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Guidance for the Safe Conduct of Fieldwork and Work Away from the University ("Fieldwork")



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

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1. Introduction

This Guidance seeks to establish a risk based approach to the management of health and safety risks arising out of fieldwork and working away from the University. It contains elements of Guidance on Safety in Fieldwork, published by the Universities Safety and Health Association in association with the University and Colleges Association. Individuals preparing to travel are strongly advised to consult the relevant Foreign and Commonwealth Office pages specific to the country(ies) they are planning to visit, to have access to up to date advice on the risks and mitigation strategies relevant to that country/region. <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

2. Definitions and Scope of this Guidance

What is Fieldwork?

In the University of Cambridge, Fieldwork is extremely wide and diverse and is defined as follows: Any work carried out by staff, researchers or students for the purposes of teaching, learning, research and other activities while representing the University offsite.

Fieldwork includes attendance at conferences, teaching and attending meetings in other institutions, travelling and working away (in group or alone) in places that are not under University control.

What is Work Away?

Work away is any time during the course or normal working pattern in Cambridge which is spent outside of The University for purposes of carrying out fieldwork, completing any compulsory course element or undertaking any work directly related to the studies.

All individuals working away from the university are called Fieldworkers.

What is Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment is the process of examining the work and the workplace to identify potential hazards that could cause harm to persons who are the responsibility of the University, and to identify appropriate mitigation measures to reduce the risks identified.

The Risk Assessment is the tool to be used to seek approval for Fieldwork from a safety perspective which will allow the Fieldwork to be conducted as safely as possible.

Scope of the Guidance

This Guidance is aimed at staff, researchers and students carrying out fieldwork and/or working away from the University. The owner of the guidance is the Director of Health and Safety and Head of the Occupational Health and Safety Service, Martin Vinnell.

This Guidance applies to all work carried out in the UK and overseas. Whilst much of it is aimed at traditional Fieldwork, such as surveying by earth scientists and specimen collecting by biologists and zoologists, with an emphasis on student activities, it is also aimed at lone fieldworkers, social scientists and humanities researchers, and anyone working away from the University.

Some of the sections on Supervision and Training, and Conduct of Fieldwork will not be applicable to Fieldwork in the humanities and social sciences institutions, such as the Judge Business School, unless the location of the work, or the nature of the work presents risks (eg: Politically unstable location). The following applies to all Fieldwork whether carried out by staff or students in the UK or overseas: **The general principle of planning; effective and appropriate risk assessment; the provision of relevant information and training; health protection and education; personal safety and security; insurance and the provision of appropriate equipment.**

3. Overseas Fieldwork and Overseas Travel

Where a host institution controls the work, they will usually have their own standards and policies which members of the University should comply with. These must be available and reviewed in advance of any visit. This does not override the requirement to complete a risk assessment but should be provided as evidence to support the mitigation measures to be implemented.

For travel to countries or areas where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) advises against travel, please see the University Guidance/Insurance. The FCO's foreign travel advice can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>. For further advice contact the Safety Office.

4. Management, Planning and Risk Assessment of Fieldwork

Management Responsibilities

The Head of Department or Institution is responsible for ensuring that adequate planning is carried out by delegated individual. This includes risk assessment, which must be carried out before the fieldwork takes place, thereby ensuring that hazards are identified in advance and safe working procedures have been established for all staff and students.

The Head of Department should have received appropriate training.
Heads of Department should consider that

- (i) There will be adequate supervision;
- (ii) Supervisors have adequate first aid training if applicable and risk assessment training as well as any additional training identified within in the risk assessment.
- (iii) All Fieldworkers are adequately prepared for the trip eg immunisations and anti-malarials are up to date and adequate insurance is in place including for emergency or medical evacuation if required. They should fully understand the risks involved and are sufficiently prepared to mitigate those risks. The Head of Department must ensure that appropriate training has taken place and appropriate equipment is available and in place (this could be personal protective equipment, mosquito nets, etc).
- (iv) Suitable lines of communication are in place; and
- (v) All accidents and incidents are reported to the University's Safety Office and investigated at an appropriate level, by the Department, Institution or Safety Office.

The Head of Department or Institution will usually delegate the responsibility for planning and risk assessment to the person who is organising the Fieldwork eg the supervisor. In this case the Head must be satisfied that the organiser has received the appropriate training and is competent to do this.

(vi) Responsibilities of Fieldworkers

Fieldworkers must complete and submit a risk assessment for approval by the Head of Department or nominated person. They must follow agreed safety/risk management protocols/control measures and the requirement to report all accidents, incidents and near misses.

Should the nature or circumstances of the Fieldwork change, it is the Fieldworkers responsibility to update the risk assessment as soon as possible and resubmit the form online to the Head of Department or nominated person.

Planning and Risk Assessment

The University Handbook on Risk Assessment ref HSD044M

<http://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/publications/hsd044m-risk-assessment-handbook>

deals with the general principals of risk assessment and the checklists and references in BS8848 & UCEA guidance on Fieldwork can be used to address specific risks.

The risk assessment process

- 1) Identify hazards associated with the work and environment in which the work is being carried out
- 2) Identify the specific vulnerabilities (exposure) Fieldworkers have to those hazards
- 3) Assess the level of risk through understanding the likelihood of the hazard occurring, and the impact on Fieldworkers if it does occur
- 4) Identify appropriate mitigating actions to reduce the risks to an acceptable level, including the capacity of Fieldworkers to implement such actions. Mitigating actions should include both preventative measures and actions required to respond appropriately to an incident.

It is helpful to consider 3 types of risk when planning Fieldwork:

- Environmental risks (will include health issues, natural disasters, proximity to eg tidal estuaries)
- Activity risks (will include eg mountain walking, diving, using heavy machinery, working in pits, road travel)
- Context specific/man-made risks (theft, personal attack, conflict and terrorist activity, protests and riots etc)

As well as these external factors the risk assessment must consider the knowledge, experience and skills of the participants and whether they have specific needs, medical conditions or vulnerabilities.

The amount of time spent on planning and the degree of detail recorded in the risk assessment needs to be proportionate to the inherent danger present in the Fieldwork. More extensive planning, preparation and assessment will be required for lone Fieldworkers or work in areas where there may be an increased risk to personal safety, for example due to criminal activity or political instability. Past experience of the researcher or student in their proposed Fieldwork activity will have a major bearing on the perceived level of risk and the details of the risk assessment must reflect this.

Once in the Field the risk assessment should be reviewed after 5 days and updated and amended based on additional local information, direct observation. Updated risk assessment should be submitted to the supervisor for review.

The risk assessment must always include a contingency plan for reasonably foreseeable incidents taking account of the likely environmental hazards and the type of work or activity undertaken (eg planning for an emergency evacuation of Scott Polar Research Institute staff from the NE Greenland ice cap). As part of this contingency plan, departmental administrators should retain an up to date record of

- (i) The type of activity
- (ii) The names and contact details of the research staff and students involved (these details must be kept up to date. This should include photocopies of passports, visas and

insurance details and the names, addresses, phone numbers of the next of kin and information on known medical conditions).

(iii) Itinerary and return times and details. Those who wish to carry out fieldwork or work away from the University must complete a Risk Assessment Form and submit it online. Students and researchers should fill in the form following consultation with their Supervisors who will either send the form to the Head of Department for their approval or return the form to the applicant for further information. The Risk Assessment Form and Guidance is appended to this guidance (Appendix 1).

<http://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/publications/hsd045m-risk-assessment-forms>

5. Provision of information

Staff and students undertaking Fieldwork must be fully informed of the nature of the work, the associated hazards and their appropriate controls.

This allows the identification of any medical problems that might affect their ability to carry out certain types of Fieldwork. Early identification of such problems will allow liaison with the Disability Resources Centre and Occupational Health Service as required, to ensure a suitable resolution. The extent of the information that needs to be provided will depend on the pre-existing knowledge, experience, and skills of the participants. Heads of Departments and Institutions must be satisfied that those providing this information are competent to do so and might wish to consider how best to assess and monitor this competency. Training on how to assess risk should be in place for those applying to work abroad.

6. Duties of Employees

University employees have a general duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of those affected by their acts or omissions and to comply with all appropriate health and safety arrangements. Fieldwork organisers and supervisors have some personal responsibility to appropriately plan and manage these activities and they may be held personally liable if they are negligent in discharging their duties. Staff participating in Fieldwork, but not supervising, must ensure they follow safety instructions and use the control measures properly.

There is no such obligation on students but they must be strongly advised to behave in a similar way to employees in this respect. Where they breach the safety rules then corrective action should be taken and recorded.

7. Supervision and Training

(a) Responsibility for Safety in Fieldwork

Following completion of the risk assessment the supervisor should devise, discuss and agree written working procedures with the Head of Department or Institutions or the appointed representative such as the Departmental Safety Officer. These procedures should be provided for each Fieldworker and the supervisor should satisfy themselves that the individual appreciates the significant safety issues at group meetings and individual interviews and discussions as necessary.

(b) Fieldwork supervision

Work involving students who are likely to be less experienced and more vulnerable than staff when working in the same environment will need greater preparation and supervision. The same principles apply where staff members are involved. The risk assessment should reflect the appropriate level of mitigating actions required taking into account the maturity, experience, expertise and training of the individual involved.

The Head of Department or Institutions will delegate to the organisers of the Fieldwork (the PI, academic supervisor, etc.) the responsibility for ensuring that adequate safety arrangements are in place and that all Fieldworkers observe them. Where appropriate, the organisers may appoint one or more leaders to act on their behalf when in the field. This may be necessary when parties split into groups or when a person other than the PI/academic supervisor has more experience of a locality or specific type of Fieldwork. Leaders may not necessarily be University employees; they may be diving supervisors, mountain guides, site foremen, and experienced staff from other Universities depending on the nature, location and type of Fieldwork. The leaders must have sufficient knowledge/skills/experience to carry out the required duties. In these cases the identity of the designated leader should always be made clear in written instructions or safety briefings. For the duration of the Fieldwork the designated leader is responsible for ensuring all safety precautions are observed. All individuals must understand that they must observe any instruction given by the leader and bring any safety issues to their attention.

The Department/Institution should always be aware of Fieldworkers activities. Copies of the Risk Assessment Form should be provided to the Departmental/Institutional Administrator and the Safety Officer. The itinerary should be updated as necessary. If the work is in a remote or hazardous environment the itinerary should include emergency contact details, what to do in an emergency and be left with a suitable person or organisation such as

- Hostel or hotel owner
- Local police
- Local mountain rescue
- Local consul or embassy if outside the UK

Suitable emergency procedures should be planned in advance of the trip to deal with late or non-arrival back at the Fieldwork base and participants should be aware of the course of action that will then be taken.

Supervision levels for field trips will vary: An inexperienced group of first year students will require more supervision than an experienced group of post doctorate and research fellows returning to a site on a long term research project. Both are equally required to complete a Risk Assessment.

Fieldwork in hostile, remote and/or inaccessible locations presents a higher degree of risk than standard field expeditions. For this reason, it will be required to carry out a rigorous risk assessment and identify control measures to reduce risks to a level that is acceptable to both the University and the individual participants.

The level of supervision must be appropriate and adequate for the individual group, the type and location of the Fieldwork, but it must be relevant for the particular situation. This will include

- Fully supervised courses
- Field expeditions
- Lone working

(i) Fully supervised courses

This will normally be of short duration (a working day or less) and conducted in low hazard environments.

Participants may be inexperienced, so they should not normally be allowed to work alone and must not be intentionally exposed to hazardous situations. Safety induction

and instruction should be an integral part of the course and they should be made aware of any local rules applying to industrial or construction sites [eg Engineering Department staff working on the London Cross Rail project and the Archaeology Unit working on local construction sites]. Careful thought should be given to the staff/student ratio which must be appropriate to the activities undertaken and the nature of the site being visited. Each group should have an experienced member of staff as leader supported by other experienced staff eg technical or postdoctoral staff where possible or by other suitable appointed supervisors. Adequate deputising provision should be made for the leader in the case of incapacity.

Maximum and minimum party sizes should be set bearing in mind the environment, the activity undertaken and any foreseeable incidents. Parties of more than 15 may be difficult to manage in rugged country and generally speaking a ratio of ten inexperienced students to one experienced staff member is appropriate. In the case of an accident, injury or illness, having a sub-group of at least 4 people will allow one person to stay with the ill/injured person while two others go for help.

(ii) Field expeditions

Expeditions may be prolonged and take place in environments that are remote and potentially hazardous. They tend to be research based rather than teaching based. Participants will normally be experienced and/or will have received instruction in work techniques and safety procedures. The leader of such trips must be adequately trained in the necessary skills which may include emergency first aid, survival, communication, navigation techniques and security management and procedures. They must be aware of local hazards and conditions and be familiar with the precautions to be taken especially where:

- the terrain is particularly hostile such as glaciers, rock faces or tidal estuaries
- weather conditions can change dramatically such as katabatic winds or tropical storms
- hazardous substances such as gases from volcanoes may be present
- dangerous animals may be in the locality such as polar bears in the Arctic regions
- infectious diseases may be prevalent such as Ebola or Zika virus
- the context presents manmade threats such as road accidents, theft, demonstrations, political volatility and conflict
- natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides and flooding are possible

The Head of Department or Institutions must be satisfied that the leader has the personal capacity, capability, competence and communication skills to lead especially in adverse conditions. The leader's authority and responsibilities must be clearly defined and understood by all members of the party and serious consideration must be given to excluding people unable to accept such authority. The leader should not be afraid to use their authority to abandon the Fieldwork if the situation starts to deteriorate. An adequate number of experienced and trained members of staff should be present so that suitable deputising arrangements can be made in case of incapacity or the party splits into smaller groups.

(iii) Lone Fieldworking

Fieldwork in the University is diverse and has moved away from what can be called "traditional" Fieldwork (such as geological and biological surveying and sample collection) it can include for example:

- Engineering Department staff working on the London Cross Rail project;
- Judge Business School running courses in India;
- POLIS mature students working with Non-Governmental Organisations in areas of the world that are politically unstable;

- A researcher from the Scott Polar Research Institute living and working with the nomadic reindeer herders in Siberia.

Much of this work will be carried out by the individual working alone and it must only be permitted after a thorough and robust risk assessment has been completed and discussed with the individual. The risk assessment must take account of the nature of the work, the hostility and location of the site and the experience, health and physical fitness of the lone Fieldworker. Safe working procedures should be devised to reduce the risks from the foreseeable hazards to an acceptable level. The individual must be involved in the risk assessment process (examples in Appendix 1) and must be made aware as far as health and safety is concerned that they are still under the supervision of the academic supervisor though they will not be on site. Regular email or phone contact during the course of the Fieldwork is recommended eg once a week or as situations change.

Departments/Institutions must formulate clear guidelines on the scope of the activities that may be undertaken alone including leisure recreation activities such as open water swimming or mountain climbing and travel to non-work locations. These should include the types of terrain where these may take place, the supervisory arrangements (including arrangements to determine the whereabouts of the lone Fieldworker) emergency plans in case of failure to check in, and the training and experience required.

Because a lone Fieldworker may be at greater risk than a group, good and effective means of communication must be planned and established prior to the person's departure as part of the risk assessment process. Checks should be made on lone Fieldworkers at the frequency and means determined in the risk assessment and always every week. They should ensure that their daily itineraries are known locally (eg local: accommodation, University or Consulate) to their on-site supervisor and that the same responsible person will raise the alarm if they fail to return at the end of their specified working period.

Personal injury and the possibility of exhaustion or hypothermia should be considered during the risk assessment. High risks of such and other hazards would normally suggest that lone working is not advisable, such as exposure to kidnap or a targeted attack.

(c) Training

All Heads of Department, Supervisors and lone workers must be adequately trained to carry out risk assessments.

It is important that personnel are adequately trained in the **skills required for Fieldwork** before they carry out the Fieldwork. Heads of Departments and Institutions must be satisfied this is adequate and appropriate for the work being undertaken and that those providing the training are competent to do so.

The training of leaders is particularly important and for some activities it may be appropriate to seek **formal qualifications** eg in mountain leadership beyond those directly connected with the work itself. Where groups work in remote locations at least 2 supervising members must be appropriately trained in **first aid**. If the expedition is a long term one or in a particularly remote environment then consideration should be given to training all group members in first aid, survival and rescue technique. At least one other member should be qualified to take over should the leader become incapacitated and at least one reserve driver should be included in the party.

Lone Fieldworkers must be adequately trained in survival techniques. Further relevant training should be identified in the risk assessment and carried out in advance of the fieldwork. This could include some level of travel security training.

(d) Conduct of Fieldwork

Itineraries

Itineraries must be planned carefully and adequate time must be allowed to meet objectives while allowing for regular breaks. Walking pace and loads carried must be matched to the physical capabilities and fitness of the participants. An experienced person should be at the rear of a party to watch for stragglers. Leaders will need to be especially vigilant in hostile terrain (snow slopes, glaciers, tidal estuaries, mud flats) or where the participants are inexperienced. They should be alert to sudden weather changes such as tropical storms or katabatic winds, and ensure the participants are adequately equipped. If skis, snow shoes, ice axes, crampons, ropes or other specialised items are needed, participants must be adequately trained in their use and importantly competent in using them.

Walkers on roads should face the traffic and wear items of fluorescent clothing by day and reflective clothing at night. A path should be used if available. They should also display white lights to the front and red lights to the rear of the group.

Use of Transport

Vehicles, boats and aircraft may all be needed on Field trips particularly in remote areas. The appropriate method of transport should be chosen following the risk assessment with additional procedures put in place to ensure the risks are reduced as far as possible.

Transport must be properly maintained in compliance with relevant national regulations. In some cases back up transport will need to be available and sufficient spare parts carried to meet foreseeable incidents.

Consideration of curfews and not travelling on roads after dark in places where infrastructure and driving ability are poor or where security issues have been identified.

Drivers or pilots must comply with relevant national regulations and must possess appropriate licences and be in a fit state to drive or fly (if any doubts concerning fatigue, alcohol or drug misuse the trip must be postponed). Local traffic rules must be observed and seat belts used. On water, navigational rules and conventions must be observed and an adequate look out maintained. Fieldworkers should be particularly careful, when using local informal commercial services, that boats or small ships are not dangerously overloaded and should disembark if they have concerns that there is insufficient control over numbers of passengers or freight.

Security Training

Security training should be considered dependent on the level of risk of the country travelling to

- Basic level training for low risk locations (including how to be risk aware)
- Personal security for medium risk locations
- Hostile environment training (more in depth with scenarios) for high and severe risk locations and lone workers

We recommend no travel on the airlines on the EU banned airline list. This will not include all local airlines so advice should be sought locally on which airlines are safest to use.

http://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/safety/air-ban/index_en.htm

(e) Equipment

Equipment must be suitable for the conditions of use and should comply with relevant British, European or International standards where appropriate. In the case of hired or loaned equipment it will be necessary to seek confirmation that it complies with such standards, has been properly maintained and has the appropriate insurance. Items essential for survival such as emergency survival equipment, should be duplicated and where practicable transported separately.

Safety equipment must be checked and tested before use and at appropriate predetermined intervals during the Fieldwork eg diving or climbing equipment. Schemes of examination may need to be drawn up and inspections made by a suitably qualified person. Damaged equipment must be suitably repaired or taken out of service.

Firearms and other items requiring licences such as some types of flare must be only used by suitably licensed persons, and stored safely and securely.

Personal clothing and personal protective equipment (PPE)

All participants must wear adequate and appropriate protective clothing. PPE should comply with appropriate standards where practicable, should be checked regularly, maintained in a good condition and worn correctly.

Depending on the location, environment and nature of Fieldwork the following PPE should be considered

- Sun protective clothing
- Insect protective clothing including both physical barrier and insecticidal-impregnated clothing and bednets
- Warm/weatherproof for cold/wet conditions
- Appropriate footwear
- Gloves
- Safety helmets
- Eye/face protection
- Hearing protection
- Respiratory protection
- High visibility clothing
- Wet suits/life jackets, immersion suits

Those traveling abroad should familiarise themselves with the local dress codes and culture, particularly in areas of political and religious sensitivity and as far as practical comply with local dress code.

(f) Hazardous substances

Adequate and appropriate risk assessments including sufficient arrangements for their control must be made for all hazardous substances such as explosives, chemical and biological hazards or radioactive materials used in Fieldwork. Hazards incidental to the work undertaken or site visits must also be assessed and controlled such as taking samples from or near rivers might entail exposure to harmful microorganisms such as leptospirosis. Hazardous substances must be handled, so far as reasonably practicable with the same degree of safety that might be expected in a laboratory and where practicable hazards should be eliminated or reduced by substituting far less harmful substances. They must be disposed of safely in accordance with local legislation.

(g) Excavations and Boreholes

Excavations must be carefully planned and made by competent persons, protected against collapse and inspected regularly. Care must be taken to avoid hazards from underground services and spoil tips, sites must be adequately cordoned off and appropriate warning signs displayed. Risk assessments should take account of any dangers from toxic or flammable gases or oxygen depletion. Visitors to such sites must be supplied with adequate safety information and personal protective material ('PPE').

(h) Manual handling

Carrying of any loads must be matched to the person's physical ability and fitness. Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid foreseeable risk of injury a specific manual handling risk assessment must be completed and a safe system of work implemented.

(i) Mechanical handling

Operators of cranes and hoists must be trained in the correct lifting and slinging techniques. Lifting equipment must be suitable for the task, inspected as necessary by competent persons and safe working loads not exceeded.

(j) Local conditions

The effect of reasonably foreseeable weather conditions should have been considered as part of the risk assessment and up to date weather forecasts obtained where practicable. A wide range of factors that are only apparent on site may require a re-assessment of risks or changes to the control measures. Risk assessments must be reviewed and updated if necessary, this should include localised disaster caused by environmental factors eg landslides, localised flooding.

See Appendix 4, Local conditions, some things to consider.

(k) Personal safety and security

Theft, vandalism and violent crime can be a problem in both remote and urban areas. Hazards to particularly vulnerable Fieldworkers, such as those working alone, should be considered carefully. Risk assessments should consider the following control measures:

- Pre visit site checks
- Working in pairs (or no lone working)
- Security locks on vehicles, buildings, stores
- Anti-theft alarms
- Personal alarms
- Mobile phones, satellite phones*, two way radios
- Emergency contact details readily available
- Training in dealing with aggression and kidnap, mugging, assault (physical and sexual)
- Not walking places alone
- Familiarity with local customs and dress codes
- Monitoring and reporting in systems

*Some countries have very strict regulations on satellite phones, check before travelling!

(l) Leisure time

Many University staff, students and researchers who undertake Fieldwork are usually outdoor enthusiasts and have interests in activities such as mountain walking, climbing,

open water swimming, skiing, canoeing etc and are likely to want to pursue their activities during any leisure time. This should be considered as part of the risk assessment process.

Members of all Fieldwork groups should be made aware that they are regarded as representatives of the University at all times and any dangerous, unsociable or offensive behaviour will reflect badly on it. Departments and Institutions should consider drawing up a code of conduct for Fieldwork that covers leisure activities. Insurance cover of all activities should be checked and exclusions highlighted.

(m) Catering

Organisers should aim to provide a wholesome balanced and varied diet, taking account of any individual special dietary needs. Every effort should be made to maintain adequate hygiene, even though this may be difficult. Ideally Fieldwork cooks should have a food hygiene qualification. Local foods should be selected carefully and high risk foods avoided. Foods should be stored as to minimise the risk of contamination and prepared in a hygienic manner as possible keeping preparation areas as clean as practicable.

People with skin, nose, throat or vomiting/bowel infections should not prepare food. An adequate supply of potable water must be available. If necessary, water should be purified by boiling, ultra-filtration or use of chemical treatments. If in doubt only drink unopened bottled water.

(n) Health and well being

Participants should receive adequate instruction on the likely health risks associated with the work and particular attention should be given to

- Environmental hazards such as hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration, altitude sickness, sunburn
- Avoidance of food poisoning eg not eating high risk foods
- Microbiological hazards
- Insect and animal bites
- Some plants
- Basic personal hygiene and foot care
- Chemical hazards
- Carbon monoxide
- Use of insect repellents

Organisers of Fieldwork must give careful consideration to the maintenance of the health of participants and where necessary the advice of the University Occupational Health Service must be sought. Participants should be asked to declare whether they knowingly suffer from any disability, mobility problem, or any medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disease, mental health conditions, vertigo or taking certain medications that could possibly compromise their health and safety or that of others. When on Field trips, it will be useful if individuals with pre-existing conditions have written details of their condition, treatment and medical contacts.

The risk assessment is the key, and should consider the activities undertaken, the work environment, the nature of the medical condition (eg its severity, degree of control and functional impact) and the remoteness of the Fieldwork activity (including access to medical assistance). Ideally an individual's treating Doctor is best placed to provide guidance and advice on their medical condition, mobility problem or disability, but they will not always be aware of the demands of the Fieldwork.

Every effort should be made for everyone to participate, but it may sometimes be necessary, after discussion with the University Occupational Health Service and other relevant parties to defer an individual's trip or to make exclusions. Activities may be more strenuous than participants are used to and organisers should ensure that as far as reasonably practicable, the participants intending to take part are sufficiently fit. If necessary they should be encouraged to improve their fitness levels.

(o) Immunisation

Advice should be sought as soon as possible after the Fieldwork trip has been agreed – see University's Occupational Health Service website <http://www.oh.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

Note: immunisation against tetanus is recommended for all those undertaking traditional Fieldwork involving manual tasks involving soils and animals.

Medical advice on the immunisation requirements for overseas travel for employees and eligible groups should be sought from the University's Occupational Health Service. For individuals from non-eligible groups, advice may be obtained from general practices and private travel clinics.

(p) Pregnancy

Pregnancy, of itself, should not stop the individual going on a Fieldwork trip and the risk assessment should consider in detail what control measures will need to be implemented. In an ever changing world, infectious diseases can spread very quickly and the person should consider all the information available to them at the time of planning the work (eg the spread of Zika virus in South America in 2016). Advice should be sought from the persons' GP and the University's Occupational Health Service.

(q) Dental Health

Individuals are strongly advised to have a dental check-up before undertaking any Fieldwork trips.

(r) Injury and illness in the field

In the field relatively trivial injuries or conditions may become serious if not treated and leaders should be alert for signs of illness, injury or fatigue in the party. Prompt medical attention must be sought and Fieldworkers should be aware of the nearest healthcare facilities. Participants on trips abroad should be advised of the need to obtain adequate medical insurance especially for trips to the USA. For visits within the EU Fieldworkers should carry a current European Health Service card.

(s) Accommodation

Only recognised or recommended accommodation should be used, hotels, University accommodation and known Fieldwork sites. As of June 2016: AirBnB should not be used for University work purposes due to the lack of health and safety regulation of the accommodation and other inherent risks.

8. Emergency Action

(a) First Aid

Individuals should be encouraged to carry their own personal first aid kit at all times.

An appropriate level of first aid cover should also be provided for the whole group. This should be identified in the risk assessment taking into account the nature of the work and the location.

Every group carrying out Fieldwork should have one supervisor who has an approved first aid certificate and if appropriate a more specialist qualification such as Mountain First Aid Course certificate. Every lone Fieldworker must be first aid trained.

(b) Accident and incident procedures

The Fieldwork leader is responsible for organising incident procedures and ensuring all members of the group are aware of them. There needs to be a clear action plan for dealing with a serious accident which should include

- Making the area safe
- Attending the injured person
- Keep the number of persons required to help to a minimum
- Withdraw the remainder to a safe place if conditions are dangerous or may deteriorate
- Send for help if necessary and ensure that the emergency services are given an exact location by GPS co-ordinates or map reference
- Warn others of the danger
- Inform the department
- Prohibition by all in the party of using social network sites
- Do not discuss with anyone except the emergency services or University staff
- What to do in the event of a road traffic accident
- Actions and response in the event of assault or sexual assault
- Actions in the event of arrest, detention and kidnap
- Actions in the event of a crowd/riot situation
- Actions in the event of crossfire or bombing
- Actions in the event of a significant deterioration in security eg a coup

(c) Accident and incident reporting

All accidents, illnesses or work related illness must be reported and a report sent to the University Safety Office. Please see the link:
<http://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/subjects/accidents-incidents>

9. Insurance

The University holds legal liability policies relevant to Fieldwork activities: Employers Liability, which covers staff acting in the course of their employment (in respect of any death or injury they might suffer for which the University is liable in law) and Public Liability which covers others. These policies will indemnify the University and those acting on its behalf against any third party claims for damages arising from death, personal injury or third party property damage where there is liability at law.

Those travelling abroad for a University purpose should also register with the University's travel insurance <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/insurance/travel/>

An appropriate risk assessment must be completed as well as compliance with University Safety Policy and travel advice notices issued by the FCO.

The risk assessment should be reviewed if there are changes in the nature of the Fieldwork. Failure to do so may result in the insurance policy lapsing.

10. Monitoring and review

A fully effective system for managing Fieldwork requires regular review of procedures at least once a year so that lessons can be learned from experience and working practices improved. The following should be considered

- (a) If something went wrong, why did it?
- (b) Were adequate advance plans and preparations made for the work?
- (c) Were all hazards effectively anticipated and were adequate precautions taken to control any risks that arose?
- (d) Do any changes need to be made to improve health and safety on similar projects in the future?

11. Further reading and advice

Lots of information is readily available on the internet but Departments and Institutions planning and managing Fieldwork on an annual basis may find it useful to have copies of the following in (a) and looking at the websites in (b).

(a)

1. The Oxford Handbook of Expedition and Wilderness Medicine 2nd Edition April 2015
www.oup.com
2. First Aid and Wilderness Medicine ISBN 978 1 85284 500 1 Cicerone Reprint 2008 with amendments
3. Safety on Mountains. British Mountaineering Council www.thebmc.co.uk
4. Code of Practice for the Safety of the Social Researcher. Social Research Association www.the-sra.org.uk
5. Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork. Universities and Colleges Employers Association www.ucea.ac.uk
6. BS 8848 2014. Specification for the provision of visits, Fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities outside the UK. BSI Standards Publication
7. Safety First. A safety security handbook for aid workers Shaun Bickley 2010
8. University Guidance for Staff Working Overseas
www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/overseas-working

(b)

1. Safer Edge www.saferedge.com
2. Key Travel www.keytravel.com
3. Royal Sun Alliance www.rsagroup.com

Appendix 1

A. Risk Assessment form and Guidance

B. Examples of Risk Assessments

1. Earth Sciences
 - (i) Conference in Tehran
 - (ii) Arran 2015

2. Macdonald Institute for Archaeological Research
Kazakistan and China

3. Social Anthropology
Somaliland

4. Geography
Barrington UK

5. Ethnographic Research
Democratic Republic of Congo

6. Department of Archaeology
Suakin Project

7. Scott Polar Research Institute
Greenland

Appendix 2

Fieldwork Abroad – Audit Check List

Appendix 3

Aide memoire for all who travel - Tips and considerations
Travel Abroad Advice www.gov.uk/browse/abroad/travel-abroad

Appendix 4

Local conditions to consider



Occupational Health & Safety Service
Safety Office
Greenwich House
Maddingley Road
Cambridge CB3 0TX

Tel: 01223 333301
Fax: 01223 330256
safety@admin.cam.ac.uk
<http://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

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