



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

South Australian
Government Schools

International Education Services

Managing Study Tours

Metropolitan and regional schools

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Learning about other countries and cultures has always been a part of the school curriculum. With increased global connectedness and influence it is now imperative that children are educated within a global rather than local context. Simply learning about other countries and cultures is no longer enough, students must be given opportunities to experience other countries and cultures through genuine interaction and Study Tours offer a unique opportunity to achieve this.

'The value of international education lies in the unique opportunities it provides for enriching learning, understanding and the curriculum, grounded in the immediacy of personal experiences and new relationships that span languages and cultures, and that this 'opens up the world' for all concerned, creating a 'global community' of learning.

- The Value of International Education, DECD, 2012

School Portal

Information sheets and forms referred to in this document are available in the school portal.

Login to <https://www.internationalstudents.sa.edu.au/en/portals/> using your school login details

Please contact the IES marketing team via education.isp@sa.gov.au or 8226 3402 for your login details.

MANAGING STUDY TOURS

Introduction

International Education Services (IES) has developed this document to assist schools in the management and delivery of Study Tours in their school.

IES has also developed a number of information sheets and forms that are referenced in this document. These are available via the school portal on the South Australian Government Schools website. ISP Managers, Study Tour Coordinators and key personnel should familiarise themselves with the resources available in the school portal.

What is a Study Tour?

A Study Tour is a short term visit designed for small and large groups of international students 10 years of age and above. Students are either from the same school or are participating in a program developed by an overseas governing body, travel agent or education agent.

The purpose of a Study Tour is to provide opportunities for participating students to:

- experience Australian lifestyle
- understand Australian school culture
- be immersed in an English speaking environment
- learn about the world outside of their home country.

Study Tours can also have a specific focus or theme, such as maths and science or sport, with most of the school activities based on this theme.

Study Tours vary in length and range from a few days up to several weeks. Each program is customised to suit the needs of the group. A typical study tour generally includes the following:

- intensive English classes
- specialised sessions for the participating students
- integration in school activities
- homestay accommodation
- tourism excursions.

Study Tours are a costed, commercial program differing from sister-school or exchange programs which are generally based on principles of reciprocity with no commercial benefit. This means that all components of a Study Tour, including homestay accommodation, are costed into the program. Pricing is market driven but also aims to ensure that host schools benefit from hosting.

BENEFITS OF HOSTING A STUDY TOUR

Study Tours involve the commitment of the whole school and community, and the benefits to schools can be both significant and long-lasting.

Host schools receive direct and indirect benefits from hosting a Study Tour:

- raise revenue to support the school's international program
- incorporate an international perspective into the school curriculum
- strengthen the language focus for the school
- raise the profile of the school in the community

- showcase your school to international students who may decide to return as a full fee-paying international student in the future.

Study Tours provide **students, teachers and host families** with the means to:

- forge life-long friendships
- promote cultural sharing and global understanding
- raise student pride through involvement in the program
- expose local students to foreign language and culture
- provide professional development and professional learning opportunities for school staff.

Community and State

The flow-on benefits to both local communities and state tourism are significant, and these benefits include revenue and employment gained through shopping, sightseeing, food and hospitality, transport and many other products and services. The peak study tour season is during the Australian winter, and it has been noted in the past that Study Tours are integral in supporting the tourism industry during winter.

Upon successful completion of a Study Tour, often the visiting group will nominate to return the following year.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

International Education Services

International Education Services (IES) is responsible for managing the Study Tour program across all South Australian government schools. Any inquiry received by a school directly from an overseas education agent or overseas school must be redirected to IES. Management of the study tour program through IES ensures that all programs are delivered consistently across the system, and that schools are properly reimbursed for their efforts.

The primary role of IES is to help host schools every step of the way. IES can be contacted at any point throughout the preparation and delivery process.

IES is responsible for:

- managing study tour agent agreements and legal matters
- costing program outlines and quotations
- negotiating with overseas agents on all matters including program content, costs, and placement with host schools
- providing advice and assistance to schools on development of their school-based program and training for homestay accreditation
- managing payment to schools for services rendered
- monitoring the quality of the program and service delivery.

Host school

The host school is responsible for:

- resourcing each Study Tour with adequately trained personnel
- liaising with IES on all aspects of a Study Tour
- nominating a School Study Tour Coordinator/Team to prepare and deliver the program

- identifying a person to liaise with IES on all aspects of the Study Tour, and the accompanying overseas teacher/tour escort upon arrival
- developing and delivering the school-based program
- sourcing and maintaining a database of quality homestays
- accrediting and training homestays
- managing homestay recruitment according to matching requirements
- providing duty of care to participating students throughout the delivery of the program
- providing 24 hour support to the group throughout the program.

Agent

The majority of Study Tours are booked through overseas education or travel agents. Only a few overseas schools arrange their visits directly with IES.

Agents will present a proposed program to a visiting school based on the itinerary and quotation that IES has provided, and an agreement is made between the agent and the visiting school to deliver the program. Often there is competition between agents for the same program, and some overseas schools and government bodies are required to regularly change the agent they use to deliver their study tour in order to meet impartiality requirements.

Agents will communicate with IES, who will then pass on relevant information to host schools. The agent will act as a communication channel for information between the visiting school and the host school in Australia, and will facilitate program and homestay management, and develop the relationship between the two schools.

The agent or overseas school is responsible for:

- liaising with IES on all aspects of the itinerary and quotation
- providing support for the study tour program
- providing IES with participating student details that are passed onto schools for homestay matching
- providing IES with flight details that are passed onto schools for inclusion in the school program
- ensuring that all participants and accompanying teacher/tour escorts obtain the appropriate visa for entry into Australia and have adequate travel insurance
- ensuring details concerning the participating student information are accurate in particular medical details
- ensuring that all participants have received information about the tour prior to departure
- arranging for at least one English-speaking teacher/tour escort to accompany the group
- ensuring that the accompanying overseas teacher/tour escort is aware of their responsibilities and is contactable 24 hours a day by the participants, host school(s) and IES.

Accompanying overseas teacher/tour escorts

All Study Tour groups are accompanied by at least one English-speaking teacher or tour escort. In the case of a group being split across multiple host schools, the English-speaking teacher or tour escort(s) are usually assigned to each school or will work across several schools.

The teacher/escort is responsible for:

- consulting with the host school on all matters relating to the study tour including the school-based program, excursions and homestay arrangements during the visit
- wearing a name tag at all times so that they can be easily identified by students and school staff
- adhering to WHS policies and procedures as required by the host school (e.g. signing in and out as a visitor)
- acting responsibly and providing 24-hour support for the program whilst the group is in South Australia
- accompanying the group at all times including activities and excursions
- providing assistance with language and cultural interpretation
- pastoral care and behaviour management of participating students as appropriate
- medical matters and facilitating immediate payment of all medical expenses incurred by a participant
- seeking approval from the School Study Tour Coordinator before visiting a host family.

In addition to the above, visiting teachers and tour escorts are required to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC) before arriving into Australia in order to allow them to be on school sites with their students. This process could take around 4 weeks to complete and needs to be considered as part of planning the Study Tour. IES facilitates the completion of this process prior to arrival through communication with the agent managing the study tour. As such, schools are not required to obtain or confirm checks for visiting teachers or tour escorts.

PLANNING FOR A STUDY TOUR

The key to running a successful Study Tour in your school is good planning. It is recommended that the process of planning and implementation Study Tours is documented for future reference.

Refer to the '*Study Tour Process Flowchart*' on the school portal.

Refer to the '*Checklist for Managing a Study Tour*' on the school portal.

Host School Service Agreement

This agreement will be forwarded by IES and outlines roles and responsibilities, group details, proposed dates and the number of participants for the Study Tour. It also includes an estimate of the revenue the school might expect to receive, which can be used to assist with budgeting for the program. Upon receiving the agreement, it must be signed and returned to IES.

Refer to the sample '*Host School Service Agreement*' on the school portal.

Itinerary

IES will cost the study tour against an itinerary that has been developed in conjunction with the overseas school or education agency managing the program. Obtaining a copy of this itinerary will enable you to see what is and isn't included in the program, and will help you plan your own school program.

Refer to the sample '*Study Tour itinerary*' on the school portal.

Inform all school staff

After accepting a Study Tour, inform all school staff of the study tour dates so they are aware of the program and understand that they may be approached to assist. Continue to update staff on the progress of the preparation and program delivery and ask for help from your colleagues when you need it. Running a Study Tour involves the commitment of many people, and the most successful programs are ones where the whole school is involved.

Involve the school community

It is also valuable to involve the greater school community in a Study Tour as well, as well as any local community groups or clubs that might be able to contribute.

Resourcing Study Tours in your school

The success of Study Tours requires a whole school commitment and a willingness by school personnel to become involved. Schools may choose to manage Study Tours by either nominating an individual or a team to coordinate the preparation and delivery of each Study Tour.

School Principal

The school principal has overall responsibility for approving the school's participation in a Study Tour and must ensure that the program is appropriately managed and delivered. Often a Study Tour is accompanied by the visiting school's principal or vice principal, and this provides the opportunity to build a lasting relationship between the two schools.

School Study Tour Coordinator

The nominated coordinator must assume responsibility for the overall planning and implementation of the Study Tour program. The coordinator also acts as the point of contact between the school and IES. Out of hours contact details for the study tour coordinator must be provided to IES, as important information about the program can often come at short notice. It is imperative that the coordinator is contactable at all times.

HOMESTAY ACCOMMODATION

Homestay accommodation is a crucial part of the study tour program. Students are hosted for the duration of the visit by families arranged by the host school. Many agents also request homestay accommodation to be arranged for the accompanying teachers or tour escorts.

For many international students, their homestay experience is one of the most memorable aspects of their visit. For the host family, it can open up a world of social and cultural experiences.

The host family is expected to provide the visiting student with three meals and snacks each day. It is a requirement that study tour students are accompanied to and from school either by a member of the family or someone close to them. If the student needs to use public transport the homestay family is responsible for any associated costs such as a MetroCard. On weekends, the student will join in family activities.

It is expected that the host family will speak English at home in front of the student and encourage the visiting student to practice their English skills. Sharing the Australian lifestyle and culture is a very important aspect of the homestay experience.

Recruiting homestay families

The IES marketing team can assist with advertising and promotional materials. Email education.isp@sa.gov.au for assistance.

Some strategies that have been used in the past to reach out to potential families and encourage them to host have included the following:

- an article in the school newsletter
- announcement at school assembly
- a text message sent to all school parents
- a letter-drop to all households in the local area
- subsidising participation in school trips for students of hosting families
- reaching out to feeder primary schools, local sports clubs and community groups.

Homestay accreditation

Accreditation ensures families are aware of their responsibilities and can provide the required duty of care, support and suitable accommodation to the student(s). The process for accreditation includes completing an application form, undergoing the Working With Children Check process, undergoing RRHAN-EC training and conducting a homestay visit and interview.

IES provides regular training for school staff on the homestay accreditation process. At least one member of staff must attend training on homestay accreditation. Please contact IES to organise training or to find out about the next group training session.

Documents required for the homestay accreditation process for homestay families are:

- Homestay study tour application – to be completed by the family prior to accreditation visit
- Homestay accreditation flowchart
- Home visit and interview form (Study Tours) – identifies checks to be completed by school staff during the home visit and interview
- Terms and Conditions for Study Tour Homestays Providers – to be provided to and discussed with the homestay family
- Child protection responsibilities – to be provided to and discussed with the homestay family

Refer to the 'Homestay accreditation study tour program flowchart', 'Homestay study tour application', 'Home visit and interview form - Study Tours', 'Terms and Conditions for Study Tour Homestay Providers', 'Child protection responsibilities' from the 'Managing the homestay program' section on the school portal.

Supporting Homestay families

Once host families have been recruited and accredited, it is good practice to run a briefing session for them. The briefing should cover all aspects of the program to ensure that the homestays are fully aware of their responsibilities.

Ongoing support to host families can range from a brief phone call to clarify a matter, to discussing a concern with a parent and reassuring them of their actions. Families need to know who they can contact when a problem occurs. In all cases the first point of contact

for a family should be the School Study Tour Coordinator, who will need to provide host families with an out of hours contact number.

THE STUDY TOUR PROGRAM

The study tour program can feature a variety of activities, however almost every program will include the following components.

Arrival and Departure

The School Study Tour Coordinator should be available just prior to arrival and for the duration of the visit to ensure that all arrangements are in place and secure. Last minute homestay cancellations can and do happen, and often coordinators are working until the very last minute before the study tour group lands in Adelaide.

Transport for students to get to and from the airport for arrival and departure are, in almost all cases, arranged by IES or the managing agent. Whilst in most cases it is not compulsory, it is certainly good practice to send a staff member to the airport to meet the group when they arrive at the airport.

Upon arrival of the group your school must enter study tour students into EDSAS using the following procedures:

1. Enter the visa subclass in the visa field (either 600 ST, 601 ST or 651 ST) in Student Personal Information Part 2.
2. When the pop up box appears asking for the identifying number from the Letter of Confirmation, all Study Tour students are to be entered with the number 10000 (please note: not 10,000).
3. All Study Tour students should also be entered under 'Status' in the Student Personal Information Part 1 section as 'O - Out of Scope'.

On the day of departure, the study tour students and staff will assemble at the host school to be collected by the bus and taken to the airport. Homestays and buddies may wish to be present at departure if the time is appropriate. Transport is in most cases arranged by either IES or the managing agent, and a time for collection from the host school will be nominated and communicated to the School Study Tour Coordinator.

Liaising with accompanying overseas teacher/tour escorts

When the Study Tour has arrived, it is important to assist the accompanying teacher/tour escorts with:

- orientation around the school
- introductions to the principal, teachers
- appropriate times for visiting classrooms
- guidelines regarding taking photographs
- information for participants regarding safety of money and possessions and 'pocket money' management
- exchange of out of hours contact numbers
- emergency contact numbers.

It is important to remember what is and isn't included in a school program. Any demands made by an accompanying teacher or tour escort that are difficult to accommodate may be refused or referred to IES.

Welcome and Farewell Ceremonies

A warm welcome will make a very good first impression. Arrange a welcome ceremony to introduce the study tour students and staff to the host school. The scale of your welcome can vary – it is not compulsory to arrange a welcome at a whole of school assembly – however it should at least involve all key staff involved in the program and the school principal. A formal welcome of each participating student and accompanying staff is usually appreciated as well as a small welcome gift. The visiting group may have nominated a student or staff member to speak on behalf of their school or organisation, and it is worth discussing this with staff prior to the ceremony.

The farewell ceremony should be held on or close to the final day that the visiting students will be in the host school. Again, it is not compulsory to do this as a whole of school assembly, however it is usually expected that school buddies at least are present and that each student receives a certificate indicating their participation in the program. A farewell party that includes homestays is usually well-received, however this may not always be possible due to family or work commitments.

In most cases, the visiting students will have prepared a speech, song or traditional dance to express their appreciation to the host school. The visiting group may also require some time before the ceremony to practise. It is important to discuss this with the accompanying staff in order to be clear about how much time, what kind of space, and if any specific facilities, such as audio-visual equipment, are needed.

Intensive English Lessons

The Intensive English component of the program must be taught by a qualified teacher. The host school can arrange for either an existing teacher within the school to be released through TRT days or for a TRT teacher to be employed for the duration of the visit. Funding for Intensive English sessions will be provided as part of the school study tour payment according to the length of lessons in the program, either half-day TRT or full-day TRT.

Provide a classroom or teaching space that is conducive to learning and is available for the exclusive use of the visiting students for the duration of their visit. Language rich displays and readily available resources will enhance the positive nature of the learning experience. This room will often double as the students' homeroom and can be a place that is theirs for the duration of their time at the host school.

The Intensive English program itself must be planned according to the total number of Intensive English lessons in the itinerary. The content required can vary as different groups have students of varying English levels and interests. Generally, a program that focuses on a range of linguistic abilities and is centred on the themes of the program – in most cases, Australian culture and lifestyle – will be appropriate. Try to include content throughout the day that can be put into practice later on, for instance an Intensive English lesson that is before an excursion could include content that is useful in the excursion. Phrases, questions and points for discussion that can be talked about with homestay families after school has finished is usually appreciated as well.

Suggested Intensive English topics may include:

- getting to know you
- Australian geography, history and culture
- around the home and local neighbourhood
- around the school

- sport – cricket, Australian rules football, netball
- food and shopping.

It is also possible to incorporate Intensive English activities into planned excursions.

School integration

As well as Intensive English classes, the students undertake a number of other school based activities. These usually include school buddies where possible and can include activities that cover subjects such as Australian cooking, Australian sports, Aboriginal culture etc.

Some schools may request integration into mainstream classes at an appropriate year level. This can be highly beneficial for students that have an appropriate level of English. Consultation with IES as to the group's English level and capabilities will assist with deciding whether to include this in the program.

Excursions and extended tours

Australian cultural and tourism experiences are an integral part of most study tours. Most study tours include at least one full or half-day excursion for each week of the visit. The IES Study Tour Coordinator will advise the agent on a range of fun excursions that will appeal to the age group of the participants and encourage interactive learning. The cost of the excursions is built into the quotation based on the selection made by the agent. Local students may participate in excursions, but funding is generally not provided.

IES will provide the host school with details of all excursions that must be booked and coordinated by the school as part of the program. The school must provide staff to accompany students on excursions in accordance with departmental camps and excursions guidelines. As with any excursion or camp, all risks are to be assessed. In addition, as study tour students are usually non-English speaking, extra safeguards may be required.

In many cases, the school is given the flexibility to choose an appropriate excursion. Some suggestions include:

Half day excursions - City sights and Glenelg Beach, Central Market and Chinatown, North Terrace and Rundle Mall, Tandanya, Adelaide Zoo and Botanical Gardens.

Full day excursions or overnight stay - Adelaide Hills, Mt Lofty, townships and Cleland Wildlife Park or Gorge Wildlife Park, Victor Harbor – Urrimbirra Wildlife Park and Granite Island.

School buddies

Each visiting student should be assigned a school buddy of the same gender and a similar age. A member of the host family is the perfect buddy. Buddies need to provide valuable support and friendship to their visitor for the duration of their stay, and it is a role that is crucial to the success of a Study Tour.

Once identified, buddies will need to be informed of their responsibilities prior to the group arriving.

Buddies will need to assist the visiting students with:

- orientation around the school
- school routines and expectations including punctuality

- introductions to teachers, classmates and friends and
- participation in activities during breaks and some lessons.

Teachers will need to be aware if buddies are required to be absent from lessons in order to participate in welcome and farewell ceremonies. Backup buddies are a good idea for these cases.

Large groups hosted by multiple schools

South Australia is fortunate to be host to a number of very large study tour groups from Japan and Korea. These groups range in size from 100 students up to 240 students, and, due to their size, must be hosted across multiple schools.

The IES Study Tour Coordinator will identify potential schools to host students of large study tours. Due to the complexity of developing and managing a large group visit, IES may arrange a briefing session for all schools involved. Often the overseas school will send a small number of staff to South Australia for an inspection visit, during which some or all host schools and excursion sites are inspected. The briefing may be scheduled to occur during this visit so the staff can be involved and provide input. Attendance at briefings for large groups is mandatory, and if the School Study Tour Coordinator is unable to attend, another person must be nominated to attend and report back.

Whilst different study tours have different requirements, there is a general expectation that all schools meet the requirements as closely as possible in order to avoid too much variance between host schools. This is to ensure that students do not miss out on activities done by others. It may be in the best of intentions to offer a program that is above and beyond the requirements set, but unless each school does the same, it will not have the desired effect.

In some cases, excursions are arranged by the IES Study Tour Coordinator. This will be communicated during the program briefing.

Approved on: 26/09/2022

Authorised by: Director, International Education