



EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY

International Travel Risk Assessment and Crisis Mitigation for Employees and Students

Policy Name: International Travel Risk Assessment and Crisis Mitigation for Employees and Students

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies how East Tennessee State University (ETSU or University) assesses and manages risk related to Students and Employees engaging in international travel by ensuring their health, safety, and security both prior to international travel and during their time abroad.

Applicability

This policy applies to (1) ETSU Students and Employees participating in Education Abroad Program programs explicitly endorsed by the University, whether credit-bearing or non-credit bearing, and (2) to ETSU employees travelling abroad for a purpose relevant to the University's academic mission not necessarily related to a Student Education Abroad Program.

Responsible Official, Office, and Interpretation

The Senior International Officer for the Center for Global Engagement is responsible for the review and revision of this policy. For questions about this policy, please contact The Center for Global Engagement. The Provost, in consultation with the Office of University Counsel, has the final authority to interpret this policy.

Defined Terms

A defined term has a specific meaning within the context of this policy.

ETSU Endorsed Education Abroad Program

Education Abroad Program programs which the University takes specific and deliberate action to support or offer travel through. This includes instances where the travel is funded, in full or in part, by the University, regardless of purpose, and where the travel is actively arranged and/or documented by the Office of International Programs and Services. ETSU Explicitly Endorsed Education Abroad Programs do not include instances where a University Employee has informally discussed the travel with an interested Student, or a University Employee has forwarded information that might be of interest to a Student or group.

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ETSU Endorsed Employee International Travel

International travel by Employees for a purpose relevant to the University's academic mission not necessarily related to a Student education abroad program (e.g., ETSU Faculty or staff travelling abroad to present at a conference, or to engage in research, or to participate in a symposium, etc.).

Student

An individual enrolled in any credit or noncredit bearing course or participating in any academic program administered by the University. For the purposes of this policy, Students include undergraduate, graduate, professional, graduate medical education, and any other individual who pursues educational programs under the guidance of the University's academic structure. Postdoctoral Students and visiting scholars are not included as Students for purposes of this policy.

Employee

Any person defined as an Employee in ETSU's Employment Classification policy regardless of Employee type. For purposes of this policy, graduate Students, volunteers, and independent contractors are not considered Employees.

U.S. Department of State Alert Advisory Levels

Advisories to inform U.S. citizens about the risks associated with international travel that utilize a four-level system to categorize the risk level for each country or specific region within a country.

Education Abroad Program

International travel outside the United States, including to U.S. Territories, by Students and, when applicable, accompanying Employee(s) for educational purposes or for a purpose relevant to the University's academic mission and explicitly endorsed by the University. Examples include full year, fall, spring, and winter intercession or summer semester programs, ETSU faculty-led Education Abroad Programs, Students in reciprocal or consortia study abroad placements, Students' direct enrollment in overseas institutions, Students' interning, doing research or rotations abroad.

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International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC)

Committee responsible for reviewing all proposed travel to U.S. Department of State Advisory Level 3 locations and to locations that pose other specific health, safety, or security concerns not captured by Department of State Advisory Levels 1 and 2. The Committee has University-wide jurisdiction. Composed of the Senior International Officer (Chair), the General Counsel or designee, the Director of Education Abroad Program, a representative from the College of Public Health, and a representative from ETSU Public Safety. ITRAAC may consult with other administrators, faculty, and experts as they choose to make assessment and recommendations).

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Policy

1. Risk Assessment and Crisis Mitigation: Education Abroad Pre-Departure

- 1.1. All Students and accompanying Employees participating in Education Abroad Program programs explicitly endorsed by the University must successfully apply for approval through application processes and procedures in the [Bucs Abroad portal](#).
- 1.2. Explicitly endorsed Education Abroad Program experiences will have undergone Education Abroad Program due diligence processes and approvals by the ETSU International Travel Assessment and Advisory Council (ITRAAC).
- 1.3. Students and accompanying Employees may engage in educational travel in countries or regions where the U.S. State Department has issued a Level 1 Advisory (Exercise Normal Precautions) or a Level 2 Advisory (Exercise Increased Caution).
- 1.4. Students and accompanying Employees may only engage in educational travel in countries or regions where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 3 Advisory (Reconsider Travel) upon the approval of ETSU's International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC) and with approval of the provost in consultation with the respective college dean or designee.
- 1.5. Any Students (with or without accompanying ETSU staff) planning University-endorsed travel to an area with a U.S. Department of State Level 3 Advisory must first make a request to do so through the ITRAAC Travel Request Form.
- 1.6. No travel will be permitted to countries or regions with a State Department Level 4 Advisory (Do not Travel).
- 1.7. If travel has not yet commenced for an approved Education Abroad Program and the risk designation for a country or region is upgraded to a U.S. Department of State Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) or Level 4 (Do Not Travel) Advisory, the program or travel authorization will be required to undergo review by the ETSU International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC) before Students and Employees may proceed with the Education Abroad Program.
- 1.8. All Students and accompanying ETSU Employees participating in Education Abroad Programs endorsed by the University must purchase illness, accident, travel, medical evacuation, repatriation, and security evacuation insurance coverage from the insurance provider selected by ETSU.

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2. Risk Assessment and Crisis Management—Post-Departure

- 2.1. If an ETSU endorsed Education Abroad Program has already departed and the risk designation of the country or region is upgraded to a U.S. Department of State Level 3 Advisory (Reconsider Travel) or Level 4 Advisory (Do Not Travel), the ETSU International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee will convene to decide about the continuation or cancellation of the program.
- 2.2. The ETSU International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC) will review Education Abroad Program programs currently in process when a significant health or safety concern arises as indicated by new travel advisories from the U.S. Department of State and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as other indicators of potential health or safety threats.
- 2.3. ETSU, in its sole discretion, may withdraw approval for Education Abroad Program programs at any time.

3. Suspension of Education Abroad Program Travel

When a significant health or safety concern arises regarding travel that is underway ITRAAC will determine whether to suspend Student travel.

- 3.1. The Senior International Officer will request via email that ITRAAC review the situation. In deciding whether to suspend Student travel, ITRAAC will consider the factors listed above as well as the success of the current program in mitigating health and safety risks thus far, the specific location and situation, information and recommendations from various agencies, entities, and sources, the Education Abroad Program office, insurance provider (if applicable), the onsite staff/affiliate (if applicable), and other trusted local contacts. In emergency situations where it is impractical for ITRAAC to meet, the Senior International officer may take immediate steps to have Students removed from a country, region, or area.
 - 3.1.1. Decisions are made by unanimous consent of ITRAAC. When consensus cannot be reached, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will make the final decision.
 - 3.1.2. A decision regarding the suspension of travel will be communicated to Students via email, phone, and other means as soon as possible.
- 3.2. The University cannot ensure full cost and academic credit recovery to Students who comply with a government-mandated or University-mandated withdrawal or evacuation. The University will make reasonable efforts and will provide Students with guidance to obtain refunds from service providers such as hotels, airlines,

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and dormitories but no refunds are guaranteed. Fees paid will only be refunded to program participants to the extent they are refunded to the University.

4. Risk Assessment and Crisis Mitigation: Employee International Travel unrelated to a Student Education Abroad Program

- 4.1. All ETSU Employees participating in international travel explicitly endorsed by the University must follow all procedures stated by the [ETSU Center for Global Engagement](#).
- 4.2. Employees must register the international trip on the [Bucs Abroad](#) website and complete all requirements in Bucs Abroad before submitting a travel authorization request.
- 4.3. Abide by all applicable University policies including all applicable travel policies set out through the accounts payable office.
- 4.4. A travel authorization request will not be approved without the Bucs Abroad registration.
- 4.5. ETSU Colleges will manage its employees' compliance with the registration requirement. The Center for Global Engagement will train the college designee on managing travel registrations on Bucs Abroad, how to monitor emerging and ongoing emergency situations abroad, and how to conduct an employee well-check.
- 4.6. Employees may travel to countries or regions where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 1 Advisory (Exercise Normal Precautions) or a Level 2 Advisory (Exercise Increased Caution). Employees may travel to countries or regions where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 3 Advisory (Reconsider Travel) only upon approval of ETSU's International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee (ITRAAC). Travel to countries where the U.S. Department of State has issued a Level 4 Advisory (Do Not Travel) will not be endorsed, approved, or funded by ETSU.
- 4.7. If international travel has been approved and not yet commenced, but the Department of State Alert Level rises to Level 3 (Reconsider Travel) or Level 4 (Do Not Travel), the Employee's travel authorization will be reassessed by the ETSU International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee for approval or denial.
- 4.8. As warranted and at the discretion of the Provost, the Senior International Officer, and/or the International Travel Risk Assessment and Advisory Committee, ETSU may make decisions regarding approval, disapproval, and cancellation of ETSU

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Employee international travel based on advice from University Counsel, other agencies, organizations, and entities regarding relevant matters related to risk and safety.

- 4.9. All University Employees participating in international travel experiences explicitly endorsed by the University must purchase international travel insurance coverage as required by the ETSU Center for Global Engagement.
- 4.10. ETSU Employees participating in international travel endorsed by the University must comply with U.S. export control regulations including sanctions imposed by the Office of Foreign Assets Controls and restrictions on the export and re-export of commodities, software, technology and technical data subject to Export Administration Regulations and International Traffic in Arms Regulations.

5. Exclusions

This policy does not apply to ETSU Student athletes travelling abroad for athletic related activities; it also does not apply to international travel that is not endorsed by ETSU.

Procedures/ Applicable Forms and Websites

[Health and Safety for Studying Abroad](#)

[ETSU Center for Global Engagement.](#)

[Education Abroad](#)

[Faculty-Led Education Abroad Information](#)

[Bucs Abroad](#)

Authority and Revisions

Authority: TCA § 49-9-203 et seq.

Previous Policy: Policy on Risk Assessment and Management for Education Abroad Program Programs

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The ETSU Board of Trustees is charged with policy making pursuant to TCA § 49-8-203, et seq. On March 24, 2017, the Board delegated its authority to ETSU's President to establish certain policies and procedures for educational program and other operations of the University, including this policy. The delegation of authority and required process for revision to this policy can be found on the [Policy Development and Rule Making Policy webpage](#).

To suggest a revision to this policy, please contact the responsible official indicated in this policy. Before a substantive change to the policy section may take effect, the requested changes must be: (1) approved by the responsible office; (2) reviewed by the Office of University Counsel for legal sufficiency; (3) posted for public comment; (4) approved by either Academic Council or University Council; and (5) approved by ETSU's President.