

Code of Practice 38

OVERSEAS TRAVEL

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1 SUMMARY

This Safety Code of Practice sets out procedures for managing the travel aspects of work-related staff and student offsite visits overseas. This includes organised trips with groups of students for the purposes of teaching or research, and travel by individual members of staff or postgraduate students for teaching, research or other activities while representing the University outside the UK, including business travel.

2 SCOPE

This Code covers:

- All staff
- All postgraduate and research students
- All undergraduate students who travel overseas in connection with work/study organised by their School or other exchange or partnership study abroad programmes supported by the University e.g. Erasmus.

UK travel is not covered, since this is generally regarded as low risk, or is already addressed in other University Policies. See Health and Safety Services Website <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/health-and-safety/hs-home-2.aspx>

For UK Fieldwork please refer to ‘Safety Code of Practice 32 Fieldwork’

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The University Executive Board (UEB)

They will determine the level of risk associated with overseas travel that is acceptable to the University.

3.2 The Insurance Office

They are responsible for putting in place appropriate travel and other insurance policies, including emergency assistance support and repatriation arrangements for travellers overseas.

3.3 University Security

They are responsible for responding to telephone calls made out of hours to the Security emergency number (+44 (0)118 378 6300) and referring the member of staff or student to the appropriate help – normally the travel insurance emergency assistance. Depending on circumstances they may also invoke the Major Incident Plan.

3.4 The Communications Office

They are responsible for taking the lead on communications with press/media arising out of a serious incident.

3.5 Human Resources

Human Resources are responsible for ensuring that occupational health advice with respect to overseas travel is available via Occupational Health.

3.6 Heads of School/Function

They are responsible for the safety of travel undertaken by staff/students within their School/Function and must ensure that travel group leaders and individual travellers have adequately risk assessed and planned for the conditions that they might encounter including the University's arrangements for medical and travel support overseas.

Must approve travel plans that are high risk. Where the UK Government (GOV.UK) advises against all travel, approval by the Vice-Chancellor, or in their absence the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or a Pro-Vice-Chancellor is required. Where The UK Government advises 'essential travel only' this must be approved by A Head of School/Function. Approval can only be delegated in exceptional circumstances.

3.7 Travel group leaders /travellers

Must ensure they have the appropriate level of authorisation to undertake the travel and have adequately risk assessed and planned for the conditions that they might encounter.

Where a group of staff/students are travelling together as an organised group, the group leader must ensure that the group and all participants comply with the University guidance and any other School/Function procedures.

Individual travellers are responsible for doing likewise when travelling alone.

All travellers must ensure they have completed a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and ensure they have the appropriate approval.

All travellers must complete the online 'Notification of Travel Form' which can be found on the Insurance webpage. <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/finance/Insurance/fcs-ins-business.aspx> Failure to do this will result in expenses not being paid.

4 PLANNING

The initial risk assessment should be used as a planning tool. Please seek advice from your local Health and Safety Coordinator.

4.1 Approval of travel

Table 1 sets out the authorisation levels for travel that must be complied with. These are linked to the Overseas Travel Flow Chart in **Appendix 1** and the Risk Profiling Tool in **Appendix 2**.

Please note, further approval may be required based on financial constraints.

Table 1 Approval levels

Low	Medium	High
<p>Line Manager, consistent with normal financial approval systems</p> <p>Risk profiling tool completed.</p> <p>Note: If the trip is being financed by an external organisation/grant award body and the grant holder has authority to approve expenditure, authorisation from the Head of Department and/or Line Manager must still be obtained.</p>	<p>Head of School</p> <p>Head of Department where Head of School has delegated authority</p> <p>Head of Function /Deputy Head of Function</p> <p>Supported by a written risk assessment which explains how the risks will be mitigated.</p>	<p>Where the UK Government (GOV.UK) advises against all travel, Vice-Chancellor; Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Pro-Vice-Chancellor</p> <p>Where the UK Government advises ‘essential travel only’ – Head of School/Function</p> <p>In both cases the request for approval must be supported by a risk assessment and business case that sets out the benefits to the University that justifies the risks involved, and explains how the risks will be mitigated</p> <p>For other high risks: Head of School or Function Supported by a written risk assessment.</p>

4.2 Threat analysis

Information about the proposed destination, and any countries en-route, should be obtained early in the planning stage. The following should be contacted for travel advice before and if necessary during travel.

- i. **The [GOV.UK travel web site](#):**
- ii. **The University Insurance Office or the University insurers (see the [Insurance Office web site](#) for details)**
- iii. **The University contracted travel management companies (see [Procurement web site](#) for details of current provider)**

Other sources of advice may also be referred to e.g.

- World Health Organisation <http://www.who.int/ith/en/>
- Travel Health Pro <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>
- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/>

The Foreign and Commonwealth office give advice about Foreign Travel and it is advised that prior to travel the appropriate page for the country of travel is consulted.

Advice will be given about the current travel advice e.g. the FCO advise against all travel to this country.

For areas of political unrest this information must be kept under review until the day of departure, and where possible, during the trip. Be aware that governments are likely to take a cautious approach when providing information and the UK Government’s advice reflects its ability to deliver consular services to UK citizens. In-country contacts can provide a useful context against which to evaluate information.

4.2.1 Overseas staff and students

Overseas members of staff or students wishing to travel to their home country for purposes directly related to their employment or course of study must comply with the authorisation procedures set out in this Safety Code of Practice. If this involves travel to a country on the GOV.UK travel advisory list, Vice-Chancellor or his/her delegated approval must be obtained.

Advice should also be sought from the Insurance Office.

Non-UK nationals (staff and students) undertaking work or study overseas should also check the travel advice and consular services provided by their own country for the destination.

4.2.2 Existing contracts or travellers already in country

Where an existing contract is in place that requires work in a country where the personal security risks subsequently increase and the UK Government advises against travel, travel should not take place, and advice should be sought on any contractual implications.

Any travellers already in a country when a government travel advisory notice is introduced should contact the Insurance Office/ the University travel insurance providers /the British/own national Embassy for advice. The University insurance policy remains valid in these circumstances.

4.3 Risk assessments

In all instances all travelers **MUST** check the FCO website for travel advice prior to the risk assessment being undertaken. [.https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

Use the Risk Profiling Tool in **Appendix 2** in order to determine if your trip is low, medium or high risk in conjunction with advice from the FCO website.

If the Risk Profiling Tool suggests your trip is low risk **you will not need to prepare a further written risk assessment or the Travellers Checklist and** you can go ahead and book your travel as normal, provided you comply with: any additional controls that you or your School/Department/Function have identified as necessary; the requirements and guidance in this Safety Code of Practice; and any local School/Department/Function procedures. If it suggests medium or high risk **you will need to complete a further written risk assessment (Appendix 3) and Travellers checklist (Appendix 4)**. A copy of the risk assessment template and other related documentation is available on the Health and Safety Services Website. [Health & Safety Forms and Resources](#)

The purpose of any proposed trip, together with a summary of expected outcomes, must be clearly established early in the planning stage. This will enable the School/ Department and the University to give the proposal full and balanced consideration and decide if the expected outcomes are “worth the risk”.

4.3.1 Changing Circumstances

Dynamic risk assessments (i.e. assessments which are completed during the course of travel to take into account changing circumstances and conditions) may be required during some work to allow flexibility. However this should not replace adequate contingency planning, and it should not introduce completely new activities which have not been given prior approval without consultation with the person who has approved the travel.

4.3.2 Preparation

- i. Plan and risk assess all aspects of the trip

- ii. Ensure that they are authorised to travel
- iii. Check that the travel is within scope of the University insurance policies.
- iv. Consult and comply with the advice given on the GOV.UK travel web site and other sources of reliable travel information such as the University's travel insurance provider
- v. Check that you have a valid passport that will not expire while abroad.
- vi. Check that any health requirements such as vaccinations and fitness to travel have been addressed. Contact Occupational Health (for staff) or University Medical Practice or GP (for students) for travel health assessment, or to discuss the required vaccinations or other medical support.
- vii. Must obtain information about local health care facilities and emergency medical assistance and so far as practicable ensure that they are satisfactory. They must have this information available to them during travel.
- viii. Book travel and accommodation in accordance with Procurement policies, using a University contracted supplier
- ix. Costs associated with travel (e.g. reputable travel providers, specialist training, equipment, accommodation etc.) should be included when preparing budgets, estimates and grant applications. This may involve the Head of School/Function.
- x. Ensure that visas and work permits are obtained if required
- xi. Check that any goods/equipment that you intend to take with you or bring back to the UK are legal for transportation/import/export
- xii. Leave travel plans, personal emergency information and contact details with their University School/Department and the Insurance Office for access in an emergency.
- xiii. Keep in contact with the University (by phone, text or email) to confirm that they are safe
- xiv. **Report any accidents or near misses to the School/Function and to Health and Safety Services via the University incident reporting system. This includes incidents that occur during leisure time.** <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/health-and-safety/IncidentReportingandEmergencyProcedures/emergency-incident-reports.aspx>
- xv. Take all essential information with you (e.g. tickets; accommodation details; passport + copy; contact details for the University; Embassy/High Commission contact details; copy of travel insurance policy and contact details plus travel assistance emergency number; etc.)
- xvi. Stop the activity (which may include leaving a location/changing travel plans) if they judge that the situation is unsafe
- xvii. After the trip, review how things went and feed lessons learnt back into the risk assessment process.

The Policy Number is RSA Policy Number **RTT306251**
(Individual policy number for the University of Reading: **RTT 306251/LUPC35**).

Help when travelling/making a claim:

Emergency medical and travel assistance 24/7

Tel: **+44 (0) 2086 084 100**

Email: rsa@healix.com

[Medical Insurance Template with Card](#)

[A Guide to Healix Travel Oracle Mobile App](#)

[RSA LUPC Group Personal Accident and Business Travel Policy](#)

4.3.3 Contingency Planning

Where appropriate and foreseeable, the contingency/emergency plan should include responses to:

- Illness, medical emergency and repatriation
- Domestic/personal or work emergency in the UK requiring immediate return to the UK
- Changes in activity or location
- Changes in political stability in-country, civil unrest
- Travel disruption
- Loss of communications
- Theft/loss of money, documentation or personal possessions (e.g. passports)
- The need for additional funds e.g. if return home is delayed, extra accommodation or travel tickets have to be purchased
- Theft/loss of essential or sensitive equipment or information e.g. laptops
- Extreme weather/natural disaster
- Lone working/missing persons procedure
- Emergency assistance (from the local police, emergency services, British or other national Embassy, local consulate, the University)
- Evacuation procedures
- Communications with the University and family members (if appropriate)

Travellers travelling together as a group should all be aware of the general plan, significant risks, communications and emergency procedures.

Travellers and their managers/supervisors should ensure that there is a contingency plan if the traveller fails to make contact with either the University or contacts in country. As a minimum this should involve trying to contact the traveller and establish if they are safe. The agreed frequency and need for making contact will vary, depending on the risk level.

5 HEALTH AND MEDICAL ASPECTS

Consideration should be given to:

- The degree of general health fitness required (both mental and physical) for the work and for travel to the proposed destination. For staff, general advice can be obtained from Occupational Health. Where an assessment of the fitness of an individual a management referral should be made.
http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/humanresources/WorkingatReading/humres-Occupational_Health.aspx
- Immunisations/vaccinations and the nature of the work to be done. It can take several weeks or months for full immunity to be developed after some courses of immunisations, and so advance planning is essential. Vaccinations and chemo prophylactic tablets may not prevent disease or tropical infections, but they may ensure survival. Vaccination advice may also vary with underlying health issues, destination, and length of stay and time of year.
- It is therefore important to **contact Occupational Health, your GP or a travel clinic for advice on immunisations and vaccinations**. More information about the vaccines required for travel to each country is available from:

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>

[NHS Scotland Fit For Travel](#)

<https://www.masta-travel-health.com/#>

- Any traveller with health restrictions e.g. heart disease, epilepsy, diabetes, recent serious injury etc. should consider the possible effect that these may have on their ability to travel or to likelihood that they will need medical support while abroad. Underlying medical issues may not be a cause for concern in the UK, but they could be an issue on a long haul flight, or in a country where appropriate treatment is not readily available. Also disease or treatment may affect a person's response to a vaccine, or occasionally a vaccine may aggravate a disease.
- It is usually safe to fly whilst you're pregnant and it shouldn't harm the baby if the pregnancy is straight forward. Most airlines will not let you fly after week 37 of pregnancy, or week 32 if pregnant with twins or more. Here's some further information from the NHS website.
<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/pregnancy/is-it-safe-to-fly-while-pregnant/>
- Where appropriate a referral to Occupational Health should be made for staff,
- For students, advice should be sought from the University Medical Practice. Alternatively the individual should seek advice from their GP.
- Modifications/adjustments to enable staff/students with disabilities to take part. Advice should be sought from Occupational Health for staff, or from the University Medical Practice for students. The disclosed information should normally only be issued to the trip organiser on receipt of the participant's signed consent.
- Checks should be made that travel insurance will cover any pre-existing medical conditions.
- The availability of medical assistance in-country, and the procedures for medical repatriation must be checked.
- Information about likely health hazards and preventative measures must be obtained. This might include information about food, drink and hygiene, environmental or climatic illnesses e.g. dehydration, Altitude Sickness, and endemic diseases.
- Travellers are strongly advised to have a dental check-up prior to undertaking extended travel overseas to remote locations where access to dental care may be difficult or where there is a high prevalence of blood borne virus including HIV infection.

5.1 Medical repatriation

If a traveller becomes ill or suffers injury and requires either to be moved to the nearest suitable hospital or to be brought back to the UK, they must phone the 24/7 emergency phone number for the University Insurers and University Security **+44 (0) 118 378 6300**.

5.2 Medical documentation and supplies

Participants should have/carry, as appropriate:

- European Health Insurance Card (E111) for medical treatment in Europe. *(Please note, this advice may change following Brexit)*
- Vaccination certificates
- Proof of medical insurance (available via the University Insurance Office), etc.
- If required by a pre-existing medical condition, sufficient medication for the trip, plus spares in case of loss, destruction or damage e.g. asthma inhaler, insulin etc.
- Letter or prescription from a medical practitioner to justify carrying any necessary prescribed drugs
- A 'Fit to Travel' medical certificate, as required by some countries (obtainable through a GP, the University Medical Practice (for students) or a travel clinic. Staff should be referred to Occupational Health if necessary
- In some instances, travellers may wish to take sterile packs, consisting of sterile syringes, needles, etc., in case invasive emergency treatment is required whilst travelling. Medical kits containing sterile medical supplies are available from MASTA.

6 EMERGENCIES

In the event of any emergency contact the 24/7 emergency phone number provided by our insurers followed by security.

Travel group leaders (or individuals travelling on their own) can decide to stop an activity or leave a location if they deem it to be unsafe. This decision can be made without reference to the University if circumstances dictate this. The University will support the decision and will meet any additional expenditure incurred as a result.

Travellers must have an emergency plan, appropriate to the circumstances likely to be encountered. This may be as simple as relying on the standard University travel insurance/emergency assistance cover, and having access to their emergency contact telephone number, or it may require more planning and resources e.g. 'buddies' in country; flexible travel tickets; security protection.

All travellers must comply with the requirement to provide travel plans and associated emergency contact information, for use by the University only in an emergency situation.

All travellers should carry a form of personal identification, in case of accident or emergency. In some countries, this is a legal requirement.

6.1 Travel information

The information that will be valuable for the traveller and the School/Function in case of an emergency is likely to include:

- Names of all travellers
- Passport and visa details for all travellers
- Emergency contact details (to be used only in the event of an emergency and with the prior consent of the traveller)
- A copy of the itinerary, with details such as:
 - flights
 - addresses (for appointments and hotels)
 - contact names and telephone numbers (for appointments and hotels)
 - times of appointments (where relevant/known)
- Contact names, addresses and telephone numbers of the British Consul, agents and British Embassy/High Commission
- Purchase card/credit card emergency numbers (to report loss etc.)
- Travel insurance company contact details, policy number and emergency numbers
- Details of any health issues or disabilities of vulnerable individuals
- Name and contact details for the nominated School/Function contact

If there are any last-minute changes, especially of participants, the information must be updated.

6.2 Emergency funds

If a traveller needs access to emergency funds (e.g. due to lost or stolen cash or credit cards; extended duration of stay etc.) they should contact the University Insurance emergency assistance 24 hour help line who can arrange emergency funds.

Alternatively, University Finance can be contacted (financehelp@reading.ac.uk) or telephone 0118 378 6135). They will decide how best to transfer funds depending on the situation and location.

6.3 Communications

Depending on the location, a variety of methods of communication may be required e.g. landline, mobile phone, satellite phone, HF radio, agreed email communications schedule. In high risk remote locations, up to three methods of communication may be required to provide assurance that a system will work in an emergency. Systems must be tested in country before they are needed 'for real'.

Travellers must check the legal requirements for taking communications and satellite navigation equipment in and out of countries; some countries ban the use of such technology and there are legal penalties for non-compliance.

7 INSURANCE

7.1 Travel insurance

If the destination is remote or unstable:

- Check if the University Travel Insurer/emergency assistance provider can respond to foreseeable emergencies. If they cannot, the trip must be referred to the VC, DVC or PVC as high risk.
- Ensure that traveller has effective means of communication.

Travellers must draw the attention of the Insurance Office to any risks that they think may be out of the ordinary or potentially more hazardous than usual.

All travellers must inform the Insurance Office of any significant pre-existing medical conditions prior to travel as this information may need to be disclosed to the University insurers.

All travellers should take a summary of their insurance cover and emergency telephone numbers with them.

The University has policies for employer's liability; public liability; staff and student travel on University business; and professional indemnity. See the Insurance Office web site for more details: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/finance/TravelandInsurance/fcs-ins-travelandinsurance.aspx>

Please note, extra premiums may need to be paid if you are travelling to a destination that the FCO advise against all travel.

If in any doubt about insurance cover provided, please contact the insurance office before travel insurance@reading.ac.uk

7.2 Insurance for leisure activities

If travellers are likely to undertake hazardous activities during personal down time, or make their own travel arrangements e.g. by extending a business trip to take a holiday, this may not be covered by the University travel insurance. A holiday in the same country is covered, but if the holiday extends to another country or includes hazardous activities, you must check with the Insurance Office. Participants may need to take out their own personal travel/accident insurance.

7.3 Vehicle insurance

The use of private cars by individuals (staff or students) for overseas travel is not recommended. If a student or member of staff wishes to use their own vehicle overseas, they must check that their own vehicle insurance cover is adequate. **Cover for business use is required for staff and may be required for students.** Students must be advised to check the terms of their insurance policy to make sure that the cover is adequate for themselves, any other passengers, and any equipment carried.

If it is proposed to hire a vehicle, the hirer's insurance cover must be obtained; hiring vehicles overseas is NOT covered by University insurance. The extent of cover must be checked, including cover for any equipment carried, any off road travel, theft, loss, damage, etc. If the cover offered is the legal minimum, this may not be sufficient. If in doubt, contact the University Insurance Officer for advice.

Travellers should also check the insurance cover for contracted external vehicles which have their own drivers. Hire should include passenger insurance, but it is always best to take the advice of the University Insurance Officer.

Breakdown insurance is recommended for hire vehicles. Check if it is included in the hire package.

8 ACCOMMODATION

Travellers should have the ability and authority to decide if accommodation meets acceptable standards of safety and hygiene. Consideration may need to be given to:

- Fire and electrical safety
- Safety of gas appliances
- Personal security
- General safety of the structure and facilities – for example pool, lifts, balconies, cleanliness
- Environment surrounding the accommodation
- Existence of third party liability insurance

If the accommodation is found to present unacceptable risks to health and safety, in the first instance the traveller should contact the University contracted supplier to ask them to find alternative accommodation.

If this is not forthcoming within a reasonable timeframe, or is impracticable, the traveller should be given delegated authority to find alternative accommodation.

Personal security and privacy should be considered when booking accommodation e.g. depending on location, some travellers may feel less secure in a ground floor room.

All travellers should make themselves familiar with the fire procedures in their accommodation (alarm signal, evacuation routes, extinguishers, assembly point). For further advice you can contact the University Fire Safety Advisor, d.w.sharp@reading.ac.uk

Accommodation should be booked through the University contracted travel agent who will be able to guarantee that health and safety standards in the accommodation have been checked. However there may be circumstances when accommodation is not booked through a contracted supplier e.g. for research in remote locations, camping or hostel accommodation etc.

Advice on camping is given in Safety Code of Practice 32 Fieldwork ([Health & Safety Codes of Practice](#))

9 TRANSPORT

9.1 Driving and Road Safety

Ensure that the travel group leader/individual traveller is competent to assess the safety of the travel arrangements in country, including travel to/from airports, transportation in-country, and the emergency arrangements, driving standards; the reliability and safety of hire car and taxi companies; what to do in the event of a road traffic accident.

Ensure that they are authorised to change the arrangements, even if this occurs additional costs, if they identify that the planned arrangements are unsafe or that safer options are available.

GOV.UK and local advice should be sought regarding the safety of public transport and road safety /driving overseas.

Travellers must ensure that they comply with local road safety and driver licence requirements.

Car/van/bus passengers **must** wear seat belts where these are fitted to the vehicle. Where there is the option of using a vehicle fitted with seat belts, this **MUST** be selected in preference to one without seat belts, even if this incurs additional costs. Seat belts, if fitted, must be worn.

Specific conditions relate to minibuses, especially with regard to driving licence requirements - further details are available from the University Insurance Officer or see the University policy '[Driving for Work Purposes](#)'.

Drivers of vehicles being driven off road must have specialist training – see the University 'Driving for Work' policy and procedures document. [Health & Safety Codes of Practice](#)

When hiring vehicles use a reputable company. The cheapest may not be the most reliable or the safest. The hirer has the responsibility of checking that the vehicle is as described on the delivery sheet, is properly equipped, and is roadworthy.

Plan contingency arrangements in the event that the transport arrangements fail or are assessed as unsuitable.

Risk assessments should consider the potential security threats associated with different forms and modes of transport. This applies particularly in areas with a history of kidnap or ambush.

9.2 Air travel

Travellers **must check** and comply with all legislative requirements relating to airline safety regulations, luggage limits, and carriage/import/export of dangerous goods and restricted or controlled articles and equipment, computer software etc.

The effects of jet lag should be considered when planning overseas visits, and subsequent work. The Finance Hospitality, Expenses and Travel policy may permit an upgrade in class of travel subject to budgetary approval.

9.3 Aviation and marine safety standards

The European Commission provides a list of airline carriers which are banned from operating in EU airspace – https://ec.europa.eu/transport/modes/air/safety/air-ban/search_en

University contracted travel suppliers will only book on EU approved airlines. No ‘blacklisted’ companies will be offered.

Travellers must not use any of the airlines banned by the EU unless there is no alternative. If they propose to fly with a carrier banned by the EU, they must obtain approval of their Head of School and justify why an alternative, safer mode of transport cannot be used. The Insurance Office must be consulted before approval is given.

Where practicable, it is preferable to use an international carrier which flies to western/ developed destinations. Likewise, airports that receive international flights may have higher standards than a local domestic airport, even although the latter may be closer to the final destination. However this also has to be balanced by an assessment of the risk of road/ rail travel in-country to reach the final destination.

Travel by light aircraft, non-scheduled air services and local marine services

In some remote or under-developing areas, travel by light aircraft or boat/ferry may be the only practicable method of travel. Facilities and safety standards may be lower than would be permissible in the UK or EC. Where there are doubts about the safety of this method of travel, Head of School approval must be sought in advance.

9.4 Dangerous, controlled and restricted goods

In the UK and elsewhere there are import/export controls on military or paramilitary goods, technology, IT software (in particular encryption software), artworks, plants, animals, foods, medicines, chemicals and infectious substances. License requirements may depend on the potential use of the item – e.g. if it has a military application (usually referred to as dual-use goods) and where the item is being exported to/from.

A license may also be needed to export or import goods temporarily – e.g. taking a sample to an exhibition. Exporting or importing controlled goods without the right license is a criminal offence, therefore anyone travelling with equipment/goods/samples must check the requirements beforehand. Travellers should also check the legal requirements for the countries that they propose to visit or travel through.

Guidance:

Guidance on shipping dangerous goods and import/export restrictions is given on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website.

The carriage of dangerous goods by road, sea or air is governed by international regulations and conventions, covering classification, packaging, labelling and certification. Dangerous goods are any goods that pose a risk to people, property and the environment. The relevant regulations must be checked before travel.

Note that dangerous goods (HAZMAT) can include everyday items such as lithium batteries (used in Drones). These must have the exposed terminals covered by a safety cap, if the battery is carried loose, not installed in a device. Please be aware that each airline has its own rules for how to transport lithium batteries.

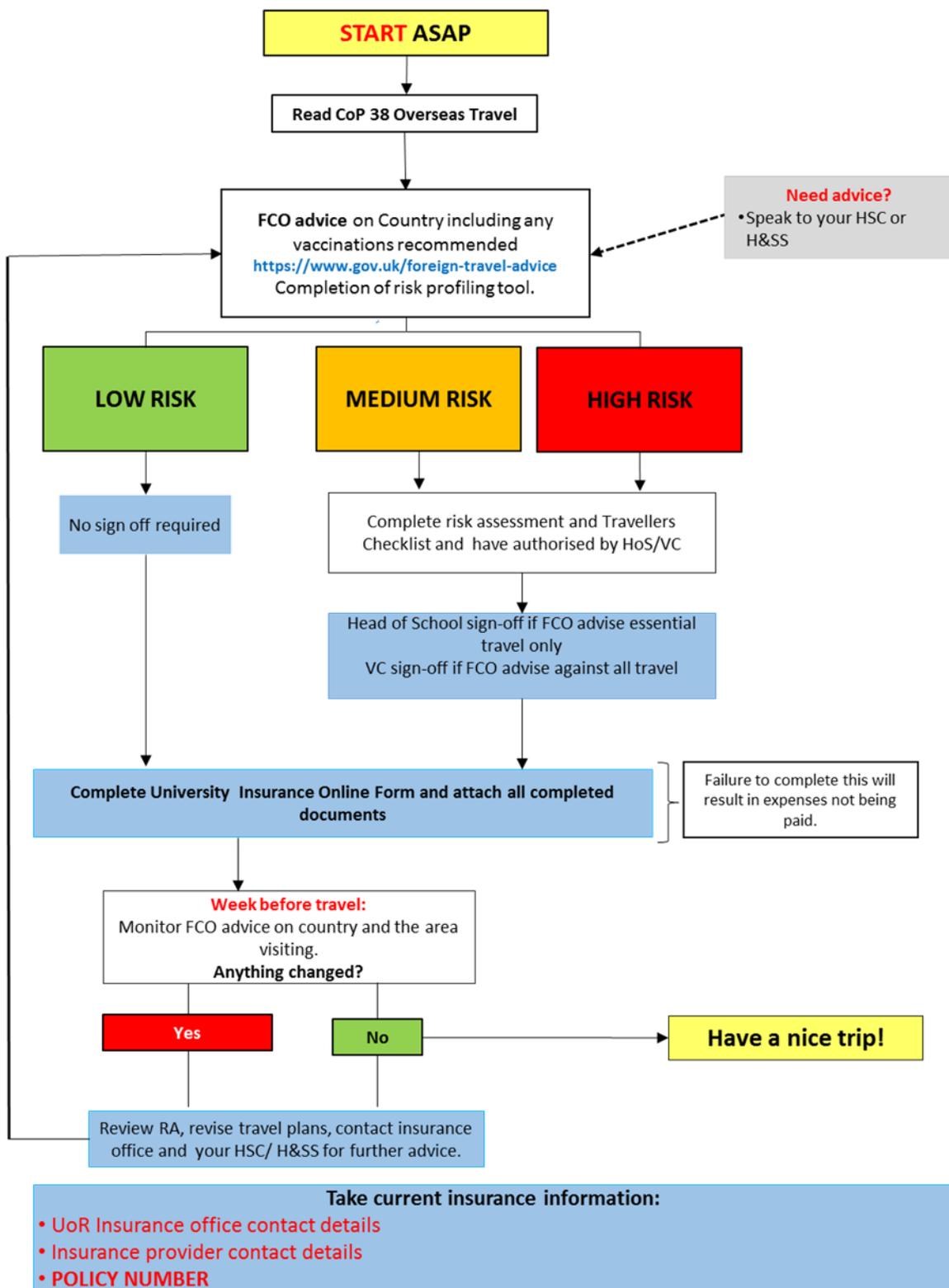
If you plan to take a Drone abroad as part of your research you must ensure you have received the appropriate training, have completed and have copies of the correct documentation, and checked the legislation of the country you are travelling to for any additional information. Some countries will confiscate the Drone and other related equipment if documentation is incorrect or if they believe there to be a breach in legislation. Please see Code of Practice 54 - Drones for further guidance. [Health & Safety Codes of Practice](#)

10 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Review adequacy of arrangements on return to the University. Pass on any lessons learnt to colleagues via local Health, Safety and Wellbeing committees and the Insurance Office.

Appendix 1: Overseas Travel Flow Chart

HOW TO: Overseas Travel



Appendix 2: Overseas Travel Risk Profiling Tool

A TICK IN ANY BOX IN THE MEDIUM OR HIGH RISK COLUMNS MEANS THAT THE PROPOSED TRAVEL IS REGARDED AS MEDIUM OR HIGH RISK AND YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE RISK ASSESSMENT.					
Low	X	Medium	X	High	X
Standards are broadly equivalent to the UK.		Risks are considered to be tolerable but higher than the UK. The travel plan reflects this.		Despite planning to reduce the risks, they remain substantial.	
PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY					
<p>No FCO travel restrictions in force</p> <p>A location where personal safety and security risks are broadly equivalent to the UK, or known from previous recent experience to be safe.</p> <p>Any higher risk areas can be avoided.</p>		<p>Higher than normal risk of civil disorder, political unrest, serious crime or other comparable danger, but no FCO restrictions.</p> <p>It is possible, but unlikely, that the traveller may be caught up in local disturbances.</p>		<p>FCO advises against all travel</p> <p>FCO advises essential travel only</p> <p>Significant and immediate risk of instability, disorder, crime against the traveller, conflict, or similar danger that could threaten the traveller (either targeting them, or risk of being in the wrong place at the wrong time).</p> <p>Contingency arrangements for foreseeable emergencies cannot be provided.</p>	
TRANSPORT/TRAVEL SAFETY					
<p>A location with good safe, transport systems.</p> <p>Travel plans are commensurate with the risk and have reduced risks to as low as reasonably practicable.</p> <p>The mode of travel and accommodation are</p>		<p>Modes of transport present risks greater than might be experienced in the UK e.g. suspect road or air safety records, long haul travel without reasonable breaks or rest.</p>		<p>Modes of travel or accommodation present a high risk of accident, injury, disease; UK, EC or US regulators consider the provider to be unsafe</p>	

<p>broadly equivalent to the standards that apply in the UK.</p>					
HEALTH RISKS AND MEDICAL INFRASTRUCTURE					
<p>A location with no endemic disease or none that could be contracted by the traveler so no vaccinations or precautionary health measures are recommended/required.</p> <p>Good health/medical infrastructure.</p> <p>No reported issues of air pollution.</p> <p>Emergency medical support can be provided locally.</p> <p>Good food/water safety and hygiene standards.</p>		<p>Vaccinations and precautionary health measures are recommended/required e.g. inoculations. (If vaccinations are recommended and you choose not to take them, please speak to the Insurance Office.)</p> <p>Health/medical standards are significantly lower than in the UK.</p> <p>An area where air pollution is uncharacteristically high and may aggravate bronchial, sinus or asthma conditions and other pre-existing medical conditions.</p> <p>Emergency medical support can be provided locally, but may be difficult to access or may not be to an equivalent standard to the UK. This can be compensated for by availability of medical repatriation in extreme cases.</p> <p>Food/water safety and hygiene standards are significantly lower than in the UK, but the traveller should be able to adopt good food, water and personal hygiene precautions.</p>		<p>Vaccinations and precautionary health measures are recommended/required e.g. inoculations but there has been no assessment of health needs prior to travel and travelers' may not have adequate health protection. (If vaccinations are recommended and you choose not to take them, please speak to the Insurance Office.)</p> <p>Medical or rescue services not available quickly or locally or are below acceptable international standards. Repatriation is difficult, time-consuming or impossible.</p> <p>Food and water safety and hygiene standards are low, there is a serious disease that is not practicable to protect against.</p>	

COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE				
<p>A location with a good communications infrastructure, enabling contact with emergency assistance services and/or the University if necessary.</p> <p>Contact details for the traveller are available.</p>		<p>Two-way communications with the traveller are possible, but not reliable 24/7.</p>	<p>An area where communications in the country or to the UK may not be available and where this would prejudice the ability to provide essential emergency support.</p>	
INDIVIDUAL FACTORS				
<p>The traveller is experienced, understands the risks for the intended destination and has no known ill health or physical mobility issues.</p> <p>The proposed work is itself low risk e.g. attendance at a conference, visit to an academic or business institute with no practical work hazards.</p>		<p>The traveller may be at greater risk due to inexperience/unfamiliarity with the destination or cultural differences.</p> <p>The traveller has significant health problems (e.g. heart, respiratory, diabetes etc.), or mobility limitations, or requires regular prescribed medication. Adequate support can be provided, or reasonable adjustments can be made.</p> <p>The work is inherently hazardous, but safe working practices will reduce the risk as low as reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Travellers have not adequately risk assessed the trip, or have previously failed to follow University/School procedures for overseas travel.</p> <p>Risks are considered to be tolerable but higher than would be the case for equivalent work in the</p>	<p>Those with known health problems, or recovering from ill health or surgery, or who need regular prescribed medication, which cannot be given adequate support.</p> <p>Females where the University knows they are beyond 24 weeks pregnant.</p> <p>Despite planning to reduce the risks, they remain substantial.</p> <p>If you choose not to follow the advice of the FCO regarding immunisations etc.</p>	

		UK. The travel plan reflects this.		
Natural Disasters/Extremes of Weather				
No expected Natural Disasters and weather conditions broadly equivalent to the UK.		Higher than normal risk of extreme weather particularly at certain times of the year, e.g. Monsoons Natural disasters can occur but the likelihood is lower than expected due to time elapsed.		Threat of extreme weather. Natural disasters have occurred in the last five years and are likely to re-occur.

Appendix 3: Medium & High Risk Assessment

Medium/High Risk Travel Risk Assessment

This form must be completed in full if an initial risk assessment identifies proposed travel as Medium or High risk - see Safety Code of Practice 38 for definitions of what constitutes low, medium and high risk travel.

Safety Code of Practice 38 Overseas Travel sets out University of Reading procedures for planning and undertaking overseas travel. However neither this form nor the Safety Code can define the precautions that are appropriate for all travel assessed as medium or high risk. These must be tailored to suit the individual traveller, the risks that have been identified, and the destination country.

If travel is repeated, completion of this form will constitute a generic assessment for repeat travel, **PROVIDED** that this is reviewed before every visit to check that circumstances have not changed and that the assessment remains valid.

In addition, any proposal to undertake travel against the advice of the UK Government must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor or a Pro-Vice Chancellor. This form should be used to present a supporting statement in support of the proposal.

This form **only addresses travel aspects** of working overseas. Any hazards and risks associated with the work activities must be subject to a separate risk assessment. Contact your HSC or H&SS for the correct form.

OVERSEAS TRAVEL CHECKLIST FOR:

Name(s) of Traveller:

Travel to (country/location):

Purpose of visit

Department/School

Dates
from:

To:

COMPLETE FOR MEDIUM AND HIGH RISK TRAVEL

1. Description of proposed travel/fieldwork and any relevant background information:

2. Summary of hazards and risks:

e.g. GOV.UK advises that there is a substantial risk of terrorist or criminal activity; disease outbreak occurring in-country; remote & hostile location with poor road access and limited communications; traveller has a significant medical condition that requires ongoing medical support.

3. Explain why other options of achieving the work objective are not considered viable:

4. Agreed precautions and control measures:

5. Details of the nearest Embassy, High Commission, Consul Etc.

6. Outline the benefits to the University that would justify approval. Outline the consequences of not going ahead:

I have considered the risks and proposed precautions and control measures and agree that the work can proceed, subject to these precautions being rigorously observed.

Signatures/Authorisation:

Person completing Risk Assessment:	Date:
Principle Investigator/ Supervisor:	Date:
Any other reviewee e.g. your HSC (optional)	Date:
Head of Department/School/Function:	Date:
Vice Chancellor (or PVC) for HIGH RISK GOV.UK restricted destinations only	Date:

Appendix 4: Travellers Checklist

CHECKLIST FOR TRAVELLERS				
THREAT AND CONTROLS		CONTROLS IN PLACE		
		Yes	No	N/A
1.	Basic travel precautions			
	All controls that apply to low risk travel covering contact details, insurance, communications, legal requirements, laws and culture, financial support, weather etc. will be adopted where appropriate and practical.			
2.	Emergency communications – failure to be able to contact the traveller in the event of accident, illness, loss of documentation, natural disaster etc. This may prejudice the traveller’s safety e.g. unable to render assistance.			
	Upgrade the communications plan e.g. satellite phone, email enabled on laptop, agreed schedule of phone or email contact with the University or to a contact in country. Ideally, try to establish 3 means of communication, and test in country on arrival. Ensure that the communications plan is included in the itinerary/planning documentation and available to the School/Service and the Insurance Office.			
	Failure to make contact will initiate emergency procedures.			
3.	Risk to personal safety - Country politically unstable, likelihood of civil unrest, injury from indiscriminate or targeted attacks, mugging or kidnapping.			
	Check the FCO website for travel advice on your destination: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice			
	Get specific security advice from the University travel insurers. Check insurance cover and arrangements.			
	Determine if contacts in country have additional local knowledge to put UK Government advice in context. Avoid travel to/via high risk locations (if practicable). Determine if local contacts in country can provide additional security.			
	Ensure all travellers are fully aware and briefed about the risks, and how to stay safe.			
	Ensure travel arrangements provide flexibility and if practicable to do so, enable the traveller to leave the country at short notice if necessary (e.g. open ended airline ticket, sufficient funds to buy new ticket). Have alternative options if the situation deteriorates and the traveller is unable to leave the country (e.g. stay in secure hotel, do not venture out).			
	Have local contact meet traveller at airport, ensure that both parties know what the other looks like and have proof of identity, travel with a trusted local contact or trusted reputable travel company.			
	Select recognised international hotel chain where practicable, with any necessary security e.g. secure compound, guards at entrances.			
	Check travel advice on a regular basis while in country.			
4.	Problems with local authorities due to loss of/inadequate documentation, carriage of illegal substances, goods or materials, leading to delay, arrest, imprisonment.			

CHECKLIST FOR TRAVELLERS				
THREAT AND CONTROLS		CONTROLS IN PLACE		
		Yes	No	N/A
	<p>Save scanned images of all important documents including your passport, to a secure on-line account or to your Administrator, for worldwide access in an emergency</p> <p>Emergency medical and travel assistance 24/7</p> <p>The university policy number with RSA</p>			
	Keep a copy of your credit card details as well as the contact name of your bank in case you need to report loss of this card.			
	Have a letter of invitation from local institution/client.			
	Check visa and work permit requirements; ensure you are fully compliant.			
	Check import, export, carriage of dangerous goods, and/or illegal material requirements and ensure compliance. Avoid travelling with any information, equipment, supplies or samples that could cause potential problems with Customs or Immigration authorities.			
5.	Local transport standards are poor, present a high risk of injury or death to travellers			
	Follow GOV.UK/local advice on transport e.g. driving at night, use of local taxis or hire car companies, safety or otherwise of self-drive, safety of trains and buses, what to do in the event of a traffic accident.			
	Obtain Head of School approval for travel with carriers who are banned in the EC, or about whom there are substantial safety concerns – only use if alternatives cannot be identified. <u>Do not</u> select on lowest cost – consider safety implications.			
6.	Health risks - risk of poisoning and/or illness from contaminated food or water, infection and disease. Inadequate medical support in country, medical repatriation difficult.			
	Ensure all staff/students obtain health advice well before travel. Plan immunisation/ inoculation requirements well in advance, or maintain full immunisation/inoculation at all times.			
	Take emergency first aid kit and other essential equipment e.g. mosquito net, water purification tablets etc. appropriate for the health risks faced in country. Follow food, water, hygiene safety advice.			
	Check if essential routine medical and toiletry items can be obtained in country – if not, take your own. Have a doctor's letter for any prescription medication.			
	Attend First Aid course for travellers if appropriate.			
	Consider carrying special emergency contact card translated into the local language – carry card at all times.			
	Please take your EHIC card with you to cover for medical treatment in Europe. https://www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do			
	Do not swim, wade or paddle in water that may be contaminated with parasites, leptospirosis etc.			
	For longer term postings, ensure that appropriate health cover and insurance is available and provided			
7.	Other risks and associated controls – define here			

CHECKLIST FOR TRAVELLERS				
THREAT AND CONTROLS		CONTROLS IN PLACE		
		Yes	No	N/A

Version control

VERSION	CHANGES	REVIEWED	APPROVED BY	APPROVAL DATE
7	Removal of specific references to named travel insurers or emergency assistance providers, with reference made instead to the Insurance Office and Procurement web sites. Changes to University management structures.	Every three years	H&SS Moira Simpson	June 2015
8	Amended to include changes to approval levels for high risk travel.		H&SC	Oct 2016
9	Full review of whole document. A new risk profiling tool and repaired broken links.		Julian Vaughan-Spickers	March 2019