

before you go: a safety guide



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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Planning
3. Getting the Ball Rolling
4. Risk Assessments and Inspection Visits
5. Fire Safety in Accommodation
6. General Safety in Accommodation
7. Transportation
8. Safety at the Sports Events
9. General Health and Safety on Tour
10. Safety in Resort and on Excursions
11. TourWatch – Responsible Touring
12. Travel Insurance and Emergency Medical Assistance
13. Health Advice for Travellers
14. Emergency Contacts
15. Other Useful Information, Guidance and Checklists
16. Reporting Incidents and Feedback

1. Introduction

Established in 1992, Sports Travel International Ltd. is a specialist sports tour operator organising sports tours, activity holidays, ski trips, festivals, events and tournaments for schools, colleges and clubs to destinations at home and abroad.

The 'SportsParty' brand of Sports Travel International Ltd. operates our annual multi-sports and leisure festivals in Lloret de Mar (Spain) and Dublin (Ireland) which are safely enjoyed by thousands of students every year.

The most effective way to ensure a safe and trouble free tour is to prepare thoroughly in advance and act responsibly whilst on tour. Our pre-tour safety guide provides information that we believe will assist both group leaders and individual tour members alike in the planning and preparation of the tour and to minimise your own and your group's exposure to potential accidents, hazards and incidents whilst away. Please feel free to contact us at any stage to discuss the elements within this guide. This document should be circulated to and read by all tour party members, including but not limited to team leaders, tour officials, committee members, captains and senior management. If you are a Group Leader you should ensure that all members of your touring group are clearly advised to read this document. It is available as a free download on the SportsParty website. Every tourist is advised to fully read this document as soon as possible and certainly prior to travel.

At Sports Travel International, we are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our clients. Sports Travel International operates a 'Safety Management System for Universities and Colleges' (SMS/UC) which is annually audited by a suitably qualified external agency. This ensures that all reasonable measures are taken to assure our clients of a high level of safety and professionalism throughout a tour. We commit to:

- Maintaining and developing the highest safety management standards for the tours that we provide
- Planning and setting standards which meet the needs and expectations of our clients
- Providing the best financial protection available
- Promoting the concept of 'responsible touring' (see section on 'TourWatch')

2. Planning

Consider Your Group

Each group is unique - the combination of individuals that make up the group is likely to change each time you travel. As such, even if you visit the same places, you may need to consider different measures to accommodate the individuals. You will need to take into account affordability for everyone, accommodation preferences, travel choices, meal plans, sports tournament categories and other factors in order to get the most out of your tour. Remember also to consider your team of group leaders, captains and committee to ensure that the workload is well managed.

Destination Guidance

Sports Travel International is a partner of the 'Know Before You Go' campaign. Please visit the FCO website as soon as possible for up to date impartial travel advice about the country you are proposing to visit including health and safety tips, passport and visa information. See www.fco.gov.uk/travel or follow the link from the SportsParty website.

3. Getting the Ball Rolling

Supervisory Staff Places & Experience

We offer a generous free place ratio to groups travelling on tour. All individuals within your party listed as group leaders and team captains have a responsibility to liaise with us and to pass on information supplied by us to all the other members of the group. This responsibility extends to checking in with us at SportsParty HQ on arrival and attending (sober) a welcome meeting or briefing on arrival at the hotel and passing on information to group members. The ongoing liaison with senior reps may well also be necessary during the tour. Team captains and group leaders are also responsible for the well-being, safety and discipline of your group throughout the tour.

Larger multi-sports groups should give serious consideration to ensuring that one of more tour managers have past experience of touring and that linguistic assistance may prove worthwhile (Spanish speakers may prove invaluable in certain tour situations in Spanish resorts where English is not spoken by everyone).

Pre-Tour Meetings & Codes of Conduct

It is important to meet regularly with group leaders and team captains accompanying the tour to establish policy, share duties and to communicate this policy to the students participating on the tour. Aspects of safety and behaviour should certainly be raised at such meetings and students should be advised of their individual responsibility for personal and collective safety, wellbeing and enjoyment. It is good practice to agree a code of conduct with students in advance of the tour. Acceptance of the code will provide group leaders with the necessary authority to carry out their responsibilities. All participants must additionally adhere to any SportsParty Code of Conduct. See **TourWatch** section on page 9 for details.

4. Risk Assessing

Risk Assessment

This is the process of identifying risks and applying measures to avoid or counteract them. There are many different ways to record risk assessments and you should follow your own university's guidelines and formats. We have produced a comprehensive Safety Management System for Universities and Colleges (SMS/UC) which outlines measures to minimise risk and how these are checked. Individual risk assessments for the accommodations, coach companies and other tour suppliers that we use are also maintained on file and are available for inspection by Group Leaders on request. However, the greatest risks to your own safety are often posed by your own behaviour and decision-making on tour. As well as being extremely dangerous, any self-exposure to peril will not be covered by travel insurance.

On arrival and during your stay

- Familiarise yourself with the accommodation including any public areas, swimming pools and bars
- Consider potential hazards for groups and individuals both at your accommodation and nearby
- Select appropriate group meeting points both at the accommodation and in the vicinity
- Liaise with team captains and hotel reps to address any issues needing attention
- Raise any concerns with senior SportsParty reps, without delay
- Pay particular attention to balconies, glass doors and the swimming pool
- Familiarise yourselves with emergency escape routes at the hotel and other venues

5. Fire Safety in Accommodation

Varying Standards

It is important to recognise that standards and regulations on fire and safety differ greatly throughout Europe and the rest of the world. As a minimum, all our properties will conform to local regulations. Where we use properties on a regular basis, additional recommendations may be made. The Inspection Standard for general safety and fire safety in our accommodation has been developed in conjunction with RoSPA and the Fire Protection Association (FPA) and with reference to the EC recommendations (88/666/EEC).

Induction Talk

SportsParty suggests an induction talk (and where practical a fire drill) to be given on arrival at your accommodation on your request. This is an important safety measure, so please ensure you ask for an induction or at least advice upon your arrival. If circumstances prevent this induction talk, group leaders may wish to undertake their own group evacuation exercise.

Fire and Safety Precautions

You must ensure that all group members know what to do in the event of a fire. Make sure everyone is aware of;

- what the alarm will sound like and how to raise the alarm
- the accommodation's procedure in the case of fire including all escape routes and where the assembly point/s is/are

Additionally, there are some other precautions that you can take whilst staying in any accommodation:

- Check where the fire alarm call points are, how to sound the fire alarm and the means of calling the fire brigade
- Check the fire escape routes and report any problems to the accommodation management and senior SportsParty reps
- Recommend that students unplug electrical appliances before leaving a room unattended and before going to bed
- A strict no-smoking policy should be adopted in all the bedrooms at all times
- Instructions for what to do in an emergency should be posted by the accommodation in every bedroom or in the corridors or communal areas at the least. Please advise a senior rep or hotel manager if you have any concerns.

6. General Safety in Accommodation

Reception Times and Cover

Our accommodations operate a 24 hour reception policy, often staffed by night porters and security guards. Please ensure you and your tour members are respectful of accommodation staff and other clients on their return at night as noise disturbance may result in heavy fines and the police being called.

Students should be reminded that if they have forgotten bedroom keys that the porters can usually assist with entry via a master key, if correct identification has been satisfied. The forced entry of doors is dangerous and will result in substantial fines and damage payments being imposed.

Balconies and Banisters

We strongly recommend that group leaders stress to their groups prior to, and on arrival, the importance of being extremely careful on accommodation balconies. All individuals are hereby specifically warned that jumping from, leaning over, climbing on or climbing over balconies are all extremely dangerous and strictly forbidden. The FCO and ABTA have launched a campaign in an attempt to reduce the number of serious balcony incidents that happen every year, especially in Spanish resorts. You can check out the FCO news section for details on the campaign and also see the Travel Advice page for Spain in the section called 'balconying.' You must act responsibly on balconies at all times, especially as you may be tired, under the influence of alcohol or with friends. N.B. The taking of unnecessary risks (self-exposure to peril) can be life threatening and have the most serious of consequences and will not be covered by travel insurance.

Check out the following FCO link: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/europe/spain>
The FCO states *"There have been a number of deaths recently as a result of falls from balconies. Do not take any unnecessary risks, especially when under the influence of drink or drugs. It is unlikely that your travel insurance will cover you for such incidents"*.

Andrew Gwatkin, British Consul General in Spain says: "I urge young people to take care on holiday and avoid jumping from balcony to balcony or climbing back into their room after a night out. Most falls are accidents that often follow the consumption of alcohol, and which can and do cause serious injury or even death. Drinking may well also invalidate your travel insurance, potentially costing you thousands of pounds if you need medical repatriation. Some falls are the result of *balconying* - deliberately jumping from a balcony into a swimming pool or from one balcony to another. Such pranks can end in the grief of a bereaving family when their loved one dies. Our staff sees the devastating effects of a momentary lapse of judgment and the impact on the victim and their family. The message is: holidays are a time to relax and have fun but please don't leave your common sense at home, think of the potential consequences of your actions".

Make sure banisters and rails are sturdy and report any defects to the accommodation management immediately. Insist on a room change if you consider there is any danger to the room occupants. Please also bring this to our attention so that we can ensure remedial measures are put in place.

The throwing of anything from accommodation balconies is also extremely dangerous and strictly forbidden. Please report any such behaviour to the hotel management and SportsParty reps without delay.

Glass Doors

Be aware of clear glass doors or patio doors that are difficult to see. It is easy to walk into these risking serious injuries. Particular care should be exercised in bedrooms where glass doors often lead onto balconies.

Lifts

Some group leaders stipulate that lifts are out of bounds for tourists. Either way, sensible use of lifts is recommended. The misuse or overloading of lifts can be very dangerous and extremely expensive should repairs to damages be necessary.

Electrical Sockets in Bathrooms

Some accommodations we use may still have electric sockets in the bathrooms. We would strongly recommend that you do not use these under any circumstances.

Alcohol in your accommodation

Please check the 'Code of conduct' appropriate to your accommodation in respect of alcohol consumption at your accommodation. Glass bottles and glasses represent a safety risk in any communal area, bedrooms and around any swimming pool area. Exercise due care and attention at all times and do not walk around in bare feet when cuts from broken glass can cause serious injuries. This is equally important in the bars, nightclubs, sports venues and at the beach.

Smoking in your accommodation

Smoking is not permitted in the accommodation bedrooms. Other than the particular health and safety risk attached, it is illegal. Furthermore, smoking is now not permitted in public places other than in designated smoking areas.

Swimming Pools

Many apartment or hotel pools do not provide lifeguards nor do we provide lifeguards during the tour. As such, we advise you and your tourists not to swim without competent supervision at any time. The use of the swimming pools is strictly limited to the hours shown on the apartment or hotel notice-board or signs by the pool. The use of swimming pools is strictly forbidden to those under the influence of alcohol at all times.

You should also take particular care to ensure that you and everyone in your group:

- do not run and lark about around the pools
- do not dive or jump into the pools or push others into the pools
- do not use glass bottles or glasses in and around the pool area
- pay attention to all the safety signs in and around the pool areas
- only use the pool area during the opening times that are stipulated
- remember that the hotel pools do not have lifeguards on duty

7. Transportation

Coach Transportation

We request self-assessment audit forms from all the coach operators we contract and inspect those we class as frequent use. All UK originating coaches are fitted with seatbelts. In addition, it is now compulsory for passengers to use seatbelts on coaches both within the UK and also in a growing number of countries within Europe. You must use the seat belts where fitted. In some cases, failure to use them can result in on-the-spot fines.

- Drinking Alcohol and Smoking on Coaches

Smoking is not permitted on our coaches. In accordance with EC regulations, the consumption of alcohol is not permitted on coach travel in Europe. Please do not compromise your safety by bringing alcohol onto the coach.

- Safety Points to Remember

- Group leaders should be seated strategically near all exits. Check that these are operational if possible
- Check the location of the First Aid Kit and keep your own first aid kit on board as well
- Check the location and operational instructions of Fire Extinguishers
- Please use the seatbelts provided - it is law in several countries
- Keep all luggage clear of aisles and exits and only bring 1 x small item of carry-on luggage person on board the coach
- Do not disturb the driver whilst he/she is driving or the 2nd driver if he/she is resting or sleeping, unless in an emergency
- Ensure a rubbish collection facility is provided and used - a bottle or tin can on the floor could roll under the driver's pedals and impede his/her ability to drive
- Standing or walking in the aisle is not permitted whilst the vehicle is moving
- Take care getting off the vehicle, especially on the Continent. The door may open directly onto the road and the traffic will be approaching from an unfamiliar direction
- Always do a head count before leaving every stop
- The on board toilet is for emergencies only and will overflow and be out of action if over-used
- As your group may be sharing with students from another university, please allocate seats accordingly and be respectful to other groups and tourists that may be travelling with you at all times. This is a safety issue just as much as a social one

Coaches will be checked by the Police and local authorities on arrival at Dover in the interests of the safety and wellbeing of all those travelling. Groups or individuals who do not comply with the guidelines above may be off-loaded in the interests of the overall safety of the group and drivers.

Non UK Coaches

Regulations applying to travel on non UK registered vehicles vary from country to country. We ensure that coach companies contracted comply with locally enforced regulations. It should be noted that some countries outside the UK do not yet require coaches to be fitted with seatbelts and it may not therefore be possible for us to provide such a facility. For the avoidance of any doubt, all the regulations listed above concerning behaviour, smoking and the consumption of alcohol all apply to the foreign coaches we supply as well.

Ferry Transport

Ensure that all members of the group listen to and are familiar with the emergency procedure that will be announced shortly before departure. You must not return to the coach deck until specifically called to do so. The behaviour of passengers (especially groups) is monitored on board and you should be mindful and respectful of other clients on board. The safety of everyone should be of paramount importance.

Please read the 'Behaviour of Young Persons Hazard Sheet' (P & O Ferries) for further specific risk assessment and safety information for Dover-Calais ferry crossings and the 'Safety Advice' document (Irish Sea Ferries) for crossings to and from Dublin.

All individuals are hereby specifically warned that jumping from, leaning over, climbing on or climbing over railings, balustrades and balconies are extremely dangerous and strictly forbidden.

For those travelling on the Dover-Calais route, P&O Ferries have insisted on the presence of an on board security team for all university sailings henceforth. Please behave responsibly at all times as safety on board the ferry must be paramount.

Air Travel

Very strict safety criteria apply to all air travel originating within the UK. These are closely monitored by the Civil Aviation Authority. You should pay attention to the terms and conditions particular to the airline, which we shall send to you with your flight confirmation. You should be careful to ensure that baggage is not left unattended at the airport at any time and to ensure that no-one could interfere with your luggage at any time prior to travel. It is essential that restrictions concerning items that may be carried as part of any carry-on allowance are strictly adhered to. All passengers must observe the safety instructions and demonstrations that are given prior to take off and stow luggage carefully in the lockers provided.

During your flight, dehydration is a potential risk, so drink plenty of bottled water if you can. Simple exercises in your seat or in the aisle when permitted to do so may help prevent problems associated with sitting still for longer than usual as well.

Please read the CAA's 'Travelling Safely' document for further safety information for flight travel.

Public Transport

The regulations concerning public transport are determined by the appropriate authorities in each country. Should you or your group use public transport, we recommend that you are familiar with the best means of using the relevant system, including the capacities, frequency and destinations appropriate.

8. Safety at the Sports Events

The sports and activities you participate in will naturally carry an element of inherent risk. We implement measures as outlined in our 'Safety Management System' to minimise and control such risk. The following additional advices should be taken into account and re-enforced by group leaders and team captains to all event participants to ensure that:

- you take sufficient food and water with you for the day as there may only be limited supplies at venues away from the resort. Drinking plenty of water will minimise the risk of dehydration
- everyone has the appropriate ability to participate in the events; everyone is in a suitable physical and medical condition to participate in the events and no-one under the influence of alcohol should participate
- keep a listing of participant names and emergency contact details on location at the venue
- jewellery and wristbands must not be worn during tournament matches
- the safety of everyone is more important than the enjoyment of any one group or individual
- the venue and environment be respected and kept in a safe and orderly fashion. Litter must be disposed of safely and responsibly. Be aware of broken bottles, glasses and other hazards. Do not walk around with bare feet or bring glass bottles or glasses to the sports fields or courts at any time as this presents a serious additional risk of accident and injury.
- local hosts are respected at all times - which means no nudity, public urinating and excessive noise which is an abuse of the local environment as well as creating a health and safety violation
- each team should have it's own first aid kit and medical supplies on hand at the sports venues
- keep a copy of the insurance certificate, EHC and emergency contacts details with you at all times at the sports venues
- respect the rules and regulations of the tournament organisers, officials and festival reps

First Aid Cover

We contract ambulances and drivers at the major tournament venues we feature, with local qualified first aiders on site for the treatment of minor injuries and to assist with emergency situations. Those with serious injuries will be taken by ambulance to nearby nominated hospitals and clinics. Please keep a copy of your EHC and insurance certificate with you to facilitate these arrangements.

9. General Health and Safety on Tour

Think about what you are doing at all times – don't take risks that you wouldn't at home! Refer to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website staying safe section at: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> for advice, guidelines and checklists for travel abroad.

Looking After Each Other

For your safety and wellbeing, we would recommend that you avoid getting isolated on your own and stay in groups of 3-4 or more where possible. Remember that you are more vulnerable in a foreign environment, especially when tired and/or under the influence of alcohol. Bear in mind too, that you will stand out if you are wearing strange clothing or fancy dress or are loud and boisterous. Do not walk home alone or allow others in your group to do so. Avoid poorly lit or remote areas, the backstreets and beaches in the dark. Accept responsibility to look after yourself and other members of your group.

- never hitch a ride with strangers
- don't attract attention to yourself by wearing expensive looking jewellery
- never let anyone into your bedroom at any time unless you know and trust that individual

Local Laws and Customs

Find out about local customs and dress and behave accordingly. Obey local laws – there may be serious penalties for breaking a law that might seem trivial at home.

Looking After Your Possessions

Each year there are plenty of valuables (especially mobile phones and cameras) that are either lost or stolen from bars, nightclubs and bedrooms. Most of these are as a result of opportunist theft because bedrooms have been left open, valuables easily accessible or illegal access to bedrooms, when keys have been lost or forgotten. You must have proof of identification to enter a bedroom without your key. It is your responsibility to keep your valuables secure and you should use a security box in your bedroom or accommodation building for safekeeping if there is one available.

A full police report as well as an incident report sheet to SportsParty reps will both be required in order to make an insurance claim on your return.

- don't carry large amounts of cash or valuables on your person that you do not need
- don't leave mobile phones and cameras lying around loose on tables, in bars or in your bedroom
- don't leave valuables on display or unlocked in hotel rooms.

Crime

You're as much at risk of being a victim of crime when travelling as you are when you're at home. While this means you should be on your guard, staying safe is more a matter of common sense and simple precautions. You and your group should be especially vigilant in busy areas, markets, beaches and cities. You should be aware of the possibility of muggings and guard valuable personal items at all times.

Don't openly display valuables such as mobile phones or digital cameras, and take care in crowded areas where pickpockets and bag snatchers may be operating. The majority of reported thefts are a result of items being left unattended or thieves using distraction techniques.

Sexual Assaults and Indecent Behaviour

Incidents of this nature are fortunately rare but groups of over-excited young adults (usually but not always male) occasionally take things too far and make indecent or physical assaults on others (usually but not always female) resulting in upset, alarm and regret. Such incidents can lead to arrest and expulsion from the tour. We recommend you think carefully about your actions and how these may be received before causing unnecessary and unwarranted offence.

Excessive Alcohol

Too much drink can make an individual tired, irrational and unreasonable (as well as fun, amorous and good-humoured on occasions). It can sometimes lead individuals and groups to being boisterous and aggressive as well. The added danger of dehydration exists, especially when the weather is warm and you are in a hot nightclub or playing sport. Drink plenty of water as often as possible and keep to a sensible alcohol limit to remain in control at all times. For impartial advice, you could visit <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/> for information.

Drugs

As a responsible sports tour company, Sports Travel International strongly opposes and disapproves of the purchase, use, sale and carriage of illegal drugs. Unfortunately, in large cities such as Barcelona and Dublin, as well as in busy seaside resorts like Lloret de Mar, illegal drugs may be accessible from vendors on the street or in nightclub venues. Do not discuss or attempt to source illegal drugs from locals or other tour groups as you will put yourself and your group at enormous risk in so doing. Any individual or group on tour with us found to be using, selling, purchasing, distributing or carrying illegal drugs will be reported to the local police for arrest and immediately expelled from the tour without any recourse to us whatsoever.

Spiking Drinks

Make sure that you do not leave your drink unattended at any time. Don't accept drinks from people that you do not know and trust. If you think that you have consumed a drink that has been spiked, please alert the SportsParty reps or bar management without delay and remain with friends. You should call for medical assistance if you have any concerns.

Photography

You may wish to take photographs and or video footage during the tour. Be aware when doing so, as in certain situations this may offend, be prohibited or simply be misunderstood.

Food and Drink

Stay hydrated - be sure to drink plenty of water. Check whether it is safe to drink local tap water. If not, stick to bottled water. Be careful when buying and consuming food other than from the accommodation, especially from street vendors.

Protection from the Weather

Always take and wear clothing appropriate to the weather – hot, cold or otherwise. Be safe in the sun – avoid excessive sunbathing and wear a high factor sunscreen, hat and sunglasses.

10. Safety in Resort and Excursions

SportsParty Wristbands

You are required to wear your wristband throughout the tour, in order to be instantly recognisable to SportsParty management, accommodations, transportation, bars, nightclubs and tournament providers. They should not be worn when actively participating in the sports tournaments, which would be dangerous by the nature of event. You will be refused entry to SportsParty venues, accommodation and transportation without an appropriate wristband being worn. Under no circumstances whatsoever must a wristband be sold to a local, other tourist or non-participating British student (whether from your own university or any other) or anyone else at any time. Only fully paid up bona-fide SportsParty students as supplied on the passenger lists and having travelled as part of the official package are entitled to a wristband. The disregarding of this regulation would lead to the instant dismissal of an individual (or group) as this represents a large safety risk for the infiltration of outsiders within the controlled and managed environment we strive to create. Please kindly report anyone who you see trying to sell, or purchase a wristband to any of the senior SportsParty rep team as soon as you are aware. Replacements wristbands for those lost are only available from SportsParty management upon production of satisfactory proof of identification.

Nights Out

We have selected the best student-friendly venues that welcome our groups each year. The management and staff here will do the very best to look after you, so please take advantage of the great atmosphere at these nominated SportsParty venues. We'll show you where to find them and highlight them on the SportsParty map as well. In the interests of health and safety, you must wear your SportsParty wristbands at all times to enjoy entry into these bars. Risk Assessments have been carried out for these venues and they have a security team in place to monitor your wellbeing. For your general safety and enjoyment, please remember that only the bars and clubs we feature have been checked by us for our students.

In Lloret de Mar

Lloret de Mar is a lively and popular tourist resort with a diverse population. While you are welcome to explore different parts of the town you should be vigilant at all times, especially in the backstreets, at the market and by the beach. In the interests of safety, we recommend that you stay in small groups at all times and do not venture onto the beach at night or walk the backstreets on your own.

If you respect the local people and their resort you will minimise the risk of any friction and animosity. This is particularly important if you are partially dressed (in fancy dress) and you are more vulnerable when tired and under the influence of alcohol. It is illegal to walk around in public areas in Lloret de Mar (other than the beach) without a top on (T-shirt or other) and illegal to drink alcohol in public. Both can lead to heavy fines and possible arrest. The FCO website states: *"In Barcelona (and the Costa Brava including Lloret de Mar) it is now against the law to be in the street wearing only a bikini or swimming shorts/trunks. Being bare-chested or going fully nude has also been banned. The only exception to this law is when you are on the beach, the seafront promenade or the adjacent streets. Failure to respect this law may result in a fine"*.

Take care at the beach and in the sea. See the following advice from the FCO website for Spain: *"Take care when swimming in the sea. Some beaches, especially around Spanish Islands, may have strong undercurrents. Most of them have a flag system in operation. Before swimming, please ensure you understand the system and heed any warnings (a red flag means you must not enter the water). Follow local advice if jellyfish are present"*.

Catamaran Cruise

Your contract and booking will be with the Charter Costa Brava S.L. (The Catamaran Cruise) and we are simply acting as agents on their behalf for the trip. However, you should bear in mind that as you can swim, snorkel and jump from the boat into the sea (as well as eat and drink) it is essential that;

- you carefully listen to all the safety instructions before setting off and familiarise yourself with the emergency procedures
- the rules and regulations of the staff are strictly adhered to throughout the trip
- you do not swim or attempt any activities in the sea unless you have the competence and confidence to do so
- you do not drink alcohol before swimming or any other sea activity
- you do not eat immediately prior to swimming or any other sea activity
- you behave responsibly at all times
- pay particular attention to sunstroke, sunburn and windburn, apply sunscreen as required and dress appropriately

Barcelona Excursion

You can enjoy a wonderful visit to Barcelona, but as with all large cities, you should be vigilant at all times and look after yourselves and your possessions, especially as you may well be unfamiliar with the surroundings. It is easy to get lost and disoriented in foreign cities, so you are advised to stay in small groups at all times and be mindful of meeting points, directions and agreed times for the return journey back to the resort. Exercise due care and attention at all times. Please see the following extract from the FCO website in respect of Barcelona:

'In Barcelona, you should be especially vigilant in the Plaza Catalunya, Ramblas and surrounding streets of the old city and be aware of the possibility of violent muggings in the Montjuic area. In the Ramblas, Old Port (Port Vell) and Olympic Port areas, thieves posing as Police Officers may ask to see wallets for identification purposes. Holders should proceed with precaution, first establishing that the officers are genuine. Should the police request ID, they should be shown your passport, driver's licence or other photographic identification. Genuine Police Officers would not request to see wallets'

In recent years, legislation has come into effect across Spain bringing in controls covering smoking in bars, restaurants and other workplaces. Barcelona city has banned the consumption of alcohol in the street. Additional legislation has since come into effect bringing in more stringent controls on drinking & sexual activity in public places. This includes Spanish beaches, where regulations have increased significantly. Fines imposed for breach of regulations range from €30 up to €1500.

Dublin

You should be able to enjoy the fantastic ambience of Dublin, but as with all large cities, you should be vigilant at all times and look after yourselves and your possessions, especially as you may well be unfamiliar with the surroundings. It is easy to get lost and disoriented in foreign cities, so you are advised to stay in small groups at all times and be mindful of your location, meeting points and directions. Exercise due care and attention at all times. Please see the following extract from the FCO website in respect of Dublin:

'Most visitors to Ireland enjoy a trouble-free time and experience no difficulties during their stay. The capital, Dublin, is a bustling city and tends to be the centre for nightlife and shopping, attracting a lot of people. The Dublin shopping centre is very busy, especially at weekends. Take normal, sensible precautions to avoid personal attacks, bag-snatching and pick-pocketing. Try to avoid carrying valuables and large sums of money. There is an underlying threat from terrorism. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers.'

Important General Points to Remember

- Advise anyone you know who is not a fully paid up member of your tour party and who is considering travelling separately, that they will not be allowed entry in the main SportsParty bars. There is a huge safety consideration, an insurance implication as well as an essential control measure to be considered.
- Any security team members we use are appointed to look after our participants. Please respect them and help them to respect you too.
- Our reps are chosen with your enjoyment and wellbeing in mind and a number of our specialist reps have language or first aid qualifications too. Please help them to help you by acting responsibly on tour.
- Drink responsibly and within your limits and keep hydrated by drinking bottled water as often as possible.
- It's the law in Spain to carry photo identification with you at all times.
- Spanish law prohibits smoking in accommodations, bars and nightclubs (other than in specifically designated areas).
- Drinking alcohol on the streets is also prohibited and may lead to immediate arrest.
- There are loads of bars and clubs to choose from, but we cannot vouch for any venue not specifically featured and promoted by us.
- Like most places, our festival destinations have good and bad people and areas. Be vigilant and careful at all times.
- Stay in small groups whenever possible and don't leave anyone stranded on their own.
- Look after yourselves, team-mates and your possessions at all times, especially when returning late at night.
- Don't walk down the backstreets, poorly lit or remote areas or get lured into bars which we do not recommend.
- We strongly recommend that you do not head down onto the beach at night. The beach area and the sea represent a serious risk to your safety, especially when under the influence of alcohol.
- Be extremely careful when crossing bridges and by the river.
- Be vigilant when crossing busy roads, especially when the traffic is coming from the right (in continental Europe).
- If other groups, tourists or locals are harassing you, please urgently get in touch with SportsParty reps or inform the local police, depending on the nature of the incident. Make a police report or complete an incident report form if appropriate in order that this can be followed up without delay.

11. TourWatch – Responsible Touring

TourWatch

'TourWatch' is a group of leading sports tour operators who organise sports tours and festivals for British university students. TourWatch exists to provide a communication forum between these festival organisers and to promote the concept of responsible touring.

Responsible Touring

Responsible touring is a set of simple guidelines endorsed and enforced by TourWatch members designed to encourage students on tour to be responsible and accountable for their own actions and the actions of their team-mates and to promote the safest possible touring environment for students, officials and staff participating in university sports festivals.

The Purpose

The purpose of this forum is not to spoil the fun of the thousands of student tourists who every year, enjoy the fantastic experience of tour, party and drink responsibly with their team-mates, look after each other and treat the host destination with respect. The purpose of the forum is to collectively identify and hold accountable those university tour groups who;

- act unreasonably, ignoring warnings and behaving recklessly and irresponsibly on tour, endangering their own safety and that of others
- cause deliberate vandalism/damage to accommodation, vehicles or venues

Holding Groups Responsible

TourWatch operates a 'banned from one, banned from all' policy. Any group that is identified by a TourWatch member as meeting any of the criteria listed above will be put forward for a ban at the annual TourWatch meeting. The duration of any ban imposed will be between one and two years in duration and will include ALL members' festivals. There will be no process for appeal. The ban will extend to the entire club or, in very serious cases, the entire university – not just individuals. The names list of those banned will be circulated among TourWatch members to prevent banned individuals travelling with/as non-banned clubs/teams.

The Fundamentals of Responsible Touring

It's tempting, but don't overdo the drink just because you are away having fun. Know your limit and stay in control. If one of your team-mates has overdone it – look after them. Do not leave them alone, especially if they become unwell.

- Do not use, purchase or sell any drugs on tour
- Respect your accommodation and the people who have to work there. Don't cause deliberate damage or vandalise your room or communal areas. If you break or damage something by accident – just pay for it and say sorry
- On vehicles, use seatbelts where provided, do not stand up and walk around unnecessarily and don't do anything to distract the driver
- Don't physically or verbally assault anyone or deliberately seek confrontation
- Respect the rules/code of your sport, play safely and obey the officials
- Remember to observe local laws and customs on decency/partial nudity, when you choose your fancy dress
- Don't use the excuse of 'we're on a sports tour' to justify the acceptability of unacceptable behaviour and damage
- Do not, under any circumstances use body paint for your costumes. The damage deposits lost as a result of body paint stains on sheets, walls, curtains and towels run into tens of thousands of Euros every year

12. Travel Insurance and Emergency Medical Assistance

Travel Insurance

It is vital that you ensure that you have adequate travel insurance cover for yourself (and all the members of your group), especially as you are travelling on a sports tour and **some of the elements required will not be covered by the EHIC and other insurance policies**, including the provision for medical cover for accidents and injuries sustained whilst taking part in sports on tour. We are able to offer you travel insurance, which has been specially designed to meet the needs of sports tour groups. Full details of the policy are available to view on our website at www.sportsparty.co.uk. Travel insurance is not included in your tour package unless specifically added as an extra inclusion by your Group Leader or you have since added this yourself individually. If insurance isn't included in your group package, then you'll need to act now. Every individual must have adequate travel insurance in place before setting off on tour. If you choose to make your own insurance arrangements, for the avoidance of doubt, your policy must cover as a minimum the full cost of cancellation by you and repatriation in the event of accident or illness as well as provide cover for you for the activities you are participating in on tour. These elements are **not** covered on an EHIC or in many standard insurance policies. Please read the guidelines on the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-insurance> for what may be covered by an EHIC and what is not. Spanish Hospitals and Medical Centres have featured in the National press recently due to a number of reported incidents where treatment has been refused until payment has been received or insurance policies produced, where this treatment should actually have been covered by an EHIC. You are advised not to sign anything at the hospital, pay for any treatment there or give your credit card details before you have checked this out with your insurance company on the 24 hour emergency medical number provided on your insurance certificate (see below). They will give you clarification and advice first.

Sports Travel International Ltd. is an appointed representative of Fogg Travel Insurance Services Limited for the sale of travel insurance. Fogg Travel Services Insurance Ltd. is fully authorised by the Financial Services Authority. **Bear in mind among other things that you will not be covered by insurance, if any injury or claim of any kind is the result of your being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or due to your wilful self-exposure to danger.**

24-hour Emergency Medical Assistance

In the event of serious illness or injury, or you need to curtail your trip, you may need the help of the emergency medical service provided by Fogg Assist. This service is included in the insurance cover we offer and therefore only applicable to insurance purchased with SportsParty through Sports Travel International Ltd. If you arrange alternative insurance, there may be an equivalent service, but you would need to check very carefully with your own provider.

If you have purchased insurance with us and require 24-hour emergency medical assistance whilst abroad or need to curtail your trip, you will need to contact 'Fogg Assist': Fogg Assist: Tel: **+44 (0)845 658 9899**

You should advise Fogg Assist that you are insured under the **Sports Travel International** scheme through URV, and have the following information ready to advise:

- Name and age of patient
 - Name and contact telephone number of your group leader
 - Location of hospital and doctor's telephone number
 - The medical problem
 - Your SportsParty tour booking reference and/or Group Name
- Following your call, Fogg Assist will undertake the following, as applicable:
- Contact the treating doctor/hospital for details of the illness/injury
 - Guarantee hospital/medical costs where necessary
 - Establish the necessity for repatriation. This will be on the recommendation of the doctor, not the patient or their family
 - Arrange repatriation as specified by the doctor, including ambulances, flights, nurses etc. as necessary
 - Where repatriation is organised, the group leader will be contacted to pass on the relevant details to the rest of the group
 - In the event of a death, details will be required of the location of the deceased, cause of death, next of kin, and contact number for relatives
 - A relative will be permitted to travel out to an ill or injured person if this is deemed to be medically necessary. Agreement must be obtained from Fogg Assist prior to travel
 - In the event of a death of, or serious illness/injury to a close relative at home, Fogg Assist will facilitate you to curtail your trip and travel home

13. Health Advice for Travellers

It can be especially disconcerting to suffer illness abroad as medical treatment generally has to be paid for. As well as taking appropriate travel insurance cover there are some further precautions that you should consider:

Visit your Doctor prior to travel

If you have any concerns about your health or have an existing medical condition, we recommend you visit your doctor as soon as possible before you travel. Check what vaccinations you need and if you need to take any extra health precautions. Details are available from your GP surgery and from the National Travel Health Network and Centre www.nathnac.org Information on health abroad is also available at www.nhs.uk/livewell/travelhealth and you should seek medical advice if you are in any doubt about your fitness to travel. Check if your medication is legal in the country you are visiting - pack it in your hand luggage. If you are taking prescribed medication, take a copy of the prescription with you, and find out if you will need to take a doctor's letter with you. N.B. Please remember that all pre-existing medical conditions must be reported to your insurance company, prior to travel, or your policy may prove to be invalid.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

You should obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) before leaving the UK (the form E111 is no longer valid). The EHIC is not a substitute for medical and travel insurance, but entitles the holder rights to healthcare that may become necessary during a temporary visit to EEA (European Economic Area) countries including Spain. You will not be covered for medical repatriation, on-going medical treatment or treatment of a non-urgent nature. Remember - each person in your group requires a card. Apply online at www.ehic.org.uk or forms are available from most Post Offices in the UK. If you already have an EHIC, check that it is still valid as they do have an expiry date and renew online without delay if required.

First Aid Kits

Many sports governing bodies stipulate that a first aid kit be carried on all tours. This policy may specify the contents of such a kit. Keep in mind that you are providing for a group and not just a few people and take into account the activities which students will be participating in. It is a tour requirement that you have your own team medical kit at all of the sports venues where you are participating.

First Aid Qualification

Large multi-sports groups should give strong consideration to taking one of more qualified first aiders with them on the tour.

14. Emergency Contacts

In the event of a serious incident whilst on tour, your first point of contact should be the local emergency services. However, it is essential to communicate speedily with other contact points:

Designated University Contact

Designate a university contact in the UK who will be available whilst you are on tour. A complete set of tour documents should be left with them. This will facilitate speedy assistance in the event of an emergency.

SportsParty HQ and Emergency contact details

Our SportsParty HQ is staffed by senior reps and SportsParty management during the hours stated in the pre-festival documentation and the location is clearly marked on the SportsParty map. Emergency telephone contacts for the head reps and event managers are also detailed on the pre-festival 'Tour Details' for Group Leaders. Someone will be available 24 hours a day to deal with the situation calmly and efficiently in the event of an emergency.

Sports Travel International 24-hour Emergency Contact in the UK

We also operate a 24-hour duty officer service back in the UK for emergency communication with senior reps and group leaders. Our managers are trained to operate to established emergency procedures in case of any major incident. These procedures set out channels of communications, duties and responsibilities, enabling quick and efficient assistance to be provided. The following number should be used by Group Leaders in emergency situations ONLY.

Tel: +44 (0) 7795 466 016 This number is also available on our 24/7 answering machine at the office.

Under no circumstances should the emergency telephone numbers be passed on to other participants or members of the public as this may result in our management team being diverted from helping you.

Further Useful Emergency Contacts Whilst on Tour

	SPAIN	IRELAND
Police.....	092.....	999 or 112
Emergency services.....	112.....	112
English speaking medical attention	902 248 268....	112
Local Hospital:	972 35 32 64...	01 803 2000
Local Police:.....	972 36 17 36	01 666 8000

15. Other Useful Information, Guidance and Checklists

British Embassies abroad

British embassies overseas can help British nationals travelling abroad, with advice and practical support and may be especially useful to those who may have been the victims of crime. Subject to the individual circumstances they can;

- issue replacement passports
- provide information about transferring funds
- contact family and friends
- provide appropriate help if you have suffered rape, serious assault, are the victim of other crime, or are in hospital

British Embassy in Spain

British Embassy
Torre Espacio
Paseo de la Castellana 259D
28046 Madrid

Tel; (00 34) 91 7 146 300 (switchboard)

<http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk/en>

Office opening hours for telephone callers; 09.00hrs – 17.00hrs (correct at publication) Monday-Friday

British Consulate-General in Barcelona

Avenida Diagonal, 477, 13a planta
Barcelona 08036, Spain

Tel; (00 34) 913 342 194 (outside Spain) or 902 109 356 (in Spain)

Fax; (00 34) 93 366 6221

<http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk/en>

Office opening hours; 08.30hrs – 13.30hrs (correct at publication) Monday-Friday

Consular phone lines are open from 09.00hrs-17.00hrs (correct at publication) Monday-Friday

British Embassy in Ireland

British Embassy
29, Merrion Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4, Ireland

Tel; (00 353) 1 205 3700 (switchboard)

<http://www.britishembassyinireland.fco.gov.uk/en>

Office opening hours; 09.00hrs–12.45hrs and 14.00hrs-17.00hrs (correct at publication)

FCO Travel Advice – Know Before You Go

Sports Travel International Ltd. is a partner of the 'Know Before You Go' campaign. The campaign was launched in 2001 and is an ongoing travel industry campaign to help Brits to stay safe and healthy abroad. It is essential that you visit the website at the planning stage of your tour and in advance of heading abroad.

For further details and up to date travel advice and information for the country you are visiting, please visit www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice in good time before you go.

See the following links for specific travel advice in respect of Spain and Ireland.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/spain>

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ireland>

A widget with link to these pages can be found at <http://www.sportsparty.co.uk/safety/>

All other countries we feature for ad hoc tours also have similar pages on the FCO website. Please read thoroughly in advance of travel for up to date advice.

*All the contact details shown above are correct at the time of this publication, but are subject to change.

Travel Checklist – Before You Go

- Don't travel without insurance: It is your responsibility to make sure that any policy (whether purchased from us or another source) covers you for any activities you are likely to undertake (including sports tournaments) and is wholly suitable for your needs and those of other members of your group.
- Report any pre-existing medical conditions to your insurers.
- Get a free European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for free or reduced cost emergency care (and check it's still valid) - you still need full travel insurance though!
- Check with your doctor as soon as possible to find out if you need any vaccinations or other precautions before you travel and to discuss any pre-existing medical conditions and confirm you have the necessary and health and fitness to travel
- Make sure you've got correct visas (if applicable) for the country you are visiting
- Ensure that your passport is valid for the duration of your trip or longer, as stipulated for the entry requirements for the country you are visiting - for certain countries your passport must be valid for 6 months after the date you travel
- All first time adult passport applicants must now attend an interview to verify their identity. It now takes up to six weeks (or sometimes even longer) to get a first passport. For more information please visit www.ips.gov.uk
- Take photocopies of your passport and other important documents and keep these separate from the originals when you travel and/or store them online using a secure data storage site
- Fill in the emergency contact details in your passport. This will make it much easier for the authorities to contact someone in an emergency if necessary
- Find out where the nearest embassy is - check their website to find out what services they offer and their opening times
- Take enough money for your trip and some back-up funds. Consider a pre-paid debit card or travellers cheques - make a note of the cheque numbers before you go. Advise your bank and/or credit card companies if you intend using your cards while abroad
- Consider taking your mobile phone - check with your service provider to make sure your phone works abroad and be aware that the cost of using it abroad (and insuring it) can be substantially higher than at home. Travel insurance does not usually include cover for mobile phones and gadgets such as i-pads etc. Consider storing useful numbers such as the police and the local embassy or consulate before you set off.
- Invest in a good travel guide to help you plan your trip (and phrase book for whilst you are away if necessary)

Travel Checklist – When You Are Away

- Think about what you are doing at all times - don't take risks that you wouldn't at home!
- Remain alert and guard valuable personal items at all times. The majority of reported thefts are a result of items being left unattended or thieves using distraction techniques. Don't openly display valuables such as mobile phones or cameras
- Find out about local customs and dress and behave accordingly. Obey local laws - there may be serious penalties for breaking a law that might seem trivial at home
- Be careful when taking photographs, videos or using binoculars. Such activities may be misunderstood, especially near military installations or religious buildings
- Drink plenty of water. Check whether it's safe to drink local tap water - if not, stick to bottled water

16. Reporting Incidents and Feedback

Sports Travel International Ltd. is committed to the continued improvement of safety standards. The review and assessment of our own systems is ongoing as we aim for the highest level of safety, professionalism and client satisfaction.

Customer Communication

Please immediately report anything that causes concern to the appropriate party (eg. rep, hotelier, coach driver or other supplier), and record any incidents on an Incident/Accident Report Form. If the situation cannot be satisfactorily resolved, please contact Sports Travel International Ltd. and we shall endeavour to resolve the issue as soon as possible. We shall also send you a Customer Feedback Questionnaire in advance/post tour, which we shall ask you to complete and send back to us on your return. These steps help us to address matters with the supplier concerned and to be proactive in preventing similar problems happening in the future. We believe that by listening to our clients we can continue to improve our products and services.