Field Trip Procedure (effective 1 January 2025)

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In developing this procedure the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

1. PURPOSE:

1.1.   This Procedure outlines the safe planning, approval, management and administration of University of Canberra (University) field trips.

2. SCOPE:

2.1.   This Procedure applies to all staff, students and volunteers participating in University field trips.

2.2.   Work integrated learning (WIL) and study abroad is out of the scope of this Procedure. For more information, see the University's *Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Policy and Procedure* and *Global Learning Policy and Procedure*.

3. PROCEDURE:

Knowledge of safety and risk management

3.1.   Faculty Deans, Heads of School and Directors of Research Centres/Institutes will ensure that staff and students organising field trips have received training to help them:

3.1.1.   understand their legal obligations regarding student wellbeing and safety under Clause 2.3 of the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*

3.1.2.   understand their legal obligations regarding general work health and safety protocols for field trips and field trip participants

3.1.3.   assess likely risks using the *Field Trip Risk Assessment Checklist*

3.1.4.   develop Risk Management Strategies in line with *AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines*.

3.2.   Risks are managed under the *University of Canberra Risk Management Plan*.

Planning, requests and approvals

Travel requests

3.3.   Before departing, field trip leaders must submit a travel request form via the University's designated platform for field trip travel.

Record keeping

3.4.   Field trip leaders must provide the following details to the relevant faculty office:

3.4.1.   a list of all field trip participants

3.4.2.   phone numbers and email addresses for all field trip participants

3.4.3.   details and contact information for the next of kin of all field trip participants.

Solo work

3.5.   Field trip leaders must seek approval from the Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute for any proposed solo field trip work.

Risk management strategies

3.6.   Field trip leaders must conduct a risk assessment, prepare a Risk Management Strategy and submit it to the Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute for approval **at least 2 weeks** before the field trip. However, some approvals may require a shorter timeframe due to extenuating circumstances (for example, sampling rainwater).

3.7.   To determine the appropriate risk management strategies, the 'remoteness' of the field trip location must be considered. See 'Section 7 – Definitions' for the University's definition of 'remoteness', which can be balanced against the Australian Statistical Geography Standard's (ASGS) Remoteness Area (RA) boundary map. The definition and boundary map together should assist field trip leaders to critically analyse the potential risks of field trip locations as they relate to remoteness.

3.8.   Staff organising **overseas** field trips must refer to the *Global Learning Policy*.

3.9.   Risk Management Strategies for short field trips in the ACT urban area must include:

3.9.1.   an itinerary

3.9.2.   a risk assessment for the likelihood of accidents, injury, damage or other incidents and their possible consequences

3.9.3.   measures for controlling all identified risks.

3.10.   Risk Management Strategies for field trips in remote areas with a high risk rating will need to be more comprehensive and include:

3.10.1.   an itinerary

3.10.2.   a list of work to be done and its objectives

3.10.3.   a list of participants and their contact information

3.10.4.   a risk assessment for the likelihood of accidents, injury, damage or other incidents and their possible consequences

3.10.5.   measures for controlling all identified risks

3.10.6.   an Emergency Response and Communication Plan (see below).

3.11.   In developing the Risk Management Strategy, field trip staff must consider:

3.11.1.   transport arrangements

3.11.2.   legal and insurance requirements relating to vehicles used

3.11.3.   availability of maps, GPS devices, Personal Locator Beacon devices, and satellite phones

3.11.4.   relevant licences, permits and permissions to enter private property and Indigenous lands

3.11.5.   equipment

3.11.6.   first aid

3.11.7.   vaccinations

3.11.8.   catering

3.11.9.   accommodation

3.11.10.   clothing

3.11.11.   personal protective equipment (PPE) and appropriate clothing

3.11.12.   dangerous, hazardous, venomous or toxic environments, substances, animals or plants

3.11.13.   weather forecasts and conditions

3.11.14.   precautions to ensure the health and safety of participants engaging in medium- to high-risk activities

3.11.15.   whether any students or people that students will be interacting with are under the age of 18 or are vulnerable – if so, all relevant field trip participants must have a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card (or state/territory equivalent)

3.11.16.   whether any students are international students.

3.12.   Risk Management Strategies must include control measures for each identified risk. The following table (adapted from the *Model Code of Practice: How To Manage Work Health and Safety Risks*) outlines the hierarchy of control measures:

LEVEL OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTECTION	MEASURE	RELIABILITY OF CONTROL MEASURE
4 (Highest)	**ELIMINATE** risks	*4 (Most)*
3	**SUBSTITUTE** the hazard with a safer alternative	*3*
2	**ISOLATE** the hazard from people	*2*
2	Reduce the risk through **ENGINEERING CONTROLS**	*2*
2	Reduce the exposure to the hazard using **ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS**	*2*
1 (Lowest)	Use **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**	*1 (Least)*

Emergency response and communication plans

3.13.   For all field trips to high-risk remote areas, field trip leaders must prepare an Emergency Response and Communication Plan as part of their Risk Management Strategy that must include at a minimum:

3.13.1.   emergency response procedures for incidents that have a high likelihood of occurring

3.13.2.   emergency contact details for **a primary and secondary** staff member not attending the

field trip to act as contacts between the University and the field trip

3.13.3.   emergency contact details for all field trip participants (staff, students, volunteers)

3.13.4.   procedures for communication, including frequency of contact between home base, field teams, the field trip leader, and the University

3.13.5.   triggers for concern, such as a failure to meet a daily call-in requirement

3.13.6.   clear lines of responsibility when the group is divided into more than one team

3.13.7.   protocols for reporting overdue or missing participants and for raising the alarm in emergencies.

3.14.   Field trip leaders for **overseas** field trips must contact the University's overseas assistance provider for emergency assistance. Country contact numbers should be carried on all overseas field trips. Further information can be found on the University's Staff Portal.

Information from participants

3.14.   Staff, students and volunteers who have pre-existing medical conditions or disabilities must notify the field trip leader before the field trip and should register with InclusionUC to discuss a reasonable adjustment plan.

3.15.   For participants who are concerned that their health may impact their ability to participate in a field trip, the field trip leader must receive both of the following from the participant before allowing the participant to attend:

3.15.1.   a written clearance from an appropriately qualified health practitioner

3.15.2.   a plan for managing or treating the condition.

3.16.   Medical information must be provided to first aiders in preparation for the field trip and to emergency services personnel in the case of an accident, emergency or other similar incident.

Reasonable adjustments

3.17.   Refer to the *Inclusive Access to Education Policy* and its associated *Reasonable Adjustment Procedure* for more information on reasonable adjustments.

Information and instruction to participants

3.18.   Field trip leaders must provide all students, fellow staff and any volunteers participating in the field trip with written details early enough to enable them to be properly prepared.

3.19.   Information provided to participants depends on the nature of the field trip; however, the following must be considered in the written information:

3.19.1.   the nature of any hazards likely to be encountered

3.19.2.   a consent form for the student to sign consenting to information about any relevant health condition or disability to be shared with first responders

3.19.3.   details of any appropriate clothing, PPE and other materials needed

3.19.4.   whether any visitor inductions will be required, and the need to follow directives arising from such inductions

3.19.5.   whether any vaccinations are recommended

3.19.6.   expectations about appropriate behaviour, including advice about relevant University rules and policies

3.19.7.   a statement about the University's *Tobacco-Free University Policy*

3.19.8.   the decisions about the consumption of alcohol during and outside of field trip hours as

provided for in the *Field Trip Policy*

    3.19.9.   details of any catering arrangements and food hygiene.

3.20.   Field trip leaders must ensure that all field trip participants have been instructed in the use of any specialist equipment they will be required to use during the field trip.

Communication during field trips

3.21.   Daily communication is preferable during field trips.

3.22.   Where possible, contact must be made at agreed intervals with on-campus University staff with protocols if contact is not made.

3.23.   Field trip leaders in remote areas must consider whether satellite communications are required and be trained to use such devices. Back-up plans must be in place in case of satellite communication system failure.

3.24.   In some cases, it may be necessary to establish alternative communication arrangements with regular contact people, such as a local police station or national park ranger.

Overdue or failed check-in

3.25.   If the field trip leader is overdue in checking in with the University during the field trip, the nominated on-campus contact person must enact the protocols in the Risk Management Strategy (and/or the Emergency Response and Communication Plan, for a high-risk field trip).

3.26.   The nominated on-campus contact person must make reasonable attempts to contact the field trip leader or participants before contacting emergency services.

First aid

3.25.   If identified through a risk assessment, **at least one** up-to-date first aid kit must be brought on a field trips.

3.26.   For remote area field trips, **at least one** participant must be qualified to administer first aid. Field trip leaders will consider the risk of each field trip location when determining the number of first aid officers required. The following table provides recommended ratios:

LOW-RISK LOCATIONS	HIGH-RISK LOCATIONS
- One first aider for 10–50 participants. - Two first aiders for 51–100 participants. - An additional first aider for every additional 50 participants over 100.	- One first aider for up to 25 participants. - Two first aiders for 26–50 participants. - An additional first aider for every additional 50 participants over 50.

Incidents and work health and safety reporting

3.27.   All incidents must be reported within the University incident management system - Safe Community – University of Canberra.

3.28.   All **notifiable incidents** must be reported to WorkSafe ACT. Field trip leaders must immediately report a notifiable incident to the University's Health and Safety Officer, who will report the notifiable incident to WorkSafe Act. The Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute must be cc'd. Notifiable incidents include:

    3.28.1.   the death of a person

3.28.2.   a serious injury or illness of a person

3.28.3.   a dangerous incident

3.28.4.   a sexual assault incident, including a suspected incident.

3.29.   Field trip leaders must report the following to the Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute within 12 hours (or immediately, if they are a part of a notifiable incident as mentioned above):

3.29.1.   all incidents requiring first aid

3.29.2.   all near miss incidents

3.29.3.   all incidents resulting in the loss or damage to University property

3.29.4.   all incidents involving emergency response or police investigation.

3.30.   Faculty deans or heads of research centres must report all incidents involving students through the Incident reporting System as soon as possible. Such incidents will be addressed by the Director, Student Life.

3.31.   The Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute will investigate all incidents and review the field trip's Risk Management Strategy.

Vehicles

Ground vehicles

3.32.   Where possible, University vehicles or hire vehicles should be used for field trip activities.

3.33.   All vehicle drivers on field trips must be appropriately licensed.

3.34.   If a private vehicle is used, it must be registered and have comprehensive insurance that covers the use of the vehicle for business travel.

3.35.   Vehicles must be appropriate for the field trip location, and should be well maintained and suitably equipped.

3.36.   For field trips to remote locations, drivers must be trained in how to operate the vehicle in the expected field conditions, including basic vehicle maintenance and the use of recovery equipment, if supplied.

3.37.   The University recommends that drivers take rest breaks every 2 hours and refrain from driving more than 12 hours in any 24-hour period.

3.38.   Under the University's *Tobacco-Free University Policy*, smoking is prohibited in University vehicles.

3.39.   The University does not accept any liability associated with the use of the University's vehicles, a hire vehicle or a personal vehicle by a person under this Policy.

Aircraft and drones

3.40.   Field trip leaders must that ensure that:

3.40.1.   anyone operating aircraft for the field trip is competent and appropriately licenced

3.40.2.   all field trip activities involving aircraft and drones adhere to the regulatory framework of the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and any other jurisdiction in which the University conducts field trips.

Boats, other vessels and diving

3.41.   Field trip leaders must ensure that:

3.41.1. anyone operating boats and other vessels is competent and appropriately licensed

3.41.2. passengers on boats or other vessels receive and understand the safety instructions related to the specific model of boat/vessel

3.41.3. participants involved in diving receive and understand safety instructions about diving equipment and methods

3.41.4. a risk assessment is conducted for all boating and diving operations, and is submitted along with itineraries and planned courses.

3.41.5. all field trip activities on boats and other maritime vessels, as well as diving, must adhere to the regulatory framework of the [Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#) and any other jurisdiction in which the University conducts field trips.

3.42. The Insurance Office must be notified of the insurance requirements under the boat or vessel's charter agreement.

3.43. Evidence of a chartered boat or vessel's insurance must be supplied to the Insurance Office, including third-party liability insurance.

Animals

3.44. Field trip leaders must ensure that all participants working with animals:

3.44.1. are competent for the tasks involving specific animals

3.44.2. are appropriately licensed, if required

3.44.3. have relevant animal ethics committee approvals.

3.45. Field trip leaders must ensure that a risk assessment for working with specific animals is conducted and submitted.

Insurance

3.46. Staff, enrolled students, and volunteers participating in field trips officially organised and approved by the University are generally covered by the University's insurance.

3.47. Sub-contractors participating in field trips must have their own insurance cover.

3.48. Field trip leaders must notify the University's Insurance Office at least 14 working days before field trips involving travel in helicopters or chartered aircraft. This is to allow for any necessary additional insurance cover to be arranged.

3.49. All insurance or protection arrangements are subject to certain exclusions, terms, conditions and limitations.

3.50. A student's Personal Accident Insurance has limitations on claims relating to medical expenses.

3.51. No cover is provided where the expense can be claimed under Medicare or the participant's private health insurance fund.

3.52. University staff members undertaking employment duties are covered under Workers' Compensation.

3.53. For questions about insurance on field trips, please contact the University's Insurance Office.

Motor vehicle insurance

3.54. If private vehicles are used for field trips (University vehicles or hire vehicles are preferred), they must:

3.54.1. be registered and in a roadworthy condition

3.54.2. have comprehensive insurance that covers the use of the vehicle for business travel

3.54.3.   be driven by someone who is appropriately licensed.

3.55.   The University's Motor Vehicle Insurance does not cover damage to private vehicles used for field trip activities.

3.56.   The owner of the private vehicle is responsible for private vehicle insurance claims, including the payment of any excess.

3.57.   Any passenger personal injury claims should be lodged under the vehicle owner's compulsory third part (CTP) insurance.

Research ethics

3.58.   Research conducted during field trips must have the relevant ethics approvals in line with the University's research policies.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

WHO	RESPONSIBILITIES
Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute	• Facilitating risk management training for field trip leaders. • Approving proposed solo field trip work. • Approve Risk Management Strategies. • Forwarding details of notifiable incidents to the University's Health and Safety Officer. • Reporting all incidents involving students to the Dean of Students as soon as possible. • Investigating incidents and reviewing the field trip's Risk Management Strategy.

Field Trip Leader	- Submitting travel request forms. - Submitting to the faculty office the names, contact details, and next of kin names and contact details for all field trip participants. - Seeking approval from the Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute for any proposed solo field trip work. - Conducting a risk assessment, preparing a Risk Management Strategy and submitting it to the Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute for approval **at least two weeks** before the field trip. - Preparing an Emergency Response and Communication Plan as part of their Risk Management Strategy if the field trip is in a remote area. - For **overseas** field trips, contacting the University's overseas assistance provider for emergency assistance. - Organising reasonable adjustments to ensure students with disabilities can participate in field trips. - Organising alternative arrangements for a student to meet course requirements if they cannot participate in a field trip, despite reasonable adjustments. - Providing all field trip participants with written details about the field trip. - Ensuring all field trip participants have been instructed in the use of any specialist equipment they will be required to use during the field trip. - Determining the number of first aid officers required for a field trip. - Ensuring that enough participants have been trained to apply compression bandages for fields trips where there will be a risk of snake bites. - Reporting all notifiable incidents and other work health and safety incidents to the appropriate Faculty Dean, Head of School or Director of Research Centre/Institute. - Notifying the University's Insurance Office at least 7 working days before field trips involving travel in helicopters or chartered aircraft. - Overseeing the safe and legal practices of field trip operations involving cars, boats/vessels, diving, aircraft, drones and animals. - Supplying the Insurance Office with insurance documentation related to chartered aircraft, boats, and other vessels.
Field Trip Participants	- Reading and understanding all provided field trip information. - Providing relevant documentation in a timely manner. - Notifying the field trip leader of any pre-existing medical conditions. - Observing all work health and safety protocols in connection to the field trip. - Following all reasonable instructions from field trip leaders.
InclusionUC	Advising field trip leaders on reasonable adjustments for students.

5. GOVERNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION:

5.1.   The governing Policy for this Procedure is the *Field Trip Policy*.

5.2.   The following legislation is related to this Procedure:

5.2.1.   Airspace Act 2007 (Cth)

5.2.2.   [Child protection and working with children legislation for each jurisdiction](#)

5.2.3.   Civil Aviation Act (CAA) 1988 (Cth)

5.2.4.   Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

5.2.5.   Information Privacy Act 2016 (ACT)

5.2.6.   University of Canberra (Student Conduct) Rules 2023

5.2.7.   Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth).

6. SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Policies and procedures

6.1.   The following Policies and Procedures are related to this Procedure:

6.1.1.   Field Trip Policy

6.1.2.   Global Learning Policy

6.1.3.   Global Learning Procedure

6.1.4.   Inclusive Access to Education Policy

6.1.5.   Privacy Policy

6.1.6.   Reasonable Adjustment Procedure

6.1.7.   Tobacco-Free University Policy

6.1.8.   Travel Policy

6.1.9.   Travel Procedure

6.1.10.   Work Health and Safety Policy

6.1.11.   Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Policy

6.1.12.   Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Procedure.

University resources

6.2.   The following University resources are related to this Procedure:

6.2.1.   Field Trip Emergency Response and Communication Plan Template

6.2.2.   Field Trip Information Pack Template

6.2.3.   Field Trip Risk Assessment Checklist

6.2.4.   Field Trip Risk Management Strategy Template

6.2.5.   University of Canberra Risk Management Plan.

External resources

6.3.   The following external resources are related to this Procedure:

6.3.1.   AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management

6.3.2.   Model Code of Practice: How to Manage Work health and Safety Risks.

7. DEFINITIONS:

TERMS	DEFINITIONS
Emergency Response and Communication Plan	For field trips to remote locations, a summary of procedures for managing emergencies must be provided, together with emergency contact details, procedures for communicating including frequency of communication, and protocols for raising the alarm in an emergency.
Field Trip	All approved teaching and research activities conducted off-campus (in Australia or overseas) that would not normally require a risk assessment. Field trips can include field camps, day trips/excursions, and site visits. Field trips exclude work-integrated learning activities (internships and placements), lab work at other institutions, conferences, and other similar learning and research activities.
Field Trip Leader	For *undergraduate field trips* this is generally the unit convener, but in some cases this responsibility may be delegated to another staff member. For *research activities*, including field trips undertaken by honours students, the research supervisor is the field trip leader, or their approved delegate (such as another University staff member or a suitably experienced student appropriate to the field trip's risk level).
Participant	A staff member, student, volunteer, or contractor attending a field trip or engaging in field work.
Remote Area	A location on land or water that is separated from an urban centre by distance, terrain, access, time and/or communication networks. Emergency assistance would be delayed in reaching the field trip location. Note that distance is not the only criterion for remoteness – for example, a forested mountain next to a large population centre would also meet the definition of 'remote' because of the difficulty of access for emergency services.
Risk Management Strategy	Includes a summary of work to be done on the field trip relevant to the risk, an assessment and evaluation of risks and strategies for their management.
Volunteer	A person whose participation in the field trip is not related to their paid work or student/course requirements.