

# **Health and Safety Plan: Monte Castello Academy Study Abroad Program**

## **Monte Castello di Vibio, Umbria, Italy**

### **Purpose**

The health, safety, and well-being of participants are fundamental priorities of the Monte Castello Academy Study Abroad Program. This Health and Safety Plan establishes policies and procedures designed to reduce risk, promote informed decision-making, and provide an effective framework for responding to emergencies while participants are studying in Italy.

The Academy is committed to maintaining a safe learning environment while recognizing that international education necessarily involves exposure to new cultural, environmental, and logistical circumstances. Participants are expected to exercise sound judgment, respect local laws and customs, and assume personal responsibility for their health and safety.

### **I. Program Administration**

The **University Program Director** attending with the group is responsible for:

- Implementing this Health and Safety Plan.
- Monitoring local conditions that may affect program operations.
- Maintaining emergency contact information for all participants.
- Coordinating responses to medical or other emergencies.
- Maintaining communication with partner institutions and home universities.
- Determining whether program activities should be modified or suspended because of safety concerns.

**Faculty leaders and staff share responsibility for participant welfare and shall receive orientation regarding emergency procedures before each program.**

### **II. Student Preparation**

Before arrival, participants shall receive information concerning:

- Health insurance requirements.
- Emergency medical services in Italy.
- Local laws and cultural expectations.

- Transportation safety.
- Personal security practices.
- Emergency communication procedures.
- Mental health resources.
- Weather and environmental conditions.
- Required medications and prescriptions.

Students are encouraged to register with their country's embassy or consulate when appropriate.

### III. Medical Insurance

All participants must maintain:

- Comprehensive international health insurance.
- Emergency medical evacuation coverage.
- Repatriation coverage.
- Personal liability coverage when required by their home institution.

Students are responsible for understanding their insurance benefits before departure.

### IV. Medical Care

Participants should disclose any medical conditions that could reasonably affect their participation or emergency care.

Students are responsible for:

- Bringing adequate supplies of prescription medications.
- Carrying copies of prescriptions.
- Informing program staff of significant allergies or medical conditions that may require emergency response.

The Academy will maintain information regarding nearby hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, and emergency medical services.

### V. Mental Health and Well-Being

Living abroad may involve stress associated with cultural adjustment.

Students are encouraged to:

- Seek assistance early.
- Maintain regular communication with family and home institutions.
- Notify program staff if they experience significant emotional distress.

Program staff will assist students in locating appropriate local mental health resources when necessary.

## VI. Emergency Communications

Each participant shall provide:

- Emergency contact information.
- Home institution contact information.
- Medical insurance information.

The Academy will maintain an emergency communication protocol including:

- Immediate notification of emergency personnel when required.
- Communication with designated emergency contacts.
- Coordination with the student's home institution.
- Documentation of significant incidents.

## VII. Emergency Response

In an emergency:

1. Contact Italian emergency services (112).
2. Provide immediate first aid if qualified to do so.
3. Notify the Program Director.
4. Arrange transportation to appropriate medical facilities.
5. Notify emergency contacts and home institutions as appropriate.
6. Complete an incident report.

Examples of emergencies include:

- Serious illness
- Injury
- Missing participant
- Fire
- Natural disaster
- Civil disturbance
- Crime
- Transportation accident

## VIII. Personal Safety

Participants are expected to:

- Follow faculty instructions.

- Avoid unnecessary risks.
- Secure passports and valuables.
- Travel in groups whenever practical during personal travel.
- Inform program staff when traveling independently outside scheduled program activities.
- Use licensed transportation providers.
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption.
- Comply with all Italian laws.

Illegal drug use is strictly prohibited.

## IX. Transportation Safety

Program-sponsored transportation will utilize reputable commercial carriers whenever possible.

Participants should:

- Wear seat belts when available.
- Observe pedestrian safety.
- Exercise caution while using trains, buses, bicycles, and scooters.
- Avoid distracted walking in urban environments.

## X. Housing Safety

Program housing will be reviewed for reasonable standards of:

- Fire safety.
- Secure entry.
- Emergency exits.
- Basic sanitation.
- Smoke detection where available.

Participants shall familiarize themselves with evacuation routes immediately upon arrival.

## XI. Excursions and Field Activities

Before excursions, participants will receive:

- Itinerary.
- Emergency contact information.
- Meeting locations.
- Safety guidance specific to the activity.

Higher-risk activities may require additional waivers or may be prohibited.

## XII. Environmental Health

Participants should prepare for:

- Summer heat.
- Uneven medieval streets and stairways.
- Seasonal weather.
- Sun exposure.
- Hiking terrain during outdoor activities.

Students are encouraged to remain hydrated and wear appropriate footwear.

## XIII. Infectious Disease

The Academy will monitor guidance from Italian public health authorities and participating universities regarding infectious diseases.

Measures may include:

- Hygiene recommendations.
- Isolation procedures when necessary.
- Vaccination recommendations consistent with current guidance.
- Temporary modifications to programming if required.

## XIV. Crisis Management

The Academy maintains procedures for responding to:

- Natural disasters.
- Public health emergencies.
- Political unrest.
- Terrorism.
- Severe weather.
- Utility failures.

Program leadership may alter itineraries, suspend activities, relocate participants, or terminate the program if participant safety requires such action.

## XV. Incident Reporting

Any significant incident involving injury, illness, crime, harassment, discrimination, or threats to participant safety shall be reported immediately to program leadership.

Written incident reports shall be maintained in accordance with applicable privacy requirements.

## XVI. Non-Discrimination and Harassment

The Academy is committed to providing an educational environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation.

Participants are encouraged to report concerns promptly.

## XVII. Participant Responsibilities

Participants agree to:

- Follow program rules.
- Respect Italian laws.
- Maintain required insurance.
- Attend safety orientations.
- Inform staff of emergencies.
- Conduct themselves responsibly.
- Exercise reasonable judgment.

Failure to comply with health and safety expectations may result in disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

## XVIII. Review

This Health and Safety Plan shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in local conditions, legal requirements, university best practices, and program operations.

The Monte Castello Academy believes that thoughtful preparation, shared responsibility, and prompt communication are essential to creating a safe and successful international educational experience. While no plan can eliminate all risks associated with international travel, this policy provides a framework for preventing foreseeable hazards and responding effectively when emergencies occur.