EDINBURGH INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

PRE-PROGRAMME INFORMATION

The following pre-programme information and arrival instructions are very important and should be read very carefully. If, after reading this material, you require any additional information, please contact the EPA Edinburgh office.

**What is EPA and what is its role?**

Educational Programmes Abroad (EPA) is an educational agency that organises and administers study abroad programmes in Europe on behalf of many American colleges and universities. EPA is responsible for all local arrangements and programme administration. The EPA staff is in regular contact with the study abroad offices at all its affiliated institutions.

**EPA OFFICE ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER**

Please give your parents the EPA office addresses and telephone numbers:

**Edinburgh Office:** 25 Hillpark Loan

Telephone 0131 539 2553

Mobile Phone 07711 251 378

Telephone from the US 011 44 131 539 2553

There is an answering machine available to take messages outside office hours. Friends and relatives may send mail to you in care of the EPA office until they know your permanent address and we will forward it to you.

Should you encounter any difficulties once you arrive in Edinburgh, you may contact the Programmes Director on 539 2553 or 07711251378 (mobile). You will be given other emergency contact names and numbers during your orientation. Give these numbers to your parents in case there is an emergency at home and they need to contact EPA outside normal office hours.

**We must stress, however, that these numbers are only to be used in case of emergency, otherwise we will be happy to take calls during office hours.**

**BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE US**

Check now to make sure that your passport is valid. You should bring a current photo-identification card from your home institution, as it will enable you to get discounts at various places in the UK. We recommend that all students buy an International Student Identity Card (ISIC), primarily for student discounts, but also for obtaining travel insurance through your ISIC; check this and other benefits when you apply for your card. You can check with your study abroad office or local student travel service to find out how to get an ISIC card in the US or you can obtain one once you are in Edinburgh.
from STA (Student Travel Association) 27 Forest Road, Edinburgh (0131 226 774). You will need £9.00, one passport size photo and a student ID card from your home institution.

Also, please note that mace or any type of pepper spray is illegal in the UK, and bringing it into the country and/or possessing it while here is seen as a serious offence. It is equivalent to carrying a gun and carries the same jail sentence, so please leave it at home.

**BRITISH MONEY**

As soon as you are in Britain you will need British sterling (pounds - £). To save time you may wish to ask your bank in the US to get about £50 in British notes. If you are unable to do this, there are cash machines at the airports. The best places to change money in Edinburgh are the American Express office or a branch of Marks & Spencer department stores; both offer competitive exchange rates and do not charge commission. Cash machines (ATMs) are also widely available. The 'Bureau de Change' and banks tend to charge higher rates and commission fees. The main British 'High Street' banks are Barclays, Lloyds, HSBC, Royal Bank of Scotland, Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale and National Westminster.

**HEALTH**

Contrary to popular belief, the British National Health Service (NHS) does **NOT** provide blanket health care for Americans visiting Britain for less than six months. The NHS charges Americans for all routine health care and for all hospital treatment once a person has been admitted to hospital. The NHS, however, does pay for any emergency treatment (i.e. a broken leg or a communicable disease) an American might require while in Britain.

**You should check your US insurance policy to determine the amount and type of coverage you will have abroad and take out a supplemental policy if your existing coverage seems insufficient.** At orientation we will discuss what to do if you become ill while in Scotland. Since waiting times for appointments with NHS physicians are normally quite long, we usually recommend a private physician known to EPA. The average cost of a private consultation is around £50 ($75). This fee is normally recoverable from the student's US policy with adequate documentation, but you will have to pay for the consultation up front. You should bring a copy of your insurance details with you to the UK for your reference.

If you are taking any medication, try to bring enough to last you the whole of your stay abroad. Bring a clear description of the medication from your doctor/pharmacist ready to show customs officials. All medication and vitamins should be in individual containers and clearly labelled.

If you are taking medication and are unable to bring enough with you from the US, it would be helpful if you could bring a prescription and letter of authorisation from your US physician. Even with this prescription and letter, you might still have to see a British physician before a pharmacy (called 'chemist' in Britain) will issue your medication, and you might, therefore, ask your US physician if he/she could recommend an Edinburgh specialist to you.

If you have a medical or emotional condition, which should be known to the EPA staff, convey it to the Programmes Director **in confidence** either **before** or **upon arrival** in Edinburgh.
If you wear glasses or contact lenses, try to bring an extra pair. Having replacements sent from the US can create long and costly hassles with UK customs authorities. If you wear contact lenses, bring enough lens solution to last you the whole of your stay, as it is much more expensive in the UK than in the US. If you cannot bring extra glasses or contacts, it is a good idea to have a copy of your prescription with you.

**ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT**

Standard US electrical appliances are incompatible with the British electrical system, because both the current and type of outlet are different. If you plan to bring any appliances with you, you should obtain a voltage converter (past students have recommended the FRANZUS voltage converter) and an adapter before you depart the US. These can be purchased in Britain but they are more expensive. You will need a **three (square) prong** plug for all parts of the UK. A word of caution: many Americans find that even with the proper equipment, it can be difficult to use US appliances in Britain, because converters can easily over-heat and short fuse. Some people find it easier and in the long-run just as economical to purchase the cheapest available British appliances once they are here; hairdryers and irons can be purchased for about $20. It is now possible to buy dual-voltage hairdryers and curling irons in the US. You can use these in the UK with a plug adapter, purchased in the US or UK.

**OTHER EQUIPMENT**

It is advisable to bring a battery-operated travel alarm clock. You might also wish to bring an i-player.

Many students bring a lap-top computer for course work and emails. You should check with an electronics store in the US before you leave to make sure it will run on the higher voltage here and bring the appropriate converter or adapter.

If you bring an expensive camera or laptop to the UK, bring the bill of sale or a copy thereof, to prove you purchased it in the US.

Students sometimes ask about the availability of e-mail. Napier University will be able to provide this facility. Many of the apartments have internet connection but you can purchase a ‘dongle’ to connect your mobile phone with your lap-top for emails.

**CLIMATE - CLOTHING - WHAT TO BRING**

The British climate is, for the most part, mild and moderate, but the weather can be extremely changeable and unpredictable, and, as you’ve no doubt already been told, it rains a great deal. Below are the **average maximum** daily temperatures in Edinburgh month by month. When using this guide bear in mind that these are averages; for instance the temperature can rise to the 80s (F) in the summer and dip to the 20s (F) during the winter.

**AVERAGE MAXIMUM DAILY TEMPERATURES IN LONDON IN FAHRENHEIT AND CENTIGRADE:**

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**DEC**
Regardless of the time of year you come, bring an umbrella, raincoat and sweaters. It doesn’t rain all the time, contrary to popular belief, but we do get our fair share of wet weather. Students on the Fall and Spring should bring a winter coat.

Edinburgh is a great walking city, and even when you travel by public transport, you will spend a lot of time on your feet. You should, therefore, bring a couple of pairs of comfortable walking shoes. High heels are very impractical.

Appropriate dress in the internship placements is largely dictated by the nature of the placement in which you are working. A strict dress code operates for all Parliamentary internships: men are required to wear suits in Parliament, and women must wear corresponding dress i.e. dresses, skirts or smart trousers.

In most other fields, including advertising and public relations, all areas of business and banking and law firms, male interns are expected to wear either suits or jackets, ties and good trousers. Female interns in these fields are expected to wear corresponding dress i.e. skirts, dresses or smart trousers. All law interns, male and female, must have at least one good, dark suit to wear to court.

In a few placements where the atmosphere is fairly informal, such as fringe theatres, museums and pressure groups, both male and female interns can wear pretty much what they want within reason, such as jeans etc. Health care placements tend also to be fairly casual, though jeans should be avoided. Most medical research interns are loaned lab coats for the duration of their internships.

It isn't necessary to bring a vast wardrobe as long as it contains four or five outfits suitable for working in your placement; it's helpful to bring a fairly co-ordinated wardrobe from which you can make as many combinations and add and subtract layers as necessitated by the weather. Students are sometimes invited to attend special luncheons, dinners, cocktail parties etc. in conjunction with their internships, so it is advisable for all students to bring at least one rather 'dressy' outfit.

All students should bring casual clothes for classes, evenings and weekends; it is not necessary to dress up for most British restaurants and theatres.

You would be well advised to make sure your valuable personal property, such as cameras and expensive sports equipment, are insured under your parents'/guardians' existing homeowner's policy or under separate cover. During orientation we will advise you on how best to protect your personal property from theft. In Edinburgh, pick-pocketing and petty theft are not uncommon. EPA cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of personal property such as money, clothes, cameras, sports equipment, jewellery etc. You should leave your valuable jewellery at home in the US.

Above all, try to travel light. A good rule of thumb to follow is this: if you can't carry it, don't bring it. Bear in mind that you will inevitably want to bring home more than you come with and your baggage allowance is the same in both directions. Excess luggage and shipping costs can be very high. If you are planning on travelling before or after the programme, remember that you will have to find somewhere to store most of your luggage for the duration of your trip.
Soft-sided luggage is useful to bring because it expands for the trip home. If you bring two big suitcases, try to bring a smaller piece of luggage - such as a backpack - as well to use for shorter trips around Britain, possibly folded up and carried over in one of your big suitcases. If you are planning to travel around Europe for any length of time after the programme, you will definitely need a backpack. It is worthwhile carrying one in your suitcase as they are more expensive to purchase in Britain.

**INTERNSHIPS**

Barring any unforeseen circumstances, students will be placed in their internships in advance of their arrival in Edinburgh. Notification will be given on the first day of orientation when you will speak individually to an EPA staff member about your particular internship. All questions and concerns can be answered at that time. A great deal of time and care goes into placing students in internships most suited to their individual backgrounds, goals and interests.

Although EPA supervisors are asked to make acceptance decisions in advance of the programme's commencement, all such acceptances are considered provisional pending satisfactory interviews with prospective interns on their arrival. In the rare case where it seems the student may have been misplaced due to some unforeseen circumstance, the EPA staff will re-place the student elsewhere.

You should bear in mind that to a certain extent your internship will be as good as you make it. EPA will provide your placement, programme administration and back-up support. Your supervisor will provide assignments, guidance, feedback and insight into your chosen field. A good attitude, enthusiasm, initiative, diligence and hard work must all come from you. Your attitude towards your work, your supervisor and your colleagues will be a major factor in determining the success of your internship. If you come with an open mind and a willingness to work hard, you will have a very worthwhile experience. Your supervisor will seek to assign work that is challenging, useful and enjoyable and in return he or she will expect you to make a significant contribution to the workplace.

In all its internships, EPA requires that the majority of the work assigned must be of an educational or intellectually challenging nature and that each student must ultimately be given a level of responsibility commensurate with his or her abilities. However, it is essential that you understand that in all internships, as in most jobs, there is a certain amount of routine, sometimes even tedious and boring work. EPA, your sponsoring institution and your supervisor will expect you to undertake this routine work willingly. Your co-operation and adaptability in the initial stages of your internship while you are still learning the ropes will be rewarded with increased responsibility and more stimulating tasks as the placement progresses.

**SCHEDULES**

Please note the number of days per week you will be expected to work below:

**FALL AND SPRING SEMESTERS** - 3 days per week

**SUMMER** - 3 days per week

There are no official breaks during the **FALL SEMESTER** programme

During the **SPRING SEMESTER** programme there is an official four-day weekend break at Easter (Good Friday through Easter Monday).
During the **SUMMER** programmes the only official breaks are the occasional Monday public (‘Bank’) holidays.

**PROGRAMME ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM**

The EPA staff handles all aspects of programme administration and assists students in understanding and adapting to British culture. The staff are always available to help students deal with any problems which might arise in connection with any aspect of their stay in Edinburgh or with sickness, accidents, unpleasant news from home, etc. If a student has a problem which is outside the EPA staff’s area of expertise, they will refer the student to a trusted outside source for help. Students are treated as responsible adults and any problems brought to the attention of the EPA staff are dealt with in confidence. If, however, a serious situation arises in which, for example, a student is in an accident, or hospitalised, or when the student seems to be in danger of losing academic credit, the Programmes Director reserves the right to initiate contact with the student’s family, academic adviser, or home college. Such an action would normally only be undertaken in consultation with the student.

* **VERY IMPORTANT RULE ON CHANGES TO YOUR APPLICATION DETAILS** *

Any changes to your housing or internship requests or to any details in your application and supporting documents must be made **in writing** (not email) to the Edinburgh EPA office. If it is possible to accommodate these changes, we will confirm the changes in writing. **Please note that switches to or from the prearranged housing option will be accepted no later than six weeks before the programme begins.**