

Offsite Educational Activities Policy

Purpose

This policy is designed to ensure as far as possible that offsite activities arranged or sponsored by the London Interdisciplinary School (LIS) happen safely and without any incident or injury occurring to participants or others.

The guidance explains what LIS requires organisers to consider before any offsite educational activity is undertaken.

Background - Risks and Liabilities

If an incident were to occur during an offsite activity, criminal or civil action may be taken against the participants, organiser or LIS.

LIS has a legal responsibility to its staff and a legal duty of care for its students and members of the public under the Health and Safety at Work Act. It also has an obligation to ensure that any third-party provider has considered the health and safety impact of its activities and acted to manage this accordingly.

All employees have a responsibility under law to follow instructions provided for health and safety by the employer and to act sensibly to protect their own health and safety and that of others.

Definition and Scope

This policy is intended to cover any work carried out off campus for educational purposes where the University retains responsibility for the health and safety of the participants, other than activities falling within the definition of 'research' as defined by the Research Ethics Policy and Procedure.

This includes activities such as museum, gallery, farm or laboratory visits, educational visits to industrial or business premises, and activities that may be associated with the term 'fieldwork' (such as interviewing people, conducting surveys, making systematic observations or taking measurements) but are not part of a formal research project.

Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for ensuring that suitable management systems are in place to support the safe conduct of offsite activities lies with the Executive Committee and ultimately with the Registrar.

- **The Director of Teaching and Learning (DT&L)** has overall responsibility for health and safety in relation to teaching and learning activities, including offsite activities. It is usual for the DT&L to delegate the practical management of all aspects of offsite visits, including the health and safety requirements, to the activity leader. This would normally be the module leader or, in the case of a discrete 'disciplinary perspective' (DP) within a module, the DP leader. In these cases the DT&L must be sure that the activity leader is a suitable person to carry out that role, through experience and appropriate training (competence).
- **The Activity Leader** is responsible for the overall supervision of the offsite activity. There should only be one leader per activity, however they may appoint a leadership team and allocate responsibilities appropriately in this team. They must ensure that health or safety issues are considered and that any precautions required are put in place, communicated to all participants and are adhered to for the

duration of the activity. Levels of supervision need to be assessed as appropriate for the activity and environment and there needs to be the potential to change this with a fluid situation. This will include, if necessary, ceasing the activity if it cannot be completed safely. The activity leader must be explicitly empowered to discharge these responsibilities and to implement emergency or contingency plans where needed.

- **Participants** must ensure they understand and comply with any instruction given to them by an activity leader or their deputy, as well as reporting any potential hazard. They must accept responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by them. All students should be aware that the School's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure applies to all off-site activities.
- **The home agent** should be a member of staff based in the department (usually the Faculty Manager or their deputy) who will hold the information about where the fieldwork is being carried out, the names of all participants and their next of kin, contact details, and if necessary their passport numbers. A contact number for the home agent should be available for 24/7 use by the activity leader or as an emergency contact by relevant services.
- **Individual members of staff** carrying out work or travel alone are responsible for taking appropriate care in their activities. An emergency contact as home agent should also be provided who is available to provide assistance if needed. In some high-risk activities, this may need to be in a proactive position whereby if the individual does not check in at a certain time an emergency process will need to be activated.
- **A third party provider** may be used to provide some or all of the activities. If so, the activity leader must ensure that they conform with legal requirements and have in place a full health and safety policy and relevant, suitable and sufficient risk assessments. Suitable public liability insurance must be in place and checks must be made to ensure that it is valid for the duration and provides sufficient cover for the activity.

Approvals Process

In order to ensure that all offsite activities are approved before commencement, the activity leader should complete all the above actions and document the risk assessment using the School's template. If they are happy that the work can commence, they should pass a summary of the findings and a copy of the assessment to the DT&L for approval.

If the DTL feels that the proposed offsite activity is high risk and should not be approved as it stands, they can either (a) request amendments to the risk assessment; (b) consult the Registrar before granting approval; or (c) in exceptional circumstances, submit the proposal to be reviewed by the Research Ethics Panel at its next meeting.



Version Control

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Version Control			
Version	Author	Date	Brief summary of changes
1	Ash Jay Brockwell	27/10/2021	Original document (approved RWG 27/10/2021)
2	Andrew Redford	11/11/2021	Minor change to include reference to Code of Conduct (approved RWG Chair's action 15/11/2021)