



Health and Safety
Field Trips

Policy

Field trips are to be planned and undertaken in accordance with this policy.

Purpose

To ensure the safety of all persons engaged in field activity, where that activity involves travel to and from a destination away from campus.

Scope

Field activities vary in their nature and duration, and are difficult to categorise, however this policy is intended to provide guidelines for compliance with the requirements of the Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1992.

Applicable Legislation

Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1992

Procedure

It is not possible to cover all situations in this policy, however organisers and supervisors must assess any field activity in light of this policy and if necessary develop more specific detailed procedures, which must be documented and promulgated extensively.

Approval of Field Activities – The Head of Department is to approve the field activity and must ensure that adequate consideration is given to aspects of health and safety. The responsibility for safe conduct of the activity rests with the designated supervisor.

Accident Reporting – All accidents and injuries occurring in the field must be reported to the activity supervisor and an accident/incident report completed.

Alcohol and Drugs – All persons engaged in field activities have a responsibility to ensure that they are not, through the consumption of alcohol or drug, in a state that may endanger themselves or any other person.

After Hours – The safety of students “after hours” can only be determined by assessing the circumstances in each situation. Supervisors are to be aware that there is a significantly greater responsibility in remote or isolated areas than when in a built up area. In some circumstances it may be advisable for students not to leave the campsite.

Emergency Procedures – The supervisor of the field activity is to ensure that correct and immediate action can be taken in the event of injury or other unforeseen emergency. They must ensure the well-being of the rest of the group, obtain any necessary assistance and make contact with the relevant personal or aid authorities.

Organisers of field activities - Plan strategies for dealing with emergencies. The following may act as a guide:

- The supervisor should know the whereabouts of the local emergency and support agencies such as police, ambulance, Department of Conservation and Mountain Safety, their contact numbers and/or radio call-signs.
- An emergency contact should be available at all times so immediate contact can be made in an emergency.
- The names, and contact phone numbers of all group members should be known by the contact person along with full details of the location of the activity and methods of travel.
- In remote areas, the itinerary and emergency contact person should be made known to the local police or DOC Ranger.
- The use of portable radios or cellphones should be considered subject to the availability to recharge batteries. If such equipment is carried, then all members of the party must be trained in the proper use and routines.
- Escape plans should be formulated during the activity planning stage to allow withdrawal of the group or individuals in the event of injury, illness, forest fire or downturn in weather conditions.

Equipment - Subject to the nature of the field activity, there may be a requirement for specific safety equipment such as life jackets, wet weather gear or similar. Such equipment must be of good quality (an approved design where applicable) and must be in good repair. Participants in the activity must be instructed in the use and care of any special equipment. Party members are to ensure that they have adequate clothing to meet any contingencies.

Medical – The supervisor is to be aware of any special medical conditions relating to party members, and any specific medications or treatments for those conditions. Allergies are to be especially noted.

First Aid – Organisers of field activities are to assess whether a fully qualified first aider is to be included in the party. When making this assessment the nature of the activity and proximity to outside assistance is to be considered. A suitably stocked first aid kit (University of Auckland First Response Kit) is to be carried, irrespective of the decision to include or not a qualified first aider. The contents of the kit, including a remote location module, are listed as Appendix A. Arrangements for transportation to medical assistance should be made at the activity planning stage.

Non-University Staff – From time to time non-University persons may be invited to participate in field activities. Such participation may only occur after approval by the Head of Department organising the activity. Such participants are to be briefed on all requirements and treated as though they were students or staff of the University.

Permits – Permits may be required for some activities such as open fires in forest areas, or to gain access to restricted areas. Obtaining such permits is the responsibility of the field activity organiser.

Essential Information – The activity supervisor is to ensure that the appropriate information is available to all concerned parties. Included in this information notice are to be the following items:

- Date, time and duration of the field activity
- Transport arrangements
- Medical and first aid requirements and procedures
- Staff and student responsibilities and obligations
- Essential safety and personal equipment
- Vaccinations, passport information
- Personal needs list (special clothing, medication, etc)
- Catering details
- Accommodation details
- Smoking rules
- Alcohol and drug rules
- Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment
- Procedures for dealing with and reporting on incidents and/or injuries

Such information notices should incorporate a recognition form that *each* member of the field party can formally acknowledge. This is also the form where individuals *shall* enter essential personal details such as allergies, medication, phobias, contact numbers etc.

Remote Field Activity – “Remote” is a flexible concept.

- If emergency or medical support is more than one hour away on foot, then the location should be considered remote.
- The itinerary, a location map and a list of party members should be left with a nominated contact person.
- Persons working in remote areas should establish a regular communication procedure with the nominated contact person. Where possible radio communication should be used, and all party members should be trained in the correct operating procedures. Organisers of the remote field activities should establish and note the location of any “dead spots” where radio transmission is not possible or intermittent.

Vehicles – Vehicles to be used on field activity are only to be driven by staff with the licence classification appropriate for the type of vehicle and number of passengers. No alcohol or drugs are to be consumed while the driver is in control of the vehicle.

Monitoring

- De-brief following each trip
- Annual hazard review

Approved:
Vice Chancellor