

This is an overview of Rotary Youth Exchange supported in the Manual by a series of Guidance Sheets relevant to the involvement of the Counsellor or the Host Family but also for general information.

Much of what follows applies to all programmes unless otherwise stated.

Rotary Youth Exchange has two Short Term programmes (STEP) and the Long Term programme (LTEP).

Overall around the Rotary world about 8000 exchanges take place each year (most of these are LTEP).

Every outbound student who participates must be interviewed and accepted ('sponsored') by a Rotary club in order to go on the programme, whatever that might be. Sponsorship in this context does not carry the implication of a large financial outlay on the part of the club.

It follows that internationally well in excess of 4000 Rotary clubs are participating in Rotary Youth Exchange through one programme or another. Without this participation by clubs no exchanges can take place at all and the life changing experiences which so many now have would not be available.

The Long Term Programme (LTEP)

The LTEP is the 'flagship' programme in Youth Exchange. Many students exchange around the world on this truly life changing programme but unfortunately very small numbers of students in UK & Ireland put themselves forward.

Students spend a school year abroad. They attend the local school and live with two to three different host families. Our UK students generally go out after GCSE (aged 16+) although the official age range is 15 – 18½.

At present UK visa regulations prevent students from countries outside the European Union entering UK to study at state schools for longer than six months. However, students from non EEC countries who are holders of an EEC passport by virtue of their family connections can enter. This means that with enough time to plan for it we can accept students from many parts of the world for long term exchange. Undoubtedly if a club supports an outbound applicant for LTEP it can expect to be hosting an inbound either in the same year or a year later.

Short Term Programmes

These are:

Family to Family (STEP) - for 15 - 18 year olds:

The Exchange involves a paired arrangement where both students spend an equal amount of time - usually around 3 weeks each - in each other's home together in turn. The Exchange may be split across two school holiday periods but typically takes place over one summer with the students travelling together on the same flight from one home to the other. Usually students choose to exchange into a country in the northern hemisphere because of the similarity of the school calendar.

International Rotary Camps & Tours (C&T) – for groups within the age range 15 - 25 year olds

About a hundred themed Camps take place across Europe and beyond each summer. The relatively few Camps which are organised across Great Britain & Ireland require Counsellors for the inbound students. Accommodation varies – host families may be needed depending on the theme and location.

The Website

Details of all programmes can be found on the RIBI website youthexchange.org.uk, together with opportunities for students to register their interest. Most applicants appear through this website, some of their own volition, some through personal contact but maybe purely randomly, to a local club or through the District website. The application filters down to the District Youth Exchange Officer who then contacts a club in the vicinity of the applicant's home.

Otherwise, applicants arise from presentations made by District and Clubs in the local schools /colleges/ youth groups etc. This includes Interact and Rotaract clubs

The Youth Exchange Cycle

Significantly, the admin for a Youth Exchange placement takes place in the Rotary year before the student goes abroad. This means that that undertaking by the Club is made with the signatures of the CURRENT officers, not of those who will be in place when the exchange actually happens.

In general the pattern is

July - December:	School/college/youth group visits. Potential exchanges identified
December - March:	Camps & Tours Invitations arrive with the RIBI Camps Coordinator and students bid for places.
December – March:	STEP students' placements are arranged.
End of March/April:	Orientation Day for Outbound Students
End June – end August:	Most STEP/ Camps take place between these times
Mid - end of September:	Feedback Day for returning outbound students.

Rotary Youth Exchange In Great Britain & Ireland (RIBI)

Youth Exchange students 'belong' to a Rotary Club regardless of who else assists the Club with the process. The person responsible for the Exchange in the club is the Club Youth Exchange Office (CYEO). This person may also be the Youth Service Chair, in charge of all the activities to do with Youth.

Support for the clubs comes from:

At RIBI level - Specialists/ Coordinators for LTEP, STEP, and Outbound CT

At District level - District Youth Exchange Officer (DYEO), possibly with team.

Home Visits/Interviews/Applications

All outbound applicants must to be interviewed at home with their parents by a 'panel' of two Rotarians. The panel reports back to the club and if the student is accepted the application process begins..

For all exchanges except Camps the Host district ,which receives our outbound student, will send an inbound student in return.

The club needs to appoint a Counsellor for the inbound student of any age. How this person is selected and the role and function are set out in the Guidance Sheet for each programme.

Certification For Youth Exchange

Every district which participates in Youth Exchange must satisfy Rotary International every year that it has policies in place for Child Protection and General Liability Insurance. The Conditions of Certification lay down rules for the manner of preparing students for exchanges for their ongoing care.

Disclosure & Barring Service Checks For Youth Exchange

One of the conditions of Certification is that for all inbound students any adult care giver in the household of the host family or the Counsellor's household (LTEP only) will need a current Enhanced DBS Certificate for Youth Exchange Hosting & Supervision/ Counselling & Supervision.

Note - For a student going out on a Camp & Tour there is no reciprocal inbound student so there is no DBS requirement and no need for a Counsellor.

Before And After The Exchange

Orientation is an important process which is required by Certification for all exchange students. It prepares them for going away, for arriving on exchange, for leaving at the end(in the case of long exchanges) and when the students return.

The DYEO organises Orientation Day for all outbound exchange students to prepare them for going abroad in as wide an interpretation of the word as is possible.

In UK this can be a full day event usually takes place on a Saturday or Sunday before or after Easter. It is compulsory for students to attend for the whole event and their parents must attend their session (this is one of the conditions which they sign to agree to do).

The District Youth Exchange team is responsible for delivering it, with the help of ROTEX, the former exchange students. CYEOs and other members of clubs involved are always invited to attend and the students are appreciative when they know that the cub is supporting them there.

Clubs are also welcomed at the Feedback meeting, held in September which is when the returning students give presentations of their exchanges to each other and file their official reports to District. Returning Long Term students and their parent also attend Orientation meetings, delivered by The District YE team.

Club involvement during the year of having an Inbound Long Term student.

The LTEP student is more often than not created an Honorary member for the Club for that Rotary year. The student attends meetings frequently and on a regular basis, including Business meetings, and take part in club projects (could even initiate one). S/he belongs to the whole club, not just to the CYEO who is in over all control, and between them the members ensure that the student gets to achieve what is on his/her wish list.

Financial Matters

All Students on all programmes pay for their return fares, insurance and visa and inoculations where necessary. They also pay a non-returnable Administration fee (set at £25 in 2016) as soon as they are placed. Many Rotary camps now have a fee, which is also entirely met by the student. There is nothing to prevent clubs form assisting with any of this in a very deserving case but this is not usual or expected.

Hosting Students On Youth Exchange

Host families are needed for INBOUND students on the following programmes:

Long Term Exchange (student needs two or three host families)

Inbound Camps & Tours (students may be hosted singly or in pairs)

- as well as for STEP where the parents of the Outbound student are the host family for the 'paired' Inbound student.

From a cultural point of view it is desirable for a LTEP student to experience different households.