

## **FIELDWORK PROCEDURE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Procedure applies to all Schools and Departments, to work that takes place away from University campuses or premises (e.g. fieldwork, consultancy, work based placement learning, University vehicles).

This procedure is based on national UCEA guidance, *Higher Education Sector on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and Travel*.

Fieldwork is a broad term and can include a low risk social trip to another city, a trip to a country park to carry out ecological surveys or a higher risk expedition to collect geological samples in remote countryside. All carry some level of risk that needs to be assessed and managed. The effort needed to manage this risk depends on the amount of risk involved.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Deans of Schools and Heads of Departments**

Deans/Heads have overall responsibility for health and safety in their Schools/Departments and must ensure assessment of the risks to the health and safety of anyone who can be affected by the operations of the School/Department.

The Dean/Head has to ensure that risk assessments of all fieldwork carried out by the School/Department are made and ensure that safe procedures have been established for all staff and students involved.

The Dean/Head must ensure that all of those involved are adequately informed and trained. The distinction between information and training is significant and should not be underestimated (e.g. fieldwork involving mountain walking is potentially very dangerous for the untrained; no matter how well informed they may be).

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **Risk Assessment**

The object of the risk assessment process is to; identify all the foreseeable hazards associated with the work, assess the actual risk that these hazards present under the particular circumstances of that trip and then identify and put in place risk control or management measures.

In this context, a “suitable and sufficient” assessment will:

- identify foreseeable significant risks
- be appropriate for the level of risk
- enable the assessor to decide on action to be taken and priorities to be established
- be compatible with the activity
- remain valid for the period of the work and
- reflect current knowledge of the activity.

The risk assessment should be carried out using the UWS *Procedure for Carrying out a Risk Assessment*.

Following the risk assessment, it should be possible to identify areas of the work that present particular problems and act to remove risks or to reduce them to an acceptable level. The assessment of risk calls for a thorough and systematic consideration of all aspects of the work. Checklists to aid health and safety planning are given in Appendix A which provides a framework for a more practical approach.

Schools and Department may wish to develop specific Fieldwork Risk Assessment Forms for specific types of fieldwork, e.g. geological surveys or ecological sampling.

For visits to locations that are remote or outside of the UK, or involving small groups working on an irregular basis, there is clearly a need for more extensive planning and assessment (see Appendix A Checklist 2). The risk assessment procedures for fieldwork should therefore be geared to the level of risk and will run in parallel to the planning procedure. By recording such planning, evidence is available for the enforcing authorities that a serious and systematic attempt has been made to establish safe systems of work.

In performing risk assessment, there will be an identification of hazards specific to the work, as shown at Appendix A, Checklists 3 and 4, which will highlight the key elements for action. A number of unfortunate incidents in the recent past have, however, pinpointed the need for a general approach to safety based upon adequate management.

The person responsible for the trip can do much to control risk by ensuring that:

- a suitable number of supervisors is always present,
- supervisors are competent to manage any circumstances likely to be encountered and have adequate first aid training (or have first aiders available),
- all fieldworkers are adequately prepared, (clothing, footwear, training etc.),
- suitable lines of communication are available (both in terms of procedures and equipment),
- accidents are reported and investigated.

Fieldwork Leaders should compile details of the relevant emergency services. Contingency planning for reasonably foreseeable changes of arrangements (Plan B) and, particularly, emergencies must be made, taking into account the likely hazards of the environment and the type of work undertaken. Items such as those listed below should be considered:

- provision of adequate emergency equipment (e.g. first aid kits, bivouac tents)
- means of summoning aid
- evacuation procedures
- liaison with police and emergency services and
- correct treatment of casualties and equipment (e.g. chemical decontamination).

## **Insurance**

Most fieldwork will be covered by the University's insurance policies, however some higher risk or unusual activities may not be covered by the standard policies. Fieldwork Organisers should inform the Senior Insurance and Risk Officer ([Jacqueline.Thomson@uws.ac.uk](mailto:Jacqueline.Thomson@uws.ac.uk)) of any trips to confirm insurance (including liability cover is in place, or can be sourced.)

When carrying out fieldwork overseas the Overseas Travel Procedure must be followed.

## **Authorisation**

Once the planning and risk assessment procedure has been completed, the Dean/Head may authorise the commencement of the work. More detailed advice on the conduct of the fieldwork is given in Section 4, but all fieldwork should be supported by a base at the University which has knowledge of:

- all work involved on the trip
- itinerary and return times
- members of the party and their details
- how they may be contacted.

It is strongly recommended that all staff and students carry their University Identity Cards whenever on field work. This helps to identify you to others as having legitimate reasons to be where you are and doing what you are doing and may be useful in the event of an emergency.

## **Responsibility for Safety on Fieldwork**

Responsibility for the health and safety of participants in fieldwork lies, ultimately, with the Dean/Head. They must ensure that Fieldwork Leaders and supervisors are authorised and competent and:

- adequately trained in the work techniques involved
- possess any necessary skills such as first aid training
- capable and competent in leading a party in the field, and
- appreciate the hazards involved in the undertaking.

In the light of the results of the risk assessment, safe procedures should be devised, discussed and agreed with the Dean/Head or their representative.

## Communications

Schools/Departments must be kept aware of the activities of fieldwork groups; a plan of work which includes the full proposed itinerary and timetable should be deposited with the School/Department office and updated as necessary. Arrangements should also be in place for supplying relevant details of a fieldwork party and their itinerary to authorised enquirers when the School office is not open, e.g. at night, weekends or bank holidays if the trip is likely to extend outside of normal working hours (08.45 – 16.45).

This information should contain the names, addresses and next of kin details for all participants and should be updated, if necessary, immediately prior to the commencement of the fieldwork trip. This is the case for even low risk fieldwork trips as the information could be required in the event of an accident on the road.

The information left with the School should also be deposited at University Security on the appropriate campus. (reception for Lanarkshire, Dumfries and London campuses). It should be left in a sealed envelope with instructions on what to do if the group do not return at the time specified on the itinerary. If the group are delayed for any reason and are not able to return at the specified time then they should contact Security and inform them of a new predicted time for return or any other changes to the itinerary.

If the work is in a remote or hazardous environment, a detailed and accurate itinerary should also be deposited with a suitable person or organisation in the area where the work is being carried out, (emergency services such as the Police, Coast Guard or Mountain Rescue Team). Independent workers should do this and also maintain communication with the University on a planned and regular basis.

**It is imperative that, after depositing the itinerary any changes are immediately notified to all of those involved; University Security, Emergency Services, the Field Work Organiser or Dean of School / Head of department.** This is to avoid the situation of the party being stranded in one part of the country while searches are made in another.

Suitable response procedures should be decided upon in the event of contact times being missed and such procedures and arrangements must be in place and familiar to relevant participants before the fieldwork begins. For example, if a small group is lost in a remote area or in adverse weather conditions, it is essential that they are aware of the course of action likely to be taken by their base or University Security. Such knowledge will determine whether they stay put and wait to be found, or how long they will have to wait before a search begins.

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## **Appendix 1- Guidance for Assessment of Risk**

Supervision levels for fieldwork will vary. An inexperienced group of first year students will require a higher level than is appropriate for postgraduates or experienced staff and, while fieldwork cannot usually be as closely supervised as other activities, a responsibility lies with the leader to ensure that the level of supervision is adequate for a given situation. Three different levels of supervision can be recognised:

- Fully supervised courses
- Expeditions
- Lone working

### **Fully Supervised Courses**

These will normally be of short duration (a working day or less) and usually conducted in low hazard environments, including cultural visits and excursions; although visits to tidal zones, rugged terrains, industrial sites or urban localities for sample collection or observation can have their own particular associated risks which should be assessed beforehand.

For cultural trips, eg to a museum, the main concerns are ensuring safe transport to and from the venue, that all participants have information regarding the venue and the area around it (eg, maps), and a communication plan (eg, mobile numbers for all participants and instructions on what to do if lost or delayed). For trips with international students who may have difficulties in communicating if stressed by being separated from the party, it may be worthwhile emailing or texting details of the meeting point along with the Leaders' contact phone numbers to the student's mobile phones.

Consideration should be given to appropriate staff/student ratios, which may vary according to the activities being carried out and the nature of the site being visited.

The UCEA guidance recommends the following as a basic standard. The maximum number of inexperienced students involved in low risk activities (e.g. geological or botanical specimen collection, or surveying) in reasonably rugged countryside in summer should be 10 per experienced staff member. Each party should contain at least two such staff members and adequate deputising provision should be made for the leader and driver(s) in case of incapacity.

### **Expeditions**

Expeditions may be prolonged and work in environments which are remote and potentially hazardous. Participants will normally be experienced and/or will have received instruction in work techniques and safety procedures. The leader of such a trip must be adequately trained in appropriate skills which may include survival, communication and navigational techniques; he or she should be aware of local

hazards and conditions and be familiar with particular precautions to be taken where the terrain is particularly hazardous (e.g. glaciers or rock faces) or where dangerous animals, diseases or substances may be present. The Dean of School should be satisfied that the leader has the personal capability and competence to lead, especially under adverse conditions. The authority and responsibilities of the leader must be clearly defined and understood by all members of the party and serious consideration should be given to excluding people unable to accept such authority.

### **Lone Working**

Working alone by employees and students is to be discouraged as far as possible but it is recognised that in some situations it is not reasonably practicable to avoid it. Lone working should only be sanctioned after a thorough assessment of the risks has been carried out taking into account the nature of the work, the hostility and location of the site and the experience of the worker. There are specific situations in which lone working is highly inadvisable (e.g. work on or near to bodies of water). In many cases the lone worker will be a postgraduate or final-year undergraduate undertaking project work. The worker should be involved in the risk assessment process and must be made aware that he or she is still under the supervision of the Academic Supervisor back on campus, who must take immediate responsibility for their safety.

The worker must not leave campus without informing the Supervisor (or School) of his/her destination, nature of the work to be carried out on that trip and estimated time of return. He/she must then advise the School upon return. If the worker departs for the field directly from home, the supervisor or School must be given the relevant information by telephone and appropriate emergency plans should be in place should the lone worker fail to check in at an agreed time.

As well as the danger of personal injury, the possibility of exhaustion or hypothermia should be considered, although any such risk should have come to light during the risk assessment and would strongly recommend against lone working. Checks on lone workers must be made on a regular and planned basis. The frequency should be dependent on the nature of the activities and the perceived hazards. Checks might take the form of periodic visits by the supervisor or regular communication by telephone or radio (see Appendix B). If contact is made through intermediaries, Schools must ensure that these are reliable. It may be useful to arrange for messages to be relayed through 24/7 University Security.

### **Training**

Various skills may be required for field trips and it is important that personnel are adequately trained before or during the expedition; training requirements should be clearly specified in codes of practice (see Appendix A checklists). All staff engaged in trips to remote locations must be trained in first aid and, if the expedition is particularly remote or long term, there may be a case for training all group members in first aid, survival, and rescue techniques. At least one other member should be qualified to take over should the leader become incapacitated, and at least one reserve driver, (or pilot, boat handler etc.) should be included in the party. All participants in activities on water

should be able to swim at least 50 metres under the conditions expected on the trip and an appropriate level of physical fitness for the activities to be undertaken should be attained. The training of leaders is particularly important and, for some activities, formal qualifications may have to be sought in excess of those relating to the work process (eg, Summer or Winter Mountain Leader courses).

### **Work-based/Placement Learning**

Reference should also be made to the requirements of the Work Based Learning Procedure if appropriate

### **Expeditions on Foot**

Itineraries must be planned carefully with adequate time allowed to accomplish objectives. Leaders must exercise considerable vigilance, particularly if the terrain is hostile or participants inexperienced. Great care must be taken when crossing dangerous terrain (e.g. ski slopes, glaciers, crevasses, rivers, estuaries, mud flats). A watch for stragglers should be kept and an experienced walker should be at the rear. Loads must be tailored to physical ability and walking pace matched to the capabilities of the slowest walkers. Regular breaks should be taken. Walkers in remote areas should be alert to possible sudden weather changes and must be adequately equipped. If skis, snowshoes, crampons, climbing gear and other aids are necessary, participants must be adequately trained in their use. People walking roads at night should wear light or reflective clothing and a rear light should be carried.

### **Transport (Land, Water and Air)**

Control of transport hazards is an integral part of risk assessment and must include vehicle suitability, prevention of driver fatigue and provision of adequate rest periods. Vehicles, boats and aircraft play an essential part in many expeditions, particularly in remote areas, and it is essential that they are suitable for the required use and in a travel-worthy condition in compliance with relevant legislation. Adequate backup transport must be available and sufficient spare parts carried to meet foreseeable emergencies. Transport must be maintained in a safe state by competent persons. If you will be using either a School minibus or a hired self-drive minibus, you must follow the requirements set out in any guidance on the use of minibuses provided by the University's Senior Insurance Officer, Estates, and the Resilience and Safety team.

In general, lights, indicators, brakes, tyres etc. must be checked as appropriate. Drivers, pilots, etc must be in a fit physical state and possess appropriate valid licences. Additional training (such as for minibus driving or defensive driving) may be necessary. Adequate rest breaks must be taken during journeys. Transport must not be used in a reckless, careless or dangerous manner. Navigational rules and conventions must be observed and an adequate lookout must be maintained.

### **Equipment**

Legislation requires that equipment must be selected carefully to ensure that it is suitable for the intended use and conditions. All safety considerations must be taken into account and appropriate British, European and International standards should be complied with. If equipment is hired, confirmation must be sought that it meets

appropriate standards and has been properly maintained. Equipment must be checked and tested before use and at appropriate predetermined intervals during use. Schemes of examination must be drawn up and inspections by competent persons must be carried out where necessary.

Equipment must be maintained in a safe state by competent persons and damaged equipment suitably repaired or taken out of service. Items essential for survival should be duplicated where practicable. Duplicate items should be transported separately. Equipment must be operated safely by competent trained persons. Current legal requirements on use and maintenance of electrical equipment must be followed. Reduced voltage (110 volts or less) should be used out of doors, with earth leakage/residual current protection where practicable. Waterproof/spark proof etc. equipment must be used as appropriate. Damage to cables and insulation must be avoided. Any damaged equipment must not be used until properly repaired by a competent person.

Firearms and explosives **must only be used by competent persons** and stored safely and securely. Licences must be obtained as appropriate.

### **Protective Clothing**

Adequate and appropriate protective clothing must be worn by all participants. It must be checked regularly, maintained in good condition and worn correctly as required by current legislation. Equipment complying with appropriate British, European and International standards should be used where practicable. The requirement for Personal Protective Equipment should be determined on the basis of the risk assessment and, where PPE is required, its use should be enforced by leaders.

The following types of clothing should be considered:

- safety helmets                      where there is a risk of falling objects
- eye/face protection              when using tools, chemicals, etc.
- ear defenders                        when in a noisy environment
- respiratory protection            where there may be exposure to dusts, toxic vapours, etc.
- warm/weatherproof clothing    for cold/wet conditions
- high visibility clothing            In remote areas, traffic etc.
- wet suits and life jackets        when on, in or near bodies of water
- aprons                                 where there is a risk of splashing of hazardous substances
- gloves                                 for handling sharp objects or chemicals or in cold conditions
- additional foot protection        where there is a particular risk to the feet

After use, protective clothing must be removed carefully and stored, repaired, decontaminated or disposed of safely as appropriate.

### **Dangerous Substances**

Suitable and sufficient assessments of risks from dangerous substances (explosives, chemicals, biological hazards, radioactive sources etc.) used or encountered on field trips must be made and adequate arrangements made for their control. Risks from



potentially dangerous substances which might be encountered as a result of the work undertaken or sites visited must also be assessed and controlled. For example, a trip to sample river sediments for heavy metals might also entail the risk of exposure to *Leptospirosis* (Weil's disease) or other potentially pathogenic micro-organisms in the river water.

Risk assessments must be carried out and effective systems of control adopted. Where practicable, hazards should be eliminated or reduced by substituting less harmful substances. Dangerous substances must be disposed of safely and in accordance with environmental legislation. University Health and Safety Procedures with respect to Risk Assessment, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres must be followed.

### **Excavations, Boreholes etc.**

Excavations must be carefully planned and made by competent persons. They must be protected against collapse and inspected regularly. Precautions must be taken to protect against toxic and flammable gases and oxygen depletion, also hazards from underground services and spoil heaps must be avoided. Sites must be adequately cordoned off and appropriate warning signs displayed. Visitors must be supplied with adequate safety information and protective clothing. Construction Regulations must be complied with where appropriate.

### **Manual and Mechanical Handling**

Loads carried must be matched to physical ability. Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid operations which pose a risk of injury, a risk assessment must be made and safe working procedures instituted in accordance with legislation and University Health and Safety Procedure. Operators of cranes, hoists etc. must be trained in correct lifting and slinging techniques. Lifting equipment must be suitable for use and inspected as necessary by competent persons. Safe working loads must not be exceeded.

### **Making Observations**

Before starting any fieldwork operations, the surroundings should be examined carefully and any hazards noted. Examples are given in Appendix A, Checklists 3 and 4. The possible effect of reasonably foreseeable climatic conditions must be considered and up to date weather forecasts obtained where practicable; local knowledge can be very useful.

Workstations should be suitable for persons using them and for work to be done. Arrangements should be made to protect against adverse weather (if reasonably practicable), to guard against slipping or falling and to allow swift evacuation in emergencies. A safe scheme of work (including emergency action) must be devised and communicated to all participants. Examples of precautions that could be necessary are given in Appendix A, Checklist 6. Participants must be warned not to become too engrossed in their tasks and to be alert to changing conditions. They must inform a responsible person of any situation which they consider to be a threat to health and safety or a shortcoming in health and safety arrangements.

**Security, the Human Hazard**

Theft, vandalism and violent crime can be a problem in both remote and urban areas. Hazards to workers, particularly people working alone and to those who may be especially vulnerable on account of their age, sex or physical condition, must be considered carefully and appropriate precautions taken. Local crime rates, social and political factors should be considered and police, social workers etc. consulted if necessary. Preventative measures could include the following:

- previsit appointments and checks
- making visits in pairs or with companion in earshot
- security locks on vehicles, buildings, stores etc.
- anti-theft devices and alarms
- personal alarms (preferably linked to a central control system)
- radios or mobile phones
- monitoring and reporting systems
- training in interpersonal communication skills
- regular, planned reporting back.
- contingency plans.

**Catering**

Although it may be difficult to maintain adequate food hygiene in the field, every effort should be made to do so as intestinal upsets can have a devastating effect on an expedition. Organisers should aim to provide a wholesome, balanced and varied diet. Special dietary needs must be taken into account. Local foods should be selected carefully and high risk foods avoided. Food should be stored so as to minimise risk of spoilage or contamination. Food should be prepared in as hygienic a manner as possible and, if practicable, expedition cooks should have a food hygiene qualification. People with skin, nose, throat or bowel infections should not prepare food. Preparation areas must be kept as clean as practicable. Prepared food should be kept clean and covered. It should be held at temperatures below 5°C above 70°C. An adequate supply of potable water must be obtained. If necessary, water should be sterilised by boiling, filtration or the use of tablets. Toilets must be maintained in as clean and hygienic condition as is practicable.

**Leisure Time**

In many respects, the potential for accidents to occur is greatest during student leisure time. Students may wander off without providing information about where they are going and may engage in dangerous recreational activities such as swimming alone or climbing cliffs.

**Code of Behaviour**

Participants in fieldwork, including both staff and students, must be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them. All members of a fieldtrip or expedition will

be regarded as representatives of the University by locals and other people encountered, and any unsociable or offensive behaviour will be interpreted accordingly. Students should be issued with a **written code of behaviour** before the fieldtrip begins, reminding them of their responsibilities to the University, staff and fellow students. This must be endorsed by the Dean of School. It should also be pointed out to students that fieldwork may be a vital component of an academic course and that unacceptable behaviour may mean offenders being excluded from future trips which could have a bearing on their final qualification.

Students are young adults and it is unreasonable to expect staff to be responsible for their behaviour 24 hours a day. Any warnings about behaviour and dangerous activities should be recorded (i.e. written warnings and witnessed verbal warnings).

### **Health Matters**

Organisers of fieldwork expeditions and outdoor activities must give careful consideration to the maintenance of the health of participants and, where necessary, the advice of Resilience and Safety should be sought. If a fieldtrip is for an extended period of time, there may be a case for asking participants to make a declaration that they are not knowingly suffering from a condition that could compromise their health and safety during particular activities, e.g. diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, vertigo etc (see Appendix C). Activities may be much more strenuous than the normal work of the participants and organisers should ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the people intending to take part are sufficiently fit. If necessary, they should be encouraged to improve their level of fitness (see also 3.6).

### **Disabled Persons**

Every effort should be made to ensure that disabled persons have access to fieldwork activities and are able to participate fully in them. This may include the provision of special safety arrangements and the use of specialised equipment. Training and instruction in the special needs of some participants may be necessary for expedition leaders and other participants. Advice can usually be obtained from Student Services and the University Occupational Therapist.

### **Exclusions on Health and Safety Grounds**

There may be some circumstances where, after consultation with Disability Advisors and the University Occupational Therapist, persons with certain disabilities or illnesses may have to be excluded from specific activities to safeguard their own health and safety or that of the other fieldtrip members. The decision to exclude anyone from fieldwork should not be taken lightly and certainly not before extensive consultation with relevant parties.

Where possible, reasonable adjustments to ensure equality of treatment should be considered. These could include use a different venue or additional Non-medical Personal Helper assistance.

### **Health Education**

Participants must receive adequate instruction from a competent person on the likely health hazards associated with the work, particular attention should be given to:

- physical hazards of the environment (hypothermia, frostbite, snow blindness, dehydration, altitude sickness, nitrogen narcosis, sunburn etc.)
- chemical hazards
- infection by pathogens (including leptospirosis)
- dangerous animals and plants
- avoidance of gastrointestinal disorders and food poisoning
- basic personal hygiene and care of the feet and
- safe use of insect repellents.

### **Immunisation**

Medical advice on the need for immunisation must be sought where necessary. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Red 24 (available through the Overseas Travel Policy) will give guidance on the requirements for various countries. Immunisation should also be given if the fieldwork could result in exposure to certain pathogenic organisms. Immunisation against tetanus is recommended for all fieldworkers, but is particularly important for those performing manual tasks in contact with soil or animals. A record of immunisations must be kept.

If a new worker is being asked to undertake a project that would require immunisation, then this immunisation would normally be carried out by the employee's General Practitioner or by a travel clinic, but individuals may make other arrangements, provided that the records are made available to the University (see also relevant University Policies regarding travel overseas).

### **Injury and Illness in the Field**

Prompt medical attention must be sought in the event of an illness. Under field conditions, relatively trivial injuries may become serious if not treated quickly and expedition leaders should be alert for signs of illness, injury or fatigue in the party. Always ensure that expeditions know where the nearest health care facilities are before starting out on the field trip and as a part of the expedition planning, there should be adequate medical insurance. For visits within the European Community, fieldworkers should carry a European Health Insurance Card, available from the Post Office. It is strongly recommended that for visits abroad, if there is any doubt about the standard of health care in the country or area concerned, the expedition should carry sufficient sterile packs to ensure that clean needles, sutures, etc. are always available. The University's Occupational Health may be able to supply such sterile packs.

### **Health Related Incidents**

If there is occasion, for whatever reason that an individual is taken to hospital for treatment related to the activity then a written report must be given to the University's Resilience and Safety Team which, as a minimum, should include the individual and supervisor's comments, so that appropriate follow-up procedures can be implemented.

### **Mental and Emotional Ill-Health**

It is advised that the organiser of the field trip ensures students are aware of the availability of Student Counselors through Student Services. The designated person can contact the University's Student Services for advice in assisting the individual through any immediate need for help.

### **First Aid Competence**

It is required that at least one member of staff attending any field trip other than the lowest risk ones (such as a visit to another city) should, as a minimum standard, hold a first aid at work certificate (i.e. three day training) and have authorisation from the University to administer first aid. Other supervisors should be trained in emergency first aid and all members briefed in specific procedures (cuts, bites, etc.). Provision of specialised training such as mountain first aid should be considered.

### **First Aid Kit**

A first aid kit must be taken on every field trip. The University's Resilience and Safety Team should be consulted on the composition of the kit which should be appropriate for the nature of the work and the expertise of the Leader. A field first aid kit should be available to all groups working away from the field base control point.

### **Accident and Emergency Procedures**

For each group, the Expedition Leader is to be responsible for organising emergency procedures and ensuring that all members of the group are aware of the arrangements. Fieldwork will often take place in remote areas and some of these areas may have been used by the armed services for training. It is self evident that, under these circumstances, fieldworkers should be instructed not to touch suspect objects. These are to be left in place, the place marked and the emergency services alerted. Similarly, scrap materials that have been dumped should be treated with caution as these may be contaminated with harmful substances, eg asbestos, chemicals, microorganisms, etc. Fieldworkers handling such scrap should receive medical attention if cut or scratched. Fieldworkers working in fresh water should be aware of the dangers of leptospirosis.

If an accident does occur then there should be a clear plan of action to deal with the situation and the following points should be borne in mind:

- ensure that one accident does not produce more; withdraw the remainder of the team to a safe place as conditions may be dangerous or may deteriorate
- attend to the injured person, keeping only the minimum number of persons to assist as necessary
- send for help, if the injuries are serious. Ensure that the emergency services are given the exact location such as the OS map reference)
- warn others of the dangers
- inform the University's Resilience and Safety department
- **do not discuss the situation** with anyone other than the emergency services and University officials.

### **Accident Reporting**

As stated above, it is important that all accidents are investigated and, as soon as conveniently practicable, a factual report, including any statements taken, should be sent to the Resilience and Safety Team. This procedure is important because serious accidents may have to be reported to the appropriate authorities.

All members of staff accompanying a fieldtrip must be aware of the emergency arrangements and the means of contacting the emergency services.

Expedition Leaders must be aware accident reports should be made through the on line Awaken system.

**Appendix 2- Checklists**

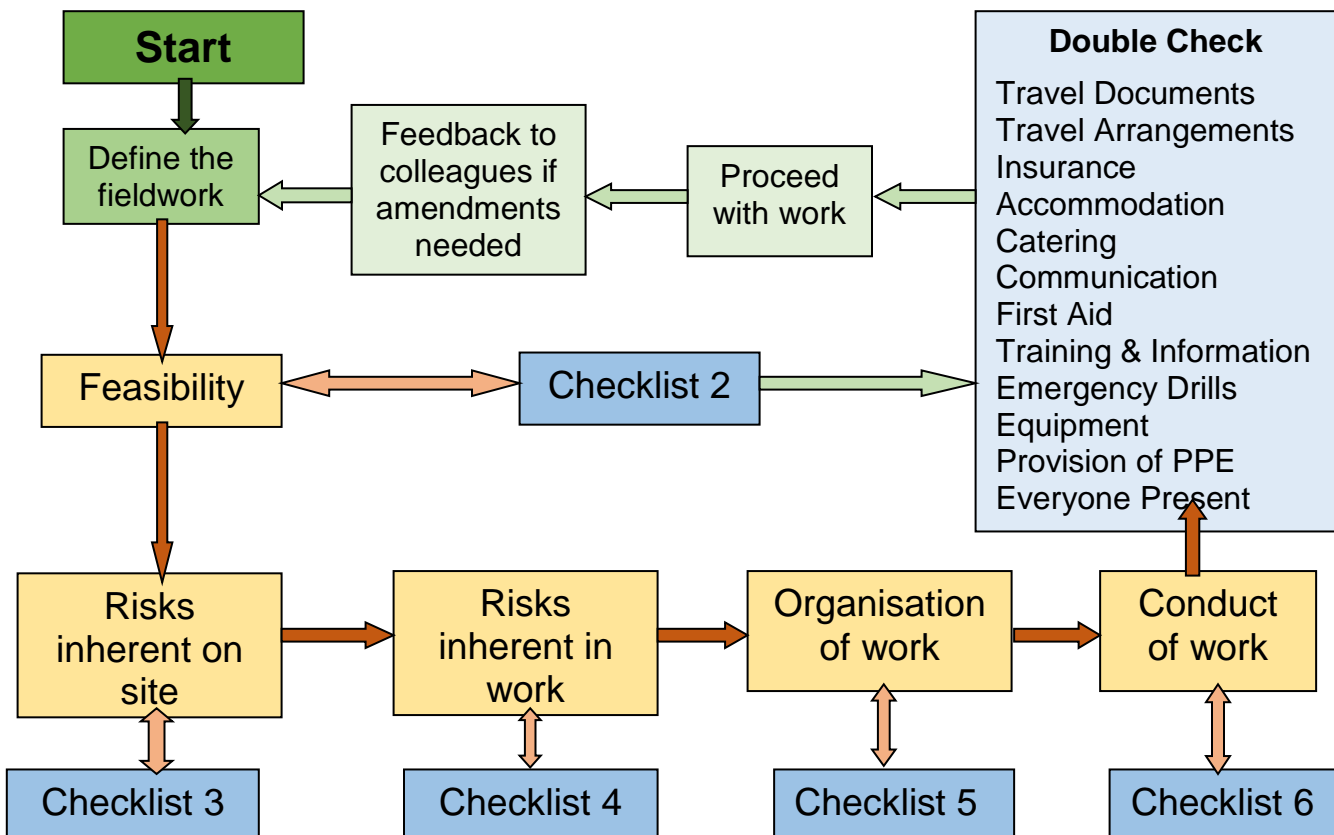
**Notes on the Checklists**

The checklists supplied are meant as an aid to planning rather than a comprehensive plan in themselves. Because of the diversity of fieldwork, the hazards and risks will show great variation and it is for those leading, or otherwise responsible for the fieldwork, to make appropriate plans and risk assessments. As with any form of risk assessment, there is a need for a careful and systematic approach and it is useful to talk through the assessment with a colleague who has some knowledge of the work to be undertaken and the conditions that are likely to be encountered. While there is no requirement to attempt to quantify the risk assessment, a semi-quantitative approach to the assessment does allow a more systematic approach to reducing risk scores.

The checklists can never be fully comprehensive, rather they offer guidance upon the approach to take. Checklist 1 below gives a general flow chart to take the assessor through the basic planning stages, while the subsequent lists are directed to more specific items of the work.

The lists overlap, and although this is an inevitable part of the planning process, it may be useful to incorporate the relevant components into discipline specific risk assessment forms.

**Checklist 1 – Flowchart for Planning**



## **Checklist 2 – Feasibility of project**

### **Access**

Travel arrangements  
Permission to work on site  
Provision for disabled  
Availability of assistance  
Accommodation (suitable and sufficient)  
Insurance

### **Fitness**

Pre- expedition training

### **Training**

Navigation  
First-aid  
Languages  
Interpersonal skills  
Hygiene/health education  
Specific skills - e.g. diving, chain-saw use  
First-aid  
Languages

### **Health**

Health Questionnaire  
Medical/dental check-up  
Vaccination (especially tetanus)  
First-aid kit(s)  
Sterile packs

### **Staffing**

Staff to student ratios  
Deputising arrangements  
Competence of all leaders



### **Checklist 3 – Risks inherent in the Site**

#### **Physical hazards**

- Extreme weather
- Mountains and cliffs
- Glaciers, crevasses, ice falls, etc.
- Caves, mines and quarries
- Forests (including fire hazards)
- Freshwater
- Sea and seashore (tides, currents, etc)
- Marshes and quicksand
- Roadside

#### **Biological hazards**

- Venomous, lively or aggressive animals
- Poisonous plants
- Pathogenic microorganisms (COSHH - tetanus, leptospirosis etc.)

#### **Chemical hazards**

- Agrochemicals and pesticides
- Dusts (COSHH assessment)
- Chemicals on site (COSHH)

#### **Man made hazards**

- Machinery and Vehicles
- Power lines and pipelines
- Electrical equipment
- Insecure buildings
- Slurry and silage pits
- Attack on the person or property
- Military activity

#### **Hazards to environment**

- Pollution and waste
- Disturbance of eco-systems

## **Checklist 4 – Risks Inherent in Work**

### **Training as required**

- Navigation, e.g. map and compass work
- Survival/rescue
- First aid
- Specialist training :
- Chainsaw use
- Boating
- Defensive driving
- Diving
- Electric fishing
- Firearms
- Ladders
- Scaffolding
- Tree climbing
- Use of machinery

### **Chemical hazards**

- COSHH assessments required for the work on site

### **Biological hazards**

- Animals
- Plants

### **Personal Safety**

- Risk of attack
- Routine communication
- Communication in emergency
- Secure accommodation

## **Checklist 5 – Organisation of the Fieldwork**

### **The Group**

- Leader (experience, qualifications, competence)
- Chain of command (Deputies etc.)
- Staff to student ratios
- Personal intragroup relationships
- Size of working groups (maximum, minimum)
- Responsibilities for aspects of work
- Safe and Secure accommodation (site specific)

### **The Individual**

- Lone working avoided
- Adequate clothing
- PPE provided
- Individual trained and fit

### **Equipment**

- Fit for purpose
- Used properly
- Well maintained
- Repairable on site

### **Pre-planning**

- Next of kin and G.P. noted
- Medical conditions noted
- Appropriate authorities informed (Police, Mountain Rescue, Coast Guard etc.)

### **Catering**

- Provision of food
- Hygiene
- Potable water
- Food preparation and storage areas
- Fuel for cooking

## **Checklist 6 – Conduct of fieldwork**

### **The Group**

Present and correct (roll calls)  
Correct equipment (PPE, First aid kit(s) and emergency equipment, etc.)  
Not overloaded  
Survival aids  
Appropriate group size and supervision

### **Local conditions**

Weather forecast allied to local knowledge / rules  
Farming practices  
Itinerary and return times  
Appropriate permission sought

### **Transport**

Appropriately licensed driver(s)  
Appropriate vehicles for terrain (including seat belts) and climate  
Correctly maintained and with appropriate spares and fuel supplies  
Water  
Correctly loaded  
Maps and navigational aids

### **Working practices**

Lone working avoided with, eg “Buddy” system or lookouts?  
Communication systems  
Climatic conditions  
Provision of shelter  
Safe working systems and use of safety lines, nets, harnesses, boats, etc.  
Permit to work (confined spaces etc.)  
Workers trained and fit  
Limitation of time spent working

### **Emergencies**

Chain of command and communications established  
Protection of remaining party  
Safe havens  
Secure accommodation (fire/flood risk assessments)  
Evacuation  
Recovery of casualties

### **Appendix 3- Methods of Communication**

An effective system of communication must be established between a party in the field and their base or monitoring organisations such as police, coast guard, or mountain rescue. Available methods vary greatly in cost, and not all Schools will have access to the more sophisticated items.

#### **Systems available include:**

**Mobile phones:** Small size and portable and give 2-way contact and independence from a base but reception is not available in many remote areas both in the UK and abroad. Moderately cheap initial cost but call charges may be quite expensive.

**Personal mobile radio:** Gives 2-way contact but is dependent on a base transmitter, has limited range, narrow range of available frequencies and may have interference problems. There is a high initial outlay but low subsequent running costs.

**Citizens' band radio:** 2-way contact and not dependent on a base but has limited range and unrestricted reception so lack of privacy may attract unwelcome response.

**Public telephone:** No capital outlay and low running costs but limited availability, especially in remote areas. Not always functional when needed and money/card needed for call.

**Satellite communications:** Has the potential for global cover but, at present, availability is limited and costs are very high.

**Whistle/torch:** 1-way contact (coded message). Very low cost and simple to operate but limited use in poor weather.

**Movement detectors:** 1-way contact (alarm signal). May be useful for internal workplaces but have limited usefulness for external environments.

**Flares:** 1-way contact (alarm signal), universal distress signal with low cost but limited usefulness in poor weather and by physical number of flares one can carry.

**Appendix 4- Instructions for Security**

The following information must be on the outside of the sealed envelope containing the details of participants on a field trip. This sheet may be copied, filled out and attached to the envelope.

Trip destination(s)	
Intended Route(s)	
Total Number of Participants (including staff)	
Name(s) of Leader(s)	
Mobile phone numbers to contact leaders in emergency	
Make and registration(s) of vehicles (if known)	
Date & time of departure	
Estimated time of return (& Date)	
Action to be taken if group does not return at time above (or does not contact Security to alter it), eg, Phone Destination(s) (give phone number(s))	
<b>Security phoned destinations and or Fieldwork Group at:</b>	
<b>Times:</b>	
Contacted Emergency Services at:	

**Appendix 5- Participant Declaration And Emergency Contact Details**

Those who organise field trips are responsible for the health and safety of the attendees. For appropriate risk assessments to be made and the resultant control measures to be implemented, can you please fill out and return it to the Fieldwork Organiser.

**You must inform the Fieldwork Leader if you have any medical condition or allergies that could affect your ability to fully and safely participate in this fieldwork trip.** This will be treated in confidence however may be used to inform the risk assessment and planning for the trip.

Name of Participant  
(print).....

.....

Address.....

.....

.....

School .....

Email..... Telephone.....

.....

Next of Kin/Emergency Contact:

Name.....

Next of Kin/Emergency Contact:

Address.....

.....

.....

Next of Kin/Emergency Contact:

Telephone.....

Participant's Signature .....