Re-Entry Handbook
A Guide for Students Returning From An Education Abroad Experience

Step 3: The Career Search
Contents

Unpack and Reflect 2
Career Competencies 4
Transferable Skills 6
Depth and Details 7
Résumé Ready 8

Other Available Handbook Sections:
Section 1 – Understanding Re-entry
Section 2 - Returning Home 101: What can you do now?
Section 4 - Additional Resources

*Please find sections 1, 2, and 4 on the IEGI website or within the return phase of your application.
Unpack & Reflect:
What did you learn?

In order to connect your experience to possible skills you learned abroad, it is important that you take some time to reflect on your time abroad. This requires you to “unpack” everything that you learned while you were away and think about what it means. The following questions are meant to serve as prompts for your reflection. You could write in your responses here or, consider journaling or creating a blog. Maybe you already did this while you were abroad; if so, read through your entries and take note of your personal and professional progress throughout your journey.

1. List three things you learned about yourself or your home country while abroad and how you learned each.

2. What challenges did you overcome while abroad?

4. What surprised you while abroad?
5. How was your life different while abroad?

6. How did your outlook on the world (values, perspectives, goals) change while you were abroad?

7. Did your abroad experiences meet your expectations? Why or why not?

8. What are you concerned or excited about now that you are back?

Adapted from Vanderbilt University (n.d.) “Study abroad re-entry handbook.”
While you were abroad, you most certainly expanded your professional skillset whether it is apparent to you now or not! You undoubtedly learned to adapt and problem solve and you now have an international network. Your education abroad experience will benefit you throughout your academic and professional career, but what else did you gain?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) outlines eight core competencies that prepare students for their future careers and define career readiness.

Your experiences abroad have provided you with a platform for developing these abilities. On the next page, we encourage you to explore the NACE competencies, and to think about how you improved in any (or all) of them!
ARE YOU CAREER READY?!
Eight competencies outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) to define career readiness.

**Oral/Written Communications:**
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside the organization; Public speaking skills and ability to express ideas to others; Can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

**Career Management:**
Identify and articulate skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals and identify areas necessary for professional growth; Navigate and explore job options; Understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities; Ability to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:**
Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems; Obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data; Demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

**Teamwork/Collaboration:**
Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints; Ability to work within team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict; Ability to understand and appreciate multicultural diversity.

**Leadership:**
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside the organization; Public speaking skills and ability to express ideas to others; Can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

**Digital Technology:**
Select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task; Use computing skills to solve problems; proficiency with computer software programs.

**Global/Intercultural Fluency:**
Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

**Professionalism/Work Ethic:**
Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits (punctuality, working productively with others, time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication); Show integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind; Can learn from mistakes; Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work.
Transferable Skills: Making career connections

Identifying transferable skills will allow you to market yourself to prospective employers. Job descriptions will usually include key words that the search committee is looking for on your résumé or in your cover letter. Use your experience abroad as an asset to strengthen your career search. Below are a few examples of connections you can make between your new or enhanced skills and what employers are looking for in a new hire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Developed Abroad</th>
<th>NACE Competency Fit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved language skills and ability to communicate despite language barriers</td>
<td>Oral / Written Communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global perspective and understanding of culture</td>
<td>Global / Intercultural Fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence, confidence, and ability to take initiative</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to adapt to new situations, people, and places</td>
<td>Critical Thinking / Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What other skills did you obtain or strengthen that match up with the career readiness competencies?
Now that you have identified the skills and competencies that you gained from your experience abroad, it is time to add some depth. For each skill that you developed or strengthened, think of specific examples from your time abroad to support them. Download the Career Readiness Worksheet to help. Or, come to an EA Career Workshop – contact the IEGI for more details.

By having thought through concrete examples, you will be better prepared to articulate how your learning abroad relates to the job you are applying to within your resume, on your cover letter or during an interview.
Résumé Ready: Including education abroad

Your résumé should effectively communicate the skills you have that demonstrate an ability to perform the tasks required in the position you are applying to. We encourage you to incorporate the transferrable skills you have identified that are applicable to the job. There are several different ways to include your experience on your résumé.

Below are some tips as you prepare your materials.

Education Section:

- Name of university, city, and country of program
- Term of enrollment
- Description of program components that highlight the academic, professional, and personal impact
- Relevant coursework

Experience Section:

- Experiential education abroad components and achievements can be listed under experience
  - E.g., internships, independent research, service-learning, research

Skills Section:

- List foreign language acquisition and level
- Add any further abilities acquired from experience abroad

Additional Section Options:

- A separate “International Experience” section can be added to highlight experience abroad
- Additional “Leadership” section can include any leadership opportunities from abroad
- Honors and scholarships linked to programs abroad (such as the Gilman Scholarship or Fulbright Grant) may be listed under “Honors and Awards” or added to the education sections
These are just two examples of ways you can incorporate your education abroad experience into your job application materials. Remember to tailor your résumé (and cover letter) to the job you are applying to.

Visit your university’s career counseling office for more specific advice on how to tailor your resume effectively.
If you have any questions or would like more information about the tools provided in this handbook, please reach out to us. We want you to make the most of your experience abroad, and we are here to help!

Office of International Education and Global Initiatives
Old Champlain, Room 240
Binghamton University, State University of New York
4400 Vestal Parkway East
Binghamton, New York 13902-6000

Phone: 607-777-2336
Fax: 607-777-2889
Email: iegi@binghamton.edu
Web: www.binghamton.edu/iegi