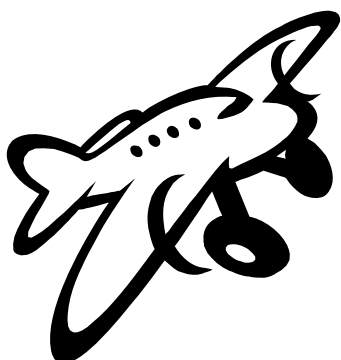




WALES YFC INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME

GOLDEN RULES FOR EXCHANGEES

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Congratulations on being selected to represent Wales YFC on an overseas trip.

We hope that the information in this booklet will help you with your arrangements, but please remember this information is not exhaustive, you will need to do your home work too.

PREPARING TO GO

Indemnity Form

Make sure you understand your obligations to Wales YFC and to your host Country. You will receive a photocopy for your indemnity form for your reference.

Insurance

You must take out adequate insurance as early as possible – it is for your benefit. Simply no insurance, no exchange.

Passport

Please check now that you have a valid passport in your name and that it will be valid for 6 months after the date of your return. Please make sure the next of kin emergency contact is completed.

Health

Please go to your doctor and ensure your vaccinations are up to date (e.g. tetanus and polio), and check to see what other vaccinations you may need for your chosen country. Sometimes these have to be administered over a period of weeks so allow plenty of time.

Booking and Paying for your Flight

Please contact the international officer before you book your flights to check that they are convenient with the host country. After this book your flight as soon as possible and promptly inform the International Officer of your flight times. It is imperative that the host country know when you are to arrive in good time. You have signed your indemnity form guaranteeing this. If you leave booking to long, you risk losing the cheaper options and will probably not be able to fly to the required destination on the designated day.

Flight Protection: Make sure when you book your flight that your booking is ATOL protected. Look on the web site www.atol.org.uk for more details. Don't forget to reconfirm your flights 72 hours before you fly.

Research

Find out about the country you will be visiting – show that you are interested in their affairs, and want to learn about their culture – be enthusiastic! Use library books and travel brochures to gain information. Contact the previous years exchangee(s) for advice.

Photographs

In order to have a decent and interesting collection of slides and photographs of your home, family, YFC activities, farming and local area, you need to take your pictures over several months selecting the best to take with you. Try to keep a balance of interests and not too many. A small booklet of family snaps plus local postcards is plenty, and allows enough slides to vary your talks – you must not be bored of them because this will be conveyed when you speak.

Knowledge

As a Young Farmers Ambassador, you must be prepared to answer questions about different aspects of life in your country – ‘surf the net’ or find out about: -

- The monarchy and our Royal Family
- Agriculture – farming in Britain as a whole not just your home area
- Learn more about the marketing boards, yields per acre/hectare, advisory services, agriculture education
- Note the prices of land, livestock, products, implements, feeds and fertiliser – take the latest copy of Farmers Weekly/Farmers Guardian.
- The Welsh Assembly, British Government, political systems
- The National Health Service and the Welfare State
- The Education System
- The EU and it’s world-wide effects, be careful to use up-to date information regarding current members and potential member countries
- Local Government – county councils, parish councils
- Prices of various goods, taxes and wages
- The structure of Wales YFC / NFYFC and it’s history
- Young people today, society as a whole, books, films, music and sport
- The environment, pollution, conservation – what can be done.

Be ready to listen as well as talk, but extend your knowledge as much as you can so that you will soon find yourself able to contribute to discussions on a wide range of subjects.

GUIDELINES ON PACKING

Luggage

Every traveller says they took too much luggage, so put together what you intend to take and then halve it!! Travel Light – to medium holdalls are easier to carry than one heavy case. Make sure you choose something that will last for the duration of your travels – you will be using them more often than normal and should be confident that they will withstand constant use. If you have a little space left, do not be tempted to fill it – you will collect a lot of items while you are away and will need the space!!

a) Items to consider taking with you

Alarm Clock, sample coins and stamps, map of UK, sunglasses, writing material, classic Welsh recipes for you to show off your skills, camera, batteries, ipods, photos of home, family and pets.

b) Clothing

This depends on the destination and season, but try to choose clothes which are not too bulky, pack well and do not crease. Never take new shoes, older ones are more comfortable for walking and sandals are handy too. A warm sweater is good as an extra layer for cool mornings / evenings. Swimwear may be handy.

Essential Items

Passport, tickets, visa (if applicable), insurance, money (travellers cheques, credit card and a little local currency), contact addresses.

Copies of Documents

Please take two photocopies of your passport information page, and your travel insurance documents, airline tickets and credit cards, one to go with you and one to

leave at home. Make sure a relative knows your credit card details and how to cancel the cards if they get stolen.

Other tips

- Do not take anything you would hate to lose.
- Make sure you have a money belt to go under your clothing.
- If you wear glasses take a spare pair.
- Keep all medicines in their original, labelled containers and bring a copy of your prescriptions.
- Take travellers cheques and a major credit card, not cash.
- Put the name and address of your destination on your luggage label.
- Make sure your home address and phone number is written inside your luggage. Have lockable luggage if possible.
- Contact telephone numbers for your host/collection person in case of problems on arrival.

Departure from the UK

Check the suitcase and hand baggage weight limit with your chosen airline, leave capacity for souvenirs etc. Excess baggage rates can be very expensive. Do not take scissors, penknife, aerosols etc in your hand luggage, again check with your airline.

Leave ample time to get to the airport, make sure you know which airport and which terminal you are departing from. Double check to make sure you have all your documents with you for travelling.

Drinks are often free on long haul flights, do not drink too much as entry into countries can be refused if you are drunk. Drink plenty of water so you don't get dehydrated and walk about as much as you can.

Most countries have strict import and quarantine regulations. Do not take any meat, dairy products, fruit, vegetables, fish, corn seeds or any other type of plant material with you if you are going to a country outside of Europe.

WHEN ON EXCHANGE

Arrival in Hosting Country

There may be delays on arrival, please be very patient as you go through customs. Remember to report any lost/damaged baggage before leaving the baggage claims area. You will be tired on arrival after a long haul flight, please give your self-time to adjust. Try and ring or e-mail home just to say you have arrived safely.

Stay in Touch

It is imperative that you keep in touch with your family and the International Officer whilst you are away – if possible, please let us know that you have arrived at your destination safely. Please make regular contact, e-mail would be the best way to keep in touch with the International Officer. Please remember, the International Officer is the first point of contact for your parents.

Host Families

Your host families are volunteers and do not receive payment for looking after you. Do not expect them to pay for everything and make sure you are appreciative of all their efforts to entertain you. Write a thank you letter when you leave. Do not speak

badly of your previous host when you arrive at the next family. Present each host family with a gift which is typical of Wales or your area. Suggestions include badges, pens, pencils, tea towels, beer mats, book marks, pottery, club supplies items, biscuits/chocolates.

Scholars

Scholars have their exchange sponsored. You will be expected to send postcards to your sponsors and to send a letter of thanks on your return. Ensure that they are proud to have sponsored you, or you may spoil the chances for a delegate next year. Scholars will receive additional information.

Publicity

Those going to countries where English is the principal language may find themselves being interviewed for TV, Radio and newspaper articles, and visiting schools, clubs and local organisations. This is a great opportunity for you to promote the YFC and Britain, using your slides or video.

Behaviour

Your behaviour must be impeccable, as you are a guest in a foreign country and someone's home, representing YFC. There is no excuse for bad manners. Do not think your activities will be unnoticed back in Wales, the grapevine is global. Note also that bad behaviour before your departure could result in your exchange being cancelled.

Be Aware

- Whilst abroad use common sense, be aware and look after your own security. Read up about the country you are going to and make sure you understand risk areas. Try not to travel alone at night, watch out for pickpockets and scam artists. Make sure that you only have a small amount of money in your outer pockets; use a money belt for the rest.
- Only deal with authorised agents when you change money. Only sign traveller's cheques in front of the person who will cash them. Make sure your credit card is returned after each transaction.
- When you are in a foreign country you are subject to its laws, be aware of what is considered criminal in the country where you are. Overseas you may be arrested for actions that may be legal at home, or considered minor offences.

Lost or Stolen Items:

If your possessions are lost or stolen report the loss immediately to the police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of your plight.

After reporting the missing items to the police, report the loss or theft of:

- Traveller's cheques to the nearest agent of the issuing company.
- Credit cards to the issuing company.
- Airline tickets to the airline.
- Passport to the nearest UK embassy or consulate.

Assistance Abroad

Should you find yourself in legal or serious medical difficulties contact the nearest British Embassy or Consulate. They will be able to offer advice and make contact with family at home to explain the situation.

Flexibility

This a vital characteristic in all exchanges. If you go on an exchange with an open mind, you will have a great time. Take advantage of all the fantastic opportunities and do not waste them. Try not be biased and approach situations with the right attitude.

Homesickness/Culture Shock

This may affect you at some point – do not be afraid to admit it. Talk to your hosting family, and mix with your new friends and try not to dwell on it. The feelings will be of disorientation, insecurity, and the feeling of inability to cope with the situations arising in a strange environment. If it affects you, recognise it for what it is, realise that it won't last forever and try not to let it ruin your trip. Try not to ring home if you are feeling home sick, it will worry your parents who will think there is a big problem.

Parents Passports

For the longer trips it might be wise to suggest that at least one of your parents has a valid passport in case of a serious emergency whilst you are away.

Staying on after your organised trip

If you stay on after your organised trip has finished there are three things that you must consider.

- 1 Amend the date for your return air ticket.
- 2 Extend your insurance cover.
- 3 Make sure you have a valid visa.

USEFUL LINKS

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Travel Advice

Look on the web site www.fco.gov.uk for updated travel advice and on www.europa.eu/eu-life/travel-tourism for travel in Europe.

Department of Health

For up to date advice on health issues for travelers look on the following web sites www.doh.gov.uk / <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/index.htm>

And, finally...

Have Fun, Learn and Achieve!