



# COVID-19

## RESPONSE GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

### For Spring 2021

#### **I. PRE-PROGRAM**

##### **A. VISA**

IFE S21 Field Study and Internship programs will be offered in their full-length format (17-weeks) thus requiring students to obtain a student visa. French, Belgian and Spanish student visa operations are open. IFE is prepared to respond to any changes in this status by shortening the in-country portion of the programs to 90 days (as it has done for F20).

Each admitted student to an IFE Field Study and Internship program is given full information and instructions for obtaining a student visa, and their progress through the visa process is carefully monitored by IFE staff.

##### **B. INFORMATION**

All inquiring students, applicants and admitted students are kept regularly informed by a series of communiqués sent out over email. These messages include information about IFE's programs and any IFE decisions related to Covid-19. Students are also kept informed of public health conditions and pandemic measures in place in IFE's program cities.

##### **C. PREPARATION (AND STUDENT AGREEMENT)**

Students are sent online pre-departure exercises which include discussion of pandemic conditions and preparing for a healthy and productive sojourn abroad.

In addition to the Internship Conduct Agreement signed by all applicants as part of the application process and indicating their agreement with a basic code of professional behavior, IFE requires a distinct COVID-compliance agreement, to be signed by all admitted students, indicating their understanding of and intent to comply with all IFE requirements concerning safe behavior.

##### **D. CANCELLATION AND REFUND**

Admitted students may withdraw from an IFE program without charge until the first day of scheduled operation of that program if they are unable to attend due to travel bans or decisions to cancel study abroad by their home university. For full information on refund and financial policies, an Addendum to the IFE financial agreement is available on line at [http://www.ife-edu.eu/IMG/pdf/student\\_financial\\_engagement\\_addendum\\_s21\\_.pdf](http://www.ife-edu.eu/IMG/pdf/student_financial_engagement_addendum_s21_.pdf)



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## II. ACADEMICS

### A. PROGRAM STRUCTURE

IFE S21 Field Study and Internship programs will be offered in their full-length format, thus requiring students to obtain a student visa. French, Belgian and Spanish student visa operations are open. IFE is prepared to respond to any changes in this status by shortening the in-country portion of the programs to 90 days (as it has done for F20), eliminating the need for a visa for American passport holders.

Normal IFE program structure includes a week-long break between the preparatory portion of the programs and the internship portion. For S21 programs, IFE will remove this break, and instead build free days into the schedule, thus encouraging local and short-distance travel and avoiding air travel and the risk associated with same. IFE already provides a series of information sheets on rewarding destinations that are close to home but quite different, as part of its emphasis on intercultural learning.

### B. INSTRUCTION MODEL, INCLUDING SAFETY MEASURES

The following measures are currently enforced at IFE, and will continue to be so until public health regulations and conditions permit otherwise:

- - Social distancing in classroom
  - Social distancing in common space
  - Increased cleaning of classrooms and common space
  - Hand sanitizer readily available and strongly encouraged
  - Face-coverings required
  - Temperature check once a day
  - Students encouraged to download a contact tracing app

The following steps may be taken if public health conditions and enrollment levels dictate:

- Large class sessions moved online or separated into small sections, or
- Alternating online and in-person class sessions

### C. SITE VISITS

Curricular and co-curricular site visits will be maintained in S21. As in F20, full precautions as mandated by either government public health regulations or common sense are observed. In addition, most site visits are out-of-doors during the pandemic.

### D. COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE

At the start of the program, in the presence of IFE staff, all enrolled students sign a COVID-compliance agreement by which they indicate their intent to abide by all rules and guidelines set by or communicated by IFE concerning safe behavior. Students will be warned that at the second infraction IFE will contact their home institution to discuss sanctions including expulsion.



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### III. PUBLIC REGULATIONS INCLUDING TRAVEL

Once students are on site they are kept informed of all local public health regulations and prohibitions, and of all changes to same.

Public health measures stipulated by local or national governments vary slightly across IFE's four sites in three countries. Generally, face coverings are required outdoors and indoors in any commercial or professional space. Social distancing is to be observed indoors and outdoors. Public gatherings above a certain (small) size are forbidden. Recently, for example, Paris and other cities moved to limit bars' and restaurants' hours of operation. Public transportation includes a series of measures to remove all need for physical contact (eg ticketing), to maintain a distance between passengers, and make hand sanitizer available at all stations and stops. Students will be informed of these measures and of the mandatory need for compliance on their part.

Similarly, the Schengen space and individual countries and possibly regions within that space have some restrictions on travel and entry. These are susceptible to modification in response to public health conditions. Students will be advised of all travel restrictions and of the need for compliance.

For reliable and up-to-date information on the pandemic in Europe and official responses and restrictions, in English:

- The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/world/series/coronavirus-live>
- The European Center for Disease Prevention and Control <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en> including risk assessment and situation updates.

### IV. STUDENT WELLBEING

#### A. SUPPORT

As a small, challenging program, IFE's success at all times is fundamentally due to the fact that the progress and well-being of each student enrolled in an IFE program are followed closely by IFE staff. Support and - if needed - referrals are available for all situations and are provided by a member of the staff the student knows well and has already come to have confidence in.

All students are given a personal cellphone number for their program coordinator.

During the Covid-19 crisis IFE student followup pays particular attention to issues of health, and safe and healthy practices.

#### B. IN CASE OF ILLNESS, INCLUDING QUARANTINE

On a 24/7 basis IFE will provide immediate telephone and in-person assistance, working in conjunction with the student's lodger. IFE staff will arrange for medical examination (in English if desired) and prescription for test. In the case of a positive test result, IFE will work with the lodger to ensure adequate quarantine conditions and will provide all necessary academic support to the student.



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#### V. HOUSING

All students are strongly encouraged (if not required by their home university) to avail themselves of IFE housing options. In any circumstance these options guarantee social and intercultural contact, and linguistic continuity, in safe and decent conditions. During the pandemic, use of the IFE housing option also ensures Covid-compliant conditions.

All housing –whether in homestay or student residences – is in individual rooms, mostly with individual bathrooms. Students are responsible for keeping their room clean. Common areas are regularly cleaned and – during the pandemic – sanitized. IFE is a party to any IFE housing arrangement and is available in the case of problems stemming either from student (in)actions or the housing situation itself.