

Guide

for New Expat Staff



AY2025-2026



2.0	Vision & Mission	2
3.0	Contact Information	3
4.0	Staff Induction Information	4
5.0	Introduction to Malaysia	5
6.0	Cost of Living	6
7.0	Setting up Cost	11
8.0	Rental Cost	12
9.0	Other Transport - Getting Around	16
10.0	Touch 'n Go Card	18
11.0	Shopping	20
12.0	Restaurant/Bars	23
13.0	Hotels & Art Galleries	26
14.0	Family Friendly Activities	27
15.0	Banking Information	28
16.0	Healthcare	29
17.0	Employment Visa	30
18.0	Tax Information	31
19.0	Embassies & Emergency Contact	32
20.0	Staff Wellbeing	33

1.0 - FOREWORD

Our vision for BXCL International School, Penang is to be a school community where everyone can thrive and meet with success. We do this by delivering excellent learning opportunities all day every day for each and every one of our learners. Wonderful facilities are only the stage for outstanding learning to take place, but schools are not about buildings – they are about people.

We know that the only way to achieve great things for our school and our community is through having great people in every role in every department. We are therefore glad to welcome you to our team and look forward to you joining us to help us achieve our collective aims.

We hope that the information within this welcome booklet will be useful in helping you make the transition to settle in Penang quickly. We will try and continually update you with information before you arrive, and if there is no update due to things taking time to process, we will still contact you to tell you this.

It is important for us to ensure that you feel as settled as possible during and after your transition, so we will be working hard to make this the case for each of you. Many of us were in your situation just a few months ago and so we understand the issues you will be facing and will try to work together with you to settle you into your new school and new home as quickly as possible.

Please do feel free to feed back to us things we have omitted which you feel may be of use to next year's staff and we will continue to improve our processes over time.

We very much look forward to welcoming you to Penang and to BXCL International School.

Duncan Grice
Executive Principal



2.0 VISION & MISSION

BXCL Vision Statement

To be a school community where everyone can thrive and meet with success

BXCL Mission Statement

To promote XCLent learning opportunities through a safe and happy environment based on trust, inclusivity and mutual respect

BXCL Definition of Learning

Good learning is a meaningful and rewarding experience where students enjoy building on prior knowledge. Good learning allows students to flourish through being engaged, challenged and valued and are able to confidently question, communicate and reflect independently and collaboratively

Children come first when:

- ▶ The School cultivates the whole child
- ▶ The School values community well-being and provides a safe learning environment
- ▶ The School shapes children to become global citizens who have an understanding of the complexities of an ever changing world
- ▶ The School develops a passion for learning through enquiry, curiosity and active collaborative participation
- ▶ The School respects the natural world and its resources both globally and locally
- ▶ The School prepares children to live their lives honestly with a spirit of respect for themselves and others
- ▶ The School prepares children to take risks and show endurance and resilience to achieve goals
- ▶ The school challenges each child to be best that they can be and discover who they might become



3.0 - CONTACT INFORMATION



For questions or concerns regarding all things HR- visas, tax, salary etc., please contact the following:



Izyan Ronedin

HR Manager

r.izyan@bxcl.edu.my



For questions regarding social activities in Penang, please contact your social buddy.



For academic questions, please contact your academic buddy.

You can also contact the following:



Glyn Martin

Head of Secondary

glyn.martin@bxcl.edu.my



Ian Hopkins

Head of Primary

ian.hopkins@bxcl.edu.my

4.0 – STAFF INDUCTION INFORMATION

You will be flown to Penang to land on 9 Aug or 10 Aug. New staff induction will be on Tuesday 12 Aug. Wednesday 13 Aug, Thursday 14 Aug, and Friday 15 Aug will be whole staff induction with the weekend being available for you to get settled, sight-see, meet up with existing staff or go into school if you wish. All staff induction continues on Monday 18 Aug and Tuesday 19 Aug - first day of school is Wednesday 20 Aug. HR will keep you informed.

Further information about the exact sessions we will be running and who will be leading them will be shared closer to the date.

You will be met at Penang Airport and taken to your accommodation, where you will be met by a member of the school leadership team.



New staff induction



All staff induction



First day of school

5.0 – INTRODUCTION TO MALAYSIA



5.1 Penang Information

Penang, the Pearl of the Orient, is an island off the northern part of the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia by the Strait of Malacca.

The name Penang comes from the Malay word Pinang, which means the betel nut tree (*Areca catechu*). The name Pulau Pinang translated literally from Malay means "betel nut island".

Penang or its Malay name Pulau Pinang is made up of a turtle-shaped island, a total of 292 square kilometres and a strip of land called Seberang Perai on Peninsular Malaysia about 48 kilometers wide.



Rich in a variety of so many elements such as culture, food, heritage, history and lifestyle, there is much to discover in Penang. One example is Chingay, an act of balancing a 35ft to 40ft giant flag, which cannot be found elsewhere in the world but in Penang.



Renowned travel guide publisher Lonely Planet has listed Penang as the top culinary spot for 2014 and Penang Asam Laksa was ranked 7th in CNN's World Top 10 Yummiest Food. The discoveries of Penang are endless and always enjoyable. Such a gem is Penang that there is something here for everyone because Penang does indeed have it all.

5.2 Climate

Temperatures are uniformly high throughout the year. On the peninsula, they average about 80 °F (27 °C) in most lowland areas. In coastal areas in East Malaysia, minimum temperatures range from the low to mid-70s F (about 23 °C), and maximum temperatures hover around 90 °F (33 °C); temperatures are lower in the interior highland regions.

Penang Average monthly temperature 2024

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Avg. Temperature °C (°F)	26.3 °C (79.3) °F	27.1 °C (80.7) °F	27.4 °C (81.3) °F	27.3 °C (81.2) °F	27.4 °C (81.3) °F	27.4 °C (81.4) °F	27.3 °C (81.2) °F	27.2 °C (80.9) °F	26.7 °C (80) °F	26.2 °C (79.2) °F	26.1 °C (78.9) °F	26.1 °C (78.9) °F
Min. Temperature °C (°F)	23.3 °C (73.9) °F	23.7 °C (74.6) °F	24.4 °C (75.9) °F	24.7 °C (76.5) °F	24.9 °C (76.8) °F	24.7 °C (76.5) °F	24.5 °C (76.1) °F	24.4 °C (75.9) °F	24.2 °C (75.5) °F	24 °C (75.2) °F	23.9 °C (75.1) °F	23.6 °C (74.5) °F
Max. Temperature °C (°F)	29.8 °C (85.6) °F	30.9 °C (87.7) °F	31.1 °C (87.9) °F	30.7 °C (87.2) °F	30.6 °C (87.1) °F	30.7 °C (87.2) °F	30.6 °C (87.1) °F	30.5 °C (86.9) °F	29.8 °C (85.7) °F	29.2 °C (84.6) °F	29.1 °C (84.4) °F	29.3 °C (84.7) °F
Precipitation / Rainfall mm (in)	174 (6)	140 (5)	209 (8)	244 (9)	223 (8)	138 (5)	129 (5)	172 (6)	223 (8)	351 (13)	370 (14)	270 (10)
Humidity(%)	81%	77%	79%	83%	84%	82%	80%	80%	84%	87%	87%	84%
Rainy days (d)	16	14	18	20	19	14	14	16	18	21	20	17
avg. Sun hours (hours)	8.9	9.2	8.8	8.4	8.8	9.4	9.5	9.1	8.5	7.9	7.9	8.6

5.3 THE PEOPLE

The total population of the country is estimated to be over 30 million, with the great majority living in Peninsular Malaysia. This is made up of 53.3% Malay (or Bumiputra “sons of soils”), 26.0% Chinese, 7.7% Indians 11.8% indigenous tribes such as Orang Asli and the Iban and 1.2% others. The expatriate population covers many nationalities from Japanese, American, Canadian, Scandinavian, British and others.



The official religion in Malaysia is Islam but, under the constitution, freedom of worship is guaranteed to all. This is widely evident by the array of mosques, churches and temples that can be seen across the country. Some regions are stronger “religiously” than others and attention should be made to show courtesy to your hosts by awareness of their religious beliefs and the requirements therein. In particular, Kelantan and Terengganu observe Muslim practices more closely and the Syariah laws are followed more strictly.

It should be stressed, vehemently, that the government is opposed to extremist behaviour and has clamped down on any activities that it believes may affect the international perception of Malaysia. In Penang, there are numerous Christian sects, in addition to the Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches, which hold testament to the open and tolerant nature of the Malaysian population.

5.4 THE LANGUAGES

The official language is Bahasa Malaysia, though English is widely spoken. The alphabet is the same as English, therefore, the street signs and names are all easily translated. There are several Chinese dialects used including Cantonese, Mandarin, Hokkien and Hakka while Indians speak Tamil and Hindi. Once again, regionally, there are cultural differences and the level of English can vary from place to place.

No.	English	Bahasa Malaysia
1	Good morning	Selamat pagi
2	Good afternoon	Selamat tengahari
3	Good evening	Selamat petang
4	Goodnight	Selamat malam
5	Thank you	Terima kasih
6	You're welcome	Sama-sama
7	Welcome	Semalat datang
8	Yes	Ya
9	No	Tidak
10	I don't know	Saya tidak tahu
11	Excuse me	Maafkan saya
12	My name is	Nama saya
13	Today	Hari ini
14	Tomorrow	Esok
15	Yesterday	Semalam
16	What	Apa
17	Where	Di mana
18	Why	Kenapa
19	Who	Siapa
20	When	Bila
21	Stop	Berhenti
22	Left	Kiri
23	Right	Kanan
24	Up	Atas
25	Down	Bawah
26	How are you?	Apa khabar?

5.5 TIME DIFFERENCE

The country is on standard Malaysian Time, 8 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT+8) or 7 hours ahead of British Summertime.



5.6 BUSINESS HOURS IN MALAYSIA

Government departments:

08:00 a.m. – 05:00 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays

08:00 a.m. – 04:45 p.m. Friday (offices close, for Friday prayers, from 12:15 pm to 2:45 pm)

Businesses:

09:00 a.m. – 05:00 p.m. Mondays to Fridays

09:00 a.m. – 01:00 p.m. Saturdays (certain service sectors)

Banks:

09:30 a.m. – 04:00 p.m. Mondays to Fridays. Operating hours vary between each bank. Closed on Saturday for most banks but ATM services are available daily

5.7 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN MALAYSIA

There are many more Public holidays in Malaysia than you may be used to if you come from the UK for example. They fall into three categories: Civil holidays; Celebration holidays (Kings/Sultans' birthdays); Religious Holidays. When a public holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday will be a public holiday. The public holidays below are the ones being observed by XCL for AY2025-2026.

Holidays	Date	Day
Independence Day	Aug 31, 2025	Sunday
Independence Day Holiday	Sep 1, 2025	Monday
Prophet Muhammad's Birthday	Sep 5, 2025	Friday
Malaysia Day Holiday	Sep 16, 2025	Tuesday
Deepavali	Oct 20, 2025	Monday
Christmas Day	Dec 25, 2025	Thursday
New Year's Day	Jan 1, 2026	Thursday
Thaipusam	Feb 1, 2026	Sunday
Thaipusam Holiday	Feb 2, 2026	Monday
Chinese New Year	Feb 17, 2026	Tuesday
Chinese New Year Holiday	Feb 18, 2026	Wednesday
Hari Raya Aidilfitri	Mar 20, 2026	Friday
Hari Raya Aidilfitri Holiday	Mar 21, 2026	Saturday
Labour Day	May 1, 2026	Friday
Hari Raya Haji	May 27, 2026	Wednesday
Vesak Day	May 31, 2026	Sunday
Agong's Birthday, Vesak Day Holiday	Jun 1, 2026	Monday
Awal Muharram	Jun 16, 2026	Tuesday
Georgetown World Heritage Day	Jul 7, 2026	Tuesday





The beautiful Penang Island with its proud buildings

6.0 – COST OF LIVING

According to the last Cost of Living Survey from Mercer, Kuala Lumpur is in 145th position in the list of most expensive cities in the world. Singapore remains the most expensive city in ASEAN and becomes the 4th most expensive city in the world. Generally, if you compare the cost of everyday living (eating out for example) with major cities like London, Hong Kong or Dubai, you will find the cost of living to be very low indeed. Evidence from staff indicates that cost may be anything up to 3:1 more expensive in these cities than in Penang and this is backed up by data from website www.numbeo.com.

Consumer Prices in London are 99.55% higher than in Penang

Rent Prices in London are 813.19% higher than in Penang

Consumer Prices Including Rent in London are 205.32% higher than in Penang

You would need around 25,036.60 RM (£4,662.51) in London to maintain the same standard of life that you can have with RM 8200.00 in Penang (assuming you rent in both cities). This calculation uses our Cost of Living Plus Rent Index to compare cost of living. This assumes net earnings (after income tax)

Groceries Prices in London are 33.40% higher than in Penang

Restaurant Prices in London are 278.23% higher than in Penang

Refer to link below for detailed breakdown, different locations across the world and updates to this information:

www.expatisitan.com
www.numbeo.com

7.0 – SETTING UP COSTS

Moving from one city to another can be prove costly – even if only in the short term. Whilst we will endeavour to set all staff up with bank accounts and other facilities as soon as possible, it is always advisable for staff to ensure access to sufficient funds during this period of change.

7.1 – BANKING

Traveller’s cheques are convertible in some banks, whereas a bank draft can only be accessed once you have opened a bank account (this can take a few days)

7.2 HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

Other start-up costs will include purchase of household items and this amount will depend upon whether you choose to rent furnished or unfurnished accommodation. Both are widely available. IKEA, MARCO, Lotus (Tesco) are here along with many other shops and some furniture warehouses for household items.

7.3 TELEVISION

The main cable service provider is Astro Television. There is a wide range of packages that offer the usual international pickings – English language movie channels (HBO, Star, Cinemax), family / children channels (Discovery, Hallmark, AXN, National Geographic, Nickelodeon, Disney, etc), international news channels (BBC, CNN, Bloomberg, CNBC, etc), sports channels (ESPN, Star Sports) and other international channels (Zee TV, Phoenix Chinese Channel, NHK MostWorld). Many staff also choose to use online TV Providers like “NETFLIX”.

7.4 TELEPHONES

Expatriates find that the cheap cost of local and international calls, coupled with the easy availability of wi-fi to support ‘Whatsapp’ and ‘Facetime’ calls means they do not need the cost or inconvenience of installing a landline in their accommodation. Pre-paid or post paid mobile phone cards – purchase price approximately

RM10-RM60 – are easily available and can be topped up when necessary. (Phone calls from Malaysia are much cheaper than from UK or Australia and often mobile overseas calls are cheaper than using a fixed line). They have much more expensive package available via MAXIS, DIGI and CELCOM which will offer great package which may interest you as well.

7.5 INTERNET AND WI-FI

Malaysia's internet infrastructure is very advanced. The easiest way to get connected is by Wireless connection (WAP). Many free access points are available in coffee shops and restaurants throughout Penang. For home internet connection, there are many internet service providers, making prices competitive. Fibre optic connections are widely available on both the mainland and the Island of Penang. Typical download speeds will vary according to your exact location, but may be around 30 MBPS on the mainland and up to 500 MBPS on the Island. One cost effective local provider often favoured by staff is ‘Time’ Broadband and Unifi,

- <https://www.time.com.my/personal/broadband/fibre-broadband>
- <https://unifi.com.my/support/contact-us>

7.6 POSTAL SERVICES

The Malaysian postal service ("Pos Malaysia") is efficient and easily accessible. Post offices can be found all over Penang and Mainland. Normal and express (speed post), bill payments and remittance services are offered at the post offices. Some English is spoken. Courier companies such as DHL, UPS and POSLAJU are also available if required. POSLAJU will be available at local post offices and it is part of POS Malaysia courier service.



The Light Collection, The Light Linear, The Light Point

8.0 – ACCOMMODATION AND RENTAL COST

8.1 ACCOMMODATION

The school provides an accommodation allowance for overseas teachers who are under the expatriate package. This allowance is paid as part of the salary and is taxable as a benefit-in-kind. The allowance is sufficient for renting good quality accommodation but may need supplementing according where you elect to live.

We know how much of a hassle and worry it is finding accommodation when moving to another country, therefore HR will find you an apartment/house based on information we send to you and your replies. We will take photographs and video the accommodation for you as sometimes the real estate's photos and videos may be a few years old. We will be able to help you to connect with the real estate agent as well. You can haggle with the rent price – it's a renters market right now. They will meet you at your apartment with us to sign off on paperwork.

Last year we put new staff in touch with real estate agents directly and provided websites of property. We are not doing this for this year because we know the locations of property which will be good for you regarding shops, standard of accommodation, newness, location, travel time to school etc.

You are completely free to choose your own place to live, however there are a few key areas where staff tend to prefer to live.

If you favour the Island and don't mind a longer commute, a number of the recommended premium condominiums are located close to Penang north bridge (approx 30-40 minutes commute to school) and include The Light Collection, The Light Linear, The Light Point, Summerton, Quayside and Quaywest. These are to a very good standard and you are close to all the island amenities: beaches, restaurants, cinemas, hospitals, malls, Georgetown etc.



Summerton Condominium

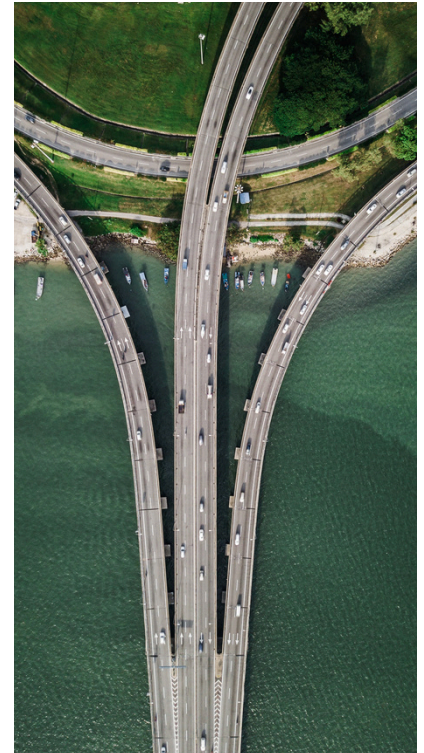


View from The Light Linear

Accommodation	Pros	Cons
The Light Collection (island)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy access to 6 pools, 6 gyms plus other facilities. Well maintained facilities • Some units have lovely seaviews. • Access to 15km cycle path and running path. • A number of staff live there for car share. • New Convention Centre Mall is 10-12 mins walk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving duration to school : 35-40 mins one way.
The Light Linear (island) Waterside Residence (Island)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheaper to rent than The Light Collection • Located within the same neighbourhood as the Light Collection, hence, the “Pros” are listed as above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving duration to school : 35-40 mins one way. • Access to one pool and one gym.
Summerton (island)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many shops/convenience stores on the ground floor and all around • 5-mins walk to Queensbay Mall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older than the above. • Rent is slightly more expensive. • No waterfront/seaview.
Palm Garden or Avenue Garden (mainland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located right opposite the school. • Daily driving to school is not required. • C-Mart supermarket is within 10 mins walk. • Rent is less expensive than “The Light Collection:. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No waterfront/seaview.
Vertu Resort (mainland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand new facilities, great for children. • Some staff live here for carpool. • IKEA is a short 5 mins drive away. • Mini convenience store on the ground floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No waterfront/seaview. • Driving duration to school: 20-25 mins
Suasana (mainland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooftop function room. • Rent is less expensive. • Shops/convenience stores are within 10-minutes walk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No waterfront/seaview. • Driving duration to school: 20-25 mins
Eco Bloom/Eco Meadows (mainland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shops/convenience stores are within 5-minutes drive. • Rent is less expensive. • Driving duration to school: 10-15 mins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No waterfront/seaview

Pearl City on the mainland is a quieter area and, although less developed than the island, still has easy access to shopping malls, restaurants and local facilities. Travel times to the airport from Pearl City may typically be 45 mins with Georgetown being approx. 60 mins away. This area has some nice quiet housing areas around the school, with modern furnished or unfurnished properties and rental sums may be significantly less than those found on the Island. These kinds of properties are easily available within a 5 minute drive or cycle ride of the school and some is located next to our school.

Eco Bloom and Eco Meadows are new apartments and houses around 10 minutes from school with very good access to local shops. They have good amenities.



You are free to choose and make your decision according to your wishes, but please ensure you prepare enough money to cover deposits for the unit. For example, if the property rental would cost you RM2500 monthly, you will be required to pay as stated below.

- 2 months rental deposit (RM5000) refundable upon completion of 2 years contract
- 1-month advance rental (RM2500)
- ½ month Utility deposit (RM1250) refundable upon completion of 2 years contract.
- Agreement fee & Stamping fee (Within RM500)
- Agent fee: Depending on the agents. Some will charge 1 month (RM2500) and some may charge ½ month (RM1250).

Approximate Total: RM11,750

You can agree the rental for one year as well to allow you time to get settled and have a look if you wish to move.

8.2 CAR BUYING OR HIRING

You are free to purchase or hire a car from wherever you wish. However, should you require assistance with this, many of our staffs choose to use the services of Cedric. Staff consistently report that Cedric is very friendly, flexible and easy to deal with. He will be able to assist you to get the right and affordable car as you wish. He is a Frenchman who also has a fabulous restaurant! Below are few websites can be used to buy your own car.

[Sell Your Used Car in Malaysia - Best Price Guaranteed! \(carsome.my\)](#)

[Sell secondhand car | JualKeretaTerpakai | myTukar](#)

The most affordable and in demand car for many locals is called the Perodua MYVI-made in Malaysia. This will cost you somewhere in the region of £300 per month, inclusive of Tax/service/insurance and breakdown cover. Another one would be Perodua Bezza which might be slightly more than Myvi. Labour is cheap for car servicing, as are parts for Malaysian made cars, foreign car parts can be expensive. Driving in Malaysia is not difficult. They drive on the left just like the UK. Whilst you are getting used to the road system you will find the Waze mobile app useful in helping you to navigate your way around. It is recommended that an international driving licence is obtained before driving in Malaysia. It's up to you if want to look at other options, and Cedric will be pleased to answer any questions you have regarding your potential choices. Cedric's contact number: +60 165211000 - usually best to contact via 'WhatsApp'. For those of you wishing to buy, you can consider buying new from a dealership. Prices are not that much higher than a used car and you will get 5 year warranty.



Perodua Myvi



Perodua Bezza

9.0 – OTHER TRANSPORT



Getting around

While downtown Penang might be small in size, there are various modes of public transportation available; from trishaws to free shuttle buses, standard city buses and taxis. It is also possible to walk around George Town and its surrounding neighbourhood. Public transportation is also available for more distant attractions out of George Town, such as the Kek Lok Si Temple, Penang Hill and the ones up in Batu Ferringhi and Teluk Bahang or Penang National Park. Do check schedules and fares before deciding on your preferred mode of transport.



9.1 Taxis/Grab

It is recommended you download the 'GRAB' mobile app onto your mobile phone so you can call up a Grab transport either on the spot or for a later time. Most staff use Grab. A 10km Grab ride costs approximately RM13.00 to RM20.00 depending on the traffic condition or peak office hour. Teachers living in the same condominium or near to each other could share a regular taxi or car share to school each day. Also, several staff have access to private drivers, used either for daily routines or longer one-off journeys.

Grabs are cheap in comparison to the UK and easily available around the island; it is a common means of getting around by tourists. If you take a taxi, these will be more expensive, be sure to agree on a price before boarding the taxi. Start by asking how much it is to get to your destination; you can negotiate on the prices quoted if you feel that they are too high.

9.2 Buses

The main public bus service is by Rapid Penang and it covers an extensive area both on the island and mainland. It also operates a Free CAT (Central Area Transit) bus service within George Town. KOMTAR Terminal is the central transfer terminal for buses that cover the whole of Penang Island. Simply ask around or look out for signboards to find out which bus route serves you best. Upon boarding the Rapid Penang bus, inform the driver of your destination, pay the amount required and receive a ticket for your trip. Remember to prepare exact change as no change will be given back as all buses do not carry change for safety reasons.

For more information, please visit :

<https://www.myrapid.com.my/traveling-with-us/how-to-travel-with-us/rapid-penang/operating-hours-and-fares>



10.0 – TOUCH 'N GO CARD

Cashless Payment

Touch 'n Go card is a cashless payment card that is used primarily for public transportation and electronic toll payment but can also be used to pay at certain retail outlets and parking lots. All toll plazas throughout Malaysia went fully electronic and only accept Touch 'n Go cards as the main electronic payment system. So, if you plan to drive around Malaysia, make sure you have a Touch 'n Go with enough credit on hand, or you might face the awkward situation of having to park your car at the side and walk to the office to buy one on the spot. We will provide you with a Touch 'n Go card as part of your welcome pack. They can also be purchased from sales counters, self-service kiosks and dedicated hubs, usually found in most major malls, petrol stations on highways and some Bank Negara Malaysia branches. Here are the link for more info;

<https://www.touchngo.com.my/CMS/Personal/Products/Self-Service-Kiosk-SSK/Locations/>

Alternatively, you can purchase a WATSON membership Card with Touch N' Go attached to it at WATSON which is located in Pearl City Mall, opposite our school. WATSON is a famous Asian healthcare and beauty chain store which is located at various places in Malaysia. You can earn points when you shop at Watson as well.

Smart Tag Device

A Smart Tag Device is a reader device you put on the dashboard of your car for automatic payment (no more rolling down the window). Insert the card and you're good to go but keep an eye on its battery level and it's best to put it away when not in use to avoid robbery attempts. You can also use the device to check the balance of your card. You can either purchase this at any of the Toll Offices or via online – LAZADA or SHOPPEE. If you have Smart Tag Device, you can use the “Smart Tag” lane.



Penang Bridge									
Toll Plaza	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5	Class 6	Class 7			
Jambatan Pulau Pinang	RM5.74	RM9.84	RM12.00	RM20.50	RM25.00	RM36.90	RM45.00	RM60.00	RM75.00

Jambatan Kedua Sdn Bhd (JKSB)					
Toll Plaza	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Class 5
Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Bridge	RM5.74	RM30.50	RM70.10	RM8.50	RM26.20
Link Road	RM0.60	RM0.90	RM1.20	RM0.30	RM0.50

Users from the Mainland (Batu Kawan) going to the Penang Island (Batu Maung) via the Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Bridge, the toll will be collected at Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Toll Plaza and Bandar Cassia (one way).

Toll for the Link Road will be collected from users exiting from PLUS Expressway at Bandar Cassia Toll Plaza going to Penang Island via the Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah Bridge or to Bandar Cassia and users entering the PLUS Expressway at Bandar Cassia Toll Plaza.

TOLL CHARGES FROM/TO SCHOOL

If you are staying on the Island, you will be crossing two tolls to travel to school. One will be Penang Bridge toll and one will be Bukit Tambun toll. Per day, you will be spending RM7.54. For more information about toll charges throughout Malaysia, you can refer to this website;

<https://www.plus.com.my/index.php?lang=en>



11.0 – SHOPPING

SHOPPING

Besides the food and nightlife, Penang is home to a number of must-visit shopping malls, each with their own specialty.



Gurney Paragon Mall

Penang Island Shopping Malls

Gurney Plaza - Gurney Drive, 10250 Penang

Gurney Plaza is on the famous Gurney Drive promenade in Penang and approximately 3Km to the north-west of city centre of Georgetown. It is known as Penang's premier lifestyle shopping mall.

Gurney Paragon Mall - Gurney Drive, 10250 Penang

Gurney Paragon Mall is Penang's best centre for an eclectic mix of fashion trends. The seafront complex is home to more than 40 fashion boutiques and 30 restaurants. What makes Paragon unique is that the entire 700,000sqft complex has been built around St. Joseph's Novitiate, a 1925 chapel that has been beautifully restored and incorporated into the mall's open-plan layout.



1st Avenue - Jalan Magazine, 10300 Penang

A stylish city mall that offers fashion, leisure, entertainment and a slew of dining outlets for the style conscious.

KOMTAR Mall - Georgetown

A good place to shop for technology devices (computers, phones, software etc)

Queensbay Mall - Persiaran Bayan Baru, 11900 Penang

Queensbay Mall is currently the largest, longest and most modern shopping mall in Penang. It is located in Bayan Lepas, minutes away from the Penang Bridge, the heart of a prime waterfront development. It is the most preferred shopping destination for both the locals and tourists- with more than 500 retail merchants.

The Wine Shop - George Town, Batu Ferringhi, Bayan Lepas

Great selection of wine from cheap to very expensive.

Free delivery to island and mainland.

Sunway Carnival Mall, Seberang Jaya, Mainland

With 220 shops and a convention centre, it is one of mainland Penang's must-visit retail havens, complete with an eight-screen cineplex and an amusement centre. Strategically located near Penang Bridge.

Design Village Outlet Mall, Batu Kawan, Mainland

Design Village is an outlet mall in Batu Kawan, Penang, Malaysia. Opened in 2016, it is Malaysia's biggest outlet mall, built on a 24-acre tropical garden. It is on the mainland, next to IKEA and the Southern Bridge.

AEON Bukit Mertajam, Alma, Mainland

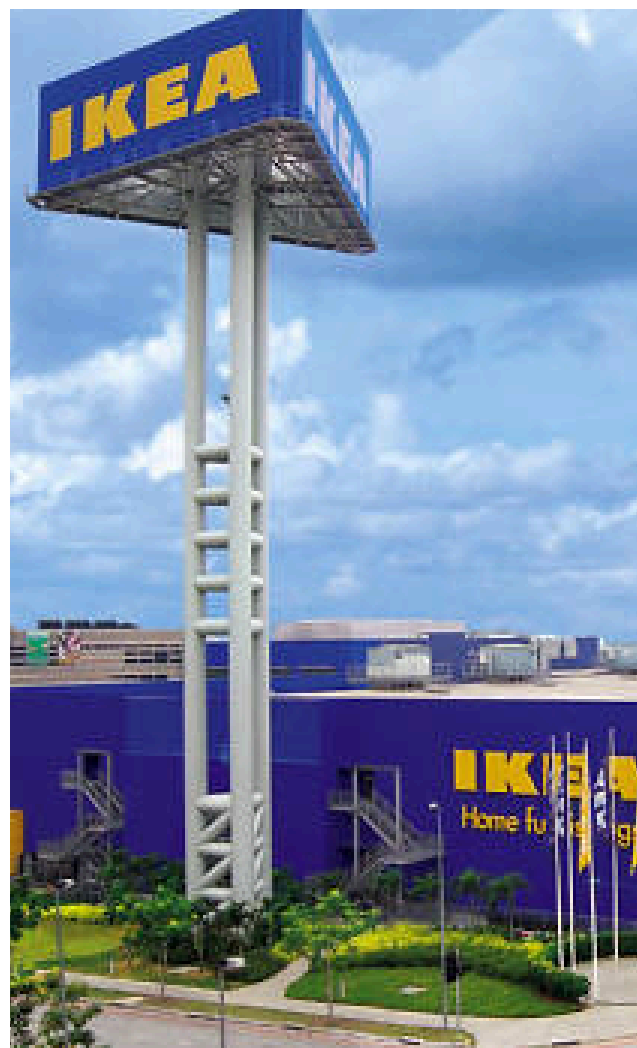
Large shopping mall in Bukit Mertajam, Penang. It is located on Jalan Rozhan, diagonally across from Tesco Bukit Mertajam. The Penang Library also operates a cyber-library within the mall.

IKEA Batu Kawan, Penang

Usual IKEA located on the mainland next to the Southern Bridge.



Queensbay Mall



IKEA Batu Kawan

Lazada - Online deliver

Good for things that are awkward to get i.e Tonic Water. Check out;
<http://www.lazada.com.my/>

TESCO Outlet in Penang and Mainland

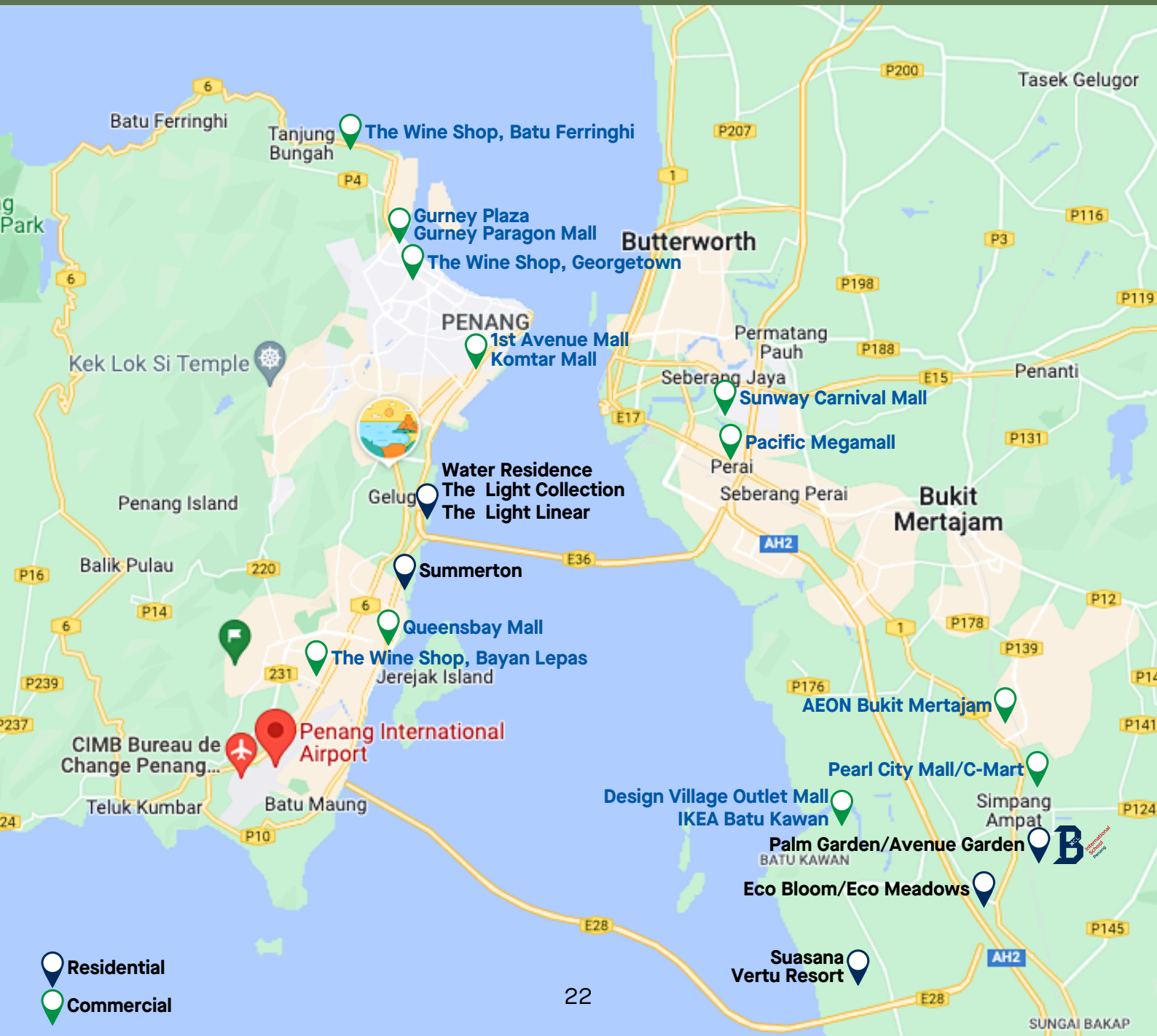
Tesco here is a bit different to back home. Ideal for regular cheap foods, cleaning products and other items like large Tesco stores in the UK, but you do not want to buy meat there!

Pearl City Mall / C-Mart Next to School

Cheap groceries, bargain toys, good coffee shop, small soft play, alcohol available. A smallish supermarket with lots of basics is also attached to this mall. Some eating places. Has a Mr. DIY store.

Pacific Megamall - Butterworth

Shopping centre providing more affordable prices for household goods and services.



12.0 – RESTAURANTS/BARS

Praised as one of the best places to eat in Asia, Penang food is rich and varied. With Malay, Indian and Chinese settlers, the island offers the best of three world cuisines (plus a lot more Western Food choices) and has an incredible variety of dishes. Here are some of the places for you to look at.

Restaurants & Bars in Penang Island

The Living Room (Island) - 43-C Batu Ferringhi

Lovely little café/bar/restaurant. Tasty food, good prices, lovely atmosphere

The China House (Island) - 153, Beach St, Georgetown

Beautiful interesting bar (longest bar in Penang) Epic live band called ACIDIC BUNCH every weekend!!

Kebaya Dining Room (Island) - 14A, Stewart Ln, Georgetown

High end with a modern interpretation of Nyonya cuisine created especially for the dining room at the Seven Terraces Hotel Penang . Asian Fusion.

Pinxin Vegan Cuisine (Island) - 38, Lebu Tye Sin, 10300 George Town

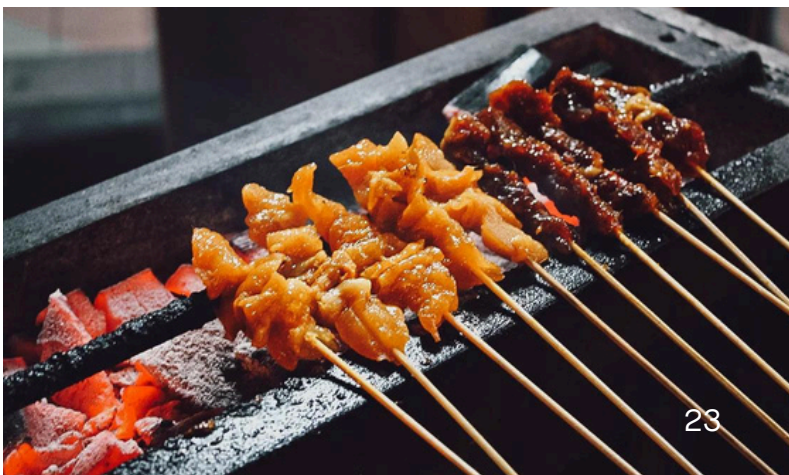
Plant based. Vegan. Healthy. Amazing coffee – can highly recommend the hazelnut latte! They also make and sell their own pastes: Asam Laksa, Tom Yam, Curry.

Real Food - Gurney/Straits Quay

Delicious local and western vegan and vegetarian café. Delicious home baked cakes and desserts.

Indigo@The Blue Mansion – Georgetown

Classy high end restaurant in a beautiful building. The lunch menu is such good value (approx MR80) for three courses incl coffee/tea.



Restaurants & Bars in Penang Island

Two Frenchies – Georgetown

Cedric's restaurant. Proper French restaurant with a French chef. Recommended

Gurney Drive Hawker Stall (Island) – 43-C Batu Ferringhi

Lots of different street food – mostly Malaysian, Indian and Chinese.

Love Lane (Island)

Address : Georgetown, 10200 George Town, Penang

Within George Town's UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a narrow lane linking Farquhar Street and Chulia Street. Rustic shophouses have been converted into motels, trendy cafes and bars. Good breakfast in Wheeler's, Good Mexican in Holy Guacamole and many late night bars.

Mish Mash Speakeasy Bar – Muntri Street, Georgetown

Serves good cocktails in town

Oceana Symphony – Tanjong Tokong

Has all you can eat · Serves happy-hour food · Has fireplace

Frandy Beach Bar – Batu Feringghi

Nice beach bar, serving Western and Asian food

Manchu – Georgetown

Speakeasy with great cocktails and fun head costumes to dress up in

Macallum Connoisseurs – Georgetown

Coffee, food and chill out place – Hip warehouse style.

The Alley, 5 Stewart Lane – Georgetown

Hides at a quiet street named Stewart Lane, limited space but extremely comfortable interior setting. Serves probably the best churros in Penang.

Le Café – George Town (near KOMTAR)

Great breakfast sandwiches.

The Brew House – Auto City – Mainland

Good for hang out after work. Serves beers (only RM8 before 8pm) and food, both Asia & western.

Food Courts and Hawker Stalls

25 Best Street Food – island

<http://penangfoodie.com/best-food-in-penang-guide/>

No.8 Bangkok Lane Mee Goreng and No. 10 Cendol are the highlight.

Fisherman's Wharf – Jelutong near The Light Point

Amazing food court by the sea. Serving both local and Western foods at reasonable prices and decent beer!

Bali Hai – Gurney Drive

Great hawker food and fresh seafood.

Northam Beach Cafe – Georgetown

Great hawker food by the beach, they even do sausages and pies!



Northam Beach Café – Seaview



Fisherman's Wharf

Resaurants & Bars in Penang Mainland

Khuntai Restaurant

104, Jalan Permatang Tengah, Taman Seri Ceraya, 13000 Butterworth, Penang.
Delicious food; especially the fish and tom yam soup. All the other food in the menu is pretty good too.

Chai Leng Park Food Street

13700 Seberang Jaya, Penang

Located almost at the heart of Penang Mainland. Hands-down most famous hawker outlets in Butterworth of Penang. Opens only for dinner until late night.

Pelita Nasi Kandar - Many Outlets (Island & Mainland)

Serves a selection of delicious and authentic Indian-Malaysian cuisine at affordable prices. They are open throughout the night and are a good place to enjoy watching a game of football with your friends whilst tucking into a curry.

Auto City - Juru

Has various bars and restaurants as does Iconic Point near school and by the Iconic Hotel.



Khuntai Restaurant



Pelita Nasi Kandar



Restaurant Terapung Pulau Aman

Roxbury Pub & Bistro

Address : 20, Jalan Todak 3, Pusat Bandar Sunway, 13700 Seberang Jaya, Penang
They serve food, beer, cocktails & many type of liquor as well

Beer Factory

Address : 26 & 27, Butterworth Business City Center, Jalan Raja Uda, 13400 Butterworth
Also at Eco Horizon development 10 minutes from school
They serve good food, beers and cocktails.

Chong's Seafood

Address : 14120 Simpang Ampat, Mainland
Good taste and quite a cheap Chinese seafood for sit in or takeaway nearby school.

Qasar Hadramawt Arabian Restaurant

Address : No. 9, Ground Floor, De' Rendezvous, Jalan Perda Selatan, Bandar Perda, 14000 Bukit Mertajam, Penang.

One of the best yamien and Arabic food in Mainland. Their Lamb Mandy Rice is their signature dish.

Pulau Aman Island Restaurants (Mainland)

Address : No. 120, Simpang Ampat, 14100 Pulau Aman, Penang

Pulau Aman is a small island in Penang situated off Batu Kawan. Being a traditional Malay village, here you will experience the peaceful and quiet kampung lifestyle. There are also a couple of simple restaurants that serve seafood and mee udang, the latter being an island speciality.

13.0 – HOTELS & ART GALLERIES

List of Hotels in Penang Island & Mainland

Most of the hotels below are on Booking.com, Trivago etc.

Park Royal - Batu Ferringhi

Beautiful Rooms. Peaceful Hotel. Beautiful Pool. Great for small children. Good Pizzas. Spectacular sunset view.

Hard Rock Hotel - Batu Ferringhi

Beautiful Rooms. Amazing Club Room. Great Kids Pool. Kids Club is nice

Ixora Hotel – Perai

Located next to Pacific Megamall in Perai, this hotel is in a central location to shopping, temples, and food courts nearby.

Hotel Jen – Georgetown

Good club room. Central location. Lovely breakfast.

Eastern & Oriental – Georgetown

Amazing old style hotel. Like stepping back in time. Wonderful.

Malihom - Balik Pulau

Beautiful surroundings

Macalister Mansion – Georgetown

Pricey but perfect for a nice getaway and e.g. for Christmas dinner/special events in general.

Angsana - Batu Ferringhi

Very expensive but worth it – recommended for a treat weekend.

Haven - Ipoh (1.5 hours drive south of Penang)

Amazing tropical mountain views. Jungle walks. Tropical wildlife. Spacious self catering rooms.



Art Galleries

Hin Bus Deport Art Centre - Georgetown

An open space gallery, nice café and interesting graffiti.

China House Art Gallery – Georgetown

Located at the second floor of China House restaurant and bar.

Daiichi Art Space – Georgetown

Contemporary art gallery.

Artsy Sip - Georgetown

Paint and sip art workshop for layman

Penang Pac – Georgetown

Performance art center of Penang. An international platform for performance. - Jazz music, ballet, drama etc.

ArtLane – Georgetown

Public art space – street art



14.0 – FAMILY FRIENDLY ACTIVITIES

Places to visit at Penang Island & Mainland

HardRock Stage Pass

Stage Pass Membership | Hard Rock Hotel Penang (hardrockhotels.com)

Sunway Lagoon and Lost World Tambun yearly pass

Membership Pass Promotion - (sunwaylostworldoftambun.com)

Sunway Mall

Soft play

Aeon Malls, Gurney Plaza, Gurney Paragon

Multiplex Cinema

Entopia Butterfly Farm - Batu Ferringhi

Lovely way to spend an afternoon with the kids

Botanic Gardens - Georgetown

Lovely gardens, gentle hikes, take a gold trolley around the gardens or just watch the monkeys try to steal from the bins!

Tokun Hill - Alma, Bukit Mertajam

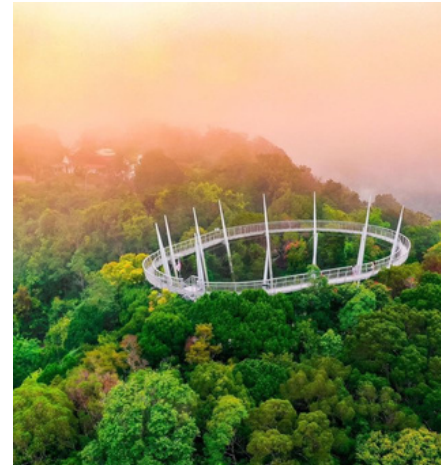
Hiking trail, greenery & fresh air. There is an open-air tea corner at the foot of the hill selling Chinese tea, herbal egg...good for afternoon tea.

Penang National Park - Teluk Bahang, Penang Island

Jungle trekking and beaches. Hike to Turtle beach then get the boat to Monkey beach for sunbathing, watersports and bars. You can camp overnight on monkey beach

Thai Odyssey

Massage parlour. Chain store – there will be one nearby



Penang Hill

Hiking & Kayaking

Moon Gate to Penang Hill - Botanical Gardens

There is an option to take the funicular down. Use you IKAD card for discount.

Kayaking - Penang Watersports Recreation Centre

Kayak to Miami café for cheap lunch and drink

Hiking - Bukit Jambul

There are two hikes

- 30 minutes up to the peak
- 2 hours up to the peak

Penang Botanical Gardens to Penang Hill

Beware of the dogs & monkeys

Bukit Mertajam - Mainland Penang, Central Seberang Perai District

If you want a guide or some help, there is a group of people who hike there every day at 2pm at the fruit stand.

Various clubs around Penang that some of the staff belong to

Dragon Boat Racing, Bollywood Dancing, Muay Thai

15.0 – BANKING INFORMATION

Salaries are automatically paid into each teacher's bank account at the end of every month, (usually on the 31st day of the month). There are many banks in Malaysia as per the picture below;



But in BXCL, we have only engaged with two banks which works well for both local and expats. Within a few days of arrival, the school will assist newly appointed teachers to open a bank account which is a choice for staff between using-

- Our local branch of **Maybank** (approx. 5 mins from the school). You are able to carry out international money transfers online, conduct your banking online or via a mobile 'app' and receive a Visa ATM card (there are plenty of ATM's located at most petrol stations and malls).
- Besides that, **HSBC Perks@work** offers all the benefits of a Maybank account plus the ability to transfer money to any international HSBC branch without a fee use any bank's ATM machines across Malaysia without paying the usual 1 MYR fee. There are **three (3) different levels of account** on offer (ranging from salaries less than 5,000 to those above 16,500 MYR) and they have **various perks** associated with them from free cash withdrawals across Malaysia, to a personalised relationship manager, free credit cards and free international transfers for ex-pats.



Please consider which of these options you would prefer and let HR know in advance of your arrival in Penang so the necessary arrangements can be made for you even before your arrival. HR will be requesting for some documents pertaining to account opening, depending on the choice of bank.

16.0 – HEALTH CARE

Health Care in the country is provided by local clinics, specialist clinics and both private and general hospitals. Dental treatment and alternative therapies are also equally and easily accessible.

Generally, most clinics are open from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily while some operate on a 24-hour basis and they do not require an appointment. Medications are dispensed at the clinic.

Specialist clinics are available in every medical and surgical field including sports medicine, physiotherapy, chiropractors, etc. While an appointment is necessary in this instance, referral from a general practitioner is usually not required unless there is a need to file a medical insurance claim.

Several private hospitals are located on Penang Island as well as the Mainland. Emergency outpatient treatment on a 24-hour basis is available in all hospitals. Medical care and treatment received are comparable to any private institutions around the world. There is a qualified school nurse at the school able to give good advice about local health centres.

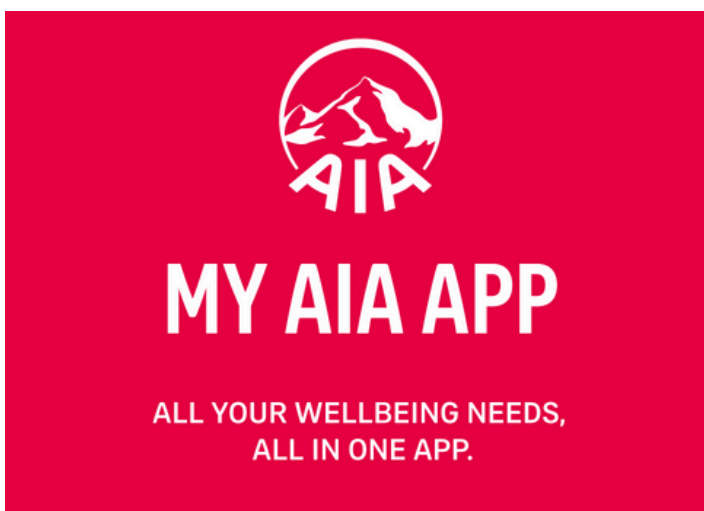
In Malaysia with its tropical climate, the biggest health challenge for most expatriates is adjusting to the heat and humidity. It does take

time for the body to make adjustments but the answer is easy, drink plenty of water and get sufficient sleep. Mask wearing is no longer mandatory but many still do. Ensure to follow all SOPs set by the Malaysia government.

For issues beyond basic adjustment, Health Care is currently provided by AIA insurance and you will receive cover as detailed in your contract for you and your family. They have an online 'app', which will contain all your information and also be used for communication between the company and you. Expat staff will not be required to get a referral letter before seeing a specialist which you can request through the App. For emergency cases, you can go straight to Emergency Department and inform the doctors about your insurance and allow them to apply for a Guarantee Letter on behalf of you.

I am sure some staff will be happy to share their experiences with you to make this process familiar to you in advance of you needing it. HR will be sharing more information on Insurance before your arrival so that you will have an understanding of how it works.

Penang is a center for medical tourism; the standards of hospital and health care are excellent.



17.0 – EMPLOYMENT VISA

Employment Visa (Malaysia)

It is a joint initiative between Talent Corporation Malaysia (TalentCorp) and the Immigration Department of Malaysia and is overseen by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Employment Pass (EP) is a work permit that enables an expatriate to work with the school in Malaysia.

The pass is subject to the contract of employment. All our expatriate hiring require a valid Employment Pass to serve the school.

All the relevant passes will be processed through ESD (Expatriate Service Division) Portal. Relevant Passes are

- Employment Pass - Staff
- Dependent Pass – legal Married spouse/ legal Child/ Adoption
- Social Visit Pass Long Term - Common Law Spouse/child above 18/ Parent & In Law (Parents)

The Employment Pass Process will take place in 3 months prior to commencement of employment in school. All the documents and process will be shared by HR Department via email on time to time basis.

Education sectors in Malaysia must obtain approval from Ministry of Education (MOE) (Regulatory Body), before proceeding with Immigration Submission.

The whole Employment Pass Application process involves 2 (Two) phases; for Teaching/Academic Positions

- 1st Phase (Ministry of Education Approval - MOE) only for staff
- 2nd Phase (Expatriate Service Division-will process upon receiving Approval from MOE) – Employment/Dependent Pass Approval (its Consist of 3 Parts)

PART 1: ESD submission
(Employment/Dependent Pass)

PART 2: ESD APPROVAL & TRAVEL TO MALAYSIA

PART 3: EMPLOYMENT PASS/
DEPENDANT PASS
ENDORSEMENT IN PASSPORT



TalentCorp
ATTRACT • NURTURE • RETAIN



18.0 – TAX INFORMATION

All staff are required to pay Malaysian income tax, which is deducted from your salary on a monthly basis and paid to tax authorities on your behalf. The tax rate varies and is based on a graduated scale - the tax rate increases as your salary grows higher each year.

For income tax purposes, there are only 2 types of tax status, namely 'resident' or 'non resident'. The distinction between these 2 types of tax status is imperative because if a person is a resident, any income received in or remitted to Malaysia is taxable at salary scale rates, whereas a non-resident is liable to Malaysian income tax on income received from a Malaysia source at a flat rate of 30%.

An individual is considered as a resident in Malaysia for the basis year of assessment if he/she is in Malaysia in that basis year for a period or periods amounting to 182 days or more from January 2026 to July 2026. Individuals who spend less than 182 days per year in the country are classified as non-residents and are subsequently subject to different tax regulations.

To qualify the "resident" status for income earned in 2025, teachers who join BXCL International School Penang in August 2025;

- **MUST BE in Malaysia on 31 December 2025 and 1 January 2026 (2 days);**
- **MUST BE IN THE COUNTRY FOR 182 days between 1 January 2026 – 2 July 2026 / NO TRAVEL out of Malaysia for more than 14 days for social visits from 1 January 2026 to 2 July 2026.**

Or, in other words, plan a holiday within Malaysia during your first year in order to change your tax status.

As required by Inland Revenue Board of Malaysia, the monthly deduction applicable to an employee who is not resident, or not known to be resident, in Malaysia shall be at a rate of 30% of his/her remuneration. Therefore, for the months of August 2025 to July 2026, you will be taxed at 30%. Once you have fulfilled 182 days from 1 January 2026 to 1 July 2026 and have not exceeded 14 days travel out of Malaysia, your tax from July 2026 onwards will be reduced to resident rate, which is between 18-22% depending on the salary scale. If you fail to fulfil the requirement above, the tax rate will continue to be deducted at 30% up to December 2026.

For more information, you may refer to the Malaysian tax website: [Tax Rate](#) | [Lembaga Hasil Dalam Negeri Malaysia](#)



19.0 – EMBASSIES & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

19.1 Embassies and Consulates in Malaysia

We will always do our best to answer routine questions for staff who are living away from home. However, as international travelers there may be questions it is not possible for us as a company to answer. On the rare occasion this is the case, (particularly where such information is updated constantly) we would advise contacting your relevant Embassy or Consulate directly by visiting their website @ <https://www.embassypages.com/malaysia> in the first instance.

19.2 Emergency Numbers

- To call an ambulance, anywhere in Malaysia dial 999 /112 from mobile phone.
- To call the police, anywhere in Malaysia dial 999 / 112 from mobile phone.
- To call the fire brigade, dial 994 / 112 from mobile phone.

The nearest main police station to the school is the South Seberang Perai District Police Headquarters: Jalan Serintik, Seberang Perai Selatan, 14200 Jawi, Penang. Contact no.: +604 – 582 42222.

The Malaysian government, through the Ministry of Health, is the main provider of ambulance services in Malaysia. However, there is no main body that is responsible for the organisation and coordination of ambulance services.



20.0 – STAFF WELFARE TEAM



Below we have gathered information, resources and services that should support our wellbeing. Remember, we are all in this together as a family. We are continually creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows us to flourish and achieve our full potential.

STAFF WELFARE INVOLVES

Maintaining a healthy body by making healthy choices about diet, exercise, and leisure.
Developing an attitude of mind that enables us to have self-confidence, self-respect and to be emotionally resilient.

Having a sense of purpose, feelings of fulfilment and meaning.
Possessing an active mind that is alert, open to new experiences, curious and creative.
Having a network of relationships that are supportive and nurturing.

REASONS FOR CONCERN WITH WELFARE

We have a duty of care and this means adopting a socially responsible approach to looking after all of us. Kindly let us know if you need anything from our side. You can contact us at any time.

Kevin Lee	kevin.lee@bxcl.edu.my
Yvonne Ooi	ooi.seoktheng@bxcl.edu.my
Jasmine Chak	jasmine.chak@bxcl.edu.my
Ravita Purba	p.ravita@bxcl.edu.my
Hannah Dark	hannah.dark@bxcl.edu.my
Izyan Ronedin	r.izyan@bxcl.edu.my



XCL International School Pearl City, Penang
No. 2, Persiaran Mutiara 5, Pusat Komersial Bandar Tasek Mutiara
14120 Simpang Ampat, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: +60(4) 509 7000

