



Campus Travel

The Smart Choice

Travel Intuition

A stand out in group travel



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Anyone who has managed group travel for a school, college or university will know that it can be a logistical challenge for even the most adept organiser. And with the reality that travel rates are moving upwards, the need to manage rising costs is an added priority. Yet there are various ways you can simplify your group travel while achieving the best possible value.

As worldwide demand for travel continues to strengthen, there are implications not only for the broader travel market but also for learning-related organisations. If you are responsible for organising group travel, you need to understand how you can keep to your budget yet still ensure comfort and convenience for your travellers. To make group travel a successful experience, you need to consider everything from planning and bookings, to insurance and security. All of these elements are covered below to help make your group travel planning easier and more cost effective.

1. Work with a travel specialist rather than DIY

'Doing it yourself' is where group travel can become complex, as there are many variables to manage and it's hard to know whether you are getting the best rates. Making group bookings via supplier websites may seem to be an easy option, but when you are organising travel for multiple people the booking process is never simple. There are the challenges of finding flight and room availability for everyone at the same time, managing individual travel requests such as meal preferences, or any extended leisure travel that members of your group may want to do after the group trip. You also need to ensure everyone has their passports, visas and insurance up to date. Web bookings can create further challenges if a travel emergency occurs and your travellers need assistance, as you are unlikely to receive dedicated 24/7 support.

In group travel, expert knowledge and support is essential to make the entire process easy and to source the best rates and fares.

The smartest approach is to partner with an academic travel specialist who can not only manage key areas such as your air and hotel bookings, but negotiate the best possible rates and fares, provide destination knowledge and traveller security services, and assist you with items like visas and insurances.

2. Use numbers to your advantage

There are advantages in arranging group travel domestically:

- a) A deposit is the only payment required at the time of booking with full payment not due until closer to the time of departure.
- b) Names of your travellers do not need to be supplied immediately, which allows a group organiser to secure seats without the need to finalise a naming list at the time of booking.

For international group travel, check with your travel manager for rules and regulations as they can change according to airline and even destinations.

3. Book in advance

In addition to the savings of negotiated group rates, you can help ensure your airfares are as low as possible by booking your flights as far in advance as you can. Airlines are constantly monitoring their demand and 'yield' levels, and as availability begins to tighten, they tend to increase fares on the remaining seats. Being well organised is therefore a must, as it helps deliver real savings in your group's air travel.

4. Lower your hotel rates & maintain flexibility

Booking accommodation via last-minute websites can appear to offer cheap rates and be a fast and easy process. Yet there is nothing intelligent about using this option for group hotel bookings.

Flexibility in your booking is crucial due to any changes which will apply to your whole group rather than just one traveller. And that can potentially incur massive costs. Last-minute accommodation bookings are generally non-changeable and non-refundable, leaving you to potentially forfeit what you have already paid in full if you need to make any changes.

Travel companies have access to all available rates while offering the advantage of flexibility.

Campus Travel will specifically negotiate group rates, which are available at selected properties and can be lower than last minute rates. We also have a Global Hotel Programme that provides an extensive worldwide choice of properties at Best Available Rates – BAR - also often lower than last-minute rates.

With a global database of preferred accommodation partners, we can quickly research the most suitable accommodation options for your travellers in the cities where they will be staying. We can also negotiate on the inclusion of value-adds such as breakfasts and transfers.

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5. Consolidate your ground travel

Ground travel (eg. cars, taxis, rail) is often an area where group savings can easily be achieved with the right local knowledge and some forward planning. For example:

- your selected hotels may also offer a courtesy airport pick-up and drop-off service for your group
- hiring 'people mover' vehicles, mini-buses or buses (depending on the size of your group), will be more cost effective than using multiple taxis to travel to/from airports and other destinations
- if there is an option to use a convenient rail service from the airport to your selected hotel, this will be even more cost effective
- if you are hiring vehicles, ensure GPS systems are included in your hire rate as these can save your travellers a lot of time
- ensure your travellers refuel any hire cars before they return them and check for any toll roads, as fines for late payments can be costly.

For car hire, it is best to work with your travel company to use the lowest negotiated rates with preferred suppliers so your rates remain competitive regardless of which way the market moves.

6. Put traveller security in place

Security in group travel cannot be compromised. In schools and colleges especially, parents of students need to know their children are in the safest possible hands at all times. As part of your duty of care, you therefore need to take measures to help protect your travellers' safety.

It's important that your travel company can provide you with security services such as:

- 24/7 emergency support, so you always can reach your travel advisors and rely on them for urgent assistance worldwide
- travel alerts, to keep you up-to-speed with any safety hazards or crises – eg. natural disasters, epidemics, social unrest etc - that may put your travellers at risk in the air or on the ground
- tracking and confirmation of your travellers' location, should an emergency such as a natural disaster occur while they are on the move
- re-booking your travellers' flights and accommodation, and liaising directly with travel suppliers on your behalf – to save you the hassle.
- added local support through on-the-ground contacts such as preferred hotel representatives.

7. Look for value-adding services

In addition to the above capabilities, an effective travel company should be able to offer you value-adding services such as:

- easy payment options eg. credit card, corporate card and individual payment options

- dedicated assistance with your group's check-in at your departure airport
- negotiating free-of-charge tickets for your group tour managers, if your group is large enough
- booking and coordinating additional leisure tours
- destination knowledge (including best ways to get there, where to stay, key points about the city/location)
- advice and assistance with visas, insurance and currency
- reporting on your carbon offsets, if needed
- reporting on your travel spend.

Campus Travel

Who We Are

Campus Travel provides Australia's most complete service in academic travel management.

Our trained consultants understand the distinctive world of academia and are educated in your domestic and international needs. Drawing on our vast experience in travel and our knowledge of your sector, we deliver savvy and flexible solutions, as well as global choice.

Our consultants are skilled advisors in all aspects of travel, from air and hotel bookings, to complex multi-point itineraries, to travel security. With our blend of dedicated service, industry-first technology and rate negotiation specific to academia, Campus Travel is the 'smart choice' for more than 20 universities and research organisations nationwide.

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Organising group travel can be a challenge, but when your group checks in at the airport for departure, it's great to know that a complex travel plan has come together smoothly and everyone is happy. I have a lot of fun organising this type of travel because it's exciting and rewarding.

Stuart Munro

Team Leader
and Group Travel Specialist

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campustravel.com.au