



# GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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**1. RESOURCE DOCUMENTS****1.1 VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET**

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL OF .....

**VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET**Details of volunteer

Name: .....

Address: .....

Phone: .....

Emergency contact

Name: .....

Relationship: ..... Phone: .....

Address: .....

Details of activity

Date(s): .....

Location(s): .....

Monash student/staff member present (name): .....

Declaration: I have volunteered to accompany the Monash University student/staff member named above on the activity as specified. I have been informed of the risks involved in doing this work and have read the risk assessment. I have been informed of the risk controls that have been implemented and I agree that I will comply with the risk control measures to the best of my ability.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

The information on this form is collected for the primary purpose of enabling you to undertake the off-campus activity. If you choose not to complete all the questions on this form, it may not be possible for Monash to permit you to undertake the activity. Your personal information may be disclosed to a third party involved in the activity and in the event of an emergency. You have a right to access personal information that Monash holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact the Monash University Privacy Officer on 9905 6011.

**1.2 PRE-DEPARTURE NOTIFICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL OF .....

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**PRE-DEPARTURE NOTIFICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

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Please complete this form, ticking off completed items, and submit to: .....

**All details must be supplied with the completed checklist**

Date form completed: .....

**INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY:** .....

.....

**Destination(s):** ..... **Date(s):** .....

.....

**Participants of activity:** (If preferred, attach a list) **Number:** .....

*(Indicate whether the participant is a staff member, postgraduate, honours or undergraduate student, or volunteer)*

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Safety Officer:** .....

**First aiders attending activity:** **Number:** .....

*(Please indicate level of first aid training)*

.....

.....

.....

**Staff member(s) in charge:**

Name: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

Name: ..... Signature: ..... Date: .....

**1. Conferences**

- Itinerary attached
- Details of personal contact(s) attached
- Appropriate immunisation(s) obtained

**2. Work or study**

- Completed risk assessment of project to be undertaken, including details of risk controls, attached

**3. Group activities****3a Attached lists of:**

- Student names
- Student identification numbers
- Personal contact details

**3b Emergency procedures**

- Details of appropriate emergency procedures attached
- Provided participants with a list of general emergency procedures and contact numbers (attached)

**3c First aid**

- Arranged for sufficient, appropriate first aid kits to be prepared
- Checked that first aid kits are fully stocked

**3c Transport**

- Arranged appropriate transport
- Details of licensed and trained drivers for vehicles attached

**3d Supervision**

- Briefed all supervisors on their duties, responsibilities and obligations (Details of briefing and attendance records attached)

**3d Information**

- Provided all participants with information outlining safety issues (attached)
- Given safety briefing to all participants (attendance records attached)
- Received acknowledgment forms from student participants (attached)

**4. Field activities****4a Information**

- Developed and distributed 'Student guidelines for safety on undergraduate field activities '(attached)

**4b Access**

- Obtained permits and/or permission for access to the area of field activity

**4c Safety equipment:**

- Provided essential safety equipment (list attached)
- Essential safety equipment has undergone checking and maintenance and is in good working order
- Provided appropriate navigation aids

**4d Communication**

- Provided appropriate means of daily communication and ensured its effectiveness in the proposed area of the field activity
- Developed communication protocols (attached)
- Provided back up means of communication

1.3 INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF

.....

**INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY:** .....

**Destination:** ..... **Date(s):** .....

**Name:** ..... **ID no:** .....

**Address:** ..... **Phone no:** .....

**Name and phone number of person(s) to contact in case of illness or emergency:**

.....  
.....

**Medical concerns (optional) / Specific requests:**

.....  
.....

**Dietary requests (eg vegetarian etc):**

.....

I have read the information provided for this activity and agree to abide by the guidelines and procedures and the directions provided by supervisors during the activity.

I acknowledge that acceptable standards of behaviour will be expected during this activity. I understand that, in the event of serious misbehaviour during the activity, I will be informed and that I may be sent home and that any costs associated with this return will be my responsibility.

**Signature:** ..... **Date** .....

The information on this form is collected for the primary purpose of enabling you to undertake the off-campus activity. If you choose not to complete all the questions on this form, it may not be possible for Monash to permit you to undertake the activity. Your personal information may be disclosed to a third party involved in the activity and in the event of an emergency. You have a right to access personal information that Monash holds about you, subject to any exceptions in relevant legislation. If you wish to

seek access to your personal information or inquire about the handling of your personal information, please contact the Monash University Privacy Officer on 990 56011.

## 2. BACKGROUND

These guidelines have been developed to highlight the additional risks that may be encountered during international activities where the living environment, infrastructure, culture and political climate can differ considerably from that encountered in Australia. These differences may be particularly pronounced in emerging nations, but may also be apparent in developed nations. The guidelines also include considerations of the threat of terrorism and of emerging diseases that may pose a risk to international travellers.

These guidelines should be used in the risk assessment and planning stage of an international activity. Staff and students preparing for international work or study must find out the conditions likely to be encountered *en route* and at their destination and then take steps to minimise and control the likely risks. The main areas of risk that should be considered are discussed in these guidelines.

Any staff or students intending to undertake activities in international country, remote or wilderness areas or distant from medical help must also comply with the Monash University Guidelines for Field Activities in Country and Remote Areas.

## 3. HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

Use '**Scope of Guidelines**' (4) to determine whether the guidelines apply to any of the research and/or teaching activities that you undertake.

Use '**Definitions**' (5) to determine whether your international activity is:

- an international activity;
- an off-campus activity in an urban area;
- a country or remote field activity.

Obtain a copy of the appropriate guidelines from <http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/documents/Docum.htm>.

- 3.1 Familiarise yourself with your '**Responsibilities**' (7) to your staff and students, including those who have **disabilities** (8).
- 3.2 For international activities that involve **staff or honours or postgraduate students** work through Section 9 of the guidelines to comply with University requirements.
- 3.3 For international activities that involve **undergraduate students**, work through Section 10 of the guidelines to comply with University requirements.
- 3.4 '**Resource documents**' to assist you to fulfil your requirements have been provided at the beginning of the guidelines (1).
- 3.5 Reporting of accidents that occur during international activities is outlined in 11.
- 3.6 Details of insurance issues relating to international activities are outlined in 12.
- 3.7 Examples of measures to be used to control risks during international activities have been provided in '**Controlling risks during international activities**' (13).

## 4. SCOPE OF GUIDELINES

- 4.1 These guidelines apply to all activities that occur outside Australia involving staff and students from the campuses of Monash University in Australia.

- 4.2 Staff who elect to manage the risks associated with international activities in a different manner to that described in these guidelines must use practices that provide at least equivalent, or a better level of safety.
- 4.3 Staff and students may only participate in collaborative international activities if the activity is in compliance with Monash University occupational health and safety policies and procedures or if the health and safety policies and procedures of the organising body are of equivalent, or better, level of safety.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

### 5.1 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

International activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers from Australian campuses that take place abroad or incorporate travel to and from international locations.

### 5.2 OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES IN URBAN AREAS

Off-campus activities in urban areas comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus in urban areas or within 5 km of an urban areas in Australia.

For the purposes of these guidelines, urban areas are defined as populated areas such as cities, towns, suburbs, country towns or centres where medical assistance and communication is readily available.

Off-campus activities in urban areas include excursions, field excursions, study tours and site visits to places such as industry locations, hospitals and factories.

***NB Off-campus activities in urban areas do not include visits by staff members or students to another site for the purpose of lectures, seminars or meetings.***

### 5.3 COUNTRY AND REMOTE FIELD ACTIVITIES

Country and remote field activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus outside urban areas. Field activities include field excursions, field trips, field camps and fieldwork.

### 5.4 REMOTE FIELD ACTIVITIES

Remote field activities comprise all teaching and/or research activities authorised by Monash University involving staff, students and authorised volunteers that are undertaken off-campus outside urban areas:

- more than 5 km from a frequently trafficked road, farmhouse or other facility with telephone or radio communication; or
- off-road in areas including river, inland waterways, estuarine and oceanic locations where very little traffic is likely or where hills, dense timber or other topographic features would make it difficult to summon help; or
- where it would take more than one hour to obtain medical and other emergency support without a vehicle.

### 5.5 HEAD OF ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

For the purposes of these guidelines, head of academic/administrative unit is used to denote the head of the area that is undertaking the activity. For academic areas,

this term includes head of faculty, department, school, institute or centre. For administrative areas, the term includes head of division, branch, centre or unit.

## 6. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these guidelines are to ensure, as far as practicable, that:

- students and staff of Monash University are aware of their health and safety responsibilities with regard to international activities;
- risks to the health and safety of participants undertaking international activities are reduced;
- consistently high health and safety standards are achieved in the international activities conducted by Monash University;
- students and staff of Monash University who are organising and attending international activities are aware of the health and safety standards to be attained in international activities;
- the highest quality of teaching and research is achieved during international activities undertaken by the staff and students of Monash University.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff involved in the conduct of international activities must be familiar with the Monash University Occupational Health and Safety Policy<sup>1</sup>, in particular, the responsibilities of supervisors and individuals. A summary of the important elements relevant to international activities is provided below.

### 7.1 HEAD OF ACADEMIC/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

It is the responsibility of the head of the academic/administrative unit to ensure that satisfactory provisions for health and safety are made for the international activities organised by their unit. Heads of academic/administrative units must institute a system for assessment, approval and review of all international activities in their unit and ensure that occupational health and safety issues are reported to the safety officer or the local zone OHS&E committee for resolution as required.

### 7.2 STAFF MEMBER IN CHARGE (ORGANISER)

The staff member in charge of the international activity must:

7.2.1 ensure that all international travel is authorised by their Dean, PVC or administrative head who will require the latest advice from the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade on travel to the intended destination.

7.2.2 ensure that the risks associated with international activities are managed effectively. To do this they must:

- determine the possible hazards that may be encountered during the international activity;
- assess the risks associated with the possible hazards;
- incorporate strategies to minimise the risks to health and safety.

Hazard identification and risk assessment forms, as well as training in their use, are available from Occupational Health, Safety & Environment (OHSE). Many of the hazards likely to be encountered on international activities are discussed in these guidelines (13).

7.2.3 ensure that the responsibilities for health and safety are communicated to all participants;

7.2.4 provide appropriate information, instruction and training to all participants.

### 7.3 SUPERVISORS

The academic supervisor of undergraduate, honours or postgraduate students has a particular responsibility for safeguarding the occupational health and safety of students in their charge (Monash University Occupational Health & Safety Policy<sup>1</sup>). The academic supervisor can delegate the supervision or training of a student to a suitably qualified and/or experienced person, as appropriate for the task. The academic supervisor of the student(s) is, however, responsible for ensuring that the student has received appropriate training and has gained sufficient competence to undertake the task.

Supervisors of international activities must:

- ensure that safe work and study practices are developed and maintained at all times;
- arrange for participants to be instructed in safe and healthy work or study procedures;
- ensure that participants are warned about hazards, and how to avoid, eliminate or minimise them;
- ensure that participants under their control use safety equipment provided in the correct manner.

### 7.4 INDIVIDUALS (STAFF, STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS)

Each staff member and each student has a moral and legal responsibility for ensuring that his or her work or study environment is conducive to good occupational health and safety by:

- seeking medical advice about appropriate immunisations and medical precautions relevant to his/her current health status;
- reading any notices relating to the international activity, attending any briefing sessions and returning any forms provided to the staff member in charge;
- taking action to avoid, report, eliminate or minimise hazards of which they are aware;
- complying with all occupational health and safety instructions;
- making proper use of all safety devices and personal protective equipment;
- not wilfully placing at risk the health and safety of any person;
- maintaining dress standards appropriate for the work or study undertaken.

A volunteer information sheet is provided in 1.1 that can be used to record the details of authorised volunteers.

## 8. STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH DISABILITIES

Monash University is committed to being fair, equitable and sensitive to the diverse needs of its students and staff in all its policies and practices and to supporting access by disadvantaged groups with due regard and respect for the sensitivities of all stakeholders (Monash University Global Equal Opportunity Policy; <http://adm.monash.edu/sss/pc/equity/policy.html>). With respect to international activities, it is Monash University's responsibility to avoid discrimination against people who have a disability by making reasonable adjustments to the working environment and arrangements.

When students are undertaking an international activity as part of their course requirement, reasonable accommodations must be made to ensure that students who have a disability can participate. Some students may not, however, be able to undertake some activities. Alternative arrangements must be made to ensure that these students can meet the inherent requirements of the course. Advice and assistance can be obtained from the Disability Liaison Unit.

Adjustments to the working environment and arrangements for students and staff with disabilities may include:

- **Transport**
  - The type of transport used for the international activity must be accessible for the students and staff with disabilities attending the activity.
  - Alternative forms of transport or frequent, scheduled breaks may be required for participants who have disabilities.
- **Facilities**
  - The facilities and accommodation for the international activity must be accessible for the participants who have disabilities attending the activity.
- **Communication**
  - Communications regarding the international activity must be provided in a form that is accessible for the participants who have disabilities attending the activity. Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participants eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.
  - Participants with hearing-impairment may find Short Message Service on mobile phones useful for communication while attending activities.
- **Student Support Worker participation**
  - Some students may require a Student Support Worker to accompany them on the international activity to assist as interpreters or note takers.

## **9. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR STAFF AND HONOURS AND POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

### **9.1 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 9.1.1 Risk assessment is not required for staff and students attending international conferences or visiting an international location for the purpose of lectures, seminars or meetings.
- 9.1.2 When undertaking work or study overseas, a comprehensive identification of the hazards to be encountered on the international activity and an assessment of the risks associated with these hazards must be undertaken during the planning for the trip. Forms to assist with this process are provided by OHSE.
- 9.1.3 Staff members in charge of international activities and supervisors of students are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment procedure has been completed before the commencement of the international activity.
- 9.1.4 Following the assessment of risks likely to be found during the international activity, risk control measures must be adopted to minimise the risk associated with each hazard. The hierarchy of hazard controls, as described in the OHSE risk control program, must be used to determine the appropriate risk controls to be adopted.
- 9.1.5 Potential hazards identified by the staff member in charge of the international activity must be disclosed to participating staff and students before departure together with the risk control procedures to be adopted.
- 9.1.6 The effectiveness of risk control measures must be reviewed and improved following any incidents that occur during an international activity and before the activity recurs.

### 9.1.7 **Research/teaching projects involving international activities**

An overall risk assessment must be completed of all types of risks involved in a specific research or teaching project, including the various international activities, before the activities commence. The head of the academic/administrative unit must be notified of the general area of the project, personal contact details and the completion of all requirements before commencement of the project. The specific details of each of the excursions that occur as part of the project must then be notified just prior to each excursion.

## 9.2 **EMERGENCY PLANNING**

9.2.1 The risk assessment must include a section that outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency such as an injury, participants becoming separated from the main group, a deleterious change in the weather, civil unrest etc.

9.2.2 The emergency plans must include:

- emergency procedures for participants of the activity and for the academic/administrative unit, school or centre;
- emergency procedures for participants who have disabilities;
- communication procedures;
- emergency contact numbers for local emergency services and with the academic/administrative unit.

## 9.3 **APPOINTMENT OF A SAFETY OFFICER**

9.3.1 When students take part in an international activity, one of the supervisory participants must be appointed as a safety officer. The role of the safety officer is to maintain an overview of safety issues during the planning and progress of the activity.

9.3.2 It is recommended that the safety officer is someone other than the staff member in charge of the activity. The safety officer should keep the staff member in charge of the activity informed of any safety issues and make recommendations to ensure the safety of participants.

9.3.3 All safety issues that arise during the international activity should be directed to the safety officer.

9.3.4 In the event of changes to proposed itinerary or activities occurring whilst the international activity is in progress, the safety officer must review the risks associated with the new route or work or study proposed and communicate any health and safety warnings to staff and students.

## 9.4 **NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

### 9.4.1 **To head of academic/administrative unit**

#### 9.4.1.1 Itinerary

9.4.1.1.1 Before departure, staff members or students must provide their supervisor and/or head of academic/administrative unit with a written itinerary of the international activity. A form is provided in 1.2 that can be used for this purpose.

9.4.1.1.2 Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the system of notification is working effectively.

#### 9.4.1.2 Provision of contact details

Every staff member and student must:

- nominate a personal contact (eg flatmate, parent, partner);
- provide the name and phone number of the contact person to their supervisor or a specified academic/administrative contact person before commencing the international activity.

These details will be used in the case of an emergency. A form is provided in 1.3 for this purpose.

#### 9.4.1.3 Pre-departure checklist

9.4.1.3.1 Before departing on an international activity, the staff member in charge of the activity must complete the form provided in 1.2 and submit it to the head of academic/administrative unit or their nominated delegate.

9.4.1.3.2 The head of academic/administrative unit will authorise the international activity if all steps required have been completed.

9.4.1.3.3 The form must be submitted well in advance of the trip to allow time for the head of academic/administrative unit or their nominee adequate time for assessment and approval before departure.

9.4.1.3.4 Sections of the international pre- departure notification form and checklist to be completed:

- *Conferences*  
Information page, and  
Section 1
- *Research and teaching activities*  
Information page, and  
Sections 1 and 2
- *Group activities*  
Information page, and  
Sections 1, 2 and 3
- *Field activities*  
Information page, and  
Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4

### 9.4.2 **To participants**

#### 9.4.2.1 Information sheet

Participants should be provided with an information sheet detailing:

- organisational arrangements, including information about travel, safety requirements, names of supervisors;
- practical requisites for the activity, eg clothing, sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle;
- written policies regarding actions that will be taken if students do not comply with safety instructions or display disruptive behaviour while attending the activity.

#### 9.4.2.2 Safety briefing

When safety issues have been identified for the activity, a safety briefing must be given to all participants (staff, students and volunteers) before the commencement of the activity.

9.4.2.2.1 The safety briefing must include as a minimum:

- the need to follow all explicit directives from staff members in charge, site controllers and transport operators (eg bus drivers);
- the need to follow all other instructions as given by staff or workers on site that do not conflict with the above.

9.4.2.2.2 Specific information regarding safety aspects of the activity must also be included in the safety briefing:

- discussion of potential hazards that are likely to be encountered and the steps individuals must take to minimise the risks associated with these hazards;
- minimum dress requirements.

9.4.2.2.3 The briefing is an educational exercise aimed at making participants aware of potentially dangerous situations. It should be conducted in such a way that participants appreciate the need to follow the correct safety procedures. It is necessary to take reasonable steps to ascertain that the briefing is understood.

9.4.2.2.4 The safety briefing must be provided in a form that is accessible for participants with disabilities attending the activity. Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participants, eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.

## 10. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

This section of the guidelines is designed to cover international activities that are part of an undergraduate subject or course.

### 10.1 RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1.1 A comprehensive identification of the hazards to be encountered during international activities for undergraduate students and an assessment of the risks associated with these hazards must be undertaken during the planning for the trip. Forms to assist with this process are provided by OHSE.

10.1.2 Staff members in charge of international activities and supervisors of students are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment procedure has been completed before the commencement of the international activity.

10.1.3 Following the assessment of risks likely to be found during the international activity, risk control measures must be adopted to minimise the risk associated with each hazard. The hierarchy of hazard controls, as described in the OHSE risk control program, must be used to determine the appropriate risk controls to be adopted.

- 10.1.4 The risk controls implemented for the activity should be documented, as well as the details included in the safety briefing provided to participants. These documents must be made available to new staff members supervising the activity so that they will be aware of the issues likely to be encountered on the activity and the procedures that have been found to be successful in controlling the risks.
- 10.1.5 The effectiveness of risk control measures must be reviewed and improved following any incidents that occur during an international activity and before the activity recurs.

## **10.2 EMERGENCY PLANNING**

- 10.2.1 The risk assessment must include a section that outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency such as an injury, participants becoming separated from the main group, a deleterious change in the weather, civil unrest etc.
- 10.2.2 The emergency plans must include:
- emergency procedures for participants of the activity and for the academic/administrative unit, school or centre;
  - emergency procedures for participants who have disabilities;
  - communication procedures;
  - emergency contact numbers for local emergency services and with the academic/administrative unit.

## **10.3 APPOINTMENT OF A SAFETY OFFICER**

- 10.3.1 When students take part in an international activity, one of the supervisory participants must be appointed as a safety officer. The role of the safety officer is to maintain an overview of safety issues during the planning and progress of the activity.
- 10.3.2 It is recommended that the safety officer is someone other than the staff member in charge of the activity. The safety officer should keep the staff member in charge of the activity informed of any safety issues and make recommendations to ensure the safety of participants.
- 10.3.3 All safety issues that arise during the international activity should be directed to the safety officer.
- 10.3.4 In the event of changes to proposed itinerary or activities occurring whilst the international activity is in progress, the safety officer must review the risks associated with the new route or work or study proposed and communicate any health and safety warnings to staff and students.

## **10.4 NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **10.4.1 Head of academic/administrative unit**

- 10.4.1.1 Before departing on an international activity with undergraduate students, the staff member in charge of the activity must provide the head of the academic/administrative unit with the following information. Forms are provided in 1.1 – 1.3 that can be used for this purpose.
- 10.4.1.1.1 Written itinerary
- 10.4.1.1.2 Details of participants
- Details of all those attending the activity including the staff member in charge, staff or students acting as supervisors, volunteers, and students;

- Names of safety officer and first aiders attending the activity;
- Name and phone number of a contact person (eg flatmate, parent, partner) for each participant. These details will be used in the case of an emergency.

10.4.1.1.3 Details of the safety briefing provided to participants

10.4.1.1.4 Emergency procedures, eg

- Details of procedures for participants who become separated during the activity;
- Action to be taken if a participant is injured.

10.4.1.2 The head of the academic/administrative unit or their nominee will authorise the activity when all procedures have been completed.

10.4.1.3 The information must be submitted well in advance of the trip to allow time for the head of the academic/administrative unit or their nominee adequate time for assessment and approval before departure.

## 10.4.2 To participants

### 10.4.2.1 Information sheet

Participants must be provided with an information sheet detailing:

- written guidelines and/or safety procedures relevant to the activity being undertaken, eg use of equipment or vehicles; communication protocols;
- emergency procedures and contact numbers;
- rules relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;
- written policies regarding actions that will be taken if students do not comply with safety instructions or display disruptive behaviour while attending the activity;
- organisational arrangements, including information about the site of the activity, travel, first aid, catering, names of supervisors, and first aiders;
- practical requisites for the activity, eg clothing, laboratory coat, safety glasses, sun screen, insect repellent, sunglasses, footwear, weatherproof coat, water bottle;
- personal accident insurance cover.

10.4.2.2 Students should be asked to sign a form to acknowledge that they have read and understood the guidelines as a requirement to attend the activity. An example of a form that could be used for this purpose is shown in 1.3.

10.4.2.3 If students are participating in field activities while overseas, the 'Student guidelines for safety on undergraduate field activities', which can be found in the Monash University Guidelines for Health and Safety during Field Activities in Country and Remote Areas, provides examples of safety guidelines that could be used where appropriate.

#### 10.4.2.4 Safety briefing

A safety briefing must be given to all participants (staff, students and volunteers) before the commencement of an international undergraduate activity.

10.4.2.4.1 The safety briefing must include as a minimum:

- a discussion of the potential hazards which are likely to be encountered and the steps individuals must take to minimise the risks associated with these hazards;
- a discussion of the emergency procedures developed for the activity (see 10.2);
- introductions to the safety officer and first aider(s) attending the activity;
- general safety guidelines, including:
  - the need to act lawfully at all times;
  - the need to follow all regulatory and advisory signage and traffic regulations;
  - the need to follow common sense practices;
  - the need to follow all explicit directives from staff members in charge, site controllers and transport operators (eg bus drivers);
  - the need to follow all other instructions as given by staff or workers on site that do not conflict with the above;
  - rules relating to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

10.4.2.4.2 Specific information regarding safety aspects of the activity must also be included in the safety briefing:

- minimum dress requirements, including a warning that correct dress is mandatory for participation in activities;
- discussion of correct maintenance and use of safety equipment required for the various activities that are to be carried out.

10.4.2.4.3 The briefing is an educational exercise aimed at making participants aware of potentially dangerous situations. It should be conducted in such a way that participants appreciate the need to follow the correct safety procedures. It is necessary to take reasonable steps to ascertain that the briefing is understood.

10.4.2.4.4 It is essential that all staff and students participating in the activity attend a safety briefing and that the attendance at the briefing session is recorded. Separate sessions may have to be held for participants who are unable to attend the main briefing session.

10.4.2.4.5 The safety briefing must be provided in a form that is accessible for participants with disabilities attending the activity. Alternative formats may have to be provided for specific participants eg written information for participants with hearing-impairment, Braille version or audio for participants with vision impairment.

## **10.5 SUPERVISION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GROUPS**

The staff member in charge should determine an appropriate staff/student ratio when planning an international activity.

- The staff/student ratio will depend on the type of activities being undertaken. Generally, a ratio of 1:10 is suitable for most situations. A ratio of less than 1:20 is not recommended.
- Where possible, there should be male and female supervisors for activities involving male and female students.

## **10.6 KEEPING PARTIES INTACT**

During travel and at the site of an international activity, the main group may split up into smaller groups travelling in different directions. To avoid the possibility of a participant becoming separated from the group, the supervisor of the group must ensure that appropriate procedures are in place. These should at least include:

- Lists of names of participants in each group;
- Head counts before groups go out to sites and before leaving sites to return.

# **11. INCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RECORDING**

**11.1** Before commencement of the international activity, the staff member in charge must be familiar with the Monash University policy on Incident Reporting, Investigation and Recording Procedures<sup>2</sup> (<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/documents/Docum.htm> ).

**11.2** An incident report form must be completed for all incidents.

**11.3** The supervisor of the group, the staff member in charge of the international activity or the safety officer should undertake an investigation of the incident on site and assist with the completion of the incident report form. A thorough investigation of the immediate and underlying causes of an incident is essential to prevent a recurrence.

**11.4** Completed incident forms must be returned to your safety officer on return from the activity.

# **12. INSURANCE**

## **12.1 TRAVEL INSURANCE**

**12.1.1** University staff and staff of associated entities travelling overseas on University business are insured by the University. Please refer to <http://www.firm.monash.edu.au/insurance/> for further information. If the level of cover is inadequate for the traveller's personal requirements, additional insurance arrangements can be made at their own cost.

**12.1.2** The University policy also extends cover to PhD students while they are travelling overseas on authorised university business.

### **12.1.3 Undergraduate students**

12.1.3.1 Undergraduate students overseas are covered for insurance for medical benefits up to \$100,000. This policy only covers against accidents (not sickness) whilst engaged on "campus/and or engaged in university/course/sport related activities including their necessary direct travel to and from such activities".

12.1.3.2 It is strongly recommended that undergraduate students obtain separate personal insurance cover in the event that they fall sick or have an accident whilst pursuing a non-university/course related activity. It is also recommended that they take out a policy with a travel agent for luggage and personal effects.

## **12.2 VEHICLE HIRE**

For car rentals overseas it is the responsibility of the employee to take out all insurance recommended by the vendor.

## **12.3 PUBLIC AND PRODUCTS LIABILITY INSURANCE**

The University has a public and products liability insurance protecting it from claims by third parties for personal injury or damage to property. The policy extends this protection to:

12.3.1 Employees and voluntary workers whilst acting within the scope of their duties in such capacity;

12.3.2 Students engaged in practical training both on or off campus including but not limited to practical placement, community placement, enterprise experience, work experience or off campus field assignments.

# **13. CONTROLLING RISKS DURING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

## **13.1 HAZARDS OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **13.1.1 Climate**

The climate at the international destination may be quite different to that experienced in Australia. Planning for the international activity should include consideration of the effects of the climate change, such as:

- the time required for acclimatisation;
- clothing suitable for the climate, ensuring that it also provides health and safety protection, eg long sleeves in tropical regions to protect against both insect bites and ultraviolet radiation;
- increased water consumption in arid and tropical climates.

### **13.1.2 Disease**

The risk of disease will vary with:

- the area to be visited;
- the duration of the stay;
- the living and sanitary conditions;
- the types of work to be performed; and
- the predisposition of the student or staff member.

### **13.1.3 Natural disasters**

13.1.3.1 Seasonal and geological factors should be taken into account when planning international activities in order to minimise the risks of work or study carried out in areas prone to flooding,

severe storm, avalanche, volcanic eruption, earthquake, tsunami and such occurrences.

13.1.3.2 Participants should ensure that they obtain local information about what to do in the event of such an emergency and prepare a crisis response plan.

13.1.3.3 Registration of participants at the nearest Australian embassy or consulate is required in disaster-prone areas.

#### 13.1.4 Threats to personal security, eg terrorism, civil unrest

13.1.4.1 Participants of international activities must undertake an evaluation of the potential risks to their personal security and develop recommended practices to minimise the identified risks.

13.1.4.2 Information should be obtained from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade ([smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au); <http://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/>), contacts in the country to be visited, from the experiences of previous travellers and from the media. Advice can also be obtained by fax (02) 62611299 (within Australia only) or by calling 1300139281 (if calling within Australia) or (61 2) 62613305 (if calling from overseas).

13.1.4.3 The general threat of terrorism against Western interests overseas has increased in recent years. All staff and students travelling overseas should:

- Inform themselves, before and during their travel, of developments that could affect their safety in the countries that they are visiting by consulting the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade ([www.dfat.gov.au/travel/](http://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/)) and the media;
- Avoid large public gatherings or demonstrations;
- Be alert in commercial or public areas known to be frequented by foreigners such as clubs, restaurants, bars, hotels, places of worship, cultural and tourist sites, schools or outdoor recreational events;
- Exercise caution in areas outside major cities
- Monitor country-specific travel advisories and announcements issued by governments of the country(ies) to which they are travelling or transiting, due to the risk of attacks on commercial aircraft.

## 13.2 MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS

### 13.2.1 Medical status of participants

13.2.1.1 The staff member in charge of the international activity must provide participants with information regarding the types of activities, the nature of the exercise and the climatic conditions likely to be encountered during the international activity.

13.2.1.2 If a staff member or student has any concerns regarding their medical status or fitness for an international activity, they should consult the Occupational Health Physician regarding the appropriateness of their participation.

13.2.1.3 Following discussions with the Occupational Health Physician, the nature of the medical condition and its treatment may be

discussed in confidence with the first aider(s) attending the international activity, with the permission of the staff member or student.

- 13.2.1.4 Staff and students with particular medical conditions that cannot be orally explained in the case of an accident (eg allergy to penicillin) should wear 'medical alert' or similar bracelets, pendants, etc.

### 13.2.2 Medication

- 13.2.2.1 Adequate supplies of any prescribed medication(s) required for the duration of the international activity must be taken. Approximately 1.5 - 2 times the normal supplies should be packed in case return from the international activity is delayed.
- 13.2.2.2 The first aider will assist in providing appropriate storage of the medical supplies, if necessary.
- 13.2.2.3 It is advisable to include a covering letter from your doctor with the medication.

### 13.2.3 Planning before departure

- 13.2.3.1 Some months before departure, staff and students going overseas should undertake an evaluation of the infectious diseases prevalent in their proposed work locations.
- For information on prevalent diseases and inoculations, staff and students should consult their doctor or a travel clinic.
  - Health information can be found at [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au) (which is the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website, <http://www.dfat.gov.au/travel/>) and on the OHSE web site (<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/>). Contact details for travel clinics can be found at [www.smartraveller.gov.au/travelwell.html](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/travelwell.html) . Further information is provided by the World Health Organisation (<http://www.who.int/en/>).
- 13.2.3.2 A doctor with experience in travel medicine should be consulted 3 – 6 months before departure to ensure adequate time for completion of any vaccinations required.
- This service is available at the campus health services at the Clayton and Caulfield.

### 13.2.4 World-wide disease risks. eg Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Avian influenza

#### 13.2.4.1 SARS

- Staff and students who have a particular reason to be concerned about the risk of SARS, eg those with chronic illness, should seek medical advice before travel.
- Staff and students whose travel includes areas with reports of recent local transmission of SARS should be aware of the main symptoms of SARS, ie high fever (>38°C) and dry cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- Staff and students who experience symptoms of SARS (see above) and, who, in the last 10 days, have been in

an area which has experienced a recent outbreak of SARS, are advised to contact a doctor.

- Staff and students planning to visit or transit through areas that still have screening for symptoms of SARS, such as fever, should be aware that if they show symptoms of SARS they may be detained and prevented from further travel until well.
- Staff and students arriving in Australia with symptoms suggestive of SARS will be referred by the airline and border authorities to be examined by health personnel as per routine quarantine procedures. If symptomatic of SARS, the person will be referred for specialist diagnosis and treatment, and precautions taken to prevent the possible spread of infection to others.
- If symptoms develop after arrival in Australia, staff and students should minimise the possible spread of infection to others and see their doctor as soon as possible.
- The Department of Health and Ageing has a SARS hotline - 1800-004 599.

#### 13.2.4.2 Avian influenza

- Staff and students travelling to areas experiencing an outbreak of avian influenza are advised to avoid contact with poultry farms and live bird markets.
- All uncooked chicken meat and eggs should be handled hygienically. Proper cooking will destroy the virus in chicken meat and eggs.

### 13.2.5 **Disease prevention and medical treatment**

13.2.5.1 As vaccines are not available to prevent all infectious diseases, advice regarding recommended preventive measures against such infections and medical treatment should be sought before departure, including issues such as:

- safety of local food and water;
- requirements for water purification;
- measures to avoid insect bites;
- safety of paddling or swimming in local bodies of water;
- availability of local medical and hospital services;
- availability of communication facilities.

13.2.5.2 Special consideration needs to be given to:

- pregnant women;
- those at increased risk of infection;
- the presence of a pre-existing medical condition, eg asthma, diabetes, etc.

### 13.2.6 **Traveller's thrombosis**

There is a risk of people travelling on long journeys developing deep vein thrombosis (DVT) or traveller's thrombosis.

13.2.6.1 Risk factors include previous DVT, malignancy, hormone treatment, recent surgery, family history of DVT, abnormalities of blood clotting factors and recent trauma involving lower limbs.

- 13.2.6.2 Measures to avoid the risk of DVT when travelling:
- see your doctor before travelling if you are in any of the risk categories;
  - drink adequate fluids – water is best;
  - avoid alcohol;
  - restrict intake of caffeine drinks (tea, coffee);
  - walk around whenever you can;
  - do not cross your legs when seated;
  - stand up at your seat and stretch arms and legs;
  - perform foot and leg exercises while seated;
  - wear loose fitting clothes;
  - avoid smoking.
- 13.2.6.3 Always check with your doctor if you have any concerns regarding your health particularly if planning overseas flights, especially if you have a previous history of DVT or risk factors.
- 13.2.6.4 Further information can be obtained by contacting the occupational health advisor at OHSE on Extension 51014.

### 13.3 FIRST AID<sup>3</sup>

#### 13.3.1 Numbers of first aiders

- 13.3.1.1 All groups participating in international activities in urban areas should contain a trained first aider.
- 13.3.1.2 All groups participating in international activities in non-urban areas eg bush, outback or ocean should include as many first aiders as practicable and these should be trained to at least Level 2 (Basic First Aid).
- 13.3.1.3 All groups participating in international activities in non-urban areas should include the following numbers of first aiders:
- Groups up to 9 people: 1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher.
  - Groups of 10 to 30 people: As for I plus 1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher.
  - Groups of over 30 people: As for II plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher, for every additional 30 people or part thereof.
  - Whenever practicable the first aiders should not travel in the same vehicle.
- 13.3.1.4 All groups participating in international activities in remote areas should include the following numbers of first aiders:
- Groups up to 9 people: 1 person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher with additional remote area first aid training.
  - Groups of 10 to 30 people: As for I plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher.
  - Groups of over 30 people: As for II plus an additional person trained in Basic First Aid (Level 2) or higher for every 30 people or part thereof.

- Additional remote area first aid training is recommended for all first aiders who work in this context.
- 13.3.1.5 Whenever practicable the first aiders should not travel in the same vehicle.
- 13.3.2 First aid kits**
- 13.3.2.1 A first aid kit of appropriate size and type should be carried on international field activities to non-urban and remote areas.
- 13.3.2.2 The kit contents will depend on the nature of the hazards of the area and country visited. A doctor with experience in travel medicine must be consulted on the contents of the kit.
- 13.3.2.3 Advice can be obtained from campus health services.

## **13.4 INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL & TRANSPORT**

### **13.4.1 Use of hire vehicles**

- 13.4.1.1 The seat belts in all vehicles must be worn, properly adjusted and securely fastened by all students and staff.
- 13.4.1.2 Vehicles taken on international trips should be appropriate for the conditions encountered, eg 4 wheel drive, if necessary.
- 13.4.1.3 Transport used must be accessible to participants with disabilities attending the activity.
- 13.4.1.4 Students and staff must be made aware before starting the trip that smoking, the consumption of alcohol and the misuse of drugs are not allowed in university vehicles (including any transport used to move students and staff while on official trips).

### **13.4.2 Driving guidelines<sup>4</sup>**

#### **13.4.2.1 Planning the trip**

- Start a long trip in the morning, after a good night's sleep.
- Plan to drive at times you are normally awake; avoid driving late at night and very early in the morning.
- Plan time for rest breaks and to stop and rest overnight on long trips.
- Don't travel for more than 8-10 hours in any one day.
- Avoid alcohol and medication that may cause drowsiness (check with your doctor) before and during the trip.

#### **13.4.2.2 On the trip**

- Take regular breaks (at least every 2 hours). Get out of the car and walk around for a while.
- Share the driving when you can.
- Eat properly - not too much and not too little; don't drink any alcohol during rest breaks.
- If you feel tired and sleepy, find a suitable place to stop and sleep as soon as possible.

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#### 14. LISTING OF RELEVANT GUIDELINES AND POLICY STATEMENTS

Monash University policies are available from the Occupational Health, Safety & Environment web site (<http://www.adm.monash.edu.au/ohse/documents/Docum.htm>).

- 1 Monash University Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- 2 Monash University Procedures for Hazard and Incident Reporting, Investigation and Recording
- 3 Monash University Policy on First Aid
- 4 Vicroads 'Plan your drive and stay alive' brochure (1992)