



Policy & Guidance for the Safe Conduct of Fieldwork

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Policy & Guidance document

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Policy & Guidance for the Safe Conduct of Fieldwork

SECTION 1 POLICY

1 Introduction

This document implements revised guidance issued by the Universities and College Employers Association [UCEA] in 2011. The revised guidance aligns good practice in the Higher Education sector with the British Standard, BS 8848: Specification for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions, and adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom (BS 8848:2007+A1:2009). It outlines the procedures and arrangements that need to be in place within Schools and Departments to enable staff and student participants to undertake fieldwork safely.

Its aim is to encourage Schools and Departments to adopt a risk based approach to the management of health and safety risks arising out of field work and sets out reasonably practicable actions to: -

- Ensure the university fulfils its statutory and common law duties of care towards its staff and students, and
- Assist in making field work organisers and participants sufficiently informed to enable them to plan and participate in the fieldwork activities safely.

2 Definition & Scope

Fieldwork is defined as '*Any work carried out by staff or students for the purposes of teaching research or other activities whilst representing the University in locations or at premises not under the managerial control of the University.*' This definition will therefore include activities as diverse as attendance at conferences and recruitment fairs, undertaking social science interviews, as well as activities more traditionally associated with the term "fieldwork" such as survey/collection work carried out by geologists or biologists. In view of the wider definition of fieldwork, there will be many instances of fieldwork which can be demonstrably assessed as 'low risk' and can therefore be excluded from the majority of the requirements in this policy.

Note: Fieldwork activities should not be confused with Student Placements which are periods of work experience with an employer/organisation other than the University which is an integral requirement of the students University course.

3 Responsibilities

The **Head of School** is responsible for ensuring

- that there are adequate safety management arrangements in place for the health and safety of field workers.
- that there are procedures in place to review the safety of fieldwork activities
- that fieldwork/expedition leaders are authorised, adequately trained and competent to carry out their role.

The **fieldwork/expedition leader** [F/EL] is responsible for

- Carrying out a pre-trip risk assessment and putting together safe systems of work to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all the fieldwork

participants. In addition to the pre-trip assessment the leader must also ensure that dynamic risk assessments are undertaken where necessary.

- Ensuring that all safety precautions and control measures identified as required by the risk assessment are implemented and observed for the duration of the fieldwork.
- Allocating specific supervisory duties as appropriate to members of the leadership team and ensuring that delegated responsibilities are clearly understood.
- Ensuring that all participants are made aware of the safety measures and that these are fully understood.

Individual participants must

- understand and comply with any instructions or safety protocols given to them by the leader or member of the fieldwork team
- conduct their activities in a safe manner so as not to harm themselves or other participants and conform to the code of conduct detailed in student information packs.
- bring any questions or problems to the attention of their supervisor or fieldwork leader.
- disclose any health condition which may have a bearing on their own safety or that of others on the course.

Independent Fieldworkers or those travelling on University business

- Have responsibility for taking reasonable care in their activities. In practice they will assume many of the duties of the fieldwork leader and must ensure that their work has been agreed with their line manager /scientific supervisor

4 Authorisation and approval process.

Authorisation in principle for a fieldwork course /activity should be obtained at the initial planning stage from the Head of School. For activities other than those deemed low risk [see Table 1] permission should ideally be sought in the previous academic year. However, full authorisation should not be given until a full risk assessment has been undertaken and submitted for approval at the appropriate level. Most fieldwork courses/activities of a general nature will be subject to approval by the Head of School or a nominated person who is suitably experienced e.g. School Safety Officer.

Table 1 shows the risk assessment, approval, authorisation and notification requirements for the various categories of fieldwork based on preliminary assessment of risk.

For Category 3 high risk activities and/or trips to remote/high risk locations the risk assessment and associated information must be submitted to the Safety Office for review by the **Expedition Peer Review Panel [EPRP]**. See Table 1 for detail. The EPRP is comprised of University employees who have considerable experience of organising this type of field work. The role of the EPRP is to review the final risk assessment and emergency response plan and advise the relevant Head of School as to its adequacy or otherwise. In cases where the EPRP considers the residual risks are significant the Head of School must refer the expedition/fieldwork to the Registrar who will decide whether the University can accept the risk.

When planning a field trip or expedition which falls into the above category the following mandatory conditions must be fulfilled.

- The expedition leader(s) must have demonstrated that they have the necessary experience and competence to the satisfaction of the Head of School and School Safety Officer. Anyone not having led an expedition before must attend relevant expedition leadership training.
- In the case of expeditions to remote locations a minimum of two people must have attended wilderness medical training [see Appendix for providers]. At least one trained individual to accompany participants at all times. Should there be plans to split the expedition into more than two groups then more trained individuals will be required.
- In cases where the nature of the fieldwork is high risk, but the location is not remote the risk assessment must specifically address the nature of injuries that may be sustained, the proximity of adequate medical aid and immediate first aid requirements.
- Expedition leader(s) must make contact with Chubb Assistance and seek advice from both their medical [CEGA] and security advisers [red24], then formulate a risk assessment for the expedition to cover all hazards and hazardous activities that may be encountered. The following links provide direct access to:
[Chubb Assistance 'E'card](#)
[Chubb Assistance website](#)
- An Emergency Response Plan [ERP] must also be produced. The risk assessment and ERP must be sent for review by Chubb Assistance who will comment on its adequacy or otherwise. If it is deemed inadequate additional financial resources may be required to engage Chubb Assistance in the provision of a suitable assessment and plan. More information about Chubb Assistance contacts can be obtained from the Insurance Officer **pam.thompson@nottingham.ac.uk** Ext 15661
- Once the Risk Assessment and ERP have been written with input from Chubb Assistance they must be submitted to the Expeditions Peer Review Panel [EPRP], via the [Safety Office](#) (email) for review and approval or otherwise. Where the EPRP considers the risks have been adequately controlled they will advise the relevant Head of School accordingly.
- Where the EPRP considers the risks have not been adequately controlled they will advise the Expedition Leader [EL] who will be required to give further consideration to the design and/or necessity of these particular elements.
- In cases where the EPRP still have concerns that there is an unacceptable degree of residual risk these will be highlighted and brought to the attention of both the Head of School and expedition participants. In such cases the approval of the Registrar will be required for the expedition to proceed.

Appendix I contains a flow diagram which summarises the above process

Table 1

| | |
|--|---|
| <p align="center">Category 1 Negligible risk</p> <p>Routine travel by individuals or small groups to represent UoN on business or attendance at conferences in countries/regions that are not known to present risks to travellers [e.g. UK, EU, USA etc.]. Also includes architectural /museum visits. All associated activities are of a low risk nature, i.e work does not involve hazardous materials /operations and there are no high risk leisure activities.</p> | |
| <p>Planning, Risk Assessment and documentation requirements</p> | <p>Transport & accommodation to be made via Concur, individuals are aware of pre-travel requirements and personal safety information. Individuals to ensure that arrangements are in accordance with generic risk assessment [Appendix II], where they are not additional risk assessment would be required.</p> <p>Schools/departments to have procedures in place to ensure that suitable information and contact details are maintained for trip participants in order that they can be contacted in event of emergency.</p> |
| <p>Approval/Authorisation</p> | <p>Individuals booking via Concur have to confirm that their travel is approved by line manager.</p> <p>Group visits by students to be approved by SSO or other nominated person.</p> |
| <p>Notification requirements to Insurance Officer/Safety Office – prior to booking transport/accommodation</p> | <p>None required</p> |
| <p align="center">Category 2a Low to Medium risk</p> <p>Supervised visits of groups of staff/students within UK to gather data [including home visits], sampling activities, behavioural observation studies, laboratory work .</p> | |
| <p>Planning, Risk Assessment and documentation requirements</p> | <p>Risk assessment to be drawn up by Fieldwork Leader. If the fieldwork is undertaken regularly there is no requirement to do a risk assessment for each trip, though the existing assessment should be reviewed in the light of any additions or changes to the original activities.</p> |
| <p>Approval/Authorisation</p> | <p>RA to be approved by SSO . Such approval can be taken as authorisation if this is agreed by HoS.</p> |
| <p>Notification requirements to Insurance Officer/Safety Office – prior to booking transport/accommodation</p> | <p>None required unless there are activities that would take it outside of the scope of Insurance provisions. Where there is doubt the Insurance Officer must be consulted and therefore sufficient time must be allowed for this.</p> |

| Category 2b Medium Risk | |
|---|---|
| Supervised visits of groups of staff/students overseas to gather data [including home visits], sampling activities, behavioural observation studies, laboratory work. | |
| Planning, Risk Assessment and documentation requirements | Risk assessment to be drawn up by Fieldwork Leader. If the fieldwork is undertaken regularly there is no requirement to do a risk assessment for each trip, though the existing assessment should be reviewed in the light of any additions or changes to the original activities. |
| Approval/Authorisation | RA to be approved by SSO. Authorisation by HoS or nominated individual |
| Notification requirements to Insurance Officer/Safety Office – <u>prior to booking transport/accommodation</u> | For new fieldwork activities the Insurance Officer /Safety Office must be provided with relevant outline plan information [See 5.1] 2 months in advance of the proposed trip. This is to allow sufficient time to ensure that the relevant Insurance provisions are in place. For repeat activities 1 month is required |
| Category 3 High risk | |
| Field work/expeditions to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> remote areas that are either not easily accessed in an emergency situation and/or where the means of ordinary communication are non-existent or very restricted, and /or where the type of fieldwork involves higher risk activities, e.g. deep water-related work/diving, excavation, caving/pot-holing, climbing, abseiling, horse-riding, construction type activities. | |
| Planning, Risk Assessment and documentation requirements | Detailed risk assessment Emergency response and evacuation plan. |
| Approval/Authorisation | Subject to review/approval by EPRP. If at end of review process EPRP considers risks adequately controlled HoS may approve. If EPRP considers there are significant residual risks that cannot be addressed authorisation of Registrar required |
| Notification requirements to Insurance Officer/Safety Office – <u>prior to booking transport/accommodation</u> | Risk assessment must be submitted to the Safety office for posting on to the ERP Workspace for review and approval 6 months in advance of the proposed trip. |

| Category 4 Very High Risk | |
|---|--|
| Any visit by groups or individuals to countries/regions that FCO advises against all travel and all but essential travel or specific locations that the University has deemed High Risk. [See section 6] These areas are outside the scope of normal Insurance provisions. | |
| Planning, Risk Assessment and documentation requirements | Detailed risk assessment and Threat Analysis using information from Red 24/CEGA |
| Approval/Authorisation | RA must be approved by Safety Office and Insurance Officer. Authorisation of Registrar is required. |
| Notification requirements to Insurance Officer/Safety Office – <u>prior to booking transport/accommodation</u> | The detailed risk assessment and threat analysis must be submitted 2 months in advance of any travel /accommodation being booked. Where additional hazardous activities may be involved as detailed in Cat 3 above, 6 months notification & ERP review/approval will be required. |

5 A Risk Management Approach

Risk management principles should be used to identify control measures that are appropriate for managing risks associated with fieldwork. The result should be that the requirements for low risk placements are minimised with greater resource being directed at fieldwork that is of higher risk.

The process will involve the stages outlined below. It is also important that this is done in a timely manner in order to ensure that information is available to the Insurance Officer at an appropriate time in order to be able to ensure cover is in place. Recommended timescales are given in **Table 1**, failure to comply with these may result in a field trip not receiving final approval.

A risk assessment should be carried out if the nature of the work/visit and/or the nature of the location present specific hazards to individuals or groups. It is recognised that some travel scenarios are of such negligible risk that individual risk assessments are not appropriate. For the purpose of this policy these are referred to as Category 1 in Table 1. Schools/ departments should review their travel profile and where this clearly falls within Category 1 it will be sufficient to just ensure that the nature of travel is covered by the generic risk assessment [Appendix II].

Typical scenarios where an individual risk assessment is not essential include staff attending overseas meetings or conferences in low risk countries (e.g. Western Europe / USA etc).

5.1 Produce an outline plan

It is vital that all fieldwork is planned sufficiently in advance of the intended departure to allow the Head of School/nominated person to consider the proposal in suitable detail and approve it at an appropriate level. The effort and detail required will be commensurate with

risks. Given the broad definition of fieldwork, it is recognised that many fieldwork events are routine and/or low risk, and may necessitate very limited planning, relying in the main on generic risk assessments and procedures developed from within the School/Department or similar. However there will be variables that need to be considered each time a fieldwork event it to be repeated - for example:

- Competence of group
- Size of group
- Participants special needs
- Introduction of new activities or methods
- Changes to or at field site or accommodation

For new untried and untested fieldwork the destination and arrangement should be adequately assessed in advance of arranging the course/event. In order to do this the Fieldwork leader will need to be familiar with the location to be visited or have some suitable means of obtaining relevant information. This could be achieved by communicating with a suitably knowledgeable local contact at the location. Where there are significant residual risks a pre course visit should be undertaken prior to formal approval being sought. The following are the key things that must be considered at the outline planning stage:

Threat Analysis

A fundamental part of the initial assessment of the safety of any fieldwork activity – either in the UK or overseas – relates to consideration of security and political threat levels, significant natural hazards, and health risks. This should include both the field site/destination and travel considerations and be used to inform the risk assessment and influence the planning and authorisation process. In order to assess these threats the fieldwork leader or independent fieldworker must have access to adequate, up-to-date information. Threat levels are subject to change and therefore for areas of political unrest this information must be kept under review at all stages both prior to departure, and during the work.

Security & Political Threats

Consideration must be given to security and political threats at both the fieldwork location and en route. The definitive sources of advices are the [Foreign & Commonwealth Office](#) and the [Chubb Assistance web site](#).

Fieldwork organisers must be aware that the University Travel Insurance will only cover staff and student travel booked in accordance with the University Travel Policy and it does not cover travel against FCO advice.

Further information is contained in the [University's Travel Policy and Insurance](#) . It may be that insurance availability and cost is a major limiting factor when considering travel to unstable areas.

Specific threats of violence arising from the nature of the fieldwork e.g. social research on contentious topics and or with volatile individuals must also be considered and appropriate controls identified planning process.

Natural Hazards

Organisers should identify at the planning stage if the field work location is prone to natural hazards [e.g. earthquakes, volcanic activity, adverse weather events, dangerous flora & fauna etc.] and ensure that suitable arrangements should such an event occur.

Health threat analysis

Where the fieldwork is to be conducted overseas fieldwork organisers should check which vaccinations and protection against diseases are necessary for the locations to be visited. This must be done well in advance as some vaccinations must be delivered three weeks in advance and may require more than one dose. Appropriate information is available from:

- [Chubb Assistance](#)
- [MASTA Travel Health](#)

It should also be borne in mind that individuals with specific medical conditions may be at greater risk in certain locations. Therefore it is important to ensure this is identified at an early stage as under the Equality Act 2010 the University must ensure that fieldworkers with disabilities have equitable opportunities to attend fieldwork. Provided that health and safety standards will not be compromised reasonable adjustments must be made.

In exceptional circumstances relating to a participant with a disability or illness, the fieldwork organiser may consider that an individual may not be participate in specific activities in order to safeguard their health and safety and that of others. This decision should be taken with consultation and advice from the Medical Practitioner responsible for the health of the participant.

The security and health threat analyses should be used to inform the risk assessment and influence the planning and authorisation process. For that reason, it is important to ensure there is ongoing monitoring of high risk or unusual threat levels against the conditions that were in place at the time of approval. Where there is significant change in risk level, reaffirmation of approval should be sought.

5.2 Risk Assessment

Once the outline plan has been approved in principle, it will be necessary to consider whether a separate written risk assessment will be required. Activities requiring detailed written assessments are likely to include supervised off-site courses and research projects and any travel to, and work in **high risk countries** (threat of violence, health related, remote locations) and/or carrying out **work of a high risk nature** (e.g. lone working, construction work, work in labs or engineering workshops) particularly where safety standards equivalent to the UK may not be met.

Where staff/students are travelling within the UK or **to low risk countries** and undertaking **low risk activities**, such as attendance at conferences, the risks will be minimal and therefore an individual written risk assessment will be not be necessary providing travel and accommodation is booked through University approved suppliers, the trip falls within the generic risk assessment [Appendix II] and the traveller(s) have taken

account of the information contained in the **Safety Checklist for Travelling on University Business (Commercial Services Workspace)**

The risk assessment process should be closely integrated with the planning of the fieldwork. Documents should be produced which complement each other rather than duplicate information. Later sections of this document give advice on a number of specific risk areas that must be considered together within one single risk assessment document. For higher risk activities or locations, an emergency plan will also be an integral part of the risk assessment process. Where necessary, such a plan should include responses to illness, changes to leadership ratios, changes in activities, changes in political stability, events such as extreme weather, transport delays, theft or loss of money or vital equipment.

The fieldwork risk assessment must be undertaken by a competent individual, usually the person responsible for the fieldwork or the Fieldwork Leader. This person must have received appropriate training or have significant past experience and a proven track record of organizing successful fieldwork. It must not be delegated to administrative staff unless that person has detailed knowledge of the work and location and received training in carrying out this type of risk assessment.

All aspects of the work should be considered on a thorough and systematic basis. The final risk assessment document should aim to identify and record foreseeable hazards and significant risks associated with the planned activities. In order for the risk assessment to be 'suitable and sufficient', the written assessment should clearly identify what precautions need to be put in place to ensure the risks are acceptable, how and by whom the actions will be taken, and it should detail the timescale for outstanding actions to be completed. SECTION 2 of this document provides guidance on the various aspects that need to be considered and the kind of precautions that should be implemented. Appendix III & IV are risk assessment forms and checklists that will assist in this process.

Any significant residual risks apparent at the end of this process should be clearly identified in the paperwork so that the acceptability of an intrinsic or residual risk can be judged by the relevant person who will authorise the fieldwork. The authoriser must take into account the benefits of the fieldwork balanced against the costs in terms of both time and money required to address the residual risks.

Dynamic Assessment.

It is also likely that an element of dynamic risk assessment will be required to respond to changes in circumstances or new risks which may develop during the course of the field trip which were not foreseen at the outset, the aim being to identify and implement additional control measures to ensure an acceptable level of safety. However, dynamic risk assessment should not be a substitute for adequate emergency and contingency planning. If new categories of risk need to be assessed dynamically, these should be referred back via the approval process before the activity proceeds. The findings of dynamic risk assessments must also be communicated and understood throughout the fieldwork team and a method for achieving this should be established.

6 Insurance

The University has both Employers and Public Liability policies in place that will respond should the University receive a claim against them and where the University is found liable.

Organisers of field trips should check the insurances of any third party companies whose services they will engage. It is essential that companies providing specialist services produce their insurance.

The University has a travel insurance policy provided by Chubb Assistance. Details of the insurance can be accessed at:

<https://workspace.nottingham.ac.uk/display/TravelandExpenses/Travel+insurance>.

There is automatic cover for business travel booked via the Concur system with the exception of the following countries/regions, where there is no cover; Afghanistan, Iraq, North Korea, Somalia and Chechnya. Any travel to these countries/regions is classified as Category 4 and **if** travel is approved there will be a charge for the insurance.

If the country, is on the FCO lists of 'advice against all travel and essential travel only' then only the University can approve this travel. A detailed Risk Assessment and Itinerary must be provided to Commercial Services for approval from the Registrar. This must be signed off before any booking are made.

There are some restrictions on travel to Japan. Permission needs to be granted via the Insurance Officer and the Registrar depending on how close the person is travelling to the Earthquake area.

All travel of more than three months in duration needs to be notified to the Insurance Officer.

All travellers should carry the Chubb Assistance card. These are available via the School/Department administration.

Participants must not extend the duration of a field trip to accommodate additional holiday on unless they have their own insurance in place to do so.

The University will cover the duration of the field trip with up to 2 days extension maximum. If anyone wishes to travel separately at the start or the end of the field trip then they must arrange for their own insurance to cover whole duration of the travel.

If in doubt about the extent of insurance provision the Insurance Officer must be contacted for advice.

7 Monitoring & Review

A review must be undertaken after field course /expedition to consider

- Staff feedback about course viability
- Student feedback on quality of learning experience
- Conduct of students
- Health and safety incidents [these must be recorded on the University on line reporting system]
- Suitability of accommodation and transport arrangements.

The findings must be recorded and submitted to HoS and SSO and used to inform risk assessment for future fieldwork to that location.

SECTION 2 SUPPORTING GUIDANCE

1 Emergency Response Planning

An emergency response plan must be in place and form part of the risk assessment control strategy. The emergency plan must identify the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident or incident of ill health to a member of staff or a student. The degree of detail required in the plan must be commensurate to the risk. The plan should specifically address the following:

- The means of summoning assistance in emergency [i.e. communications]. If travelling to remote/hostile locations the means of communications must be established. This may require the use of a satellite phone or Spot messenger [See section 8] and use of personal locator beacons. However the latter should not be relied on as the sole means of communication as it will merely alert people to the fact there is an emergency and the location and does not facilitate two way communication.
- Access to medical assistance and first aid and means of repatriation. Bear in mind that the standards of medical treatment and health care in some countries will be poor so urgent repatriation may be necessary. The University has engaged the services of Chubb Assistance [to provide security, medical assistance and evacuation of casualties in event of emergency to its travelling population outside the UK. The organiser must ensure that Chubb Assistance contact details are readily available, and for high risk ventures the itinerary and ERP lodged with Chubb Assistance.
- Access to emergency funds for organisers. Regular travellers can obtain a UoN credit card but in certain circumstances cash may be the only option, in which case this must be planned for in advance.
- Identification of key contacts both at home and in the field. In the event of a serious accident or incident involving a student/staff member it is important that the plan has identified the appropriate people at the University who must be informed. As University Security Control is staffed 24hr this should be the primary contact in the first instance, though other School contacts should also be identified.

Security Control
University of Nottingham
University Park
Nottingham
NG7 2RD
Telephone Number [24hrs] +44 (0)115 9513013

- Security will initiate the emergency response and contact the relevant people identified in the Emergency Response Plan. A copy of the ERP must be provided to the Chief Security Officer, two weeks before the start of the expedition so that there is adequate time for clarifying any issues and briefing Security staff. A copy of the ERP will be held in the Security Control Room.
- Media management. All contact with the press should be handled by Communications and Marketing [Deputy Director Tim Utton 0115 846 8092]

2 Use of Third Party Providers

2.1 Transport arrangements

- **UK based fieldwork.** For large groups use coaches hired from University approved companies, or public transport. For smaller groups people carriers [< 9 people including driver] hired from University approved hire companies and driven by staff who are authorised car users are acceptable. The choice of vehicle must take account of the capacity to store luggage and equipment and the driver must take regular rest breaks as per University requirements in [Driving Safety on University Business](#).

If minibuses are to be used drivers must have University authorisation in accordance with the requirements in the [Code of Practice for Safe Use of Minibuses](#)

Overseas. Course leaders will need to ensure that transport arrangements with external providers are suitable and fit for purpose. Consideration must be given to the safety record of third party providers when considering transport for the trip. In developing countries public transport and hire vehicles may not conform to UK standards however course leaders must exercise due diligence in endeavouring to obtain information from providers about their safety record, and whether local safety standards are adhered to. Local 'in country' contacts may be able to assist in obtaining this information.

2.2 Accommodation

The type of accommodation that will be used for fieldwork activities will vary considerably from well known hotel chains in busy cities to hostels, bunk houses and camping in very remote areas. Many factors will need to be considered in determining the type of accommodation required. These include the requirements of the fieldwork, the needs of all the fieldworkers and the availability of accommodation in the location of the fieldwork.

Developing countries can have differing national standards and it may be necessary to assess accommodation, prior to the work as far as possible and comprehensively on arrival. The overall aim is to reduce intrinsic risks associated with the accommodation to an acceptable level.

It is not unknown for accommodation to contain deficiencies such as:

- inadequacies in fire escape routes including blocked fire exits; ineffective alarm systems; inadequate compartmentation of the building,
- unsuitable, or poorly installed or maintained, gas appliances such as water heaters that release flue gasses (containing carbon monoxide) into the accommodation,
- unsafe electrical installations or equipment.

To ensure that the standard of accommodation for field trips outside the United Kingdom meets an acceptable standard of safety it must, [wherever possible](#), be booked through a travel agency or tour operator affiliated to the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA), or to the Federation of Tour Operators (FTO). ABTA and FTO have developed

and actively promote health and safety, sustainability and accessibility standards through [codes of practice](#). This is considered to be the most practical means of gaining advance assurance on the standards in place.

Where the nature of the fieldtrip is such that no accommodation is available through the above route, for example remote locations, then the organiser/trip leader should endeavour as far as possible to assess the suitability of the accommodation before departure, for example through assurance sought from the accommodation provider that it complies with relevant legislation relating to fire precautions and safety or where feasible and indicated by the risk assessment a pre-visit should be undertaken to check out the accommodation. If this is not feasible then the trip leader should assess the adequacy of basic safety precautions on arrival and must be empowered to make alternative arrangements if necessary. If the accommodation is used on a recurrent basis (e.g. annual fieldtrip) then the trip leader should make a record of any problems noted to assist in determining its future suitability. Checks may include:

- Fire safety - As a minimum, familiarisation with accommodation emergency escape routes will be required.
- Personal security
- General safety of the structure and facilities – for example pool, lifts, balconies, electrics and gas safety
- Environment surrounding the accommodation

The FTO sells H&S guidance and some training videos. It is worth considering purchasing these resources to train the trip leader/organiser and to develop a check list (pre-trip questionnaire in non ABTA/FTO accommodation; post-arrival basic safety assessment for trip leader). The following questions should be asked of non ABTA/FTO accommodation:

- Does accommodation comply with country/state/ local fire laws?
- Does accommodation have an emergency evacuation plan posted in public areas?
- Do guest rooms have emergency plan / information posted/available (multi lingual)?
- Are there emergency exits on each floor?
- Is automatic fire detection in public areas & guest rooms?
- Are audible & or visual fire alarm fitted throughout the accommodation?
- Is Emergency lighting available throughout public areas including emergency stair wells?
- Are there rooms for people with mobility impairment?
- Are rooms suitably secure?

In situations where it has not been possible to verify the arrangements in place, or where standards fall short of expectations, but there is no alternative accommodation the provisions of a small safety pack containing the following items should be considered:

- Battery operated smoke detector which could be located outside the room above the door to give early warning of smoke when fire detection is not installed in the hotel (although we should insist on AFD being fitted as a minimum throughout the public areas including corridors).
- Wedge to secure room door preventing/delaying forced entry.
- Battery operated door alarm to give warning of forced entry similar to a personal attack alarm.
- Battery operated carbon monoxide alarm.
- Small first aid pack, plasters, antiseptic cream, etc.

The participants should also be informed in advance of the style of accommodation to be used to ensure that it meets their needs and that they are suitably prepared.

2.3 Other third party providers

Third party providers used or sourced by field work leaders must be checked to ensure they have an acceptable safety record, public liability insurance (or local equivalent) and competent staff. This is particularly important in relation to specialist providers, e.g. diving instructors. Obtain this information and agree the roles and responsibilities of the provider in writing and keep on file. If companies or individuals are used, regularly keep a note of positive and negative experiences to inform future planning.

3 Disability issues

Fieldworkers with disabilities must not be put at a disadvantage and therefore it may be necessary to make reasonable adjustments to enable participation by those with disabilities. However, if the adjustments required are such that they might be cost prohibitive and make the fieldwork non viable, thereby disadvantaging all participants, then they may not be made. Similarly, it may be justifiable to modify the activities of a disabled participant if their safety or the safety of others would be compromised.

The fieldwork leader must liaise with the Disability Support Officer for the School to obtain the necessary guidance, and offer participation advice and support to facilitate adjustments where this is reasonably practicable.

4 Conduct & Behaviour

Staff or students working offsite are considered to be representatives of the University for the duration of the trip, including during personal or down-time and during 'off-duty' periods. Their actions throughout this time will reflect not only their own personal values but also those of the University of Nottingham. Essentially they are ambassadors for the University of Nottingham. It is therefore extremely important that all participants [student/staff] are fully aware of the behaviour that is expected of them. The fieldwork leader and his/her appointed deputies are responsible for discipline during the offsite work. They should lead by example.

Appendix V contains the Code of Conduct which defines the expected standards of behaviour that all staff and students should conform to during any off-site trip. This should be issued to students in the information pack but must also be issued to staff participants.

The fieldwork leader should ensure participants are aware of this code of conduct and any specific standards of behaviour necessary in the course of the visit to comply with the code, for example, the rules of the host organisation where relevant or cultural expectations.

5 Information & Documentation requirements

Information from participants

The information outlined in the Personal Details Form [Appendix VI] must be obtained from both student participants. In the case of staff participants relevant information will be held by and be accessible from University systems, however dietary and medical information should be obtained and recorded where appropriate.

This should be obtained at an early stage in the process to allow further information to be obtained where necessary. The information contained in the form will be treated as confidential and held by the Fieldwork leader and if appropriate may be shared with the Disability Support Officer. A copy in sealed envelope will be retained by the School office for emergency purposes for the duration of the field course but destroyed thereafter.

In many cases the information provided will allow the fieldwork leader to be aware of issues should an emergency arise [e.g. allergy to anaesthesia or certain drugs] and further discussion will not be required. However certain issues raised on the form may require discussion with the participant in order to clarify whether a doctor's note is required to confirm fitness to participate for insurance purposes. Where necessary the fieldwork leader may refer the participant to the DSO for further discussion.

Confirmation of fitness to travel from a medical practitioner may be required where an existing medical condition that could affect the participant's safety is highlighted.

Participants should be asked to review the information provided just prior to departure and verify that personal details [names etc] are correctly spelt and the medical information and contact details are unchanged.

Independent travellers must ensure that they provide full details of their itinerary as well as other safety related documentation to their line manager.

Information to be given to participants

Detailed written information should be provided to all participants covering the following:

- Full itinerary
- Explanation of activities to be undertaken
- Gender mix of leadership team
- Costs associated with the fieldwork
- Actions for individuals arising out of the risk assessment
- Residual risk descriptions
- Details of training related to any activities to be undertaken on the fieldwork or required due to environmental or security considerations.
- Purchase of safety or specialist clothing and equipment
- Cultural issues/language training
- Relevant reading and website research in relation to the location and fieldwork activities to be undertaken
- Passports, visas and other essential travel documentation

- Preventative medical treatment against anticipated local hazards, especially any programme of vaccinations required either by the host country or by the health risk assessment
- Physical fitness appropriate to the demands of the fieldwork, and arrangements for declaring and assessing fitness
- In-country orientation training
- Down time and personal time arrangements
- Names and addresses of any third party providers
- Communication options for their next of kin
- Insurance cover
- Accommodation and catering arrangements
- Transport arrangements and any associated contingencies
- Code of conduct and the consequences of non compliance as detailed in Ordinance XXIV in the [University Code of Discipline For Students](#).
- Home/emergency contact in the School or Department
- Fieldwork review procedures.

Participants should be asked to confirm by signing that they have received and understood the information and will conform to any requirements identified therein.

6 Supervision

Supervision requirements will vary depending on the nature of the fieldwork and the experience of the participants. The following factors must be considered in deciding staff:student ratios.

- the nature of the fieldwork.
- the environment and conditions in which the fieldwork takes place.
- the experience of the members of staff in supervisory roles.
- the experience of the group.
- the gender mix of the group [if it is not possible to provide mixed gender staffing this must be clearly communicated to the participants in the information pack]
- the needs of individuals taking into account their age, level of maturity, and any individual special needs.
- the external requirements of, for example, regulatory authorities or bodies.
- the possibility of members of staff becoming unavailable due to illness, accident or having to deal with an unforeseen event.

Two levels of supervision can be identified and need to be considered:

Direct supervision is appropriate for high risk activities or for inexperienced participants where a member of staff is in charge of the participants and able to intervene in person immediately if necessary.

Indirect supervision where member of staff is managing the situation but would be unable to intervene immediately would be appropriate for lower risk activities such as individual research projects, group working, home visits, social activities [see personal time below]. Where indirect supervision is deemed appropriate a schedule of communication should be agreed between supervisors and participants. [See also section 6.2 below]

6.1 Arrangements for down time and personal time

Down time

A period of time, occurring before, within or after the overall duration of the fieldwork, which is outside the jurisdiction of the University. If down time activities involve participants in hazardous activities [e.g. diving, rafting] the leader must ensure that the necessary insurance cover is in place and that checks are carried out on the suitability and safety record of any third party providers.

Field trips should not be arranged with long periods of down time in the middle of two working sessions. Participants must not extend the trip to add additional holiday on unless they have their own insurance in place to do so.

The University will cover the duration of the field trip with up to 2 days extension maximum. If anyone wishes to travel separately at the start or the end of the field trip then they must arrange for their own insurance to cover whole duration of the travel.

Personal time

Time during the venture when programmed fieldwork activities are not being undertaken but participants remain under the supervision of the leadership team. Examples include sightseeing, social activities etc.

Where the opportunity for personal time is to be provided, the fieldwork leader must establish arrangements for its management, including the application of sanctions in the event that those provisions are not complied with.

Details of the management and sanctions shall be communicated to the participants.

Fieldwork leaders must:

- Advise participants in advance of any periods of down time and personal time that will occur during the field trip.
- Advise participants of the standards of behaviour expected during these periods.
- Make it clear that during periods of down time/personal time they are considered representatives of the University of Nottingham and therefore must behave in accordance with the code of conduct.
- Make clear what sanctions will be taken in the event of failure to follow the code. [See Ordinance XXIV in the [University Code of Discipline For Students](#).
- Advise participants of any additional insurance that they need to take to cover down time activities. As personal time is still under the supervision of the leadership team then the University insurance should cover this. However if any unusual high risk activities are planned these must be checked with the University's Insurance Officer.
- All the above should be given in writing and the participant should sign to confirm their understanding and agreement. In addition communicate details face to face prior to the fieldwork so that any questions can be addressed.

6.2 Lone working

Wherever possible, work should be organised so as to avoid lone working. However, it is recognised that in some situations it is not reasonably practicable to avoid lone working and in these circumstances the risk assessment should contain justification for why lone working was required and should also include specific procedures to reduce risks to an acceptable level.

Clear guidelines for the type of activity that the lone worker may carry out should be given. The risk assessment must take into account the environment, (e.g. home interviewing, data gathering in isolated locations). The University supervisor is ultimately responsible for the lone worker and should know the lone worker's location and itinerary. Effective communication with lone workers is crucial and where possible the use of mobile telephones or other means of mobile communication is advised. [See section 8] The frequency and nature of monitoring/reporting on lone workers depends on the nature of the work. This should be defined prior to commencement of the fieldwork. Consider precautions to protect lone workers such as security locks (e.g. on buildings/vehicles); anti-theft alarms/personal alarms; monitoring and reporting systems, e.g. personal radios, mobile phones; use of whistles.

Clear procedures must be in place on what action should be taken if contact is not successful, i.e. have a back-up plan in mind.

6.3 Use of leaders and staff from other institutions

Instructors, tutors and guides from other organisations may be used but if they act as supervisors the fieldwork leader must clarify their responsibilities in writing and ensure they are competent. The use of family members or friends in the fieldwork team should be avoided.

7 Training and Competence

Fieldwork leaders and independent fieldworkers should be trained in the content and application of this guidance and in how to carry out risk assessments and must have demonstrated that they have the necessary experience and competence to the satisfaction of the Head of School and School Safety Officer.

For high risk expeditions, anyone not having led an expedition before must attend relevant expedition leadership training, have participated in fieldwork and shadowed an experienced leader. In the case of expeditions to remote locations a minimum of two people must have attended wilderness medical training [see Appendix VII for training providers]. At least one trained individual should accompany participants at all times. Should there be plans to split the expedition into more than two groups then more trained individuals will be required. For lower risk field trips there will need to be an appropriate number of staff trained to a suitable standard in first aid.

In addition, for each field course the risk assessment process should be used to identify the training and induction requirements for both staff and students. This should be provided prior to departure wherever possible or during the field work if more appropriate.

The following is an indicative list of the type of training that may need to be considered for staff and/or students:

- Fieldwork planning
- Induction/orientation
- Risk assessment including dynamic assessment
- Assessing third party providers
- Fitness training
- Leadership
- Travel health
- Behaviour code
- Team awareness and dynamics
- Specific equipment as highlighted in the risk analysis and management system
- Languages
- Cultural awareness
- Hostile environments
- First-aid and preventative medical treatment
- Specific activity training e.g. diving, climbing, navigation
- Responding to an incident and emergency
- Survival, rescue techniques

Details of some external training providers are given in Appendix VII

8 Communication

The following communication frameworks need to be considered and established:

Pre-trip information. Effective face to face communication about the nature of the field work, type and quality of accommodation, eating arrangements, transport, and work hours, personal and down time can pre-empt mismatches in leader – participant expectation which can lead to disappointment and difficulties while on the field trip. All verbal information should be confirmed in writing.

Routine contact arrangements should be established between those in the field and the home contact in UK at a suitable frequency commensurate with level of risk. There should be clear procedures in place that the home contact will follow should a fieldworker fail to maintain communication.

Emergency Communication systems must be established and made known to all participants. One means of doing this is to provide staff and student participants with a small contact card detailing essential telephone numbers of the fieldwork supervisors and leaders.

Fieldwork leaders and supervisors and individual travellers should ensure they carry a contact card with the following information for Chubb Assistance and have the main numbers on their mobile phones.

24 hour assistance number is +

Helpline: +44 (0) 207 895 3364
Email: medicalassistance@chubb.com
www.chubbassistance.com
Your Policy Number: 64816893

Communication devices must also be available. Never rely on just one means of communication, always have a back up. Further information on communications devices is given in Appendix VIII

9 Food & Catering

The type of catering required for fieldwork will vary from full self catering by participants to fully catered by a third party. In all cases there is potential for participants to contract some form of illness, e.g. upset stomach/diarrhoea due to something they have consumed. In developing countries there is a greater risk of contracting more serious disease such as cholera, typhoid or Hepatitis A.

Risk assessment must specifically address this possibility and consider whether any or all of the following controls are required:

- Ensure any special dietary needs are available.
- Ensure a clean supply of potable water.
- Observing good food hygiene practices [e.g. hand washing before eating].
- Provision of alcohol hand gel or anti bacterial wipes for use in more remote location
- Ensure establishment demonstrates good food hygiene practices in terms of food preparation, temperature monitoring and storage of food.

10 Equipment & Clothing

Fieldworkers should be advised of the type of clothing and footwear needed for the field. If specific equipment is required for the fieldwork activity the organiser must ensure that this is provided by the University or by a suitable third party provider and must be fit for purpose. Training requirements for the safe use of the equipment must be identified and addressed.

Additional items of equipment, such as those detailed in 2.2 above should be provided if identified as necessary by the risk assessment.

11 First Aid Provision

Training: There must be an adequate number of fully qualified First Aiders available in the field. For fieldwork in isolated/remote areas all participants should have Elementary First Aid Training. In addition there will need to be at least two people who have attended wilderness medical training and at least one trained individual to accompany participants at all times. Should there be plans to split the expedition into more than two groups then more trained individuals will be required.

First Aid Equipment: The risk assessment must identify the contents and number of first aid kits required taking into account the following:

- The nature of the injuries/ill health that could be sustained e.g. use of equipment that could cause injury, terrain, poisonous flora & fauna, lack of potable water].
- The standard of local health care. For example in developing counties there may be no access to sterile needles and syringes, in which case these should be taken to be used in any primary health care setting.
- The proximity to adequate medical assistance.

References

- BS8848:2007 +A1:2009
- USHA guidance
- USHA website