



Advisor Guide

This Advisor Guide is meant to help you guide your new hire(s) through PFO2Go.

ACSI has provided PreField Orientation (PFO) live training since 1987. When the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of PFO in the summer of 2020, it also forced us to move to an online solution to help schools with their orientation plans. An online version had been discussed for several years and, like so many others, the pandemic pushed us to finally go for it.

PFO-live, and now PFO2Go, have been designed to help new international school appointees start their new assignment with more confidence, transition more successfully, work with TCKs more effectively, and hopefully, stay longer at their international school.

ON COURSE DESIGN

PFO2Go can be taken anytime, anywhere, but preferably prior to departure for the field (pre-field), see some exceptions to this below. PFO-live always had one downside for some potential participants—some couldn't join due to scheduling conflicts and some late hires simply missed the training completely. Being an asynchronous course now means that no one need miss the chance to take PFO2Go and learn from the most important concepts of PFO training.

For PFO2Go v.2020 (our pilot year), we are including the major core material from our PFO-live program: Culture, Third Culture Kid profile, and the Transition tracks. We are also including the topics of Introduction to Service (Course Opening), Wellness (Unstringing the Bow), and other topics like Theology of Risk and four PFO bible studies. In future years, we will add additional components.

The core content of the course is given in a series of 16 video presentations by our team of presenters. In between each presentation is a set of learning activities meant to get your PFO2Go learners thinking and preparing their hearts for service. Four Bible studies from the book of I Peter center around the concept of “scattered ones.” The learning activities and Bible studies are included in the Learners Guide that you will use along with your learners.

THE ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

PFO2Go, just like PFO-live, is designed to include the active involvement of an experienced advisor in the lives of the learners. We built this course assuming that each learner would have an advisor that will set the PFO2Go course pace, check on learner progress, and hold discussion with the learner around the important topics that are presented throughout the course.

The course can be taken with limited advisor input, but that is not our preference. We believe adult learners that can process and interact with a key advisor from their school will learn better and deeper and ultimately serve well at their new appointment. If you are unable to provide active support to the learners throughout the course, you will need to at least get your learners started and set up with some expectations for how they will demonstrate their learning to you and then do an in-person follow up with you when you are together on campus.

Regarding Advisor mindset, we view you as a person who has the experience to guide new staff from their current location to their new posting at your school. You've "been there, done that." And you have a heart for new staff and the people skills to go with it. You love answering questions that new staff will undoubtedly have, and you have the patience and heart of a teacher. We know you will do a good job of helping your new staff shine.

Steps to getting started...

- 1) You will need to register yourself. Once registered, you will be given access to the entire course and all materials. Your registration will be free, and you will have the opportunity to add additional advisors to your team for an extra fee.
- 2) Work with your school to register your PFO2Go learners. We recommend that all of your new expat hires go through PFO2Go—that includes a new head of school, new teachers, new dorm staff, and even new expat maintenance team members. Anyone who is making the transition to a new country or culture is advised to take the course. We also urge that spouses with no role at the school also go through PFO2Go. Every new staff member is entering a new world and will go through culture and transition adjustments. PFO2Go will help them be ready for what is coming their way.
- 3) Here is a major exception to taking the course "prefield." PFO2Go might also be good for the staff member that has one or two years of international service behind them. Over the years we've observed that individuals who attended PFO-live after already being on the field, often told us how they wish they had heard our content sooner. In other words, it's never too late to take this PFO2Go course.
- 4) You and your learners will also be given immediate access to the ACSI PFO2Go Community Group. This is a closed group accessible only to learners, advisors and the ACSI PFO2Go team. Here you can raise questions, offer suggestions, and greet other advisors or learners along the way. Members of the ACSI PFO2Go team will be standing by to assist as needed.
- 5) You will need to go through the course (Learner Guide and videos) ahead of your learners—be at least one section ahead of them. It will be important that you know what they are learning and reflecting upon so you can guide them, answer questions, and keep them engaged.
- 6) You will also need to figure out a pacing and timetable for your new hires to take the course. We have included a relaxed pace suggestion to the course in our Overview of Course Elements page, but you can go faster if you want (see details below). A binge pace would still probably take two full days, but we don't recommend that.
- 7) Also, think about whether or not you want to take all of your new hires (a cohort) through the course at the same time or do you want to just let each new hire take the course one at a time and you track with each one separately?

- 8) How you want to interact with your learners around the content. Do you want to set up Zoom meetings? Phone calls? Emails? Or text (G-Hangouts, WhatsApp, WeChat, etc.)? This, too, is your decision to make. We realize that time zone challenges may make personal interaction challenging, but your new staff will appreciate hearing from you as they take the course. If your new staff are on the field already, you might consider doing this as a small group.
- 9) Figure out the best way for your learners to submit their responses to the learning activities that are in the Learner Guide. See our suggestions below.
- 10) As you take your learners through the course, it will be important to track the time that it takes to complete the course. When each learner finishes the course, CEUs will be awarded. The CEU award assumes that the learners gave sufficient time to engage with the activities. As this is our pilot year, we would love to hear from you on how long your discussion times go and how long it takes your learners to get through the material. This will impact the final number of CEUs awarded. More on CEUs below.
- 11) Bonus! You will also earn CEUs for advising the course!

SUGGESTED TIMETABLE. You may do this another way if you wish—faster or slower. See the **PFO2Go Overview of Course Elements.** This plan is the relaxed pace.

- **Day 1** – Learners will work through Opening Session, Bible Study 1, all of the Culture Track sessions 1-4, and engage with all the day’s learning activities in the Learner Guide. *Note:* Learners will take the Culture Compass survey during the Culture Track. They should share the results with their advisor in advance. Advisors should take the survey, too, and be familiar with the CC concepts.
- **Day 2** – Advisor arranges a Zoom call or engages with learners over chat on the topics from Day 1.
- **Day 3** – Learners will work through Bible Study 1, all the TCK Track sessions 1-4, and engage with the day’s learning activities.
- **Day 4** – Advisor arranges a Zoom call or engages with learner over chat platform on the topics from Day 3.
- **Day 5** – Learners will work through Bible Study 3, all the Transition track sessions 1-4 and engage with the day’s learning activities.
- **Day 6** – Advisor arranges a Zoom call or engages with learners over chat platform on the topics from Day 5. There may be a lot to talk about from this day.
- **Day 7** – Learners will work through Bible Study 4 and the Closing Sessions.
- **Day 8** – Wrap up discussion from Day 7 and bring conclusion to the course.

PFO2Go Overview of Course Elements with Suggested Pacing

Tab of Each Session	Length of Session	Reflection Time	Description
Opening Session	15 mins	15-30 mins	Description: In this opening session, the course team will introduce the course and provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.
Bible Study 1	30 mins	NA	Description: The opening session will provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.
Transition Track 1-4	15-30 mins	15-30 mins	Description: The transition track sessions will provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.
Culture Track	NA	25-30 mins	Description: The culture track sessions will provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.
Session 1: CC & TCK	30 mins	25-30 mins	Description: This is a shared introduction to culture that is different from your own. In this session, you will explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives. You will also explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives.
Session 2: Understanding Culture	30 mins	25-30 mins	Description: In this session, you will explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives. You will also explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives.
Session 3: Why are They?	15 mins	15-30 mins	Description: In this session, you will explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives. You will also explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives.
Session 4: Why are We?	15 mins	15-30 mins	Description: In this session, you will explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives. You will also explore the relationship between culture and identity, and how it shapes our lives.
Imaginative World 1-4: Global Practices	30 mins	NA	Description: The imaginative world sessions will provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.
Closing Session	15 mins	15-30 mins	Description: In this closing session, the course team will provide an overview of the course content and the expectations for the course.

Thumbnail Overview of Course Elements

USING THE LEARNER GUIDE

The Learner Guide takes you and your learners through the course and accompanies the *PFO2Go course WEBSITE* (accessible only after registering for the course). We’ve broken up the course into five major sections, seen as TABS on the course website: Course Opening tab,

Culture Track tab, TCK Track tab, Transition Track tab, and the Closings Sessions tab. (There is also a Community and Resource tab with helpful materials to accompany the course.) The Guide will keep you moving from one tab to the next.

You will be provided with three versions of the Learner Guide (Word, Google Docs, and fillable PDF). It is up to you to figure out which is best for your learners and your context. Ideally, we think it is best if you can see what your learners are submitting in a live collaborative way, like Google Docs. This will allow you to keep tabs on your learners and encourage them along the way. If you can port the document onto your school’s learning platform that you use with students, that’s even better! Future versions of PFO2Go will be held on ACSI’s new upcoming learning management system once it is available.

Inside the Learner Guide, you will see that every video lesson has an activity page. Each page includes the following:

- A brief **Description** of the session.
- **Video Length.** This is included so the Learner can set aside enough time to focus on the lesson. A general rule of thumb is that learners should tack on a similar amount of time for the “Write Down and be Ready to Discuss” sections plus 5 minutes or so. These are our best estimates for v.2020.



Learner Guide

- **Write Down and be Ready to Discuss** section.

This is the most important piece of the course and the one upon which you and your learners should focus. As you will see, there are no right answers to the questions. They are designed to cause the learner to think deeply and to share with you from their heart. It is our hope that the questions will open helpful conversations.

Response boxes are included in each version of the Guide. While we do not recommend that your learners write long paragraph responses, a two- or three-word response might indicate that your Learner is not engaging appropriately with the material. On the other hand, you might have a new staff member that, for whatever reason, is uncomfortable with writing. That’s fine as long as you can find a way to know your learner is processing the concepts.

- A **Reflection** thought is included for each lesson. These reflections are usually scriptural concepts to make the learner contemplate their walk with Jesus through this time of transition. Sometimes they are questions; sometimes they are just ideas. We do not expect the learners to respond to this one in writing, but you are free to use this in discussions with your learners if you wish.
- There is a short **Pray** challenge with each lesson. We have a space for your learners to write out what they are thinking in prayer, but this can be optional if some are uncomfortable submitting a written prayer. This is between you and your learners.

- **For Further Learning** section. This is offered as an optional item. We've tried to keep this section interesting, and in some cases fun in the hopes that it will draw some learners to explore a bit more on the subject matter.
- There will be an occasional **Bonus** section. These are short videos highlighting God at work in national Christian school settings. We do recommend that you and all learners watch these videos.

THE BIBLE STUDIES

The four Bible studies show up in the Learner Guide between major sections of the course. The studies are a part of the original PFO-live training and were meant to be used in a small group setting, but of course they can be done individually. We included space in the Learner Guide for responses. We certainly want every learner to go through these Bible studies, but the level of engagement with you will be your decision.

TOPICS NOT COVERED in PFO2Go

PFO2Go, assumes that the hiring school will supplement ACSI's PFO training with their own on-site orientation program. In other words, PFO2Go should be part of your overall new staff orientation program but certainly not the end of new staff orientation. The following is a partial list of topics that you should cover with all new staff members at your school before they start their assignment.

- Child Safety Procedures at your school
- Emergency procedures and crisis plans (COVID plans, fire drills, unrest responses, evacuation plans, etc.)
- Living in your school community, who to go to for what, typical work schedule, church and fellowship requirements, etc.
- School history, leadership structure, organizational chart, etc.
- School policies and procedures, ethical expectations for staff and job descriptions, etc.
- Living in-country, cultural expectations, dress, banking, shopping, getting around, etc.
- And many others

We recommend that your new staff orientation program have a full year approach for new staff. It would be a great idea to hold at least four gatherings for you and your new staff in their first year beginning with a deep dive before school starts. Plan a second new staff check-in near the end of October, another check-in just before the start of the new year in early January, and a final check-in meeting two months prior to the end of your school year (this schedule is based upon a northern hemisphere school year). Many of the concepts in the PFO2Go course and your own orientation training should be reviewed at these meetings. This will not only be meaningful to your new staff, but you will also gain invaluable insight into what went well in your orientation work.

CLAIMING CEUs

You and your learners can earn valuable CEUs for completing PFO2Go. Since this is a new course, we are estimating that a learner will earn 1.2 CEUs for successful completion of the

course. This accounts for time spent watching the videos and time spent on the reflection activities. We have not factored in discussion time that learners might have with you. Final determination of the CEU number will be calculated after we hear from you about discussion times. Instructions for claiming your CEUs, and the CEUs of your learners, will be included on the course website.

FINALLY

PFO2Go version 2020 is the first version of PFO2Go. Your feedback and suggestions for improvement to the course will be *tremendously* helpful to us. You can chat with us over the PFO2Go Community (group posts), send us an [email](#), or wait for the course ending survey that we will send to you.

Many blessings as you guide your learners through the PFO2Go course. May they have a WONDERFUL start to their service and ministry at your international Christian school.

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