

Global Master’s in International Education

Pre-Departure Information 2026-2027

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR ARRIVAL IN COUNTRY

Local Culture, Customs, Food & Transport	2
Pre-Departure Meetings	2
Arrival Day	2
Orientation	3
Academics	3
Where Classes Are Held	4
Weekly Schedule.....	5
Local Language Learning	5
Practicum	5
Capstone	6
SIT Email - Library - Canvas Access.....	6
Communication & Money.....	6
Phones	6
Money.....	6
Money Transfer	7
Address In Country	7
Free Time	7
Travel	7
While independent travel is permitted during weekends and assigned breaks, it’s important to report your travel plans to the program chair and follow SIT staff guidelines for independent travel during orientation. The SIT team will provide clear instructions and advice for traveling safely and responsibly during your time abroad.....	7
Family & Partners	8

Local Culture, Customs, Food & Transport

There are numerous guidebooks and online resources for Spain and Nepal that students are strongly encouraged to research and read prior to departure. To learn about local customs and culture, check out the ***Culture smart: The essential guide to customs and cultures*** series, though check the publication date to ensure the most up to date edition. For a list of other guidebooks, [click here](#).

Pre-Departure Meetings

Approximately one month prior to departure, students will be invited to two virtual meetings with admissions, academic director(s), student affairs, and country coordination teams to go over program expectations and highlights, arrival day and orientation, health, safety and well-being (including COVID protocols as appropriate), and to answer all student questions. Students must attend both sessions; the meetings will be recorded for those who are unable to do so.

Arrival Day

Arrival in Sevilla, Spain

We ask that students plan to arrive in Sevilla on **September 5**. That evening, we'll host an optional informal dinner gathering at approximately **8:30 PM**, so you'll have a chance to meet your peers and ease into the program. More details about the dinner and our schedule will be shared closer to the start date.

Accommodation will be provided from **September 5 to September 8** (a total of four nights). While you're welcome to arrive in Sevilla earlier, please note that **SIT cannot provide support or services prior to the official program start date**. Additionally, due to visa regulations, we recommend not arriving much in advance than the suggested date.

Arrival in Kathmandu, Nepal

When traveling to Kathmandu, we expect students to arrive on **February 1**. This will give you time to settle in before orientation begins on February 2. Accommodation will be provided **from February 2 to February 5** (a total of four nights). SIT strongly encourages students to arrive on the designated program start date. Students who arrive earlier will be responsible for their own pre-program expenses, including transportation from the airport and accommodation costs. **SIT will not be able to provide any support or services prior to the official start date in Nepal.**

In both Spain and Nepal, you will be met by an SIT Graduate Institute staff member at the meeting time specified in the **flight information document**.

A Few Final Notes

Please be mindful of visa regulations and the program's official start dates when planning your travel. Arriving on the suggested dates ensures that you'll be able to transition smoothly into this incredible experience. We are looking forward to seeing you in Sevilla and beginning this transformative journey together!

Orientation

What to Expect During Orientation

In **Sevilla, Spain**, orientation will take place from **September 6-8**. It will kick off with an optional informal dinner on **September 6** at approximately **8:30 PM**, providing a wonderful opportunity to meet your fellow students. Over the next few days, we'll dive into activities designed to help you acclimate to life in Spain, including:

- A **guided tour of Sevilla** to explore your new home base and its vibrant culture.
- **Survival Spanish** sessions to help you feel confident navigating daily interactions.
- Fun **team-building games** to foster community and collaboration among the group.
- Discussions on **safety tips**, **cultural norms**, and strategies for living like a local in Spain.

In **Nepal**, orientation will take place from **February 2- February 5**. Just like in Spain, you can expect a mix of activities to prepare you for life in Nepal, including:

- **Survival Nepali** to help you communicate with locals and feel at ease in the community.
- Insights into **Nepali culture** and the unique aspects of living and learning in Nepal.
- Practical tips for **staying safe and healthy** throughout your stay.
- Time to bond as a group and embrace the adventure ahead.

Accommodation During Orientation

In both locations, **you'll be offered room and board during the orientation period, and all students are required to remain in the program-provided accommodations during this time.** After orientation, you'll transition to your permanent housing for the semester.

Orientation is a fantastic way to ease into your experience, meet your peers, and build a foundation for success in the program. It's also designed to ensure you feel confident, prepared, and excited about the journey ahead.

We'll be sharing more specific details closer to the program's start date, but for now, know that we're thrilled to have you join us and look forward to guiding you through this incredible adventure!

Academics

SIT's teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the experiential learning theory developed by [David Kolb](#) and informed by scholars such as [John Dewey](#), [Paolo Freire](#), and [Kurt Lewin](#).

Experiential learning theory recognizes that learning is an active process that expands beyond formal curricula and that involves both content (what you learn) and process (how you learn).

What does this mean for you as a Global Masters student? By the conclusion of your program, you can expect to have achieved the following Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge

Graduates will be able to:

1. Understand and articulate how the historical context and social, political, economic, and cultural forces shape education around the world;
2. Articulate their critical understanding of education systems around the world with emphases on social justice, equity, inclusion, and diversity;
3. Demonstrate their knowledge of influential theories in the international education field;
4. Understand the perspectives, relationships, roles, and influences of the stakeholders in the International Education field;
5. Articulate how power, privilege, and oppression mediate educational practices around the world; and
6. Articulate how international education policy is developed and implemented at the institutional, local, state, regional, national, and international levels.

Skills

Graduates will be able to:

1. Apply fundamental research skills including conceptualizing, designing, conducting, and presenting original research in the IE field;
2. Design, deliver, and evaluate international education programs (including proposal preparation, needs assessment, curriculum design, budgeting, human resource management, health and safety, crisis management, marketing, recruitment, and evaluation); and
3. Create and implement IE-related content through writing, facilitation, and public speaking.

Attitudes

Graduates will commit to:

1. Promote equity, inclusion, diversity, and social justice in education;
2. Uphold high ethical standards and critical reflexivity in all aspects of one's professional work; and
3. Value reciprocity in knowledge- and skills-sharing.

To achieve these Outcomes, you will participate in a wide variety of learning experiences (e.g., readings, lectures, discussions with professors in class and with local experts, research, visits to local sites of practice) and opportunities for reflection (e.g., in-class discussions, preparing projects and presentations, writing papers). Your learning also will benefit from the vast diversity of cultural backgrounds, training, and teaching styles of your faculty.

Please note that as an accredited institution, all SIT courses are required to meet minimum regulations regarding the earning of graduate credit. Thus, students will spend approximately 15 hours in class and related activities plus 30 hours in individual and/or group work, for a total of 45 hours, for each credit earned.

WHERE CLASSES ARE HELD

In Spain, classes are held on the campus of a local partner institution or at the SIT Center, while in Nepal, students attend classes at the SIT Center, which is based amongst the offices of our local partner, the Southern Institute of Social Science (SISS). In both locations, students have access to libraries, Wi-Fi, and other resources. Other facilities such as coffee shops, gyms, or yoga classes are located nearby as well.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

A typical week in each location will include approximately four or five class sessions ranging from two to four hours each, as well as a site visit to a local education institution and time for completing course readings, working on projects or papers, and personal reflection. Students should anticipate spending about 40 hours each week on academics.

LOCAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

Professionals in the field of International Education are often required to have some degree of foreign language proficiency. In addition, language is a key tool for being able to immerse oneself in local culture. For these reasons, MA in International Education students are required to meet SIT's Language and Culture Proficiency Requirement via one of two options:

- The Language Proficiency Pathway is beneficial for students for whom proficiency in the target language aligns with their career goals and professional interests. This pathway is recommended for students who enter their program of study with mid-level to advanced knowledge of their target language. It requires documentation of language proficiency at a satisfactory (i.e., Intermediate Advanced on the ACTFL scale) level. Students may focus on any language of their choice.
- The Language Learning Pathway is beneficial for students whose career goals and professional interests are well served by improving their ability to interact in cross-cultural settings without attaining a specific level of proficiency in the target language. This pathway is recommended for self-motivated students who enter their program of study with no or basic knowledge of their target language. Students choosing this pathway should be comfortable learning independently. It requires documentation of language study and cultural engagement.

More details can be found in SIT's Graduate Catalog. Students will be able to consult with their advisor during their first term in the program about which option is most appropriate for them.

While the program does not offer graduate-level language courses, students may take placement exams during orientation and if at the introductory or intermediate level, may take language courses in either or both locations. Language classes are approximately four hours per week for 9 to 10 weeks. Students earn two undergraduate credits per course; these credits do not count toward the degree requirements but do count toward the Language Learning Pathway requirements.

PRACTICUM

Beginning in the first semester in Spain, students will meet with the program chair and their adviser about their individual learning goals. This process takes place as part of the Reflective Practice course, and includes the preparation of a Learning Plan, completion of several workshops led by our Office of Career Services, and reflective writing. Students begin their actual search for a practicum in their second term. SIT will support students in finding an approved practicum with an educational institution, school, non-profit, think tank, government agency, exchange program, language school, refugee resettlement program, or other organization involved in international education work in Spain, Nepal, the United States, or another country of their choice in which they are permitted to intern.

During the two semesters of the practicum, students will meet regularly and remotely with their academic advisor and cohort as part of their Reflective Practice courses to discuss practicum experiences across institutional, cultural, geographical, and political settings, as well as their individual learning and capstone work. Students are registered as part-time students during these two semesters and are responsible for meeting all academic requirements.

CAPSTONE

Upon completion of their coursework and during their practicum, students demonstrate, assess, and synthesize their learning through the preparation of a capstone project and participation in a one-week capstone seminar held multiple times each year. Researching and writing the capstone paper takes you deeply into the experiential learning cycle, where you'll explore the meaning of your reflective practice experience, integrate theory and practice in a written and oral presentation, and make a contribution to the field of international education.

SIT EMAIL - LIBRARY - CANVAS ACCESS

Approximately 30 days before the start of the program, all students will receive an encrypted message from SIT's Information Technology department with their SIT email address and login credentials. Once students log into their account the first time, they will find an email from the SIT library with information about how to log into the library and Canvas, our learning management system.

Communication & Money

Students may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during their time abroad, but please bear in mind that different time zones, unreliable phone lines, and changing program activities can complicate communication.

It is important students are clear with family and friends about their availability during the Global Master's program. SIT Graduate Institute recommends moderating time on social media to engage locally, as constant communication with friends and family at home can impact students' abilities to acculturate.

PHONES

As part of SIT's commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working smart phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls throughout the duration of the program. For that purpose, students are required to either (a) bring an open, unlocked smart phone from home to the program that can accept a local SIM card, and is compatible with and usable at the program location, (b) work with the program director within the first week upon arrival in country to purchase a smart phone locally, or (c) bring a dual SIM smart phone. **DO NOT** purchase an international plan. It is critical that you have a local SIM with a local telephone number to connect.

MONEY

It's best to bring a debit card to withdraw money in local currency rather than bringing cash. All students must contact their bank to let them know of their travel plans and dates so that the debit card is unlocked in all locations. U.S. banks can also

provide a list of ATM machines in each country that is compatible with students' debit cards. It is also advisable to alert students' credit card companies that they will be traveling for twelve months. SIT does not recommend students open local bank accounts.

MONEY TRANSFER

[Wise.com](https://wise.com) is an international money transfer service that is safe, and charges low rates should students need to transfer money to local bank accounts.

ADDRESS IN COUNTRY

Receiving a package at the program sites can be expensive and problematic. Customs agents must inspect all packages and students, as the recipients, are responsible for any fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient has completed their program by the time the items are received. For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations. Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged. SIT does not forward student mail and cannot be responsible for lost mail.

Despite cheaper prices, reliance on the U.S. Postal Service is not advised due to delays and unreliability. If it is an emergency and necessary for someone to send you mail, then program staff can assist you with the most appropriate address to give the sender. Posted letters and packages should be sent via DHL as this is the service that we have had the most success with for international mail. When given the option, it's always a good idea to send packages certified and with a tracking number that allows the sender to track the package.

Free Time

SIT Graduate Institute encourages students to schedule visits from friends and family in each location around the requirements of the program, keeping in mind that it is not legally permissible to remain within the Schengen Zone beyond the conclusion of the formal program. Students are expected to engage in all program activities and coursework during the academic semester. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. Please note that visitors are responsible for their own accommodations and travel expenses.

Travel

While independent travel is permitted during weekends and assigned breaks, it's important to report your travel plans to the program chair and follow SIT staff guidelines for independent travel during orientation. The SIT team will provide clear instructions and advice for traveling safely and responsibly during your time abroad.

Family & Partners

SIT Graduate Institute recognizes that, on occasion, students may wish to have a “companion” (defined as *partners, family members (including chosen or extended family), dependents, or other significant individuals who provide personal support*) accompany them during a doctoral residency or global master’s program. While companions can offer meaningful personal support, it is important to understand that SIT’s programs are academically intensive and immersive. Students are expected to engage in all components including classes, excursions, and evening/weekend commitments which may involve long days and demanding academic assignments.

To preserve the integrity and cohesion of the academic cohort, companions may not participate in program-related activities or seek assistance from program staff. Students considering bringing a companion should understand that all support services, activities, excursions, and staff access are limited to enrolled students only. Thus, we encourage students to plan in ways that support their academic success while remaining respectful of the learning environment.

- **Transportation, Travel, and Visas**

Companions may not join SIT-arranged transportation, including transfers between program locations, group excursions, or local travel organized by the program. For the safety and integrity of the cohort experience, all travel logistics coordinated by SIT are limited to enrolled students only. Companions must arrange their own transportation independently and should not plan to accompany the group during any program-related travel.

Students traveling alone with dependent children are responsible for ensuring they have the appropriate documentation, including notarized permission from the other parent or legal guardian authorizing international travel, as required by many countries. This is essential to avoid delays or complications at borders or during immigration procedures.

Students are responsible for determining the correct visa type for their companions, based on the destination country and length of stay. As visa requirements vary by country, please consult the appropriate Embassy’s website for the most accurate and up-to-date information.

Be sure to check with your airline, as well as the Entry, Exit, and Visa Requirements for your destination before you travel.

- **Housing**

Students must identify housing applicable to their situation, taking into account the availability and cost of local travel to program activities, as well as the potential impact on their social experience. Homestays are not an option for students traveling with family members and recommended housing may not be suitable for families.

- **Child Care/Public schools**

Programs include many field studies and excursions outside of typical classroom hours. When applicable, students traveling with dependents must identify childcare to ensure their ability to fully participate in all aspects of the program. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to check that their children have a right under the country’s rules to study at a school, find the school, and complete the enrollment process.

- **Insurance/Immunization**

SIT's student medical or liability insurance coverage does not extend to family or companion travelers of SIT students. Please check immunization requirements for specific countries.

We understand that making arrangements involves careful planning, and we're here to support you in making informed decisions. If you have any questions about what to expect or need help understanding housing options or logistical considerations. Please contact [Student Health, Safety & Well-Being](#) office for more information.