



**POLICY TYPE: Health and Safety**

<b>PROCEDURE TITLE: Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Procedure</b>	<b>PARENT POLICY: Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy</b> 5.H-2018
<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b> June 25, 2018	<b>DATE REVIEWED:</b>
<b>RESPONSIBILITY: VP Academic</b>	<b>AUTHORIZATION: Leadership Team</b>

## 1 Overview

The University supports and encourages students to engage in off-campus activities and travel and believes strongly in the benefits of a national and international approach to learning, research, scholarship and citizenship. The University also owes a duty of care to its students and must do its due diligence in supporting safe and enjoyable travel experiences. For this reason, a risk assessment is completed for all off-campus activities and travel involving students, and actions are required to help manage risks.

The responsibility for assessing risk and creating and implementing comprehensive plans to manage or mitigate those risks is shared by the traveler and the institution. While it is important to do our best to implement safe travel practices, it is also important that the process not be overly complex or time consuming and that it be supportive of all involved. With this in mind, a straightforward and easy to use *Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students* has been developed to guide individuals in assessing the risks and identifying appropriate actions to manage risks.

## 2 Process

All off-campus activities and travel involving students must follow the risk assessment process outlined below.

If the off-campus activity and travel involves one individual, that individual is responsible for following the risk assessment process. If the activity involves a group, the group leader is responsible for following the risk assessment process, taking into consideration the group as a whole. In most cases, there will be a person of authority, such as a faculty or staff member, who is the group leader and assessor. In cases where there is not, one of the student participants will act as the leader and assessor.

The assessor will:

## 2.1 Assess the Risk

Use Chart One in the *Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students* to assess the risks based on the category of student traveling, the kind of activity they will be doing, where they are traveling, and the method of transportation. The final Risk Level will be the highest risk level identified in **any** of the areas assessed.

## 2.2 Obtain Approval of the Risk Assessment

Obtain approval of the risk assessment. This is not intended to be an approval of the merits of the off-campus activity and travel. It is to verify that the risk assessment has been performed appropriately and that the planning of the off-campus activity and travel may proceed.

### 2.2.1 Risk Level Approvers

Assessed Risk Levels have an assigned Risk Level Approver as shown in the following table:

Risk Level	Risk Level Approver
Low-Risk	Director/Supervisor
Medium-Risk	Area VP
High-Risk	Area VP
Extreme-Risk	Area VP and President

### 2.2.2 Approval Requests

Complete the *Off-Campus Activity Risk Assessment Summary/Approval Form: FORM A* and submit to the Risk Level Approver.

As appropriate to the activity, approval requests may include additional detailed information regarding location, duration of travel, the activity being performed, and strategies to manage identified risks. Assessors may use existing approval mechanisms within their Faculties/Departments/Areas, **or** they may choose to use Risk Services' general forms (see Related Links section of this document) to supplement their approval request.

### 2.2.3 Approver's Response

- the approver may ask the assessor to revisit and resubmit any portion of the assessment if they conclude that it was not appropriately or adequately completed
- the approver may seek advice from others, such as The Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment, when deciding whether or not to provide approval; also, if the approver feels it necessary, he/she may escalate the level of approval required to a higher authority within the appropriate faculty, department or unit, and ultimately to the President
- the approver may require specific risk management strategies be developed and implemented

- the approver may choose not to approve the off-campus activity and travel to proceed if he/she believes the risks are unacceptable or unwarranted and cannot be reasonably managed. Appeals regarding a decision not to approve a risk assessment may be made to the appropriate Director/Supervisor, Chair, Dean or Vice-President. The President has the final authority.

**2.2.4 Risk Register**

Provide a copy of the approved *Off-Campus Activity Risk Assessment Summary and Approval Form: FORM A* to the Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment office to retain in the University's *Risk Register*.

**2.3 Complete the required actions identified for the assessed risk level prior to departure.**

Once the off-campus activity risk assessment has been approved, the required actions must be completed. Use Chart Two of the *Risk Assessment Matrix for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students* to determine the actions required for the assessed risk level of the activity. The Matrix actions are listed separately for each risk level in Chart Two, and a summary of their escalating requirements is noted below:

Risk Level	Escalating Actions Required
Low	Actions as listed in Chart Two
Medium	All of LOW actions <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiver required</li> <li>Employee Driver agreement for private and rental vehicles with student passengers (if needed)</li> </ul> If outside Canada: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with the Experiential Learning Coordinator and complete recommended pre-departure orientations</li> <li>Register with Government of Canada's Registration of Canadians Abroad</li> </ul>
High	All of the MEDIUM actions <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review insurance coverage regarding exclusions based on activities or location and consult Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment if exclusions apply</li> </ul>
Extreme	All of the HIGH actions <i>plus</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment to develop Risk Management Strategies</li> <li>Evacuation Procedure</li> </ul>

The University recognizes that there are many well established and recurring programs involving student travel and acknowledges the history and importance of these programs. Many of the required actions for the risk levels described in the *Risk Assessment Matrix* may be completed using forms developed by the

Department or Area planning the event. If you require additional forms in order to complete the required actions, please contact the Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment for assistance.

## 2.4 Confirm the Completed Required Actions

The Required Actions from Chart Two of the *Risk Assessment Matrix* are listed in the form of a checklist on the *Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Risk Management Confirmation Form: FORM B*.

### 2.4.1 Complete FORM B

Based on the final assigned risk level, **complete one of the corresponding sections** (Low, Medium, High, or Extreme) of FORM B and indicate whether actions identified in the *Risk Assessment Matrix* have been completed.

### 2.4.2 Sign and Submit FORM B

Sign the last page of Form B and submit the entire form to the Risk Level Approver. Be sure to attach any planning forms and documents the Approver may require in order to confirm that the required actions have been sufficiently completed.

### 2.4.3 Timeline for submission of Form B

For this policy, Form B must be submitted to the Risk Level Approver by a **minimum of 2 weeks** prior to the earlier of the following: departure date or committing University funds to the off-campus activity.

**For any activities involving international or plane travel, Form B must be submitted to the Risk Level Approver *before* the activity can be scheduled, timetabled, or advertised. Typically, this will be 8 months to 1 year prior to the activity.**

Please note: some departments may have earlier timelines. It is the assessor's responsibility to confirm the date required for submission of Form B to their Risk Level Approver.

### 2.4.4 Risk Register

Provide a copy of the approved *Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Risk Management Confirmation Form: FORM B* to the Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment to retain in the University's *Risk Register*.

## 2.5 Monitor Volatile Risk Factors

Monitor volatile risk factors including weather alerts and health & travel advisories or changes to itinerary or activities. Alert the Risk Level Approver of significant changes which may require revisions to the Assessed Risk Level. If the Risk Level escalates, repeat the above process with the new Risk Level's required actions and get approval from the new Risk Level Approver.

## 2.6 Post Activity Debrief

Following completion of the activity, the group leader shall conduct a post-activity debrief to identify any unanticipated risk exposures that were encountered and where applicable provide recommendations on way to improve risk management for off-campus activities.

## 3 Concessions for Programs and Recurring Activities

Some off-campus activities and travel programs may involve different domestic locations for each participant (e.g., co-op and practicum placements) or several trips within a period of time to different domestic locations (e.g., varsity athletics). In such cases, the risk assessment should be performed for the program as a whole, rather than for each individual placement or trip. However, individual risk assessments should be performed for instances that are unique or different from the rest of the program (e.g., domestic VS foreign location, office work VS field work).

Recurring off-campus activities and travel with a person of authority, such as a faculty or staff member as the leader, do not have to have a new risk assessment prior to each recurrence unless there has been a change to the category of student travelling, the type of activity being performed, the location, or the risks associated with any of these. If there has been a change of this nature, the leader will follow the full risk assessment process outlined above. Even if there was not a change of this nature, *the actions identified in the existing risk assessment must still be performed prior to each recurrence.*

## 4 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Off-Campus Activity	Activities and travel undertaken by a member of the University community and/or a pre-authorized participant that takes place away from the University's owned or leased properties for reasons related to the mandate of the University. This includes, but is not limited to, teaching programs, travel study, practicum placements, research, exchanges, conferences, seminars, and extra-curricular activities that involve the formal representation of the University by student ambassadors, such as varsity athletics and disciplined-based competitions.
St. Mary's University Community	for the purpose of this document, the St. Mary's University Community includes St. Mary's governors, faculty, staff and students
University	St. Mary's University

## 5 Related Policies, Procedures and Documents

- [St. Mary's University Safety Policy](#) (3G-2005)
- [St. Mary's University Travel & Hospitality Policy](#) (3J-2-13)
- [St. Mary's University Campus Integrity and Human Rights Policy](#) (4B-2007)
- [St. Mary's University Policy for Activities requiring Waivers and/or Health Information](#) (5D-2012)
- [St. Mary's University Expense Reimbursement Handbook](#)
- [St. Mary's University Emergency Response Plan](#)
- [StMU Standard Waiver Form](#)
- *St. Mary's University Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy*
- *St. Mary's University Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Risk Assessment Matrix: Charts One and Two*
- *St. Mary's University Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Risk Assessment Summary and Approval Form: FORM A*
- *St. Mary's University Off-Campus Activity Involving Students Risk Management Confirmation Form: FORM B*

### 5.1 Acknowledgements

It is gratefully acknowledged that this Procedure is largely an adaptation of the [Off-Campus Activity and Travel Policy](#) of the University of Alberta. Research and use of various other policies and references include the following:

- [Managing the Risks: College and University International Education](#) Programs by Gallagher Higher Education Practice Group
- [Risk Management Guideline for the BC Public Sector](#), Province of British Columbia, 2012.
- University of Calgary: [International Travel Policy](#)
- Mount Royal University: [Off Campus Activity Safety Policy](#)
- CURIE bulletin: [Managing International Travel Risks for Faculty, Staff and Students](#)
- Currie Best Practices: [Best Practices for Students in International Travel Programs \(ITP\)](#)

## 6 Revision History

Date	Description of change	Sections	Person who entered revision (Position Title)	Person who Authorized the Revision (Position Title)

## Appendix A: Procedure Graphic

