

University Occupational Health and Safety Standard



Travel and Work off University Campus - Staff and Students

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1. PURPOSE

As a leading international technological University, we contribute to the development of knowledge and research around the world and consequently our workplace extends overseas. The University has a duty to ensure that all trips are planned properly and take into account the appropriate health and safety measures as necessary in a proportionate way. Many work and study activities will be covered by very simple arrangements; however, where an activity or destination increases the risks, then greater consideration will need to be given to those risks, through a more in-depth assessment. The core principles in the University sector guidance entitled '[Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and Travel](#)' (USHA) and '[Health and Safety of Placements for Higher Education Students](#)' (USHA) are incorporated into this Local Rule which also addresses the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended) requirement for risk assessment.

2. KEY DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Work off the University campus** – any type of work, study or activity as part of the University's undertaking conducted away from the University's main estate areas which involves students and staff. Homeworking is covered under the guidelines produced by Human Resources.
- 2.2 **Work/Study Trip organiser/risk assessor/placement organiser** – This will, in all cases, be the staff member responsible for originating the activity or appointed to co-ordinate the trip and activities.
- 2.3 **Destinations with heightened risk** – Destinations that present greater risk due to circumstances, including political instability, threat of attack or kidnapping, extreme natural environments etc. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides travel advice and warnings in relation to particular destinations with heightened risk or are unsafe for travel. This information is further enhanced by access to the University's Insurer's RiskMonitor Traveller which combines real time alerts with country analysis and advice to assist in travel preparations, and whilst in the destination country.
- 2.4 **Work or research which increases risk** – work or study which entails practical elements such as fieldwork, work in laboratories, workshops or remote areas.

3. ASSESSING SIGNIFICANT RISK

3.1 Working off campus - within the UK

Many of the travel and work activities off campus in the UK will be low to medium risk and assessment of these will be achieved through use of a model university risk assessment for routine travel in the UK (Appendix 1) which is available on the e-risk assessment system <https://safetysystems.strath.ac.uk/> (ID:1219: TEMPLATE: Working off campus – within the UK) and only requires to be completed annually by the traveller. This acts as a filter to enable responsible persons to determine whether a more rigorous assessment is required in order to establish appropriate arrangements. In this way a proportionate approach is taken to such travel. In addition, staff will follow the advice laid out in their local departmental arrangements which will contain good practice for travel, arranging trips and general health information.

3.2 Travel Overseas and Student Placements

Where the activity is located overseas, participants will be required to register online (at least 5 working days before travel) with the Finance Directorate to obtain travel insurance using the Travel Insurance Notification Form on Pegasus. Separate arrangements have been developed for specific travel activities such as student placements, and the University's Recruitment and International Office student placement organisers oversee this arrangement.

3.3 Assessment for trips involving increased risks

When identified as being required, a full risk assessment should be completed following the University's arrangements on the general risk assessment form available on the e-risk

assessment system <https://safetysystems.strath.ac.uk/> . In many cases, the work activity may not be particularly hazardous and it is actually the destination that presents a heightened risk, therefore, consideration of local conditions is required. The content of the risk assessment will vary with the type of overseas activity planned and should therefore reflect the actual risks that the identified hazards pose in the particular circumstances. As an example, a comprehensive risk assessment would be expected for trips to developing countries where work involves research in the field. Where practical work is undertaken overseas, some assumptions may need to be made based on how the work would be undertaken in the UK. Consideration should be given to the following potential risks:

- Travel to/from the destination.
- Travel in the vicinity of the fieldwork location associated with the work activity.
- Threats to personal security from crime, terrorism, political unrest.
- Accommodation should be assessed as far as possible prior to travel and again upon arrival (in relation to fire, carbon monoxide poisoning, electrical safety).
- Extremes of weather (hypothermia, sunstroke, dehydration).
- Location (sea or watercourses, landslide, rough terrain, remote location, work in trenches, avalanche).
- Contact with hazardous flora and fauna.
- Locations with poor infrastructure such as roads, power supplies, lack of emergency service responders or medical facilities.
- Ill health (prevalence of disease, foodborne illness, distance from medical facilities).
- Lack of competent supervision.
- Lone working.
- Fitness or competence of participants on supervised courses.
- Inherently dangerous activities (climbing, diving, caving).
- Inability to communicate or summon assistance if in difficulty.
- Lack of awareness of local culture.
- Poor or inappropriate participant behaviour.
- Failure to develop suitable contingency plans.

The assessment should be based on all available information: previous knowledge, information from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), the [University's Insurer's RiskMonitor Traveller online platform](#), (Note: On the webpage please scroll to the Security Advice section near the bottom of the webpage) travel tips from the University's Insurer's website and contacts in the place being visited.

There may be some special circumstances that require authorisation either due to the nature of work or the country that is being visited. A decision will require to be taken at Director/Head of Department level whether such a trip is critical to the business of the University and a Senior Officer will require to give approval. This requirement is detailed in the University's Expenses Policy.

Accommodation whilst travelling on University business must be booked through the [University's travel booking provider](#). The use of "shared economy" accommodation such as Airbnb is not permitted.

3.4 Planning for Emergencies

Emergencies may arise from many kinds of situation, for example, social or political unrest, terrorism, or extremes of weather, remote environments, ill-health, injury or death of a staff/student member overseas. It is essential, as part of the risk assessment process, to plan for any foreseeable emergencies and include appropriate contingency plans. These plans must be discussed with staff/students before travelling and details on relevant emergency contact details provided, including the University's 24 hour contact number (0141 548 3333) and/or department contact numbers (plus out of hours contact numbers). For overseas activity, the University has access to the University's Insurer's service called [Global Response](#) (Note: On the webpage please scroll to the Security Advice section near the bottom of the webpage) and this is a 24 hour number which can provide advice on the most appropriate course of action in the event of an emergency (security and medical), directly to staff/students at any destination in the world.

It is reasonable to expect all staff, for their own health and safety, to provide information to their line manager/departmental office about working or travelling off campus. The University can only respond quickly to support individuals by knowing where they are and having up to date contact details.

4. TRAINING AND ADVICE

To support this management standard, the University has developed guidance to assist staff members in conducting risk assessments for Student Placements in UK & Overseas. In addition, a list of top tips when travelling abroad are listed in Appendix 2.

Practical training in risk assessment is available where an elevated level of risk exists, such as when fieldwork is planned. In addition to this, Safety, Health and Wellbeing organise training on first aid in the field. If a trip is particularly high risk due to a hostile environment, but considered essential, there may be a need to bring in outside experts to provide training and perhaps even accompany staff during such a trip: this should be discussed with Safety, Health and Wellbeing well in advance.

Through the University's Insurer, staff and students have access to [TravelPrepare](#), (Note: On the webpage please scroll to the Security Advice section near the bottom of the webpage) an e-learning facility containing several modules to raise awareness and assist in keeping travellers safe when travelling on University business.

5. DEPARTMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **Heads of Department** are responsible for ensuring that suitable departmental arrangements are in place for all travel, study and work off the University's main campus. Arrangements should ensure that the department maintains a suitable accessible record of staff and students working and studying off campus. Records should generally be readily accessible by senior departmental management and include an up to date trip itinerary so that information is available should an emergency arise. This will enable departmental staff to advise senior management of the University if they do not report at their destination, if an emergency occurs or if support for repatriation is required. The University has an Incident Management Team (IMT) which can be called into action by communicating issues to the University's 24 hour contact number (0141 548 3333).

5.2 **The work/study trip organiser/risk assessor/placement organiser** is responsible in all situations for ensuring arrangements for the activities which take place off campus are covered by the appropriate risk assessment. They are responsible for ensuring the practical arrangements, including those that address health and safety issues, are planned and implemented.

5.3 **Staff/ Students** are expected to act as ambassadors for the University of Strathclyde, to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner when carrying out University business and follow the arrangements as set out by the Department regarding health and safety.

6. HEALTH

The University has a duty to ensure 'so far as reasonably practicable' that when allocating work to staff and students they are fit for their duties. Travelling for work, especially overseas, may present different risks to health than the regular work environment. All individuals with health concerns who propose to work overseas should consult with their GP for appropriate advice. Generally, staff requiring vaccinations must attend their GP or local travel clinic at least 6 weeks before embarking on a trip.

The Occupational Health Service can assist staff who have concerns about their health and travel. Relevant emergency medical equipment and first aid kits can be obtained by contacting the Occupational Health Service. Students involved in overseas trips or requiring advice can consult

with their GP and the Health and Wellbeing Adviser within Disability and Wellbeing Services who will provide general advice on health.

Helpful advice on Travel Health, both before you go and whilst at your destination, can be found on the Occupational Health Service [Travel Health](#) webpages.

7. INSURANCE COVER

All trips for work or study associated with the undertaking of the University will be adequately covered by the University insurance. To register overseas trips, staff and students access an online register on the University Finance website and insurance information is provided on the website. If advice is required on this matter, the Finance Department will provide this.

8. FURTHER GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Foreign and Commonwealth Office www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office

Finance Directorate's Advice on Travel Insurance and Services from the University's Insurer www.strath.ac.uk/finance/accountingservices/only/travelinsurance/

University Safety and Health Association Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and Travel
https://www.usha.org.uk/images/stories/files/guidance-documents/MASTERUSHA_Safety-in-Fieldwork-Guide.pdf

The following summarises how departments can effectively implement this Local Rule and integrate it into its management systems. These processes will be monitored as part of Safety, Health and Wellbeing Audit Programme, and where departments are able to demonstrate fulfilment of key actions, this is likely to provide strong evidence of good practice.

		Key Management Actions
1.	Departmental Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heads of Department must ensure that department arrangements reflect these Local Rules, and all staff and student trips whether study or work activity are managed in a consistent way. • Staff will recognise their roles as will trip or placement organiser and fulfil their responsibility to assess the risk from such activity.
2.	Identifying Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff need to be fully aware of the requirements of the travel assurance statement (risk assessment) to ensure that they have considered the hazards and determine if a full risk assessment is required. • Staff need to be aware of the requirements with regard to student placement assurance (pre-departure checklist) to ensure that they have considered the hazards and determine if a full risk assessment is required.
3.	Evaluating Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All travel, work and study out with the campus must follow, as a minimum, the department safety arrangements as set out through these arrangements. • The risk is evaluated and it is expected where elevated risk is present that a full risk assessment is carried out.
4.	Implementing Risk Control Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is expected that the key person(s) responsible for the work or study activity will ensure all relevant control measures are in place.
5.	Recording the Significant Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In all cases of student exchange/placement overseas the S23 Form will be utilised and for UK work placement the templates provided within the guidance should be used. • Where a full risk assessment is required it is expected that the S20 Risk Assessment Form will be used to record the process and significant findings.
6.	Health Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is expected that all staff & students are aware of the available advice in the University from the Occupational Health, Disability and Wellbeing Service (Students) and are familiar with the content of their departmental arrangements. • All staff and students requiring vaccinations for overseas trips should be aware that they must attend their GP or Travel Clinic 6 weeks before travel.
7.	Providing Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all work/study/research out with the University, organiser will provide relevant detail, briefing and emergency contact details or risks assessment to all participants.

Appendix 1 - Risk Assessing Working off campus – within the UK

For off-site business meetings and conferences in the UK, the model risk assessment below details the typical risks encountered, the associated control measures and is available on the e-risk system as a model template (ID:1219: TEMPLATE: Working off campus – within the UK) and can be adapted accordingly. The expectation is that travellers will only need to complete this once per year unless there are additional risks that need to be assessed and recorded.

Hazard Category 1: Travel to/from Destination			
Ref	Identified Hazards	Person(s) at risk and type of potential harm	Health and Safety Measures provided by the University or to be actioned, as applicable, by the staff member or student involved in order to ensure the risks of harm remain low to medium
1.1	Emergency e.g. severe weather, terrorist incident, severe travel disruption, rail crash etc.	Staff/student-anxiety from having to find alternative accommodation or transport; personal injury from attack or explosion etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to travel, traveller to ensure contact details, including telephone numbers and next-of-kin, are up to date on Pegasus. • Prior to travel, agree frequency and expected check-in times when you will contact your line manager or other designated person e.g. daily basis. • Leave details of your trip with your line manager or other designated person and how they can get in contact with you when you are off campus. • Understand the government Run Hide Tell security information to keep yourself safe https://www.strath.ac.uk/safety/services/emergencyarrangements/ • Have the University's Travel Management Company contact number readily available in case travel arrangements have to be re-arranged. • In event of an emergency, keep your line manager or Head of Department advised of your safety and wellbeing. If they are not available, advise Security Control on 0141 548 3333.
1.2	Road travel (e.g. own car, hire car, host's car, taxi, minibus, coach etc.)	Staff/student – a range of potential traffic-related injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If using your own car, please implement the requirements in the University's Guidance: Driving at Work; • If travelling in a host's vehicle and you become concerned about their standard of driving, then you are advised to politely express these to your host and seek their co-operation in taking necessary precautions; • Book hire cars, minicabs, minibuses, etc. through reputable companies.
1.3	Air travel	Staff/student – a range of potential flying-related injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the University's recognised Travel Management Company, available from Procurement's webpages, to book travel. • For all air travel within the UK, travel insurance is automatic and requires no formal notification to the Finance Directorate.
1.4	Rail travel	Staff/student – a range of potential rail-crash related injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the University's recognised Travel Management Company, available from Procurement's webpages, to book travel.

Hazard Category 2: Weather Issues			
2.1	Extreme weather: High winds, heavy rainfall etc.	Staff/student – trauma, general disruption of public services and various threats to safety and life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of local weather and news reports before and during your trip. • Follow the advice of local authorities and emergency services. • Maintain periodic contact with your line manager to keep them advised of your safety and wellbeing.

Hazard Category 3: Personal Health Issues			
3.1	Pre-existing health issues	Staff/student - exacerbation of pre-existing issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry a sufficient supply of prescription medication for the duration of your trip, plus a couple of extra days in case of delays. • Ensure prescription medications are properly labelled • If you have any cause for concern about your fitness to undertake the trip, advice can be sought from Occupational Health Service or Student Health Service.

Hazard Category 4: Personal Safety & Security			
4.1	Crime e.g. pickpocketing, muggings, theft	Staff/student – a range of potential trauma effects and injuries, including anxiety, bruising, lacerations, fractures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay in well-populated areas and take advice from host about areas to avoid. • Avoid carrying or overtly displaying valuables. • Obtain a police report relating to theft of personal belongings.
4.2	Alcohol misuse	Staff/student – a range of potential injuries, including slip/trip/fall injuries, road traffic accident, loss of direction, loss of consciousness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use alcohol responsibly and adhere to government recommendations regarding number of units per day/week.
4.3	Terrorism	Staff/student – trauma, disruption of public services and various threats to safety and life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of local and national news reports. • Maintain periodic contact with your line manager to keep them advised of your safety and wellbeing. • Follow the advice of emergency services.
4.4	Fire or emergency	Staff/student – smoke inhalation or burns from fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow instructions from conference organiser or host as to the fire evacuation procedures for the building.

Hazard Category 5: Staying in Hotels			
5.1	Lack of adequate fire safety measures and procedures	Staff/Student - burns, slip/trip/ fall injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University Expenses Policy states that staff are expected to stay in a 'reasonable quality hotel', which it defines as being one equivalent to a 4 star UK hotel. Use the University's recognised Travel Management Company, available from Procurement's webpages, to book accommodation. You are advised to become familiar with normal exits, emergency exits, call points and fire-fighting equipment, near to your room and other hotel facilities you may use.
5.2	Faulty electrical appliances	Staff/Students– electric shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visually check electrical appliances before use; if you suspect any to be defective then do not use and request a replacement.
5.3	Lack of maintenance on gas appliances	Staff/Students – carbon monoxide poisoning which can eventually lead to death. Symptoms include, headaches, dizziness, nausea, confusion, shortness of breath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of any obvious exhaust flue pipes, either within your hotel room or in the immediate external vicinity. If you have concerns about their physical state or suspect a leak of flue gases or suffer from flu-like symptoms without these causing a high temperature (fever), then report these to the hotel manager and if necessary request a room in another part of the hotel.

Appendix 2 - Top Tips When Travelling Abroad

Medical

- Have you had all the necessary vaccinations? Check with your doctor or travel clinic to see if you need any vaccinations, anti-malarial treatment etc. Where countries require vaccinations, take proof that you have been inoculated.
- If you have to take any medication for any on-going medical condition are these drugs alright to take into the country being visited and do you need further paperwork? Ensure that you have an ample supply for the entire duration of your trip. This should be split up between your hand luggage and checked-in luggage in case one of your bags is lost.
- Be aware of what you are eating and drinking, avoid ice in your drinks.
- Plan to take steps to prevent Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), especially on long haul flights.
- Further information can be obtained on Occupational Health Service [Travel Health](#) webpages.

Paper work

- Has your trip been authorised by the appropriate level of management? Note: Trips to countries where the FCO advise not to travel, must be authorised by the University Secretary and Compliance Officer or Chief Financial Officer as per the University Expenses Policy.
- Has a risk assessment been carried out for your trip? If you are working at another University or organisation then your host should provide the necessary health and safety provision incorporating a safe working environment. This should be acknowledged before departure.
- Have you registered your trip with Finance Directorate via the Pegasus online form?
- Is your passport in date? Some countries require at least 6 months on your passport before it runs out. Please note, changes are likely when the UK leaves the EU. You can keep up to date on the changes via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/passport-rules-for-travel-to-europe-after-brexit>
- If necessary, do you have a VISA?
- If travelling in Europe do you have an EHIC card? Please note, changes are likely once the UK leaves the EU.
- Have your trip details and contact numbers been left with a nominated person within your department as well as a family member at home?
- Scan a copy of your passport and ticket details to an email account you can access abroad if it is lost or stolen. Remember to delete it when you return.

Practical

- Do you have suitable clothing for the country you are visiting?
- If you are planning on using debit/credit cards abroad, have you notified your bank?
- Before you travel, understand your destination's environment and culture then prepare accordingly. Ensure you regularly check the FCO website and other trusted sources e.g. University's Insurers [RiskMonitor Traveller](#) online platform and with your host University or workplace in the lead up to departure. This will ensure you have the most up to date information, particularly if there is potential for political unrest or natural disasters.
- Be aware of local customs and dress, behave accordingly and obey local laws.
- Be aware taking photographs/videos near military installation or other sensitive sites may be considered illegal.
- Learn to read a map and obtain a map covering the locations where you are staying, working or studying. Use this to familiarise yourself with your locations and routes to and from each as well as alternative routes. Have access to the map so you can easily find where you are or where you need to be.
- If you are taking a mobile phone adaptor check it will work.
- Do you know the location and telephone numbers of the nearest Embassy, High Commission or Consulate and hospital?

- Don't flaunt expensive jewellery, electronic devices or money as this could increase your risk of becoming a victim of crime.
- Don't walk like a victim, instead walk with confidence, look in control and be aware. Avoid walking alone at night.
- Airports, bus and train stations can be focal points for crime so be aware and minimise the amount of time you spend there.
- Be aware of pick pocketing so travel light.
- Be discreet and avoid providing personal information about you, the University or your travel plans including when you are on the phone.
- Further information on being travel aware can be obtained on the [TravelPrepare](#), e-learning facility provided via the University's Insurers.

Travel Items

Where necessary do you have:

- A first aid kit with you?
- A torch and batteries?
- A whistle?
- Spare glasses?
- A money belt?
- Water purifying tablets?
- A door wedge for hotels with no door lock?
- Insect repellent?
- For flights to the US – do you have an approved padlock for your suitcase e.g. meets Transportation Security Administration requirements and has a red Travel Sentry logo on the padlock.

Communications

- Do you have all the necessary contact phone numbers at home and your destination?
- Do you have emergency numbers (police, fire, ambulance) saved in your mobile phone?
- Have you agreed defined check-in times with colleagues or your department?

When at a Hotel

- Make yourself aware of your nearest fire exit and the fire alarm sound.
- Use the room safe to store your valuables.
- If your room doesn't have a secure door lock, use a door wedge to prevent unauthorised access.

Emergencies and Incidents

- Know your escape routes should there be an emergency at your accommodation, workplace or place of study. Familiarise yourself by doing a walk around of the exits.
- Should an incident occur, mobile phone signals can fail so prepare for this. Have a plan of where to meet colleagues/rest of your party if something should go wrong and you cannot contact each other. Consider designating a meeting point about 1.5 km away.
- Don't panic and follow the crowd, instead assess the situation before moving to a place of safety.
- View the [Run, Hide Tell video](#) for information on what to do if you are caught up in a firearms or weapons attack at home or abroad.
- Remember, security and medical advice can be obtained at any time from [Global Response](#) provided via the University's insurers.