

Communication with Child Abroad

Open communication with your student about their study abroad experience is crucial to their success. Use our parent pre-departure checklist to guide some of the crucial conversations you should have in preparation of your student's study abroad experience. Find below tips for staying in touch with your student while they are abroad:

1. Figure out the time difference and choose best times to catch up live through audio or video calls.
2. Discuss expectations for timely response of other digital communications, such as emails and texts.
3. Make a plan for your child to use their cell phone locally in their host country and internationally to communicate with you:
 - a. Does your service provider offer an international plan, or will your child buy a local sim card? If opting for an international plan, are there limits and restrictions due to budgetary constraints? If opting to use a local sim card, through what apps will you communicate?
 - b. Will your child have reliable access to wifi abroad?
4. Plan ahead if you wish to send your child letters or packages while abroad. There are often international shipping delays and extra fees that your child may be responsible for paying upon package receipt.
5. If you want to visit your child while abroad, plan to coordinate the trip with your child directly. Marshall Undergraduate International Programs staff and exchange university partners will not be able to intermedicate communication between parents and students unless parents are granted access by the student under FERPA.
6. Finally, understand that due to FERPA regulations, most updates regarding your child's experience will need to come directly from your child, not from the Undergraduate International Programs office or the exchange university.