**Off Campus Activities Policy**

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1. **Introduction**

1.1 Scope

Off campus activities covers all work related activities off campus. Therefore, it includes any work carried out by staff and students in buildings or locations that are not owned or managed by the University, and where the University is responsible for their health and safety, and others affected by their activities e.g. fieldwork as defined by Universities & Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) and Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) as “Any work carried out by staff or students for the purposes of teaching, research or other activities while representing the institution off-site.”

 Off campus activities also includes attending conferences and meetings; recruitment activities; teaching activities such as surveys and sample collection; and research activities such as working in a collaborator’s premises. It thus includes off- site Placements and Collaborative Projects with Business (CPBs) i.e. a piece of work undertaken by University of Stirling students e.g. a dissertation or consultancy project, with a business organisation (public, private, third sector, etc.) that is assessed as part of the degree programme. It should be noted that placements are currently guided by WBLP which this policy complements.

This policy is based upon “Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork” published by UCEA/USHA which is available at https://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm/guidance-on-health-and-safety-in-fieldwork Relevant departments should ensure they adopt at least the minimum standards outlined in this document but will also need to take account of further advice in the USHA/UCEA Higher Education Sector Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and Travel 2018, in line with BS 8848:2007 and from any other competent professional body when detailing their own specific requirements

1.2 Approval

An outline of the proposed activity should ideally be agreed with the individual’s supervisor at least three months before the intended date of travel. It is recognised, however, that this timeframe is not always available however every effort should be made to provide a proposal at the earliest opportunity. Approval should be attained before travel is booked.

Consideration should be given as to whether a separate risk assessment is required e.g. low risk meetings, CBPs, placements or conferences in the UK may not require a separate risk assessment. It may be sufficient to detail the measures required to control the risks in the Faculty/ Directorate Policy or procedures.

Where separate risk assessments are required these must be provided along with the outline of the proposed activity to the individual’s supervisor. Details of supervisory arrangements, the reason for undertaking the off campus activity, a full itinerary, the emergency contacts on location and at home and confirmation that any required training has been completed must also be provided at this time.

In the case of ethically approved research that involves fieldwork, this should be done as part of the study design and ethical approval process.

It should also be confirmed with the Finance Department that the proposed activity is covered by our insurance and that all requirements have been met. Finance’s travel assessment must also be completed. In the case of research studies where University of Stirling is sponsor, this should be done as part of the initial grant submission approvals process.

When planning off campus activity or travel outside the UK the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> should be checked to identify if there is any advice or warnings in place for the relevant area(s). This should be checked regularly as the situation can change quickly. In particular the COVID 19 prevalence and requirements of the country of departure and destination are frequently changing which therefore necessitates regular monitoring.

For low-risk work in a reputable organisation and in a low risk region the head of division/ head of service department or appropriate faculty placement/CBPs may authorise the work / travel. If the area you are working in becomes an Amber zone while you are there, advice on actions required must be sought immediately from the relevant Executive Director/ Dean and Travel management Company.

For higher risk work and for travel to Foreign and Commonwealth Amber zones the Dean or Executive Director must approve the work/ travel. If the area you are working in becomes a Red zone while you are there advice on actions required must be sought immediately from the relevant Executive Director/ Dean and Travel management Company.

Please note that travel to FCO Red zones is not permitted.

**2.0 Duties and Responsibilities**

2.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) requires that the University should reduce the risk of injury during all its operations. The University must provide a safe place of work as far as is reasonably practicable and ensure that suitable and sufficient assessment of (a) the risks to the health and safety of employees and (b) the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employment.

2.2 It is the responsibility of the Deans and Directors to ensure that suitable management systems are in place for the safe conduct of the activity within each Faculty and Directorate and that these systems and procedures are complied with. Furthermore they are responsible for planning the activity at broader level. They must ensure:

That activity leaders and supervisors are authorised and competent and that there is clarity of roles and responsibilities.

That the risk assessment of the activity is made which details significant risks and control measures and that a safe system of work has been established for all staff, students and other participants. They must ensure that the activity meets the health and safety criteria and that any accidents that occur are reported. The complexity of the risk assessment should be proportionate to the perceived level of risk. A record of the risk assessments, emergency procedures and details of the travel must be retained and be easily retrievable by authorised persons at short notice.

Students undertaking CPBs based in an external organisation(s) will follow the procedures of that organisation, with the university having assessed and recorded the risk of that work prior to the start of the CPB.

2.3 The person delegated operational responsibility for all aspects of the activity, the activity leader/ supervisor is responsible for the planning the activity in detail. The activity leader/ supervisor has the task of overall supervision and must ensure that detailed knowledge and understanding of safety measures have been communicated to the other members of the leadership team including supervisor(s) and participants(students and/or staff participating in the activity) and are understood by all.

2.4 It is important that there is a clear command structure within the group and that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is in place. In addition that all safety precautions are observed for the duration of the off campus activity.

2.5 Supervisors and Managers are responsible for:

• Ensuring that risk assessments regarding all aspects of the activity, including e.g. travel, are suitable and sufficient, authorised and are communicated to all interested parties;

• Ensuring that those organising/undertaking the activity have received adequate training.

* Ensuring that there is adequate supervision (arrangements should be detailed).

2.6 Participants of the activity must heed, understand and observe any instruction given to them by the activity team.

2.7 Participants must acknowledge their own responsibilities for the health and safety of both themselves and others and bring any questions of issues, particularly those of understanding, to the attention of their supervisor or line manager.

2.8 Those undertaking solo travel or lone workers have a responsibility to take reasonable care in their activities. In practice they will assume many of the duties of the activity leader and therefore some of their responsibilities which should be agreed in advance with their line managers.

**3.0 Procedural Arrangements**

3.1 It is University policy that a risk assessment must be carried out before the activity is undertaken. Ideally this should be done by making a preliminary visit to the location to identify the hazards, assess the risk and determine appropriate safe systems of work. Where considerations of distance or other factors preclude a survey visit, the leader / supervisor must undertake a review of the risk assessment at the earliest opportunity on arrival and make and communicate any amendments or additional control measures to all relevant people before the activity commences.

3.2 The risk assessment will identify the degree and quantity of supervision, the nature of any personal protective equipment, the level of first aid provision and any training needs. For reference a ‘Off campus activity hazard checklist’ (not exhaustive) is provided in Appendix 1. Further advice on risk assessment and hazard control is given on the SESC webpage <https://www.stir.ac.uk/about/faculties-and-services/estates-and-campus-services/safety-environment-and-continuity/safety/>.

The risk assessment should be countersigned by the relevant supervisor/ line manager and reviewed and amended as required.

N.B. A post activity debrief should be held to review the risk assessment, procedures, any issues encountered etc. and to capture recommendations for improvements.

3.3 All participants undertaking the activity must be advised of the results of the risk assessment and of any consequent precautions.

3.4 Unless adequate provision is supplied by the host organisation, first aid provision must be provided through the field trip. The level of provision should reflect the degree of risk and the medical assistance available in the location e.g. low risk work close to medical facilities could rely on local services.

3.5 All accidents/incidents must be fully and promptly reported to your manager and on the Accident Management System which can be accessed through “Report an Accident/ incident” on the Portal. Serious incidents should be reported to the Safety, Environment, Security and Continuity department and your manager immediately.

3.6 Where necessary, leaders/ supervisors must ensure that relevant access permissions have been obtained from the landowner, or, as a minimum, from the agent or tenant if a landowner is not reasonably available.

Planning and risk assessment needs to ensure that:

* Expectations of what can be achieved are realistic, bearing in mind the experience and training of the participants and the nature of the environment.
* The foreseeable risks have been identified, and reasonable measures taken to manage them.
* All activity participants have a clear understanding of the nature, purpose and aim of the activity.
* A suitable number of supervisors are present as determined by the risk assessment.
* Supervisors are competent under the circumstances likely to be encountered.
* Effective means of communication are available.  This is especially important for lone working.
* A clear ‘chain of command’ has been established, with one person nominated as Activity Leader with deputising arrangements in place.
* Regular head counts or other checking in procedures are in place.
* All participants are adequately prepared (e.g. clothing, footwear, and training).
* Contingency and emergency plans are drawn up including emergency equipment, means of summoning help, first aid, liaison with emergency services, evacuation procedures. All participants should be informed of these plans. Details of how to access emergency funds should be given to the activity supervisor/ leader.
* Situations have been identified where changes should be made to itinerary or activity, and who has authority to make these changes.
* Situations have been identified when the activity should be cancelled or terminated, and who has authority to cancel or terminate the work.
* Checks on competence of service providers (e.g., transport company, activity provider) are adequate.
* Permission to work on land/site has been granted, where required

Further information and guidance is available from the following sources:-

BS 8848:2007 Specification for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions, and adventurous activities, outside the United Kingdom.

USHA, 2018: Higher Education Sector Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and Travel. Including all offsite visits and travel in the UK and overseas. University Safety and Health Association.

Suzy Lamplugh Trust - Travelling Safely in the UK and Abroad

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Detailed Trip Specific Advice Documentation from Travel Provider, via Finance Department.

**Appendix 1**

**Of Campus Activity Hazard Checklist**

Consider hazards associated with:

1. Travelling to the destination

2. Travelling around in the vicinity of activity location

3. The specific activity undertaken

4. The activity in that specific location e.g. sensitivities to the subject matter or activity, legal differences, cultural differences, ethical differences

5. Lone working

6. Fitness/abilities of participants

7. Threats to personal security from terrorism, crime, or aggression from members of the public

8. Equipment (manual handling, defects failures, safety critical equipment, transportation and legal requirements)

9. Unsafe accommodation (e.g. fire, carbon monoxide poisoning, electrical safety)

10. Hygiene of food and drink

11. Extremes of weather (hypothermia, sunstroke, dehydration, frost bite)

12. Location (e.g. sea or watercourses)

13. Prevalence of diseases, including COVID, etc. and distance to medical services

14. Communication issues

15. Inadequate/lack of/ loss of competent supervision

16. Lack of or unsuitable contingency plan

17. Health issues associated with the trip/activity e.g. long haul flights, driving, and mental health

18. Changes during off campus activity

19. Unanticipated issues

For further information relating to collaborative work with businesses or work-based learning please refer to The Work Based Learning Policy.

For specific business travel information please refer to the Business and Travel Policy.