

About this guide and the EAIE Access Group

The role of the ACCESS Expert Community is to promote the equal participation of students and staff with disabilities in all aspects of higher education, especially international mobility.

This A-Z Guide is designed to give you some hot tips on how to improve the experience of students with disabilities on study abroad programmes and has been developed by participants at the ACCESS Reception at the EAIE conference in Prague 2014.

INCLUSIVE INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY



FOR Students



A Access/Disability office is a good place to **ASK** about study opportunities abroad and supports/accommodations. Let them know if you need information in different specific alternative formats.

B **BE** prepared. Organising an international exchange takes time. It is a valuable experience and it is possible, so start well in advance.

C **COLLECT** information on all aspects of studying abroad (classes, exams, living accommodation, social activities etc.) from your home and host education institution as well as student organisations.

D **DISCLOSURE** or not? The host institution needs to know if you require supports or accommodations. Disclosure allows them to prepare and to make arrangements. Be assured that all information is confidential.

E **EXPLAIN** and document your needs if you want support and adjustments to live and learn abroad. Disclosure in good time makes sure the host higher education institution can make arrangements.

F Make a **FINANCIAL** plan, including additional disability related costs. Enquire about the possibility of funding for these extra costs (e.g. supplementary grant E+).

G Consider **GOING** on a preparatory study visit if possible to get a full picture of what to expect (living, learning, social life etc.) & to get in touch with staff, other students. Enquire about grants for such a visit.

H Consider getting **HEALTH** insurance and ask about expenses related to your disability. If you are bringing medication or special equipment, check the travel agency rules and country's entry regulations.

I **INFORM** the host institution also about your strengths and what has helped you in the past to overcome barriers (including arrangements and supports).

J **JUST** make sure the host institution can offer the necessary access, adjustments, assistive devices and support you require to learn and live abroad. You might have to bring some things from home.

K Ask the host institution to let you **KNOW** what the application procedure is for the adjustments and support (e.g. deadlines, necessary documents like needs assessment or medical reports etc).

L Ask for a named person in the **LOCAL** (host) institution that you can contact with all your questions. Also keep contact details of someone from your home institution handy. They are still there to help.

M Don't believe it's possible? Listen to the stories of other students with disabilities who have been abroad. This will definitely **MOTIVATE** you.

FOR Higher Ed Institutions



N The **NORMAL** student doesn't exist. Don't make assumptions about students with a disability: they want to go abroad and it is possible.

O Show that international mobility is a real **OPTION**, using diverse pictures and testimonies of students with disabilities in all your communication (website, brochures, talks, etc.).

P **PAUSE** and really make time to listen to the expert, the students: what are their strengths, what are their needs, what helped them in the past that can support them again to study and live abroad?

Q Ensure a high-**QUALITY** experience by providing the students with the necessary support, devices and arrangements to fully participate in university life. Inform the student quickly about what is possible.

R **REACT** quickly: inform the student as soon as possible with general prospectus in accessible formats, information on the possible support and adjustments, contact details, information on grants & social life.

S Make **SURE** you explain to students that disclosure is only asked in order to arrange the necessary supports and that all information stays confidential.

T Offer awareness **TRAINING** for staff to get to know more about diversity & the difficulties international students with disabilities might experience.

U Apply **UNIVERSAL** design when designing buildings where classes take place, residence halls, learning environments, support services, ICT to make the environment inclusive to all.

V Think about setting up **VALUABLE** support systems (e.g. a buddy-system) for all domestic and international students. This will benefit all students, including international students with disabilities.

W Collaborate **WITH** others: make liaisons between international and disability/access office, the library etc. & connect with the host/home education institution & other disability organizations outside the college.

X **eXPLAIN** to teachers what they can do to make the student feel welcome and to create equal opportunities for the student to succeed.

Y Apply a **YES-we-can-do-attitude**. Say yes to inclusive international mobility requests, and figure out afterwards how this can be realised.

Z Step out of your local '**ZONE**'. Do you as a higher ed institution need support or have questions on this topic? Don't hesitate to contact the EAIE Access & Inclusion group, Ahead, SIHO, MIUSA etc.