

# ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS PROCESS

*Updated June 20, 2024*

## Verto Education Students with Disabilities

Verto Education is fully committed to supporting participants with disabilities in its study abroad experiences in compliance with any applicable federal, state, and local laws.

### **The Key to Success is Early Notification and Careful Planning**

Just as cultures differ, so does the degree of access and readily available disability services in the many countries and communities you might consider for your study abroad experience with Verto Education. Participants with disabilities have successfully participated in many study abroad experiences; however, not every study abroad experience may be a good fit from an accessibility perspective.

Verto Education endeavors to make planning a successful and accessible study abroad experience a collaborative process between you, Verto Education staff, the Accessibility Resources Center at the University of New Haven, and each host site. While disclosure of a disability is not required during the application process, a participant who knows they will require an accommodation abroad must inform Verto or the University of New Haven of their need at least **2 months prior to departure**. This allows us to identify the resources available in each of our locations to help you make an informed decision regarding your study abroad experience. Be aware that some study abroad experiences may be inaccessible to some participants, and Verto may be unable to accommodate certain requests once a participant is already abroad.

*Please recognize that planning for an accommodation takes extra preparation time. If you do not provide sufficient notice as outlined above, you may not be able to receive reasonable and appropriate accommodations to enable your participation in a particular experience.*

### **Considerations When Choosing an Experience:**

- Your host country may not have the same or similar resources that you have become accustomed to using in the United States, and they may also view accessibility very differently.
- Legal regulations - both domestic and international - may apply differently when you travel. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply outside of the United States.
- Cultural norms may be more accommodating or less accommodating for certain abilities.
- Some prescription medications may not be available in other countries, so we strongly recommend to check if your specific medication is available in the country you are going to and speak to your medical provider about your options in order to avoid exhausting your medication supply.
- This list is not exhaustive, it is imperative that you research the countries and experiences that are best suited for your individual needs.

## Planning for Personal Expenses Associated with a Disability

Verto Education is not responsible for individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.

## Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are determined through an interactive process on a case-by-case basis. Verto Education is not able to provide any accommodation that would pose an undue hardship on its operations, including adjustments that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program, or activity that would result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

The availability of accommodation depends on a number of factors, including, but not limited to, the nature of the specific accommodation(s) needed, the general situation in a particular country regarding accessibility and available services, and the creativity and flexibility of the participant and staff/faculty in planning for the experience abroad. There may be some limiting factors that may require the participant to reconsider a particular location.

## Academic Accommodations

All academic accommodations are identified and issued through our Academic Provider, the University of New Haven. If you are a participant with a disability, you may benefit from the support and services of the Accessibility Resource Center at the University of New Haven. Enrolled participants who previously held an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Educational Plan, who would like to continue with reasonable accommodations while abroad, must request the accommodations through the Accessibility Resources Center at the University of New Haven. Please understand that the accommodations you received in high school may not be the same as the accommodations you will receive at the postsecondary level. There are a number of resources available that explain these differences, including <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>.

All Verto participants who require academic accommodations will need to do the following:

1. **Apply for accommodations through the University of New Haven (UNewHaven).** Participants start with the [University of New Haven Step-by-Step Guide](#). Participants may submit a [Participant Information Form](#) and [upload documentation](#) of their disability in the Accessible Information Management (AIM) system. Documentation must include either a Disability Verification Form (usually for medical-related conditions) which can be found in AIM or a psychological and educational evaluation (usually for LD) or neuropsychological evaluation. If a participant has any of the latter, they do not need to submit the DVF, but if they do not have the latter, the DVF is required. (Note: 504 Plans and IEPs are not sufficient documentation. Please see [Guidelines for Documentation](#) to ensure participants are submitting appropriate documentation).

2. **Schedule and attend a Welcome Appointment** with an Accessibility Resources Center staff member where appropriate reasonable accommodations will be determined.

Participants can log into AIM at any time to view and/or download letters and to see which faculty have received and read accommodation letters. Participants should reach out to faculty to discuss how accommodations will be provided. Participants may also need to liaise with their Student Support Advisor (SSA) or Academic Coordinator (AC) regarding their accommodations while onsite.

Throughout the semester, participants will be expected to connect with their Academic Coordinator, instructors and/or the Dean of Students to discuss any questions or concerns regarding their accommodations.

## Housing Accommodations

Housing related accommodations are arranged through Verto Education's Dean of Students. Participants should apply for specific housing accommodations during the pre-departure process. Participants must provide documentation which articulates the following:

- Be in the form of a letter or report from a physician, psychologist, psychiatrist or other medical provider who is qualified to make the diagnosis and is currently treating you for the disability for which you are requesting a housing accommodation. For example, a psychiatrist may not be an appropriate clinician to provide documentation for a gastrointestinal condition.
- The documentation must be on official letterhead and should be signed and dated within the last two years.
- Include a specific diagnosis, a statement of your current condition, the date and a summary of your most recent evaluation, and the expected duration of your condition.
- State the current impact of (or functional limitations) imposed by the condition on your living situation.
- Explain how the condition relates to your request for housing accommodation. There must be a direct link established between the condition and your requested housing accommodation.
- Clearly state a specific housing accommodation recommendation as a result of the condition.
- Include possible alternatives if the requested accommodation is not available.

- Provide evidence the provider is currently treating you for the condition for which the accommodation is requested.

Once you submit your application and documentation, it will be reviewed by the Dean of Students or designee. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Documentation requirements are firm and are not flexible, so you will be notified if any documentation is missing. If the documentation meets the requirements, you will be contacted for an intake appointment to discuss your housing request and possible accommodations.

## **Tips and Guidance for Making Study Abroad Possible**

The decision to study abroad is a big choice that requires thorough research and careful planning. Mobility International (MIUSA) offers a variety of specific tip sheets to assist individuals as they consider studying abroad:

- [Disability Resources A - Z](#)
- [Medications: Tips for Traveling Internationally](#)
- [Guide Dogs and Service Animals While on International Exchange](#)

A full listing of tip sheets is available on the MIUSA website: <https://www.miusa.org/going-abroad-tip-sheets/>