

GUIDED ENGAGEMENT

Case Study: Validating the VOYije Platform

Junemester 2025 — University of Georgia at Oxford

Before VOYije was live, we ran a structured pilot using Microsoft Teams to simulate what a purpose-built study abroad engagement platform could deliver. The results validated the concept — and made clear exactly why generic tools can't do this job at scale.

95%

Pulse Survey Response Rate

21/25

Completed Initial Survey

100%

Positive Mood at Closing

9+

Students Completed All 13 Onboarding Steps

Why We Piloted With Microsoft Teams

For Junemester 2025, our team at UGA at Oxford ran a creative workaround: combining Microsoft Teams, Planner, and Forms to simulate a single digital space for onboarding, communication, and experience tracking. Our goal was to validate one core hypothesis:

Can a unified platform improve student engagement and program efficiency before, during, and after study abroad?

The answer was yes — and the process showed us exactly what a purpose-built solution needs to do better.

What Worked

Teams offered a centralized workspace where students could complete onboarding tasks, receive updates, ask questions, and submit pulse surveys — all in one place. The impact was measurable:

- 95% of students responded to pulse surveys across the program — a dramatic improvement over standalone survey tools used in prior years
- 21 of 25 students completed the initial pre-departure pulse survey
- Over 50% of students completed every pulse check-in throughout the program

- All communications, calendars, onboarding steps, and logistics were consolidated into a single digital hub
- Student mood remained high throughout — 12 of 13 students reported positive or great moods in Week One

What Didn't Work — And What VOYije Solves

Teams validated the concept. But it also revealed exactly where generic collaboration tools fall short for study abroad programs:

Teams Limitation	VOYije Solution
No global onboarding dashboard	Real-time admin dashboard tracking all student progress across programs
No task-based messaging	Smart segmentation and targeted nudges based on checklist status
Clunky embedded surveys	Beautifully embedded, mobile-first pulse surveys inside the platform
Difficult guest access for partners	Seamless admin and partner logins without IT involvement
Disruptive calendar alerts	Fully customizable calendar notifications by role and program phase
Manual data aggregation	Automated wrap reports and outcomes data across all students
No career readiness framework	NACE-aligned competency reporting built into the student experience

Even more fundamentally, Teams has no framework for Guided Engagement — the model that makes VOYije different from any general-purpose tool.

Introducing Guided Engagement

Most collaboration tools treat all users as co-workers. Study abroad students aren't co-workers — they're participants on a curated, high-stakes journey. VOYije is built around that reality.

Guided Engagement means program administrators can:

- Assign tasks and guide student progression without requiring full collaboration from all participants simultaneously
- Segment communications to specific students based on where they are in the onboarding or program journey
- Control the flow of information — balancing student voice with program structure and institutional requirements
- Create a structured space for reflection, journaling, and feedback that builds toward career readiness outcomes
- Surface NACE competency data from student experiences in a format that's useful to both students and institutions

Guided Engagement is what separates VOYije from Teams, Slack, or Trello. It's not just a place to organize work — it's a platform to design, direct, and deliver life-changing experiences abroad, and to capture the outcomes that prove their value.

This is also the foundation of VOYije's wrap reports: structured, NACE-aligned outcomes documents that give institutions real data to demonstrate ROI on their study abroad programs — and give students an artifact they can bring to employers.

Program Overview: Junemester 2025

The Junemester 2025 cohort at UGA Oxford included 25 students participating in a faculty-led summer program in the UK. The engagement model ran across three phases:

- Pre-Departure (May 28): Onboarding, pulse survey, goal setting
- In-Program (June 14–24): Weekly pulse check-ins, message board, academic and excursion engagement
- Program Closing (June 23–24): Final pulse, experience reflection, outcomes summary

Onboarding Analysis

The 13-step onboarding checklist gave administrators clear visibility into student readiness:

- 9 students completed all 13 onboarding steps
- 2 students never started onboarding
- 14 made partial progress — most often stalling on steps that required interaction with external platforms

Key takeaway: Friction with outside tools is the primary onboarding barrier. VOYije eliminates this by embedding all steps in one mobile-first experience with automated nudges.

Student Experience Timeline

Pre-Departure — May 28

- 20 of 21 students felt “Good” or “Amazing” heading into the program
- Top excitement: travel, exploration, new friendships
- Top nerves: course difficulty and unfamiliar logistics
- Goals centered on cultural discovery, academic growth, and personal challenge

Week One — June 14

- 12 of 13 students reported positive or amazing moods

- Highlights: Stratford-Upon-Avon, architecture, free time to explore
- Strong early faculty praise from nearly every respondent
- Peer bonding and campus exploration were consistently mentioned

Week Two — June 20

- 11 of 13 students reported good or great mood
- Academic workload described as “stimulating” or “engaging” by all respondents
- Weekend highlights: London, Edinburgh, Bath, and group bonding
- Students noted appreciation for the excursion pace and program structure

Program Closing — June 23–24

- 100% of students reported feeling “Good” or “Great”
- Top excursions: Kew Gardens, Hampton Court Palace, the River Thames, Chawton House
- Top classes: Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Positive Psychology
- Students consistently noted increased confidence, independence, and meaningful friendships

Engagement Themes Across All Pulse Surveys

Across four surveys and all open-ended responses, six themes emerged:

- Exploration & Adventure — 62 mentions
- Academic Engagement — 58 mentions
- Friendships & Social Bonds — 44 mentions
- Memorable Places & Excursions — 43 mentions
- Academic Anxiety (pre-departure) — 27 mentions
- Personal Growth — 10 mentions

The shift in language from pre-departure to closing is one of the most powerful signals in the data. Students started the program talking about goals and exploration. They ended it talking about people, friendships, and transformation.

Experience Scoring Summary

Each category was rated on a 1–10 scale using a combination of quantitative data (mood tracking, participation rates) and qualitative analysis (open-ended responses and themes).

Category	Score	Key Insight
Cultural Growth	9.0 / 10	Deep exploration, rich cultural immersion

Academic Experience	8.5 / 10	Strong faculty relationships and course satisfaction
Program Experience	8.0 / 10	Well-paced, high excursion and peer satisfaction
Personal Growth	7.5 / 10	Increased confidence and independence

These scores are directional indicators of program value — the kind of data VOYije’s automated wrap reports surface for every cohort, without manual aggregation.

Recommendations for Future Programs

Program Delivery

- Embed all onboarding steps natively in the platform to eliminate external tool friction
- Add automated mid-week nudges to sustain checklist completion and survey response
- Build in structured reflection prompts tied to NACE competencies from day one
- Facilitate early informal meetups to accelerate social bonding in the first 48 hours

Marketing & Storytelling

- Lead with faculty quality and academic transformation as a top recruitment message
- Use excursion highlights and student pulse data for pre-departure promotional content
- Leverage student testimonials from the closing survey as social proof for prospective cohorts
- Highlight the before-and-after emotional shift in student language as evidence of personal growth

What’s Next: VOYije Is Purpose-Built for This

The Teams pilot proved the concept. VOYije is being built to make it seamless, scalable, and meaningful for every program — at every institution.

With VOYije, programs get:

- A mobile-first student experience that works before, during, and after the program
- Real-time admin visibility into student progress, mood, and engagement
- Automated pulse check-ins powered by Morphii emotional response technology
- Structured reflection journaling tied to NACE career competency development
- Shareable wrap reports that give institutions outcomes data and give students a career artifact
- A Guided Engagement framework purpose-built for the study abroad journey

VOYije is your students' digital travel companion and your program's strategic engagement engine — all in one place.

Want to see what this looks like for your program?

Reach out to learn how VOYije can help you onboard, communicate, and measure what matters.

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