

Visit Abroad FAQs

June 2016



Do you accept electronic signatures from the DC and the ACCI on the VA forms and on applications for the international fund? If so how should that be documented/evidenced?

We do accept electronic signatures on both VA forms and International Funding applications through Commissioners typing in their name, date and membership number. In addition to this we also require that the email trail be attached/forwarded showing the Commissioner approval.

How does a party leader know if the form has been approved at HQ?

There is no approval at HQ level, the reason it needs to be sent to HQ is to ensure there is central database of all Scouting visits abroad at any one time in the event of an emergency and also to allow for data analysis. The approval of a visit abroad sits only with the relevant Commissioner.

I am a GSL, we are planning a VA in 2018, how should we progress now, on the new system?

Perfect timing to use the new Visit Abroad form and process – download the form and guidance from the [International pages](#) and submit the form with Part A completed as soon as you know the basic details of your visit (where, when, numbers and vague date).

Can we have International Letter of Introduction electronically?

The purple International Introduction cards are produced by WOSM so we have no control over how these are created, however the international letter of introduction can be emailed out to ACCIs if requested. If you are an ACCI just pop international@scouts.org.uk an email to request a digital copy of the letter.

Can the Purple International Letter of Introduction Cards be written in the local language we need that would be useful to those on explorer belt?

We are unable to translate these documents into other languages – the cards are already translated into French and Spanish and if any other languages are needed then this could be an activity a member of the planning team or a young person could take on.

If a VA form is submitted late does this/should this affect the approval by the DC and ACCI?

Within the new VA process there are no strict deadlines. This is because there is such a huge variety of visits abroad which may need very different timescales. Therefore it is down to the ACCI and the relevant Commissioner to decide whether the visit has been planned within appropriate timescales and factor this into their decision to approve.

I'm taking a group skiing during the Christmas/new year break. It overlaps the 31st Dec - do I need to use new process?

Ideally you would follow the new process, however as the visit is leaving before 31st December it would also be acceptable to follow the old process.

When planning an expedition far ahead it is often necessary to start insurance early to cover incoming and outgoing costs - at present Unity insurance can only start around 14 months ahead.

Unity have confirmed that cover can begin up to 18months before a trip leaves the UK. If there are specific circumstances or needs that require this to be extended then it is best to call Unity for specific advice: 0345 0407703

You require the forms to be sent to HQ 6 weeks before, what if this is late?

This deadline ensures HQ have enough time to input the data before the visit leaves the UK. If a form is submitted late then it just means we have less time to input the data, it may be wise to put a 'read receipt' on the email to ensure it is received or follow up with a phone call if the form is submitted extremely late (less than 2 weeks before departure).

What should we do if we find out about a trip that has gone abroad without following the correct Visits Abroad process? And what do HQ do about it?

If you find out about a visit that has taken place and not followed the Visit Abroad process then this would be a local issue to address with the relevant Commissioner ensuring that all involved understand the correct process for the future and have the support in place to ensure they are able to follow it. If HQ hear about a visit abroad that has already happened without following the correct process then again, we will work with the relevant Commissioner and the party leader to ensure they have the correct information and support to ensure they are able to follow the process in the future.

Can we make it compulsory that anyone travelling abroad uses Unity travel insurance and attach the forms to the VA forms?

We are unable to make it compulsory to use Unity travel insurance and therefore are unable to attach the Unity forms to the VA form. Unity is noted within the VA

Guidance as a contact point for advice about insurance. The Unity Travel Insurance form will be available in an accessible, digital, online format in the near future.

Which part of the new form is sent to the Host Association or is the existing Host Association card still necessary?

The existing Host Association card is no longer part of the VA process. It is still good practice for ACCIs to contact Host Associations to notify them of the visit abroad but this can be done via email with the relevant information contained within the Visit Abroad form.

What's the role of executive committees in the Visit Abroad process?

Where appropriate, executive committees should be involved and informed about any relevant details associated with the visit abroad. This will be at the discretion of the relevant Commissioner approving the visit.

The wording in the definition for VA does not seem to cover Jamborees, World Moot, Roverway, and such as the staff programme for Kandersteg, as organised by HQ team.

The definition is written to include absolutely any Scouting visit to another country including any international events, staff programmes or HQ visits. The party leader for the Jamboree/Moot etc will be the contingent leader and as such we have liaised with the relevant teams to make them aware of this new process. Specific guidance for adult visits abroad will be produced to ensure they are aware of how to follow the Visit Abroad process.

Will support be provided for DC 's as they need to understand the changes and their responsibilities especially new ones to the job?

We currently deliver training to new DCs at DC inductions days. In addition to this we will be offering Webinars over the next 6months to DCs and CCs to ensure they understand the new process and their role in approving visits abroad.

Are there any specific rules for Beavers who travel abroad?

Within the Visit Abroad Rule 9.64 in POR there is some specific guidance around travelling abroad with Beaver Scouts. This can be found [here](#).

Which DC signs the VA form if involving groups from multiple districts and counties?

This would need to be agreed with the DCs involved considering specific details of the trip. Even if just one DC approves a visit abroad it is still best practice to ensure any other DCs or relevant commissioners/GSLs are also kept informed.

If the ACC(I) recommends final approval, and the form is then passed to the appropriate commissioner, how does the ACC(I) know if this has been approved?

The ACC(I) is the person which supports the visit abroad throughout the process. Once it is approved by the relevant Commissioner it will then be passed back to the ACC(I) to then issue the ILI Purple Card and pass on to HQ.

Is the ACCI's recommendation an advisory step that can be overwritten by the approving Commissioner?

The relevant Commissioner is the person who gives the final approval for a Visit Abroad. If this is against the advice of the ACC(I) then it would be best practice for this to be noted in all documentation as to why they are going against advice.

What happens if your county/area doesn't have an ACCI appointed?

The relevant County or Area Commissioner may delegate this responsibility to another member of the team in the absence of an ACC(I). In this case it is best to approach the County or Area Commissioner to see what arrangements have been made.

I'm a new ACCI and inherited a very old global directory, is there anyway to obtain a new copy?

WOSM are in the process of sending out an updated version of these contacts and they will be sent out to ACC(I)s and equivalent through Scouting + as soon as we receive them.

Are reconnaissance trips covered in the process?

Yes, any visit abroad would need to follow the process.

If the DC attends the trip abroad should the form be signed by someone else - the CC or another DC?

Yes, it would need to be a relevant Commissioner not involved in the planning or delivery of the visit. In this case it would make sense for this to be the CC.