

The history of Youth Exchange must be bound up in the fellowship formed between clubs from different countries. It moved on to promote the individual student who was not necessarily a Rotary child but it is inevitable that when clubs twin with each other they will want to 'exchange' their youngsters with those of their Rotary friends abroad. This may take a variety of forms – individuals or paired or a group – one way or 'exchanging' - and it may involve the participation of more than one nation/district/club.

Sadly, the world has moved on from the innocent scenario which was the foundation of all these connections and Rotary has had to bring in regulations to safeguard not only the young people involved but also the reputation of Rotarians and also that of Rotary International itself.

Now all situations where a young person under 18 travels abroad without his/her parents within a Rotary organised event are classified as Rotary Youth Exchanges. This covers not only the usual 'set piece' programmes which are organised in districts for random individuals but also those situations where clubs exchange their young internationally, either one way or both ways.

The so called 'back – door' exchange is one where this activity goes on without reference to the Safeguarding protocols which define Certification for Youth Exchange. Where this happens it places in jeopardy all the 'legitimate' activity carried out by Youth Exchange Officers in their district who are working for all their young people who want to go on exchange. The condition of Certification is contravened, Rotary International removes the Certificate and the district is no longer allowed to practice. It is possible that this will also happen to the partner district in the arrangement.

Club to Club Exchanges are permissible provided that every inbound student involved is treated in exactly the same way as an individual Youth Exchange student on the Short Term Exchange Programme. (*Refer to CP3: Certification beyond Youth Exchange – advice from RI*) Detailed information about this process is available at the references below.

Operational Reference:

- DG District Leaders' Reference DG3
- OB Outbound Student, OB3, OB3A, OB6
- IB Inbound Student, Host Family & Counsellor IB2 & IB2(S), IB3 & IB3(S)
- S Short Term Exchange Programme S1, S4, S5, S7 & S7A , S9 & S9A, S10, S10A, S10B

Core Reference:

- CP Certification & Protocol - all files
- IF Insurance & Financial – IF4, IF4(I) IF4(O) and IF5

The Formalities

As can be seen from the references above, students on Club to Club exchanges need to complete [CL3A: The STEP Application Form](#). (downloadable here)

Read [CL3B: Guidelines for Completing the STEP Application Form](#) (downloadable here) carefully and adhere to the advice in order to enable the interactive properties of the form to work effectively.

The DYEO will give support to clubs involved in the administration of their exchanges.