

Guides for International Students - Home away from Home Staff Programme

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS at Philadelphia University

Philadelphia University provides international students with a safe, secure, supporting and caring environment.

1.1 Policy of our university

The policy at Philadelphia University provides the support and assistance for international students, including pre-departure assistance, arrival and on-campus support. This includes assistance with the visa and residency documents, registration process at the university, and any other required help.

1.2 Designated team for international students

Philadelphia University has a special designated team within the Deanship of Students' Affairs to offer support and guide international students. This Designated Staff serves as liaisons between international students at Philadelphia University and the national institutions in Jordan.

The staff members are available during the university's working hours, and students are free to contact them via mobile phone at any time should they need any assistance. They handle welfare and safety matters with regard to international students and can be reached via mobile phone, social media and/or other means of communication on a 24-hour service.

1.3 Emergency Hotline 24/7

Philadelphia University has a dedicated staff member reachable 24/7 in case of emergency situations involving international students. Students who are experiencing an emergency can call Mohammed Omari (staff member at the Deanship of Students' Affairs) and get help 24/7.

1.4 International Students Visa

Depending on their nationality, international students usually need to obtain the required visa for the purpose of study before departing for study in Jordan, and in some cases they can obtain it at the airport upon arrival. Philadelphia University provides assistance, support, and necessary official documents to international students to facilitate the process of visa application or extension. In addition, the university helps international students with the residency documents and any other required documents by the national law.



1.5 Health Insurance

Upon their arrival, Philadelphia University ensures that international students are covered with health insurance during their stay in Jordan, just as other Jordanian students at the university.

1.6 International Students' Rights and Obligations

An international student has the same rights as other students. International students must follow all the academic regulations that are stipulated in the Higher Education Ministry and also in the ethics of the studies (e.g., cheating, plagiarism and/or copyright etc.). Philadelphia University ensures that international students are informed about all academic and non-academic rules and regulations applied at the institution.

2. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT CARE AND SUPPORT

2.1 Academic Support

2.1.1 Pre-arrival Guidance

Philadelphia University offers an English-language online guidebook, which includes useful information about preparing for studying abroad and what to expect when on-site, including academic requirements and support. International students can access all needed information and documents once they open their student portal at the university website.

2.1.2 The Orientation Program

Philadelphia University provides an orientation program to introduce international students to the institution's academic services (e.g. library, computer center, academic departments, and student services) and social and recreational activities; to facilitate initial academic advice; to inform international students about the university's rules and regulations; and highlight the academic requirements for each study plan.

2.1.3 Academic Mentors / Advisors

The university ensures an academic advisor who provides specialized support to international students in matters related to their studies, and is available for them on a daily basis. The academic advisors guide students throughout the registration process. They also monitor international students' academic performance, their study success/progress and attendance, in order to ensure that international students maintain satisfactory course progress, and to provide support in a timely manner if necessary.

2.1.4 Language Support

In case the international student does not speak Arabic (i.e. the official language in Jordan), the academic advisor, together with the department the international student is enrolled in, assists the student in



changing some courses in Arabic to other courses in English. Local students are asked to help international students mingle with the rest of students at the university. In addition, the Language Center at the university offers basic language classes in Arabic to international students, in order for them to be able to “survive” outside the classroom or campus, and some of these courses are in the form of tutoring.

2.1.5 Credits recognition

The university supports the transfer of credits for exchange students via established credits systems such as ACTS or ECTS.

2.2 Health Care, including Mental Health and Counselling

2.2.1 Insurance of Health and Accident

Philadelphia University provides international students with health insurance during their studies at the university. International students, as well as the local students, pay part of the insurance as part of the tuition fee.

2.2.2 Students health center

All international students at Philadelphia University have access to the public healthcare system. The university includes an on-campus clinic ready to offer medical assistance to international students when needed. English-speaking certified nurses or medical doctors are on duty. An ambulance is also available for emergency cases. The university also contains a pharmacy for students and staff. There is also a counseling unit under the Deanship of students’ affairs to help international students should they need any psychological/mental support.

2.2.3 Guidance and Psycho-social Counseling

The university comprises a system to identify at-risk students, such as communication between the faculty and the International Relations Office, or a Buddy system to inform privately about potential cases during regular meetings or once there is a special case.

The university has welfare officers or professional counselors ready to help and advise the international students encountering difficulties. The designated department within the university takes supportive action and facilitates the psychological care. The Deanship of Student’s Affairs also offer workshops on mental health and well-being on a regular basis. Service is intended for students and faculty who are facing various problems, like:

- (everyday) issues that they would like to talk through with someone,
- distressing and unpleasant experiences,
- what further steps they would like to take
- how to cope with painful experiences from the past,
- difficulties achieving goals, problems with motivation, how to take action, etc.
- how to improve communication and relationships (with their partners, authority figures, parents, etc.), how to be more assertive, etc.

Particular needs may arise from events happening in the home or host country of the international student, and support must be available during difficult times and throughout special circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. International students need to be duly informed and supported during challenging situations when education is disrupted and travel restrictions come into force. The online support for education and guidance or counselling for international students is available when necessary.

2.3 Cultural and Social Integration

2.3.1 Buddy System

Buddy System for international students is a unique tutoring system where local students assist new international students. Local students offer hospitality, arrange campus tours and organize visits around the city for the international students, they also help with practical issues like opening a bank account and giving advice on a convenient way for money transfer and accommodation. International students meet their buddies during the orientation day or on the welcoming event in their departments. Buddies present the local cultures to their foreign friends and help them with the smooth adjustment to the new environment.

2.3.2 Welcoming Event

The orientation aims to introduce students to the rules and regulations that can help them stay safe. A variety of events are held to orient and welcome the new students: International students welcome day, freshers' welcome day in each department; in order for the new international students to meet with fellows, and discover more student life.

2.3.3 Building intercultural interactions among students from diverse backgrounds

Joint Activities – local & International Students

Philadelphia University integrates international students in all extracurricular activities for students, like camps, seminars, and volunteer activities. International students are invited to join various student clubs and societies available at the university, such as Students' Union, sports clubs, and volunteer unions. This provides an ideal environment for engagement and collaborative learning among diverse students to take place.

International students have the opportunity to be involved, together with the local students, in co-curricular activities with some credits to connect and engage in the local communities doing social responsibility projects, and community services. Their involvement in community activities also supports their cultural immersion.

Cultural Activities

The university regularly arranges cultural activities and events for international students to mingle with the local students and share their own culture. Every year, the university holds events and activities that present the local culture as well as other international cultures. This aims to introduce international students to the social aspects of the society besides its academic side. It also gives the international students the chance to present their countries and cultures at the university. The multicultural events



encourage diversity on campus and give international students the opportunity to share their own traditions.

Moreover, the diversity of cultures on campus is also displayed during sports activities and other competitions, which gather local and international students to compete in traditional and regular sports. The activity can be conducted as cooperation between various student clubs at the university.

2.3.4 Helping international students connect with university Staff

It is important to connect the international students with the related staff and offices, like Deanship of students' affairs and other units related to their stay at the institution. In this way, the international students will know who they can contact in case of social integration difficulties during their studies. International students may also get the opportunity to work as interns at university's offices, like international relations, library, Deanship of Students' Affairs, etc. Academic advisors provide specialized support to international students and support them in connecting with university staff.

2.4 Campus Facilities, and campus life

The university aims to support international students on campus to make the best of their student's life by providing quality facilities and comfortable accommodations. Besides the good quality of teaching and learning facilities, the university ensures that international students can easily access medical facilities, food courts, sport complex, etc. The following facilities to support students' life on campus are available:

- ✓ full medical facilities: clinic, pharmacy, ambulance
- ✓ canteens/ food courts/ restaurants (reasonable prices & food suitable for all religions)
- ✓ sport complex
- ✓ prayer rooms
- ✓ libraries and computer labs
- ✓ English Speaking Zones/ Other foreign language speaking zones
- ✓ banks and money transfer offices
- ✓ student clubs and societies
- ✓ free campus-wide Wi-Fi
- ✓ free campus bus service
- ✓ campus stores and book shops
- ✓ Course-specific facilities
- ✓ FRIENDS Teahouse

2.5 Services, including Visa, Immigration Issues, and Information Support

2.5.1 Pre-arrival Support



Once an international student's application has been successful, the Deanship of Students' Affairs informs him/her about the necessary residency procedures, such as study visa and other arrangements to be taken care of before his/her departure. The university also provides the international student will all required documents to apply for a visa (shall s/he needs it).

The university staff also sends the link of the online handbook containing useful information about preparing for studying abroad and what to expect when on-site. The university gets in touch with the incoming international students days before they take a flight to Jordan. The related staff provides the new international students with necessary documents for processing the appropriate visa in their own country before coming to study at the university.

2.5.2 On-arrival Reception

The university checks with the international students that they have already secured suitable accommodation and will be in touch with them on their arrival. The incoming international students are provided with an "orientation package" comprising a small guidebook with basic information, campus and city maps, telephone numbers and survival expressions in the local language.

2.5.3 On-campus Assistance

The university has a special designated staff member to offer support and guide international students. This Designated Staff serves as liaisons between international students, our university and institutions from which students come.

One of the major assistance offered to international students is that related to the Ministry of Interior Affairs. The university ensures the renewal of residency documents and providing international students with all required documents for this purpose.

2.5.4. Information Support

The university's website is written in Arabic and English to ensure that international students can easily access all information. In addition, the staff member responsible for international students' affairs make sure that international students are always updated with all important announcements at the university.

2.5.5 Assistance before leaving the university

The staff member designated to assist international students will help them to make the necessary arrangements and prepare related documents, and to manage any pending local matters, before their departure from Jordan (after graduation).