responsible to ensure these policies provide coverage in such locations.
 - c. Appropriate travel health insurance: This is mandatory for all Travellers. The policies provided to students by the NSCAD Student Union, and to eligible faculty and staff from Medavie Blue Cross and SSQ, provide appropriate coverage. Travellers with other travel medical insurance policies are responsible to ensure their coverage is sufficient.
 - d. Other appropriate travel insurance, including coverage for the loss of personal property.

Incidents and Emergencies During International Travel

12. **Elevated Travel Advisories during international travel:** If a GAC Travel Advisory increases beyond Level 2 while the student is traveling, or if a GAC Travel Advisory increases beyond Level 3 while faculty or staff are traveling, they must contact the Office of the Dean for advice as soon as possible.
13. **In the event of an Emergency during international travel,** Travellers are expected to:
 - a. Act to protect their own safety and in the case of Activity Sponsors, the safety of other members of the group.
 - b. Contact the Dean who will engage with the University, as appropriate.

c. Follow instructions given by the Dean or designate.

14. Upon being contacted pursuant to section 13, the University will initiate appropriate emergency response measures.

Administrative Structure

Authority: This Policy falls under the authority of the President.

Policy Review: A review of this Policy will be initiated within the first two years of its implementation and in accordance with the requirements of the University’s Policy on Policies thereafter.

Forms and Tools

- Global Affairs Canada (GAC) website at <https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>
- [Travel Authorization Form](#)

Name of Document <https://navigator.nscad.ca/2.4InternationalTravelPolicy.pdf>