

Human Resources – Health and Safety

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| Protocol: University Field Activities |  |

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**Approved By**: Health & Safety

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# Introduction

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| **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015** | Field activities vary in their nature and duration and are difficult to categorise. This protocol and associated documents are intended to:   * provide a minimum **framework** for the safe conduct of field activities * assist Departments/Schools to comply with the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/hswa) and its amendments.   Within this framework, Departments/Schools must document and operate their own field activity induction/training and reporting of safe return procedures. These procedures must be appropriate and relevant to the Department/School’s own goals and objectives, and the educational, and health and safety needs of students and staff.  **Note**:Department/School also refers to Service Unit. Head of Department/School also refers to Service Unit Director. |
| **Principles** | The following principles guide this protocol:   * Field activities extend and enrich classroom teaching and learning; * Field activities are one of the distinctive characteristics of study and an integral part of research at the University of Canterbury; * The safety of staff, visitors and students is of paramount importance; * An assessment of the risks of the proposed field activity will be undertaken; * Field activities will be carried out in a manner which is environmentally sustainable; * The expectations and responsibilities of staff, visitors and students are clear, and accepted by all. |

# Definitions

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| **Activity Leader** | Person with authority to make decisions on field activities. If a person is undertaking a field activity on their own, then they are the activity leader. |
| **Assistant Activity Leader(s)** | Person or persons to whom the activity leader delegates responsibility for a particular task or tasks during the field activity. |
| **Campus** | All University of Canterbury properties, including field stations, vehicles and boats owned, or controlled, by the University of Canterbury. |
| **Course Coordinator** | Academic staff member who has overall responsibility for a course. |
| **Deputy Activity Leader** | Person who will take responsibility for the field activity if the leader is incapacitated. |
| **Field activity** | Teaching, learning, educational tours or research conducted outside a university classroom, library or laboratory. Field activities will usually be at least partially outdoors and can include:   * visits to University of Canterbury field stations * boat, river and marine activities * mountains and bush activities * roadway and roadside activities * climbing, abseiling and diving * visits to quarries and mines * manufacturer, business and factory visits * professional practice * international travel, e.g. study tours, research * museum, gallery, law courts and cultural site visits * independent field research by staff/students at the direction of a staff member * conferences or social activities:   + attended as part of official University of Canterbury duties   + organised or funded by the University of Canterbury. |
| **Hazard identification** | Recognition of the potential for an activity to cause harm to human health, property or the environment. |
| **High risk activity** | Entry into uncontrolled environments or activities involving specialist equipment or techniques, e.g. alpine, camping, boats, aircraft, river, marine, mountain and bush, volcanoes, roadway and roadside, climbing, abseiling, diving. |
| **Participant** | A person who participates in a field activity, including staff and visitors. |
| **Rahui** | To put in place a temporary prohibition, closed season, ban, or reserve for reasons of conservation or tapu. A rahui is marked by a visible sign such as a post. |
| **Risk** | An external influence which may affect the progress or success of an activity, but over which the activity leader has little or no control. Risks are also the potential adverse consequences of a hazard and are assessed in terms of their severity and likelihood. |
| **Staff member** | Includes academic, technical and general staff and postgraduate students employed at the University of Canterbury on a permanent or temporary basis. |
| **Student** | A person enrolled in a course at the University of Canterbury. |
| **Visitors** | Visitors to the University or University property, e.g. Erskine visitors, academic staff on exchange, Crown Research Institute scientists working in collaboration with University staff, contractors, school students or members of the public using field stations. |
| **Volunteer or support person** | A person who assists staff and/or students in a field activity and who does not expect or receive any reward for the assistance provided.  \* Noted as “others” in the HSWA 2015. |
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# General Statements

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| **Scope** | This protocol applies to all field activities, under the general control of the University of Canterbury, which involve staff and/or students as part of a University course, research and/or programme requirements.  As field activities are varied, may range in duration from several hours to several weeks, and may involve an element of risk, this protocol describes the minimum safety requirements for field activities. |
| **Responsibility** | Responsibility for the development of additional field activity safety procedures, induction and training within a Department/School lies with the Head of that Department/School.  Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of Departmental/School field activity safety procedures lies with the Head of that Department/School. |
| **Cost** | The cost of field activities has been stated in departmental Course Outlines and/or departmental publications, including web pages. |
| **Participation** | Unless there are significant health and safety obstacles, students are expected to participate in the course field activities.  Clear guidelines are given in Course Outlines regarding the consequences of non-attendance in field activities, both for those who may be unable to attend due to illness, bereavement or other critical circumstances, and those who do not attend for other reasons. |
| **Authority** | The field activity leader (or delegate) has the authority to instruct and/or make decisions for the group. For example, the activity leader may exclude participants from a field activity who, in their view, are not adequately prepared, or by their behaviour or other factors may put themselves or other participants at risk and/or the University into disrepute.  In an emergency situation, the lead agency, e.g. Fire Service, Police, St John, will give direction and have authority. |
| **International travel** | Staff and students travelling overseas to undertake field activities should refer to the [University Travel](https://intranet.canterbury.ac.nz/travel/) webpage and to the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/) (<https://safetravel.govt.nz/>) for further information on restrictions and what to do in the event of being involved in an emergency overseas. **Participants must contact the Risk Manager, Vice Chancellors office when organising.** |
| **Field activities on external premises/sites** | University of Canterbury field activity leader/s and participants entering another organisation’s or individual’s premises, property or environment remain subject to the requirements of this protocol but are also subject to the health and safety policy of that organisation or relating to those premises. On arrival at the external premises/sites, field activity leader/s and participants are reminded to seek information and advice about known hazards. |

# Roles and responsibilities

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| **Activity Leader** | | Competent leadership and careful planning are pre-requisites for successful field activities. In particular, it is expected that the activity leader:   1. Must be on the field trip (or delegated assistant activity leader or deputy leader). 2. Is approved by their Manager/Head as having the required experience and technical skills to lead and participate in the field activities. For example, high risk, uncontrolled activities require the activity leader to be trained in outdoor safety, risk analysis management, outdoor first aid, and emergency management procedures or any other specialised tasks relevant to the field activity, e.g. 4WD, diving. 3. Registers for and attends relevant UC Health and Safety training courses as scheduled. 4. Must have read and ensure they understand the relevant UC policy and procedures and must be familiar with the field activity location and surrounding environment. 5. Must ensure the appropriate licenses and certification are obtained, for example:  * current vehicle registration and drivers’ licenses * permits to access public conservation estate * permission to access or cross private property, including permission from local iwi or runanga.  1. Must risk assess the field activity, apply suitable controls to remove/reduce the risk and plan an emergency response for all high risk field activities. 2. **Must prepare an appropriate field activity plan** and provide adequate resources. A Field Activity Plan must be completed and approved when field activities include:  * a high risk, uncontrolled environment and activities, e.g. camps, boats, river, marine, mountain and bush, roadway and roadside, climbing, abseiling, diving * any isolated or unaccompanied activity * travel beyond the city boundary and international travel.  1. May be required to liaise with the University Equity & Disability Service (EDS) to ensure students with disabilities can be assisted to participate safely in field activities. The activity leader, in consultation with EDS staff and the student, must decide if it is safe for a student to participate in a field activity or an alternative activity can be arranged. 2. Shall contact the Health and Safety Team if they have any concerns about a participant’s health or ability to complete the field activity. The Health and Safety Team will provide advice on the collection and release of health information in order to make appropriate decisions and provide support to the participant. 3. Must complete a Health Declaration and Consent form for their Manager/Head advising them of any medical condition they may have (including medication requirements) to enable the University to support them in conducting a safe field activity. 4. Must ensure all participants are aware of the nature of the field activity, are appropriately briefed and understand the hazards involved. 5. Will respect cultural values and ensure the preservation of species in accordance with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, e.g. participants are briefed on marae protocol, by not collecting specimens if a rahui is in place. 6. All participants must adhere to the Universities Code of Conduct. |
| **Deputy Activity Leader** | It is expected that the Deputy Activity Leader:   1. Is able to demonstrate the knowledge, experience and technical skills required to lead and participate in the field activities. For example, high risk, uncontrolled activities require competency in outdoor safety, risk analysis management, outdoor first aid, and emergency management procedures along with any other specialised skills relevant to the field activity. 2. Must have read and ensure they understand the relevant UC policy and procedures and must be familiar with the field activity location and surrounding environment. 3. Is able to assume the responsibilities of the Activity Leader, if required. | | |
| **Participant** | Participants have a responsibility to work safely during field activities and to provide the activity leader with all personal information relevant to the field activity. The participant must:   1. Comply with the instructions of the activity leader and obey all instructions. 2. Inform the activity leader of any relevant medical conditions and record these on the Field Activity Participant Consent form. This information allows the activity leader to plan for support should the participant be unable to manage their own medical condition during the field activity. 3. Provide the activity leader with health and emergency contact information.   If a participant fails to disclose relevant information, the University can take no responsibility for any consequences resulting from that lack of disclosure.   1. Bring and take their medication while on a field activity and, if travelling overseas, obtain any required documented permission to carry medicines. 2. Be adequately prepared for the field activity. 3. Behave acceptably at all times during field activities, including ‘after hours’, and comply with:  * Discipline Regulations * Code of Student Conduct * Campus Alcohol and Drug Policy * Harassment Policy * University Smokefree Policy   **Note**: failure to meet acceptable standards of behaviour may lead to dismissal from the field trip and could, thereby, result in failing the course and/or disciplinary action.   1. Participate in the course field activities unless there are significant health and safety obstacles. Students should discuss any particular requirements with the activity leader and the Equity and Disability Service in order to ensure their safe participation or to find out if an alternative learning experience/activity can be arranged. 2. Comply with the University of Canterbury property and equipment policies and procedures, including those of the Department/School. 3. Be responsible for their own equipment. | | |

# Related information

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| **University Policy** | * Privacy Policy of the University of Canterbury * Animal Ethics Committee: Code of Ethical Conduct * Campus Alcohol & Drug Policy * Code of Student Conduct * Field Stations Accommodation Policy * Human Ethics Committee (HEC): Principles and Guidelines * Smoke-free Policy * UC Code of Conduct * [University Travel](https://intranet.canterbury.ac.nz/travel/) web page – for guidance on safe travel, policy, benefits, emergencies, insurance etc. |
| **Health and Safety Website** | The following information on the Health and Safety Website supports this protocol:   * [Working and Teaching in the Field](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/health-and-safety/manage-hazards-and-risks/workteach-in-the-field/) * [Epipen Kit](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/health-and-safety/manage-hazards-and-risks/workteach-in-the-field/) * [Manage Hazards and Risks](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/health-and-safety/manage-hazards-and-risks/workteach-in-the-field/) * [Report an Event](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/health-and-safety/report-and-investigate-an-event/) * Investigate an Event * [Hazardous Work](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/about/health-and-safety/manage-hazards-and-risks/hazardous-work/)   See also   * [Equity and Disability Service](https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/equity-disability/) |
| **Other related procedures** | * Harassment Policy * [UC Emergency Management](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/emergency/?s=home) |
| **Legislation** | * [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/hswa) (and amendments). |