Independent travel during the program is restricted and requires prior written authorization from the academic/program director. Independent travel is defined as travel arranged for and conducted by a student that is not part of an SIT Study Abroad (or IHP) scheduled group activity or an approved homestay activity. Each program may have regional or country-specific policies with respect to independent travel by students that are listed in the pre-departure materials and local student handbook, and also communicated during the orientation sessions and throughout the program. Violations of those program or country-specific policies may result in dismissal from the program. Students traveling independently before, during and after a program assume total responsibility for themselves. World Learning, SIT, and its employees assume no liability for individuals before the program start date or after the program end date or while on Independent Travel.

A student who travels independently or leaves the scheduled program at any time without obtaining written authorization in advance from the academic/program director may not be allowed to return to and may be withdrawn from the program. The normal refund schedule will apply, and travel expenses incurred due to a premature departure from the program, either alone or accompanied, must be borne by the student.

Travel specifically for the purpose of completing an Independent Study Project, practicum, or other type of field research must be approved in advance by the academic/program director. Deviations from the approved itinerary must be communicated immediately to SIT staff and if not approved will be considered independent travel.

While travelling, students continue to be responsible for meeting and abiding by the program’s Conditions of Participation and are responsible for their own actions and safety.

Other Circumstances Requiring Independent Travel
SIT understands the need to accommodate students who need to travel independently for academic or personal reasons. Examples include:

1) An educational opportunity (scholarship, conference, etc.) that has a significant impact on a student’s academic career and is approved by the student’s sending institution and the academic/program director.

2) A personal family matter (family death, marriage, medical emergency, etc.) as approved by the academic/program director and/or dean of students.

In both of these circumstances, the student is responsible for giving the academic/program director notice and obtaining approval prior to travel. In the first case, students are still responsible for seeking
prior approval before intended travel. A student traveling under extenuating circumstances must continue to abide by SIT Study Abroad policies and must submit the requirements specified below.

**Policy Requirements**
If a student is planning to travel independently, s/he must:

1) Provide travel plans and itinerary to the academic/program director.
2) Sign the appropriate leave form (provided by the academic/program director) which relieves SIT/World Learning of any liability.
3) Provide lodging, contact information for travel, and names and contacts of travel companions.
4) Understand that he/she may be subject to a passport check upon return to the program.

**Policy Violations**
Disciplinary sanctions for violation of the Independent Travel Policy may include a warning, probation, or dismissal from the program.

Students are strongly encouraged to plan and schedule any independent travel either before or after the program and are responsible for their own actions and safety. The period of enrollment for students begins on the program arrival date in country and concludes the day of the scheduled program departure for return to the US. SIT Study Abroad and its employees assume no liability for individuals outside of this time frame.