Fieldwork Safety Policy

Oct 2013

Reference	Title	Created	Owner	Review
HSO-SC Aug 13	Fieldwork Safety Policy	May 2013	Health, Safety and Wellbeing	

University of Sussex

Fieldwork Safety Policy

Contents

1. Introduction and Scope

2. Purpose

3. Definitions

4. Responsibilities

5. Details of procedure/operational details

6. Competence and Training

7. Reporting

8. Monitoring Audit & review

9. References/Related Documents

1. Introduction and Scope

There will be occasions when members of staff and students of the University may have to travel, either in this country or abroad in the course of University business or fieldwork activities. This may well take place in safe for travellers , but may well take place in countries (or parts of countries) where the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) may advise against travel. **However, no member of staff or student should be expected to travel to a country where there are legitimate concerns about personal health or safety.**

2. Purpose

This document sets out the University procedure **for Heads of Schools, academic supervisors, fieldwork leaders and managers who are responsible for the health and safety of staff, students and other participants in fieldwork. Fieldwork must be properly managed so that the University can demonstrate that it has done all that is reasonably practicable to minimise risks to health and safety; and to reduce the likelihood of any reasonably foreseeable accident during fieldwork.**

3. Definitions

Fieldwork Any work carried out by staff or students for the purposes of teaching, research or other activities while representing the University off-site.

This covers:

All Staff
All postgraduate and research students
All undergraduate students who participate in fieldwork trips organised by their school, as part of their course of study

Fieldwork includes;

visits to overseas universities and other academic institutions
attendance at conferences and recruitment fairs
Organised visits for groups of students e.g. geological/geographical features, museums, industrial plans etc.,
undertaking social science/psychology visits and interviews,
fieldwork such as survey/collection work carried out by geologists or biologists.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Legal Requirements

under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to protect the health, safety and welfare of its staff and students from reasonably foreseeable hazards.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 state that the University must ensure that a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment

Appoint a fieldwork leader who has the task of overall supervision;
Ensure that staff involved in fieldwork have the personal capability and competency to lead, especially under possibly adverse conditions, and that they have sufficient awareness of the obligations to those under their supervision;
Ensure that relevant

control measures and without endangering their own, or others, health, safety or welfare.

Students are expected to act in a responsible manner at all times during a fieldtrip, even when there is no scheduled activity. Students who do not follow the University (Appendix 4) may face disciplinary procedures.

5. Details of procedure/operational details

5.1 Risk Assessment

Risks from work, teaching or study undertaken away from the University need to be assessed and controlled to the same standard as work in the University. The key responsibility for this lies with the fieldwork leader or supervisor in charge of the trip. He or she is responsible for ensuring appropriate precautions are planned, put into place and followed. High risk activities or locations will require formal approval from the Head of School/Department before travel. There may also be a requirement for health clearance. See Health Declaration Form Appendix 5

Identify foreseeable significant risks
Be appropriate for the level of risk and the activity
Enable the assessor to identify and implement reasonably practicable control measures
Detail accident and emergency procedures
Reflect current knowledge of the activity
Reflect the suitability of the activity for students with disabilities or special educational needs
Remain valid for the period of the activity
Be fully explained to students participating in the activity
Be reviewed if there are any changes to either the activity or the age/experience/special needs of personnel involved.

Risk assessment and fieldwork practices for all student and staff activities should be agreed with either the Head of School/Department or the School Health and Safety Coordinator before execution of the fieldwork.

A copy of the risk assessment signed by either the Health, and Safety Coordinator (HSC) or the Head of School/Department will be retained as evidence that the

Please note that staff are not allowed to give any medication to students. Accordingly, individuals participating in fieldwork activities should take along their own painkillers, anti-diarrhoeal preparations, anti-histamines, etc.,

5.6 Injury and ill health in the field

Any incidence of injury or ill health in the field should receive prompt medical attention. In some environments trivial injuries can quickly escalate to serious medical conditions.
For travel outside the UK, information about local medical facilities should be sought before the fieldtrip begins and the appropriate insurance forms or certificates should be carried at all times.

5.7 Emergency Response Planning

Prior to any travel it is essential that an emergency plan is put in place, the level and depth of the emergency plan will relate directly to the level of risk associated with the fieldwork or trip.

One copy of the emergency plan should be lodged within the School and a copy of the plan should accompany the fieldwork leader or supervisor. Where relevant, the plan should cover the following:

- Travel Itinerary flight numbers, departure times, accommodation address, telephone number, schedule of any planned meetings, or events etc., with relevant contact details provided.
- Next of kin contact details
- Dealing with a medical emergency, consideration should be given to the remoteness of the destination, the fitness of participants, the access to hospital facilities and standards of health care available in the country.
- Financial Plan for emergencies
- Contingency planning for severe changes in weather conditions, natural disasters, civil unrest, etc.,
- Missing persons procedures.
- Reporting procedures for advising the University in the event of an accident or incident.
- Communication strategy, especially important for those going to remote locations.

5.7.1 First-aid

Where appropriate fieldwork groups should contain at least one member who is trained in first aid and holds a first aid certificate.

It is also advisable for all members of staff on fieldwork trips to be familiar with the principles of emergency first aid.

Adequate first aid supplies should be taken along on **all** trips and all activities that take place outside of the University.

5.7.2 Accident and emergency procedures

fieldworkers should be informed of the content of the plan and trained in its execution
fieldworkers should be warned not to put themselves at risk
leaders should ensure that the accident or incident does not escalate
remove rest of party from hazardous location and ensure they have adequate supervision
others should be warned of potential danger
the fieldwork leader should have the means to send for help and should not delay in contacting the emergency services or other sources of assistance
the fieldwork leader should k fo(v)10(e)-3(t)-3(h)-3(e)6(mTJETBT1 0 0 1 501.1 644.a-3(t)-3

It is the responsibility of the Fieldwork Leader to ensure that all participants attending any fieldwork activity have appropriate travel insurance.

Further information regarding University provisions for student travel insurance can be found in Appendix 6

5.9 Publicity or Contact with the Media

In the event of a major incident or serious injury which may generate media interest, Fieldwork Leaders or supervisors should refrain from giving interviews or making comments to the media.

Any such communication should be referred to the University Press and

behalf.

6. Competence and Training

The Head of School/Department is responsible for ensuring that the Fieldwork Leaders have sufficient information, instruction and training to be able to understand the importance of risk control measures. The level of information, instruction and training required will be identified by the risk assessment. Fieldwork Leaders should also have sufficient experience to ensure their own safety, and the safety of fieldworkers under their supervision.

Where appropriate Fieldwork Leaders should be trained in first aid and, depending on the activity, may need to be trained in survival skills and rescue techniques, e.g. for fieldwork conducted in potentially hostile environments, such as mountain work in winter, sub-aqua activities, etc.,

7. Monitoring, audit and review

An appropriate level of monitoring of health and safety arrangements must be an on-going process during fieldwork, and procedures must be adapted and documents, instructions etc., updated as necessary.

In accordance with requirements to manage and supervise health and safety, and to keep policies and risk assessments under review, it is good practice post-fieldwork to review the activity to capture any recommendations for improvement.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Office will also conduct independent audits, inspection and compliance checks throughout the year.

Reference/Related Documents

University of Sussex Risk Assessment Guidance

UCEA guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork
http://www.ucea.ac.uk/en/publications/index.cfm

Foreign & Commonwealth Office
http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/

The National Travel Health Network a3(af*EMC /P /MCID 8>BDC BT3(rk a3(af*ee2.38 6(tre[ )]TJET

Appendix 1

Guidance for Planning

Meetings and Conferences

Off-site meetings and conferences usually present no significant health and safety risks, but travelling abroad may present additional risks that need to be addressed. Each school/department should have a generic risk assessment for such activities. However, where the Foreign Commonwealth Office advises against travel, a specific risk assessment should be completed and signed off by the Head of School/Department. Risk assessments and travel itineraries should be retained by the Health and Safety Coordinator/School Admin Office

Please refer to Guidance notes for staff engaging in Overseas travel on International Office Business.

Key: 8(i) 3(n) 3(ns(l)5(a)14(a)-4n.cemg aT1 0 0 1 262.85 441.53 4.05[35.rg0 BT1 0 0 1 92.184 634

1. Emergency contact information anyone attending a meeting or conference must leave information with their school/department on, details of the activity, location, itinerary, return time, and contact details.
2. Means of transport Use of public transport should be encouraged, however where this is not possible and staff use their own cars or hire cars, travel times and rest breaks must be incorporated into the trip, reference should be made to the Driving at Work Policy and the associated guidance http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/healthandsafety/riskassessment/workrelateddriving
3. Lone Working consideration should be given to; personal safety, medical emergencies, time of travel, unsafe areas, walking to car parks/public transport.
4. Health advice if travelling abroad, advice on vaccinations and other travel health precautions must be sought http://www.nathnac.org/travel/index.htm
5. Security when abroad The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advice

Appendix 2

Guidance for Completing a Risk Assessment

The principles of risk assessment and duties imposed on responsible persons are detailed in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Regulation 3 requires responsible persons to make a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risks to health, safety or welfare of persons not in the employment of the organisation, but who may be affected by its undertaking.

Principles of Risk Assessment

Identify hazards
Determine who may be affected by hazards
Formulate control measures to eliminate hazards or reduce risk as far as is reasonably practicable
Record assessment
Review assessment at regular intervals and also if there are any changes in activity (personnel, equipment etc.), or as the result of an unplanned incident/accident.

To ensure risks are minimised and control measures used you must

Ensure students have sufficient instruction, supervision and training to be able to perform tasks safely.
Make the content and findings of the risk assessment known to students before starting the activity.

The magnitude of the risk and the nature of the activity will determine the appropriate staff/student ratio. The nominal ratio is 1:10. Students should not work unattended or unsupervised.

Examples of physical hazards

Climatic, amount of daylight, temperature, broken glass, metal fragments, needles, traffic, mud/sinking sand, high tide, swiftness of incoming tide, river depth/current, cliffs/depressions, steepness of slopes/banks, other users of site.

Examples of chemical/biological hazards

Oil, paint, pollution from industrial chemicals/sewage, excrement, discarded needles, allergenic substances, zoonoses (Hantavirus disease, Hydatid disease, Leptospirosis, Lyme disease, Orf).

Possible controls

Protective clothing, change of clothing, only students who can swim should be allowed near water, inspection/selection of site, clearing obvious hazards, life jackets, ropes, torch, accompanied by experienced person (increased duty of care required for persons under eighteen), information/instruction to students.

First Aid

Group should be accompanied by at least one first-aider, first-aid provision

Emergency procedures

Mobile phone and contact numbers, instructions on emergency procedures, importance of self-preservation (students should not put themselves at risk trying to help others), emergency equipment to be available.

Appendix 3

FIELDWORK RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

SECTION 1 FIELDWORK DETAILS	
Fieldwork	**Enter objective of fieldwork**
Duration	
Location	
Description of activities	
Course Organiser/Fieldwork Leader	
Course Supervisor	
Staff/Students involved	**Number of Staff/Postgraduates/Undergraduates**
Management/Supervision	**If lone working is** **fieldwork involves overnight accommodation away from home this must also be included** **see also Section 5**

SECTION 2 HAZARD IDENTIFICATION		
Potential Hazards?	**Who is at risk and how could they be injured?**	**What Control Measures are in place?**

g) Lone Working

S = Severity Rating

Major (3)	May cause death or major injury (Broken bones, loss of limb, off work for more than a month)
Serious (2)	May cause injuries or illness resulting in short-term disability
Slight (1)	All other injuries or illnesses

L = Likelihood of occurrence and is graded as follows:

High (3)	Where it is certain harm will occur
Medium (2)	Where harm will often occur
Low (1)	Where harm will seldom occur

Risk Rating = Severity of harm x likelihood of occurrence

Severity

3	6	9
2	4	6
1	2	3

Likelihood

GREEN Low Risk

AMBER Medium Risk

RED Low Risk

Appendix 4

Student Code of Conduct

It is expected that while working away from the University the following is taken into consideration:

The student is responsible for turning up to scheduled sessions and is expected to be fit for work, with appropriate clothing and the required equipment and materials

If unable to turn up for scheduled activities, or if travelling away from the fieldwork base, students must let the fieldwork supervisors know their location and their estimated return time

The student is solely responsible for the way they spend time out with scheduled sessions; if necessary this might involve independent work (e.g. writing notes or data analysis)

Appendix 5

Confidential

Fieldtrip Health Declaration Form

Please note the information provided in this form will dealt with in the strictest confidence.

If you wish, you can consult your GP or the University Occupational Health Department and ask them to advise us of any health problems you may have and how we may accommodate you on the fieldtrip.

Name
Address

Tel.
Email Address

Next of Kin
Relationship
Address (if different from above)

Tel. (If different from above)

Are you taking any medication? **Yes** **No**

If yes, please provide details.

Do you suffer from any of these illnesses? 23

Illness	**Yes**	**No**
Asthma		
Epilepsy		
Heart Condition		

Some of the activities encountered during fieldwork may be quite strenuous. Do you have any physical problems that may make it difficult for you to participate fully in the fieldwork activities?

Yes **No**

If yes, please give details.

Do you suffer from any allergies? **Yes** **No**

If yes, please give details.

Have you any special dietary requirements? **Yes** **No**

If yes, please give details.

Vaccine Checklist

Please tick against vaccinations you currently have.

Name of Vaccine	**Tick those relevant to you**

Appendix 6

Fieldwork Travel Insurance for University Students

All University of Sussex students travelling on a University organised and supervised field

The staff member leading the field trip must complete the Travel Insurance Field Trip Application Form which is available on the University web site at

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/finance/services/corporateaccounting/insurance

The completed form should be sent to the Insurance Department at Sussex House (ideally at the point expenditure on travel or accommodation is made, so as to benefit from full cancellation cover, but definitely before the trip commences), together with a list of all the students who will be part of the field trip, including the following information;

Full Name
Date of Birth
Student Registration Number

There is no requirement under the Insurance policy for staff or students to complete a health questionnaire, but no student or staff member should be travelling against medical advice or under a terminal diagnosis. Please contact the Insurance Officer if you have any query on this.

Insurance Officer Christina Dale
01273 873934
insurance@sussex.ac.uk

The Insurance Department will issue confirmation of cover by e mail to the lead staff member together with a pdf. attachment outlining the 24 hour emergency assistance cover available, including emergency contact numbers.