

Complete Program Title: <b>Field Trips, Student Placements and Research Activity Planning and Approval Program</b>	Risk Management Manual (RMM) Number: <b>801</b>
Approved by:  _____ <b>Vice-President, Administration</b>  _____ <b>President and Vice-Chancellor</b>	Date of Most Recent Approval: <b>October 2016</b>
Date of Original Approval: <b>January 2002</b>	Supersedes/Amends Program dated: <b>May 2009</b>
Responsible Executive: <b>Vice-President, Administration</b>	Enquiries: <b>Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) <a href="mailto:eohtss@mcmaster.ca">eohtss@mcmaster.ca</a></b>
<b>DISCLAIMER:</b> <i>If there is a discrepancy between this electronic program and the written copy held by the program owner, the written copy prevails.</i>	

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure safety of all people participating in field trips, research activities and student placements.
- 1.2 To define the responsibilities and risk management practices required to demonstrate due diligence for the safety of faculty, staff, students and volunteers participating in field trips and electives.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 All persons participating in field trips, research activities and placements that are McMaster sanctioned to travel include:
  - Field research conducted by faculty, post-doctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students, staff and authorized volunteers provided that the research falls within the employment responsibilities or academic program of the participant;
  - All off campus activities that are part of McMaster's academic (for credit) courses and programs;

The program does not cover:

- Travel for conferences, seminars, meetings, visits to academic or related institutions, or student placements within Canada. For student placement process see: [https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health\\_safety\\_well-being/my-health/unpaid-student-placements/](https://hr.mcmaster.ca/employees/health_safety_well-being/my-health/unpaid-student-placements/);
- External activities (including consulting) undertaken by faculty, postdoctoral fellows, staff, students or unauthorized volunteers that are not part of the individual's employment responsibilities or academic program at McMaster;
- Travel or activities of any person who is not a member of the McMaster Community who may accompany such member on approved travel.

### 3 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Not all relevant legislations and Risk Management Programs are listed here since some legislation would be specific to the individual travel activity.

- 3.1 Current Ontario Health and Safety Act, R.S.O 1990
- 3.2 Working Alone Program, RMM 304
- 3.3 Standard Operating Procedures, RMM 301
- 3.4 McMaster University Environmental Health and Safety Policy, RMM 100
- 3.5 MAESD (formally MTCU) Student Placement Guidelines
- 3.6 Guidelines for Fieldtrips, Placements and Research Activity Planning and Approval Program

### 4 DEFINITIONS

**Approval Process** – all requests for travel, with the exception of low risk, under this program will be subject to the following approval process: submission by the participant to their Supervisor, followed by Department Chair/Director and EOHSS. In the case of a travel request to an L3/L4 risk rated country, the Provost/AVP International will have final authority. Undergraduates will not be permitted to travel to an L3/L4 country.

Low Risk will require approval by the Supervisor and Chair but not submission to EOHSS.

Activities must be submitted at least 2 months prior to travel to allow time for review for an L3/L4 travel request.

If travelling to an L1/L2 risk rated country, you must submit at least 20 days prior to travel.

If there are extenuating circumstances in which you are unable to submit within the timeframes outlined in the program, please contact EOHSS directly.

**Extreme Risk** – an off campus activity that involves travel to an L3/L4 risk rated country.

**Field Trips** – an instructor led activity, defined within the course curriculum that includes travelling off McMaster property to engage in an experience, tour, or other educational activity. Generally done as a class requirement with academic credit, but could simply be extracurricular.

**Global Affairs Canada** – a Government of Canada office in which one of its services includes Travel Advice and Advisories that provide Canadians travelling and living abroad with official Government of Canada information and advice on situations that may affect their safety and well-being.

Global Affairs Canada has four levels for their travel advisories that indicate a country's overall level of security risk. There may be more than one level if security conditions differ in a specific region.

The four risk levels are as follows:

- **L1 Exercise normal security precautions**  
*There are no significant security concerns.*
- **L2 Exercise a high degree of caution**  
*There are identifiable security concerns; travelers should be alert and vigilant to their surroundings.*

The following two levels constitute official Government of Canada Travel Advisories:

- **L3 AVOID NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL**  
*There are specific security concerns; travelers should reconsider their need to travel at this time.*
- **L4 AVOID ALL TRAVEL**  
*There is an extreme risk to personal safety; Canadians should not travel at this time.*

**Low Risk** – an activity that may expose the participant to hazards that are greater than those encountered in their working lives but which can be minimized through planning, training, and standard operating procedures.

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**MAESD Student Placement** – a placement that fits the MAESD criteria as per the Student Placement Guidelines.

**Research Activity** – for the purpose of this document, a research endeavor is any activity involving but not limited to collecting data in support of research by travelling outside of the University and/or Canada to a field site or laboratory.

**Safety Officer** – is the person appointed by the Supervisor with on-site responsibility for the implementation and supervision of the fieldtrip or field activity. If the trip is comprised of one person only, that person will fulfill all the responsibilities of the safety officer. If the Supervisor accompanies the fieldtrip or activity, the Supervisor may act as the safety officer.

**Significant Risk** – an off-campus activity that has the potential to expose participants to hazards that are significantly greater than those likely to be encountered in their everyday lives. Includes travel to areas in which a travel or health advisory is in effect or there is a risk associated with the activity itself.

**Student Placement** – a placement as part of a professional program that is undertaken for academic credit.

**Supervisor** – a faculty member or sessional instructor who has control over the field trip, research activity or student placement and authority over the participants. The supervisor is the person who has primary decision making authority over the field trip, research activity or student placement and responsibility for the development of any inherent risk assessment particular to the activity.

**Travel Risk** – a risk associated with out of province travel to undertake research activities or fieldtrips or student placements that occur outside Canada. Note: Activities not related to this scope or off hour activities not sanctioned by the University are not covered by the University's liability insurance or travel assistance programs.

The types of travel risk include the following:

- **Insurance risk** – an activity requiring confirmation that travelers have adequate travel medical insurance coverage for the activity. Since the need for medical insurance is an individual's choice, it is up to the participant to evaluate adequate coverage.
- **Location risk** – the location is identified by Global Affairs Canada as a location with an "avoid non-essential travel" or "avoid all travel" notations. (L3 and L4).
- **Health risk** – the destination country has health risks that would require consultation with a travel physician to ensure one's health status and immunizations are adequate to protect themselves in adverse conditions.

#### 4.1 **Acronyms:**

**EOHSS** – Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services

**L1/L2/L3/L4** – Risk factor levels as defined by Global Affairs Canada

**MAESD** – Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

**SOPs** – Standard Operating Procedures

## 5 **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### 5.1 **Role of Senior Management:**

Provost and Vice President Academic, Associate Vice President International Affairs shall:

- Have the final level of approval when presented with a high risk activity and/or geographical location that includes an L3/L4 risk rated country as rated by Global Affairs Canada.
- Decline all requests for undergraduates to travel to L3/L4 risk rated countries as rated by Global Affairs Canada.
- Have authority to revoke authorization if a situation arises that heightens the risk rating level as determined by Global Affairs Canada.

### 5.2 **Role of Chair/Director:**

Chair/Director shall:

- Ensure that detailed and project specific safety procedures are in place for each field trip or student placement.
- Ensure that expectations around this program are adequately communicated to all those it may affect.

### 5.3 **Role of Supervisors (Academic and Administrative):**

Supervisors shall:

- Be responsible to ensure that all required safety and risk management concerns have been addressed, appropriate procedures documented and approved and required training provided to participants, prior to the commencement of the field trip or student placement.
- Designate a person to assume the role of Safety Officer where appropriate.
- Consider the foreseeable risks associated with the activities that accomplish the academic goals and will determine when consideration of the guidelines herein is warranted.

- Identify directly to the Chair or Director any specific equipment or procedure that is necessary to the trip but not financed through existing grants. The supervisor must consider **all** aspects of this program but may decide, on the basis of evidence that some sections do not apply.
- Ensure that a copy of their itinerary or anyone they supervise has been submitted to the Department.

#### 5.4 **Field Trip/Student Placement/Research Activity Participant:**

Participant shall:

- Participate in the evaluation of the risks, participate in training as may be required and observe the practices and procedures outlined in Section 6 of this document. Participants are responsible for their own safety and security during personal time on the field trip;
- Have support of supervisor to pursue this activity;
- Prepare in advance of international travel, to research and to be aware of the risks involved in their planned trip, to ensure that they are physically and mentally prepared for the travel, to ensure they have appropriate medical and other insurance for the travel and to conduct themselves in a safe manner;
- Consult and seek the expertise of others to address risks associated with the activity that fall outside their own areas of understanding;
- Register their travel plans with the University through the department or Faculty so that they are aware of itinerary if planning to travel outside Canada.
- Register with [travel.gc.ca](http://travel.gc.ca);
- Be responsible to check if any of the risk associated with the activity change to include travel alerts, revisit the process and adjust accordingly;
- Obtain appropriate immunization and medical advice;
- Obtain adequate supplementary health insurance as appropriate in view of the nature of location of the activity;
- Obtain travel insurance appropriate to their needs, including property and cancellation insurance;
- Obtain appropriate travel documents;
- Act in a safe and responsible manner and exercise good judgment at all times to prevent harm to themselves and to others;
- Report any injury/incident resulting from travel using McMaster injury/incident form; and,
- Submit a copy of the itinerary to the Department.

## 5.5 **Role of Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services:**

EOHSS shall:

- Review all approved Field Trip/Student Placements and Research Activity Assessment forms that do not fall in the low risk category and provide approval as required as part of the approval process;
- Inform the AVP International Affairs if a situation arises that heightens the risk rating level to an L3 or L4 from an L1 or L2 as determined by Global Affairs Canada; and,
- Provide, in collaboration with the International Affairs office, training on the travel approval program.

## 5.6 **Responsibilities of Department/Faculty:**

Department/Faculty shall:

- Maintain a record of the travel by their members; and,
- Ensure clinical placement students in Faculty of Health Sciences have attended the pre-departure training.

## 6 **PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**

### 6.1 **Field Trip/Student Placement/Research Activity and Approval Procedural Requirements**

Managing Activities with Travel Risk:

#### **Travel – Travel Health Insurance Risk**

- To ensure all participants have been instructed to obtain adequate insurance for the trip.
- It is recommended all travelers review their current health insurance to assess its adequacy for travel to desired location. Since every case is unique this need is best assessed by the traveler in consultation with their insurance provider such as OHIP, UHIP or MSU as examples.
- Note that some coverage may not be valid in some locations. It is the participant's responsibility to determine what is adequate.
- Have participants complete the appropriate participant waiver (The Office of Legal Services <https://ols.mcmaster.ca/>)

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### **Travel – Location Risk**

- Ensure the specific places of destination do not have any “Avoid non-essential travel” or “Avoid all travel” notations from Global Affairs Canada report on your country of travel. It is up to the participant to review these warnings until the actual time of departure travel. If the risk rating has increased it is their responsibility to inform their Supervisor and all other levels in the approval process <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>

### **Managing Low Risk Activity (see definitions for low risk)**

- Ensure the activity has support of the Chair/Director of the department.
- Review the safety travel checklist (Guideline document).
- If at any point the risks associated with the activity change, revisit this process and adjust accordingly.
- No further action required.

### **Managing Activities with Significant Risk (see definitions for significant risk)**

All activities with significant risk must be submitted to the department Chair/Director and EOHSS for review. The risk assessment package should include:

- Field Trip/Student Placement/Research Activity Approval and Review Form
- Statement of Responsibilities Checklist (Field Trip/Student Placement/Research Activity as applicable)
- Declaration of Health Status
- Copy of risk assessment document outlining activities, risks and mitigation strategies

### **Managing Activities with Extreme Risk (see definitions for extreme risk)**

If travelling to an L3/L4 risk rated country as designated by Global Affairs Canada specifically “avoid all non-essential travel” or “avoid all travel” then follow the significant risk procedures outlined above.

In addition to the significant risk procedures, the extreme risk process includes that the assessment must be submitted at least 2 months prior to desired travel. The final approval will be the Provost or the Vice President International Affairs.



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### **Approval Process for Significant and Extreme Risk**

All activities with Significant Risk Components must be submitted for approval by the travel request participant in the following order:

- Supervisor
- Department Chair/Director
- EOHSS
- Provost/VP International (Extreme Risk)
- Activities must be submitted at least 2 months prior to travel to allow time review for L3/L4 country requests.
- University will not sanction travel for undergraduates to a L3/L4 risk rated country.
- All risks associated with an activity should be identified.
- All controls that are in place should be documented and communicated.

## **7 RECORDS**

7.1 To facilitate external audits by regulatory agencies (e.g. Ministry of Labour) copies of Field Trip Approval Forms shall be kept for a period of three (3) years after conclusion of the Field trip. Such records will be kept by:

- The supervisor of the Field Trip or student placement and/or the Department Office
- Locations and timeframe are to be tracked by Department for the Faculty

## **8 APPROVAL FORMS**

Your trip submission must include:

- Fieldtrip/Student Placement/Research Activity Approval Form
- Declaration of Health Status Form

And one of the following as applicable:

- Fieldtrip Statement of Responsibilities Checklist

- Student Placements Outside of Canada Statement of Responsibilities Checklist
- Research Activity Statement of Responsibilities Checklist

A copy of your risk assessment must be attached to your submission of approval forms for your fieldtrip or research activity.

**Field Trip/Student Placement/Research Activity Approval Form**  
**Complete all information on this form and attach risk assessment for approval process**

Name:  
 Department:  
 Submitted By:

Email address:  
 Dates of Trip:  
 Location of Activity:

Description of Activity: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be completing your coop in your home country? Yes No

**Please select type of activity** (\*see definitions for clarity):

- Field Trip (follow the procedural guidelines as outlined in Section 6)  
 Student Placement (follow the procedural guidelines as outlined in Section 6)  
 Research Activity (follow the procedural guidelines as outlined in Section 6)

**Risks:** check as many as may apply \*see definitions if needed. Travel advisory risk rating included as outlined with Global Affairs Canada.

- Low Risk (L1: take normal security precautions)**
- Significant Risk (L2: exercise a high degree of caution)**
- Extreme Risk (L3/L4: avoid non-essential travel/avoid all travel)**
- Travel Risk
- Health Insurance Risk
- Health Risk

**Faculty of Engineering:**

**Approval by Career Educator (ECCS):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Approved by Department Chair/Director:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**\*All fields with exception of EOHSS and Senior Management signatures must be completed before submitting\***

**Approved by EOHSS:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Approval of Senior Management:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

## Field Trip Statement of Responsibilities Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have completed, signed, and attached with risk assessment, the [Participant Waiver Agreement](#) as appropriate, and **Declaration of Health Status** forms.
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Travel Insurance** to cover me for the entire duration of my Field Practicum while off-campus and have purchased such additional **Travel Insurance** if required. I confirm that the coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and lifestyle, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports, and repatriation (in case of death). *I understand that Travel Insurance is necessary as my Health Insurance Policy may not cover out-of-province OR out-of-country travel.*
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Health Insurance**, and purchased if appropriate, to cover me for the entire duration of my travel while off-campus. I ensure you that coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports.
- I have purchased **Supplemental Health Insurance** in the case that my primary health insurance policy does not satisfy all requirements to provide coverage appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), and extreme sports.
- I have researched, reviewed and comply with all the pertinent legislation and McMaster RMMs related to my activities. This includes any licenses, required training, registrations required for my work
- I have researched and complied with the required vaccinations and immunizations required for the location as prescribed by my travel Physician
- I have read and understand the following information: [Volunteer & Work Abroad - Before You Leave](#)
- I hold a passport that will remain valid for **at least 6 months after my scheduled return** to Canada.
- I have completed, or am in the process of completing, a **Visa application** through my host country's consulate if stated as a requirement by my host country to study abroad. I understand the rights awarded to me through this Visa, such as the approved duration of stay and any permissions to obtain work.
- (For Canadians only) **I have registered with Global Affairs Canada website as a Canadian traveling abroad** <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration>.
- I have a plan to follow in case of an emergency or health incident while travelling.
- I am a Graduate Student and have completed the appropriate travel form for off campus activity and submitted to Graduate Studies.
- I have submitted a copy of my itinerary to my Department
- I am aware of and understand the COVID-19 Protocol requirements

Please acknowledge you have reviewed the information in each of the check boxes by answering with a yes, no or not applicable beside each box.

## Student Placements Outside of Canada Statement of Responsibilities Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have completed, signed, and attached with risk assessment the [Participant Waiver Agreement](#) as appropriate, and **Declaration of Health Status** forms
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Travel Insurance** to cover me for the entire duration of my Field Practicum while off-campus and have purchased such additional **Travel Insurance** if required. I confirm that the coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and lifestyle, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports, and repatriation (in case of death). *I understand that Travel Insurance is necessary as my Health Insurance Policy may not cover out-of-province OR out-of-country travel.*
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Health Insurance**, and purchased if appropriate, to cover me for the entire duration of my travel while off-campus. I ensure you that coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports.
- I have purchased **Supplemental Health Insurance** in the case that my primary health insurance policy does not satisfy all requirements to provide coverage appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), and extreme sports.
- I have researched, reviewed and comply with all the pertinent legislation and McMaster RMMs related to my activities. This includes any licenses, required training, registrations required for my work.
- I have researched and complied with the required vaccinations and immunizations required for the location as prescribed by my travel Physician
- I have read and understand the following information: [Volunteer and Work Abroad - Before Your Leave](#)
- I hold a passport that will remain valid for **at least 6 months after my scheduled return** to Canada.
- I have completed, or am in the process of completing, a **Visa application** through my host country's consulate if stated as a requirement by my host country to study abroad. I understand the rights awarded to me through this Visa, such as the approved duration of stay and any permissions to obtain work.
- (For Canadians only) **I have registered on the Global Affairs Canada website as a Canadian traveling abroad** <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration>.
- I have a plan to follow in case of an emergency or health incident while travelling.
- I have submitted a copy of my itinerary to my Department
- I am aware of and understand the COVID-19 Protocol requirements

Please acknowledge you have reviewed the information in each of the check boxes by answering with a yes, no or not applicable beside each box.

## Research Activity Statement of Responsibilities Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- I have completed, signed, and attached with risk assessment the [Participant Waiver Agreement](#) as **appropriate, and Declaration of Health Status** forms
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Travel Insurance** to cover me for the entire duration of my Field Practicum while off-campus and have purchased such additional **Travel Insurance** if required. I confirm that the coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and lifestyle, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports, and repatriation (in case of death). *I understand that Travel Insurance is necessary as my Health Insurance Policy may not cover out-of-province OR out-of-country travel.*
- I have reviewed the need for additional **Health Insurance**, and purchased if appropriate, to cover me for the entire duration of my travel while off-campus. I ensure you that coverage provided is appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), extreme sports.
- I have purchased **Supplemental Health Insurance** in the case that my primary health insurance policy does not satisfy all requirements to provide coverage appropriate to my health, habits and life style, including but not limited to pre-existing illnesses, substance use (alcohol, drugs, etc.), and extreme sports.
- I have researched, reviewed and comply with all the pertinent legislation and McMaster RMMs related to my activities. This includes any licenses, required training, registrations required for my work
- I have researched and complied with the required vaccinations and immunizations required for the location as prescribed by my travel Physician
- I have read and understand the following information: [Volunteer and Work Abroad - Before You Leave](#)
- I hold a passport that will remain valid for **at least 6 months after my scheduled return** to Canada.
- I have completed, or am in the process of completing, a **Visa application** through my host country's consulate if stated as a requirement by my host country to study abroad. I understand the rights awarded to me through this Visa, such as the approved duration of stay and any permissions to obtain work.
- (For Canadians only) **I have registered on the Global Affairs Canada website as a Canadian traveling abroad** <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/registration>.
- I have a plan to follow in case of an emergency or health incident while travelling.
- I am a Graduate Student and have completed the appropriate travel form for off campus activity and submitted to Graduate Studies.
- I have submitted a copy of my itinerary to my Department
- I am aware of and understand the COVID-19 Protocol requirements

Please acknowledge you have reviewed the information in each of the check boxes by answering with a yes, no or not applicable beside each box.

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### Declaration of Health Status

I understand that participation in this field trip or elective may involve strenuous effort and or foreign travel. In either case, my health may be affected by activity levels to which I am not accustomed or by exposure to endemic disease in foreign locations. I accept personal responsibility for securing the advice of a health practitioner (preferably a family physician) prior to participating in this field trip and for obtaining the inoculations that are required by the country of destination or by Canadian authorities.

I recognize that some pre-existing medical conditions, while not a serious health threat when medical services are readily available, may be life threatening in remote locations. I take full personal responsibility for my known pre-existing medical conditions. For conditions that I choose to reveal, I will make personal arrangements with another field trip participant so that symptoms of distress can be recognized. For conditions that I choose not to reveal, I take full personal responsibility.

I have been made aware of the risks involved in this field trip or elective placement and have evaluated the need for a physical check-up and /or prophylactic measures.

I hereby declare that I am medically fit to engage in this field trip/elective.

**Date of trip:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_      **Destination country(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Trip Supervisor (name):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Participant (please print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** (\_\_\_\_) - \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_      **Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_