

January 2025

Guidance on Managing Risks from Travel, Fieldwork and Work Away

HSD089M (rev 6)

**This document replaced HSD039M & HSD055M in January 2019.
Please destroy all copies of previous guidance documents**

Document History

Date	Ref	What was changed?	Approved by
January 2019	-	Document issued and replaced HSD039M and HSD055M	HSEC
October 2019	rev 1	Document fully revised and simplified in line with comments from departments. Responsibility flowcharts and detailed table introduced. Title changed from “Guidance for Travel, Fieldwork and Work Away from Cambridge” as this guidance is concerned only with management of risks.	University Sub-Committee for Physical Safety
June 2021	rev 2	Document revised to reflect the change from the FCO to the FCDO (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office). Document revised to include COVID-19 related information and an amendment to the risk assessment process to contact the University COVID Helpdesk in the planning stages of travel.	SARAC
August 2021	rev 3	Document revised to reflect the change in Travel Insurance Provider and associated Healix travel Oracle risk website and App information	Andrea Eccles
April 2022	rev 4	Document revised to remove reference to the Covid-helpdesk requirement for planning travel. Document revised to include checks on requirements for entry with regard to Covid-19 vaccination status or testing.	Andrea Eccles
July 2022	rev 5	Document revised to make very minor amendments to the wording of the introduction section	The Safety Office and Legal Office
January 2025	rev 6	Document revised to include Peregrine Foresight for international travel and revision of SARAC section to include staff travel. Document revised to remove risk assessment templates and general guidance from appendices and signpost to further information.	Safety Office

Executive Summary

This guidance is provided to help with fulfilling the risk management duties of the University of Cambridge (UoC) under Health and Safety law¹ and UoC Health and Safety Policy². It should be read in conjunction with the UoC Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away³.

This document is applicable to any member of the University of Cambridge (when travelling on University business).

University responsibilities

We are committed to ensuring the safety and health of our employees, students and other persons working or studying as part of University business. We also have a legal duty to ensure the health and safety of our staff and students regardless of where they are, and to ensure they are protected from foreseeable risks.

How do we fulfil these duties in respect of travel away from University of Cambridge?

Travel away from University of Cambridge can be for a variety of reasons – to attend meetings or conferences, conduct research or study or do other work. For convenience all these are called ‘work away’ in this document. The University can only fulfil its legal duties (outlined above) if it ensures the risks involved are adequately considered and appropriately managed by departments together with people who are travelling/working away (called “traveller” in this document).

A summary of the risk assessment requirements is shown in Fig.1 section 2.5 below, and full details of responsibilities of the University, Head of Department, Managers and Supervisors, Risk assessment Approvers and Travellers are in Section 2.

For UK travel, the traveller will complete a basic form or survey, and an activity based risk assessment if undertaking research or fieldwork. For International travel, Peregrine Foresight will assign risk based on activity and country information. Elevated risk travel must be escalated to SARAC for review.

Each department must manage travel risks through:

- Knowing where the traveller is: for UK based travel, use a basic form or survey, and for International Travel, use Peregrine Travel.
- Reviewing and approving risk assessments staff and student International travel in Peregrine Travel
- In some cases, UK travel may require a risk assessment, i.e. fieldwork, which will be likewise reviewed and approved
- Remaining in contact with students, and staff working away for long periods, especially when high risks are identified.

Notes

1. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 - see: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>

2. University of Cambridge Health and Safety Policy – see: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/hsd016m.pdf>

3. Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away – see: https://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/approved_working_away_policy_and_procedures.pdf

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1 Introduction

The University of Cambridge is responsible in law and under its own Policy on Health and Safety, for managing the risks to its employees (staff), students and anyone else who is affected by its “undertaking”, that is, its business. The business of the University is teaching and research and any support activity that is done to facilitate these.

When a member of staff or registered student travels and/or works away from its premises on University or department business, the University of Cambridge retains its legal duty to ensure their health and safety, and must ensure that risks to its members are appropriately assessed and controlled. The University has a number of policies that cover these duties:

- [Health and Safety Policy](#) (outlines how the University reduces the risk to people and property to enable the University to operate effectively; to manage the University’s work without detriment to health and safety; to ensure governance arrangements are in place)
- [International working policy](#) (for staff; allows employees to carry out International Working without detriment to their health and safety or breach of legislation, including legal and financial obligations and potential costs arising from International Working)
- [Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away](#) (for students; to meet our duty of care to manage risks to the health and human safety; to ensure comprehensive, accessible, agile, and auditable processes and systems)

The University’s legal responsibility for managing these risks can be fulfilled only if we put in place measures to control risks identified through a “suitable and sufficient” risk assessment.

For urgent travel matters, contact University Security Control Centre on 01223 767444 (on internal landlines use 101). Security will liaise with the Chair of the University Silver Team.

Seek guidance from the Safety Office for non-urgent matters relating to risk assessment of emergency and contingency planning.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to offer guidance on managing risks of travel and work away, in compliance with the law and University policies listed above.

The law requires all employers to use a risk-based approach to the management of health and safety, which is met using Peregrine Foresight. This approach recognises that:

- The prime purpose of any work away is to provide learning and development experience or new opportunity for research and enable access to wide ranging opportunities;
- Work away varies considerably and therefore each case must be considered individually;
- Each department must ensure completion and approval of a risk assessments using Peregrine Foresight for travel abroad or a departmental travel form or survey for UK travel.

If you are involved at the planning or approval stage of student or staff work away, or if you accompany students during their work away, it is your responsibility to follow this guidance and ensure they do too (Section 2.1). This applies to work away organisers, administrators, academic staff, and health and safety staff. You may find it beneficial to read the further guidance issued to those travelling.

University travel insurance is only valid when an approved Peregrine Foresight risk assessment is in place.

1.2 Scope

This guidance applies to all types of travel and work away in the UK and overseas on University business including, but not limited to:

Attending conferences and external meetings	Clinical placements i.e. extramural study	Organised trips/ fieldtrips for staff and/or students
Practical research at other institutions	Longer term overseas working by staff	Student Summer activity (IF required by their course)
Staff working collaboratively with external organisations	Student research/industrial placements at other institutions	Collection of data or samples in the field
Team building trips away from Cambridge	Mandatory work placements/ internships, including student year abroad	Use of facilities at other organisations

Exclusions include permanent overseas working and PhD students writing up in their home countries.

This guidance does not cover legal, financial and insurance issues relating to work away for longer periods - please see the relevant policies in Section 1: Introduction.

The duty to manage travel risk applies to work away by both staff and students. There are minor differences in the way student travel is managed, and these are highlighted in this document.

1.3 Definitions

“Work Away” - This guidance uses the short-hand term ‘work away’ to refer to an authorised period spent away from the University of Cambridge where:

- A member of staff travels to locations other than University of Cambridge premises for any activity in connection with the business of a department or the University as a whole;
- A student undertakes work or study outside University of Cambridge premises - either as an integral part of their course, or where the student has justified the work as being sufficiently beneficial or considered essential to obtaining their degree;

“Work away” includes the period of physical travel to and from the location outside.

“Risk Assessment” is the systematic process of reviewing the work, the location of work away or destination and the characteristics of the individual proposing the work to:

- Identify significant hazards and determine what harm they could cause;
- Evaluate the level of risk;
- Determine the measures required to remove or adequately mitigate the risks.

“Traveller” in this document and University Insurance procedures means the staff (employee) or student member travelling and working away from Cambridge on University business, as a requirement of their work or study.

“Suitable and sufficient” is a term used in the Management of Health and Safety at Work and other regulations. It means that not only must all the relevant aspects of the risk be considered, but the detail of the risk assessment must be proportional to the potential impact of the harm and the likelihood of it being realised (i.e. the level of risk).

“Elevated risk” travel relates to risk assessment that are assigned as ‘extreme risk’ in Peregrine Foresight or ‘high risk’ UK travel, i.e. fieldwork that has activities with high risk impact and/or likelihood. All elevated risk travel must be escalated to SARAC for review after which advice on any additional control measures needed prior to approval will be shared.

2 Responsibilities and Procedure

Responsibility for overseeing travel risk assessments is devolved to departments, Institutes and Faculties (jointly called “departments” in this document) that administer travel and work away. These responsibilities are outlined in section 2.1. Colleges are not required to sign off travel risk assessments, but their input should be sought in completing the risk assessment (see 2.3).

2.1 Responsibilities

2.1.1 The University’s Responsibilities

Various members and sections of the University have responsibilities for managing travel risk:

The Education Committee:

- Review and update of the University [Policy to Safeguard Students Studying and Working Away](#).
- Ensure that the University captures dates and locations of student work away over 14 days through the CamSIS records systems.
- Establishing and operating the University Study Away Risk Assessment Committee (SARAC) to support departments by making final decisions on elevated risk travel assessments ensuring consistent risk management and removal of the responsibility for elevated risk decisions on a single individual.
 - SARAC must review all elevated risk assessments and accompanying documentation (supporting statement, academic merit of work away and/or evidence of training)
 - The committee will consult with departments, Colleges and/or experts, before making a final decision on such trips to ensure they are involved with the decision making process.

Human Resources will regularly review and update the [International Working Policy](#) for staff.

The University Insurance Section:

- Ensuring that adequate travel insurance is available for staff and graduate students travelling abroad. Undergraduate students are also covered for travel organised by the University, and essential for their course of study.
- Providing departments with access to web-based travel risk expertise ([Healix Travel Oracle App](#); insurance policy #ALZ193112) to help with the review process.

The Safety Office:

- Review and update of this Guidance document (HSD089M).
- Ensuring there is access to expert travel advice from an independent source (Safer Edge) to help SARAC and HoDs with the review process.
- Providing [training and guidance](#) for those filling in risk assessments and those that have been given responsibilities within departments for reviewing such assessments. Advice on risk assessment is available via email: travelriskassessment@admin.cam.ac.uk
- Having procedures in place to evacuate individuals from locations in emergency situations, either via the travel insurance policy or other sufficient contract.

The Registry’s Office is responsible for enabling the University Silver Team to deal with emergency situations that arise whilst University members are away from Cambridge.

The [University Disability Resource Centre](#) is responsible for providing additional help and support to all students who require it when planning for working away from Cambridge.

2.1.2 Responsibilities of the Head of Department

- Responsibility for accepting the level of risk involved with individual trips for those working on behalf of their department; however, some travel may need to be refused.
The University has the right to refuse any proposal to work away on grounds of health and safety. Peregrine Foresight allows for the approval of risk assessments and does not cover permission to travel, financial or ethical considerations.
- Implement an appropriate disciplinary action for individuals who fail to comply with the departmental procedure prior to the trip, or control measures whilst on the trip.

- You may delegate responsibilities to named or classes of individuals (e.g. DSOs, approvers, supervisors) to assess / review and approve travel and work away risk assessments, and carry out the tasks below. Ensure these individuals received the training provided by the University Safety Office.
- Ensure that work away plans are authorised in advance, following suitable review of risk assessment. The level of detail and time used in planning and assessment is proportionate to the level of risk.
- Guidance in place for hazards specific to work away in their department, i.e. fieldwork.
- People leading trips are appointed and competent to lead and deal with adverse or emergency conditions.
- Ensure that all Elevated Risk Travel Assessments are referred to the Study Away Risk Assessment Committee (SARAC) and that any further conditions or risk mitigations, including training imposed are adhered to by the department and/or the traveller.
- Where appropriate, involve the College when reviewing applications and risk assessments for work away. For travel notified via CamSIS approval system, Colleges are automatically given the opportunity to comment but for other trip types, a procedure for consultation should be in place.
- For higher risk travel, ensure the University's insurer's web based travel risk expert tool ([Healix Travel Oracle App](#)) is used to help with reviewing travel risk assessments and subsequently used to track overseas alerts.
- Check that suitable arrangements are in place to contact the traveller as appropriate to the trip, and that contact is maintained as determined by the risk assessment or if the situation changes, including contingency arrangements to re-establish communication with the traveller in case the contact requirements are not met.
- Be prepared to convene the Departmental Silver Team as per the Travel Incident Management Plan if required and elevate to the University Silver Team if necessary.
- Ensure the department maintains a securely held but readily accessible, up to date list of those conducting UK work away, including locations, contact details for the travellers and their emergency contacts.
- Inform the Helpdesk or the 24/7 Security team as per the Travel Incident Management Plan if conditions appear to worsen for an individual or if there is a failure in risk mitigation processes or compliance whilst away from Cambridge on an elevated risk trip. For lower risk trips, guidance is available through the Helpdesk.
- Be prepared to assist with the evacuation of any member of the department in emergency situations.
- Regularly review departmental travel for continual improvement of travel risk assessments and mitigations. If something went wrong, consider why this occurred, were adequate plans and preparation made, were reasonably foreseeable hazards anticipated and mitigation implemented, are there changes that could be made to future trips?

2.1.3 Responsibilities of People Managing Those Working Away

These could be (but are not limited to) Supervisors / Principal Investigators / Managers Nominees of HoDs and additionally for Students, College Director of Studies / College Tutor

- Familiarise yourself with the departmental procedure and the contents of this Guidance to effectively manage those applying to travel/work away. Ensure travellers comply with them and report any refusal to comply to HoD.
- Peregrine Foresight approvers will be responsible for signing off on travel risk assessment on behalf of the HoD. However, managers or supervisors should support travellers with writing of the risk assessment, especially for students and junior staff, fieldwork and/or elevated risk applications as they understand the proposed work, and know the person travelling. Ensure that the risk assessment is appropriately updated if changes occur. A new risk assessment may be required.

- Peregrine Foresight approvers are responsible for signing off on travel risk assessment on behalf of the HoD.
- Ensure that you understand the proposal, and that activities are relevant to the staff member's work or student's degree.
- Provide guidance to the traveller, including personal experience if relevant or direct them to resources including the Safety Office's [Peregrine Foresight guidance](#) and [Healix Travel Oracle App](#).
- For UK travel, keep an up to date list of all those you are responsible for who are working away, including locations, contact details of the travellers and their emergency (e.g. next of kin) contact details. Ensure these are securely held but easily accessible should they be required.
- Regularly check on the health and welfare of those you are responsible for whilst they are away. Highlight any concerns for these to the HoD (and for students, their College tutor) to address further if required.
- In emergency situations, be prepared to assist with the evacuation of any member of the department you are responsible for.

2.1.4 The Approver's Responsibilities

- Ensure you have the skills, experience and knowledge to review individual travel risk assessments; seek advice from the HoD/ nominated individual or the University Safety Office as required. Peregrine Foresight has options to share risk assessment between approvers or escalate a risk assessment for further review.
- Ensure that the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient for the travel proposed prior to approval. For each hazard identified the traveller should have included measures to eliminate or minimise the risk to an acceptable level. These control measures must include anything that is 'reasonably practicable'; thus, balancing the cost, time and effort of effective risk management against the actual level of risk.
- Ensure that all elevated risk travel assessments are referred to SARAC. Please include any comments, from yourself or a supervisor/manager, to assist with review.

2.1.5 The Traveller's Responsibilities

- Familiarise yourself with this document and cooperate with its requirements. Ensure your risk assessment is approved.
- Carry out a risk assessment and explore travel arrangements that minimise risks. Allow sufficient time to write a suitable risk assessment and to allow its thorough review. The amount of time spent on planning and the degree of detail recorded needs to be proportionate to the level of risk identified.
- Ensure that you consider if personal and/or protected characteristics may pose significant risks. Note: it is not mandatory to disclose these in your risk assessment.
- For higher risk travel, discuss and explore alternative arrangements that could be put in place to control and reduce risks with a supervisor or manager.
- Keep your contact details up to date (on CamSIS for Students and ESS for staff).
- Ensure you have sufficient and appropriate insurance by ensuring that you check the exclusions on Peregrine Foresight and have an approved risk assistant prior to travel.
- Check there are suitable emergency and contingency arrangements in place.
- Sign up to receive FCDO travel alerts for overseas travel. Obtain other specialist advice (e.g. from [Healix Travel Oracle App](#)) as needed.
- Maintain contact with your department as per the risk assessment.
- Raise any wellbeing concerns at the earliest opportunity with a supervisor or manager, or College tutor for students.
- Whilst away, inform the University if there are significant changes to your circumstances, including contact details, changes to activities or health.

- Participating in activities that are not included within the plan of work or risk assessment, is not part of your authorised work away.

2.2 Individual factors

You should check the local laws and customs section of the [FCDO Travel Advice](#) and Peregrine Foresight country intelligence to determine whether your gender, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other factors may make you more vulnerable in this area than others. The Safety Office's Peregrine Foresight [Local laws and customs](#) and [Health](#) sections offer useful information about what to include in the hazard table of your risk assessment.

Individual factors may impact on travel plans, including personal and protected characteristics, levels of experience and medical conditions and these should be considered when completing your risk assessment. **It is not mandatory to disclose personal and/or protected characteristics.** However, if these significantly increase the risk of harm to you or others during your proposed work away, even following adjustments, then you are strongly encouraged to disclose these. Your health and safety is important; providing full and complete information to the University can help you to get the support you need and ensure that your travel plans are appropriate for you. This can be achieved as a confidential conversation rather than a written disclosure.

2.3 College role in safeguarding students working away

Travel and work away risk assessments should consider the personal characteristics, circumstances and needs of a student. A student's College will have knowledge of these as part of their pastoral responsibility and so departments should collaborate with Colleges when assessing the personal risks for students working away.

For applications routed via the CamSIS approval system (for work away of 14 days or over), Colleges are automatically provided with the opportunity to comment. For other types of work away e.g. undergraduate Year Abroad, or graduate work away, Colleges should be offered the opportunity to comment in line with departmental procedures.

In contributing to the risk assessment, Colleges might suggest conditions, for example College support is likely to be subject to:

- Student agreeing to regular contact with College Tutor (College to determine regularity and means of contact)
- Seeing the full risk assessment prior to student departure
- The student completing a SSD with the DRC (if applicable)

If the College has concerns about particular plans, these should be raised with the department at the earliest opportunity. SARAC should be contacted for guidance in specific cases where there are serious concerns over student safety. Please email SARAC@admin.cam.ac.uk for more information.

The College Senior Tutor may be required by SARAC to comment on high risk travel applications for students under their care.

2.4 Fieldtrip Organisers and Supervisors

People organising field/supervised trips must follow this guidance and additionally refer to the guidance in [Appendix 1](#).

2.5 Overview of Procedure for Travel Risk Management

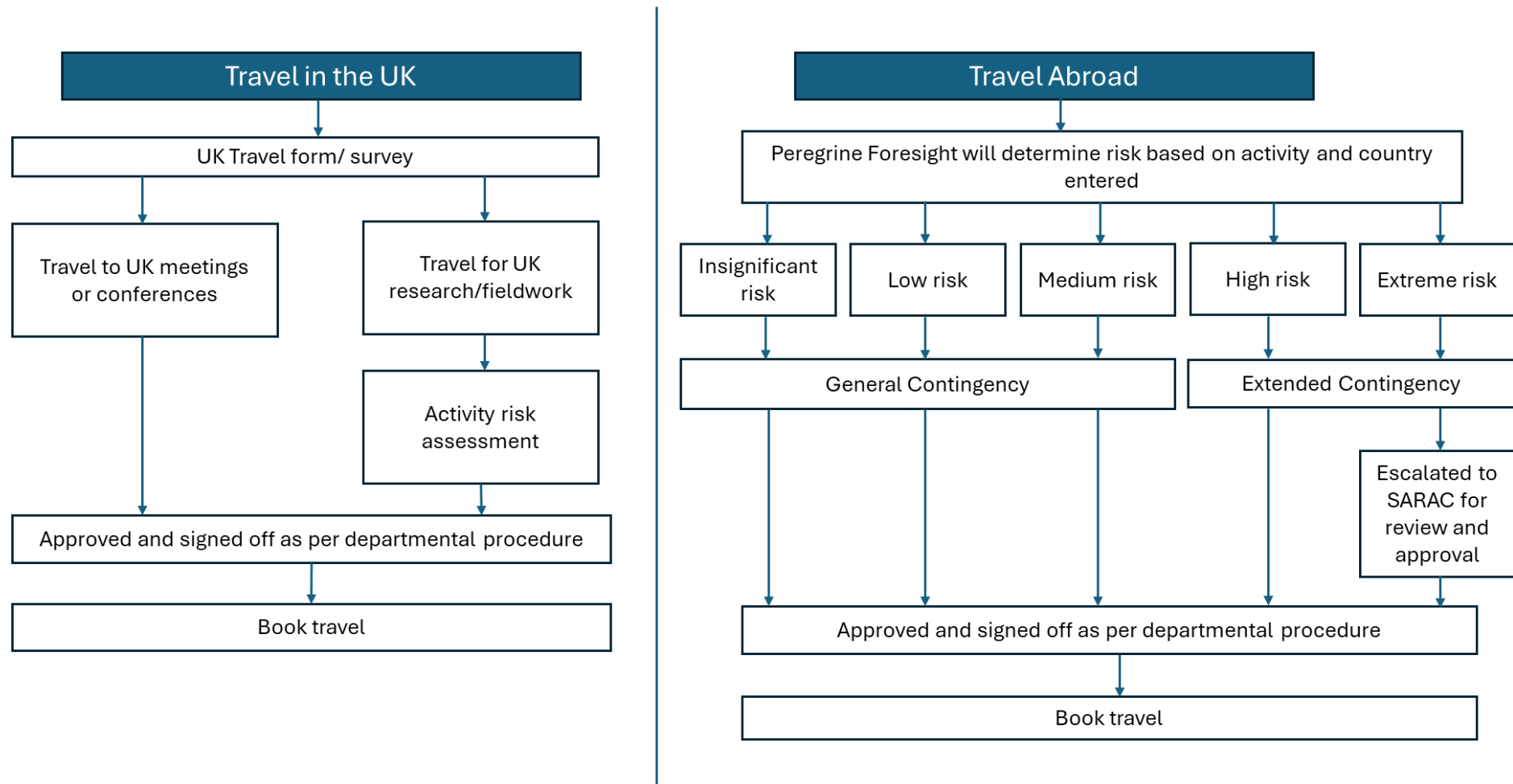


Figure 1 - Procedure for risk assessment prior to UK and overseas travel

3 Risk Assessment Process

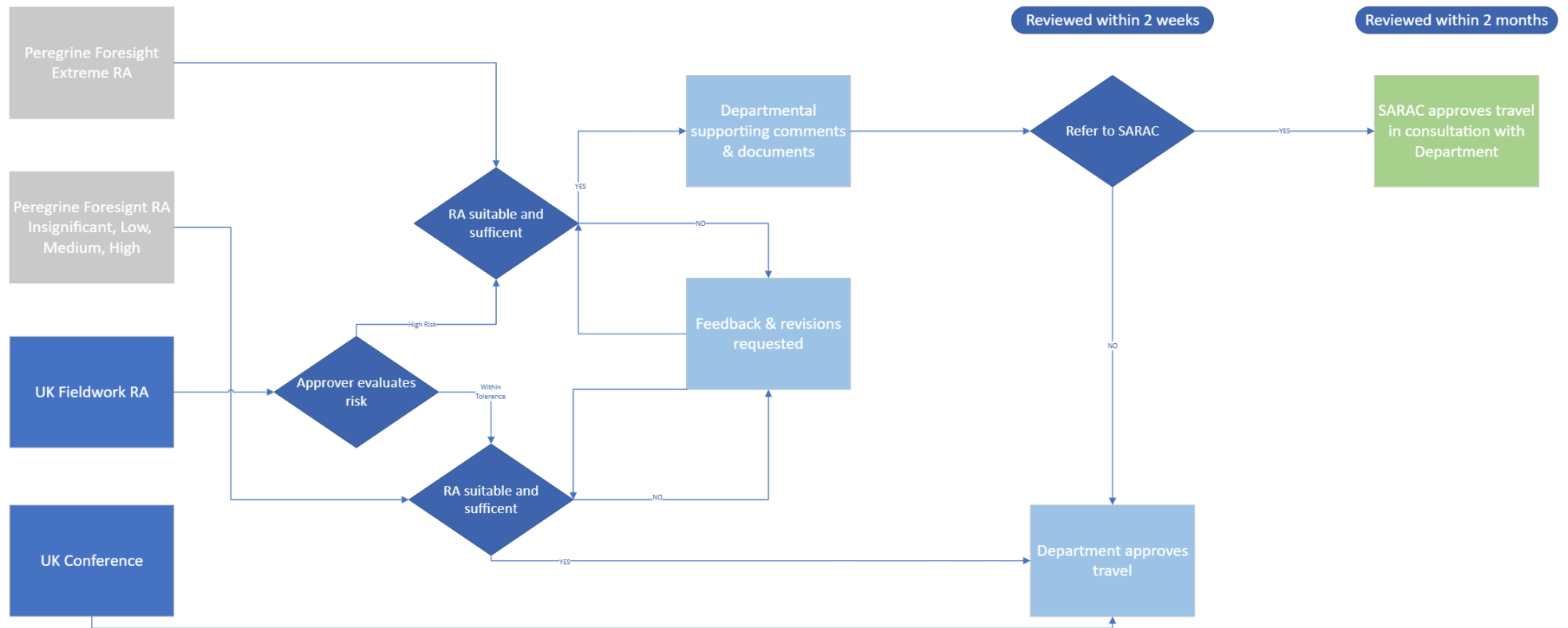


Figure 2 - Procedure for sign-off of Risk Assessments

4 Research ethics guidance

Research ethics is outside of the health and safety process; however, people conducting study away research involving human participants or personal data, must seek ethical approval for their project from a University/ department research ethics committee and/or the host institution.

Useful links relating to good research practice, research ethics and integrity:

- “Ethical Review of Overseas Research”: <https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-ethics/ethics-application-guidance/ethical-review-overseas-research>
- For all research - “Research Integrity and Good Practice Checklist” : <https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-integrity/research-integrity-and-good-research-practice-checklist>
- For students only – “Code of Practice for Research Students”: <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/new-students/manage-your-student-information/graduate-students/code>

Templates found on the following pages can be adapted for overseas research and to take into account local requirements:

<https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-ethics/research-ethics-committees>

<https://www.research-integrity.admin.cam.ac.uk/research-ethics>

5 Placement Specific (Students Only):

A “placement” is a period of work experience, paid or unpaid,

- Which is undertaken as an integral part of the student’s course.
- Where the student is enrolled at the institution during this period.
- Where there is the transfer of direct supervision of the student to a third party.

Where a host institution controls the work, they will usually have their own standards and policies with which members of the University should comply. These must be available to the person on placement 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.

6 Insurance

All those who plan to travel overseas obtain University traveller insurance, an application for University insurance is embedded into Peregrine Foresight. If there are questions about eligibility, contact the Insurance Office: <https://www.insurance.admin.cam.ac.uk/insurance-guidance/travel-insurance>

Additionally, University travellers can access the [Healix Travel Oracle App](#) developed by leading security and medical experts, which provides the most up to date travel information and advice, as well as real time alerts on breaking news globally. This is often more practical and supplements the general advice on the FCDO or Peregrine Foresight pages to assist with writing risk assessments. The Healix Travel Oracle App can be downloaded onto your smart phone from the Apple App store or Google Play store. Register as a new user with the policy number for your company: ALZ193112 (guidance [here](#)).

See [here](#) for real examples of invalid claims where departments or individuals have been liable for costs.

Participants who undertake work away may wish to participate in potentially hazardous activities such as mountain walking, climbing, open water swimming, skiing, canoeing etc. during any leisure time. It should be made clear to these participants that:

- These are personal activities and not considered authorised activities being undertaken as part of University business
- Appropriate personal insurance must be in place with note taken of restrictions

7 Resources and Appendices

For other useful advice on planning travel and fieldwork, go to:

<https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/useful-documents-and-links>

University Policies, Guidance and Support

- Safety Office pages on “Travel Safety”: [Safeguarding Work Away](https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/)
<https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/>
 - i. Risk Assessment Training video: <https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/risk-assessment-training-video> Aimed at helping the traveller assess risks adequately
 - ii. TED talk “Three simple, fun and effective tools to help manage risk” – see the bottom of this page: <https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/individuals-travelling-health-and-safety-those-working-away/completing-risk-assessment>
- Detailed training for people approving medium and high risk travel – contact the Safety Office for details (travelriskassessment@admin.cam.ac.uk)
- Healix Travel Oracle (from University Travel insurer), gives real time advice for the traveller whilst away from the University. The Healix Travel Oracle App can be downloaded onto your smart phone from the Apple App store or Google Play store – <https://traveloracle.healix.com/Allianz> Instructions for this app are found in this [guidance](#)
- Study Away Risk Assessment Committee - <https://www.safeguarding.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-and-guidance/study-away-risk-assessment-committee>
- Travel Insurance - <https://www.insurance.admin.cam.ac.uk/travel-insurance>
- Risk Assessment Forms: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-guidance/miscellaneous/hsd089m-guidance-travel-fieldwork-and-work-away-cambridge>
- Guidance for Staff Working Overseas, www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/overseas-working
- Specific requirements for carrying out radiation work away from University of Cambridge premises: <https://www.safety.admin.cam.ac.uk/system/files/hsd196r.pdf>
- University’s preferred travel agency- see: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing/travel/>

Government Advice

- FCDO website for foreign travel advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

7.1 APPENDIX 1 – Additional Information for Supervised (Field) Trips

The guidance below is aimed at organisers of supervised trips and those accompanying students on trips, but is also useful to people travelling alone.

The person organising supervised trips is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment covering the whole group, taking into account the maturity, experience, expertise, specific needs and training of the individuals involved. For UK fieldwork, the organiser must determine the level of risk of the supervised trip. Peregrine travel will assign the risk for international travel.

The organiser will then need to consider the issues outlined in this appendix, and provide a copy to each person going on the trip. The organiser is also responsible for keeping a list of those going on the trip, and providing a detailed itinerary to the nominated person in the department. Please see below for an example risk assessment. Every participant will still need to ensure their details are up to date on ESS or CamSIS (as appropriate) and will need to complete a short personal travel risk assessment.

If your field trip is taking place in the UK, it will be sufficient for the organiser to provide a risk assessment of the activities using the University's [General Risk Assessment Form RA1](#), in addition to following your department's UK travel notification procedure. A separate travel risk assessment will not be required in these circumstances. However, Peregrine Foresight is also available for UK travel if desired. All International fieldwork must be assessed using the designated form on Peregrine Foresight.

The Head of Department or Institution will usually delegate to the organisers of the fieldwork (such as the PI or academic supervisor) the responsibility for ensuring that adequate measures are in place to control risks, and that all participants observe them. Where appropriate, the organisers may appoint one or more competent 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 work.

Leaders may not necessarily be University employees; they may be specialists such as diving supervisors, mountain guides, site foremen, and experienced staff from other Universities depending on the nature, location and type of work. Organisers must ensure that any leaders have sufficient knowledge/skills/experience and appropriate licences to carry out the required duties. The identity of the designated leader should always be made clear to participants in written instructions or safety briefings. For the duration of the work, the designated leader is responsible for ensuring safety precautions are observed and for continuing to assess any new risks as they arise. Participants must be told that they must observe any instruction given by the leader and bring any safety issues to their attention.

Notifications/Communication

Organisers of fieldwork and other such activities must provide a copy of the relevant risk assessments to the person in the department/Institution designated by the Head of Department in their local procedures. The organiser is responsible for updating the itinerary and notifying the department if there are significant changes.

Emergency Plan

Suitable emergency procedures should be planned in advance of the trip to deal with late or non-arrival back at the base and these must be explained to the participants. If the work is in a remote or hazardous environment, the itinerary must include emergency contact details, and instructions for what to do in an emergency. This should be left with a suitable person or organisation who can provide help if the group leaders do not contact them as agreed.

Suitable persons and organisations include:

- Hostel or hotel owner

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

Supervision

Supervision levels for trips will vary depending on the level of experience and maturity of participants, as well as the type of work and local conditions. An inexperienced group of first year students will require more supervision than an experienced group of post-doctoral researchers returning to a site on a long term research project. Both are equally required to complete a risk assessment. For repeat trips it may be sufficient to review an existing assessment before the next visit; Peregrine Foresight has a duplicate risk assessment feature to allow you to do so.

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

As well as ensuring that the level of supervision is appropriate and adequate for the individual group and the location of the work, organisers must also ensure supervision is relevant for the particular situations listed below:

(i) Fully supervised courses

These will normally be of short duration (a working day or shorter) and conducted in low / medium risk environments. Participants may be inexperienced, so they should not normally be allowed to work alone and must not be intentionally exposed to hazardous situations. Organisers must provide a safety induction and instructions as an integral part of the course, including any local rules applying to industrial or construction sites [e.g. the Archaeology Unit working on local construction sites].

Where students are involved, organisers must ensure the staff/student ratio is appropriate to the activities undertaken and the nature of the site being visited. Each group should have an experienced member of staff appointed as leader supported by other experienced staff e.g. technical or postdoctoral staff where possible or other suitable appointed supervisors. The leader must have a suitable deputy in place 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 fifteen may be difficult to manage in rugged country and generally speaking a ratio of ten inexperienced students/employees to one experienced staff member is appropriate. A sub-group of at least four people will allow one person to stay with the ill/injured person while two others go for help in the case of an accident, injury, or illness.

The leader should not be afraid to use their authority to abandon the field trip if the situation starts to deteriorate.

(ii) Field expeditions

These 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 often 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 to ensure safety in such locations. This training may include emergency first aid, survival techniques, communication, navigation techniques and security management and procedures. The leader 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 may be present, such as gases from volcanoes
- 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 threats from people, such as road accidents, theft, kidnapping, demonstrations, political volatility and conflict
- Natural disasters are possible, such as earthquakes, landslides and flooding

The Head of Department or Institution must have a procedure in place to check that the leader has the personal capability, competence, and communication skills to lead, especially in adverse conditions. The leader's authority and responsibilities must be clearly defined and communicated to 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 discretion 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 put in place.

Catering

Organisers must plan food and drink needs in advance, and should aim to provide a wholesome balanced and varied diet, taking account of any individual special dietary needs. Every effort should be made to avoid malnutrition and maintain adequate food hygiene, even though this may be difficult. Ideally, cooks should have at least an entry-level food hygiene qualification. Local foods should be selected carefully and foods with a high risk of creating infections (e.g. some meats) avoided. Foods should be stored so as to minimise the risk of contamination/ spoilage and prepared in as hygienic a manner as possible, keeping preparation areas as clean as practicable.

People with skin, nose, throat, or vomiting/bowel infections must not prepare food for others. 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.

Insurance

The organiser of the supervised trip is responsible for considering insurance requirements and ensuring these are in place if required. See the Insurance Section [travel pages here](#).

Injury and illness while away

In the field, relatively trivial injuries or conditions may become serious if not treated quickly. 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 must be advised of necessary vaccinations, and the need to obtain adequate medical insurance. They must also be asked to notify the organisers in confidence if they have a condition that would need specialist medical treatment (e.g. haemophilia, diabetes).

First Aid

Every group carrying out field work 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. This will depend on the risks of the field work.

Accident and emergency procedures

The leader is responsible for organising incident and emergency procedures and ensuring all members of the group are aware of them. Consider and plan your actions and response in events that are foreseeable for the destination:

- suspension of flights due to strikes, bad weather, closure of the airline (especially if small) or other reason, especially where there are connecting flights that will be affected
- serious illness or injury of a supervisor or participant
- natural disasters e.g. in areas prone to earthquake, volcano eruptions or major flooding
- withdrawal of visas and travel permissions by one of the countries being visited
- road traffic accident
- physical or sexual assault
- arrest, detention or kidnap
- crowd/riot situation
- crossfire or bombing
- significant deterioration in security, e.g. a coup
- any other risks reasonably foreseeable (from FCO and other advice)

There needs to be a clear plan for dealing with a serious accident, which should include the following actions:

- Make the area safe
- Attend and reassure any injured persons
- Keep the number of helping the injured person to a minimum, and withdraw the remainder of participants to a safe place if conditions are dangerous or might 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 if appropriate
- Inform the department
- Control the use of social network sites to avoid causing unnecessary panic
- Control discussion of the situation with anyone except the emergency services or University staff



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