**General Risk Assessment Form**: Generic A off Campus work in UK

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| **Fieldwork/Project title/Day fieldtrip title/Conference Title**  Please delete as appropriate |  |  |
| **Fieldwork/Research type (circle one)** | Staff [[1]](#footnote-1) PhD PGT UGT |  |
| **Duration** |  | |
| **Hotel address (If you are staying overnight)** |  | |
| **Researcher(s)/Fieldwork Lead name(s)**  **Signature\*** |  | **Date** |
| **Supervisor(s) name(s)**(where relevant)  **Signature\*** |  | **Date** |

\*Electronic Signatures are acceptable

**In signing this document all parties are recognizing that they have read the Risk Assessment thoroughly and have taken all relevant precautions to keep themselves and other participants safe.**

**This is especially key for those undertaking lone research, the School’s Guidelines on “Conducting Lone Research” should be followed** [**guidance available here**](http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=31640) **and in signing this document you confirm that these guidelines will be followed.**

**Random auditing will take place of submitted Risk Assessments to ensure that all requirements are followed.**

All completed Risk Assessments should be submitted to [compliance.seed@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:compliance.seed@manchester.ac.uk), (as well as appending to any ethical submission where relevant) submission of the document will be considered approved, unless otherwise advised.

In the event of an emergency during normal working hours telephone the School Office 44 (0)161-275 0966. For a 24/7 response telephone the University’s Security Services on +44 (0)161 306 9966, and where possible email [seedschooloffice@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:seedschooloffice@manchester.ac.uk)

*Martin Evans, Head of School of Environment, Education and Development*

*September 2019*

| Date: (1)  16/09/2019 | Assessed by: (2)  Martin Evans | Validated by: (3)  Kay Hodgson | Location: (4)  ***Low hazard off-campus , including fieldwork, in urban and rural areas in the UK*** | Assessment ref no: (5)  **Generic Risk Assessment** **(a)** | Review date: (6)  1/9/2016 |
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| Task/Premises: (7)  This Risk Assessment has been approved by the Head of School (HOS) for low-risk off-campus activities by staff and students of the School of Environment, Education and Development  This Risk Assessment should be submitted with an ethical application in which the level has been identified as Low or Medium Risk.  This Risk Assessment is suitable for low risk day fieldtrips, conferences, research, undertaking surveys, interviews, focus groups or archival work in offices and public places within normal working hours.  It is suitable for collecting soil and water samples in lowland environments and/or small streams.  It is **not suitable** for persons working outside UK.  It is **not suitable** for activities in recognised hazardous areas, e.g. factories, quarries, high crime neighbourhoods etc.  It is **not suitable** for field research in hostile environments, e.g. large rivers, lakes, the sea or in wild areas.  It is **not suitable** for residential Fieldwork activities  It is **not suitable** if you are engaged in work/activities more than 12 hours from proposed medical help.  It is **not suitable** if the work requires a high standard of physical fitness and/or exposure to specific hazards (e.g. climbing at altitude).  It is **not suitable** if the visit is likely to be more than 6 weeks and must complete a separate Risk Assessment.  It is **not suitable** if there is the possibility that vaccinations will be required. This includes fieldwork involving soil and/or water where you must have up to date tetanus inoculations. Also be aware of health risks from water borne pathogens (Hepatitis 'A', Weil’s disease, Polio and toxic cyano-bacteria). Vaccinations for Hepatitis ‘A’ and Polio are recommended.  An additional Risk Assessment Form must be completed for any extra hazards not covered by the Generic Risk Assessments (there are three Generic Risk Assessments) and must be validated by the adviser/supervisor in the case of students before Permission to Proceed is granted. Staff should obtain the validation of the Discipline Safety Officer. No work may be carried out without Permission to Proceed.  SEED Generic A: Off Campus work in UK  SEED Generic B: Low risk overseas destinations  SEED Generic C: Normal office work on Campus  SEED Residential fieldwork Activities | | | | | |

| Activity (8) | Hazard (9) | Person(s) in danger (10) | Existing measures to control risk (11) | Risk rating (12) | Result (13) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Off campus working in UK | Lack of Pre activity Planning | All members of SEED | * Staff who will be away for 3 days or more are required to complete the online ‘Academic Absence Approval and Information’ form. * Research Postgraduates should confirm the suitability of this Risk Assessment with their supervisor before embarking upon fieldwork or period of absence greater than three days and complete a full Risk Assessment if necessary. * Taught Postgraduates and Undergraduates should consult with their dissertation supervisor or programme advisor as appropriate. Note that Risk Assessments for field courses are the responsibility of the member of staff organising the field course. * Make sure that a responsible person knows where you are and when you may be expected to return and what action should be taken if you do not return in time. * Carry your university ID and be ready to identify yourself to the authorities. * Have consulted and signed the appropriate Risk Assessment. | Medium | N |
| Off campus working in UK | Recognised hazardous areas | All members of SEED | You must complete a full Risk Assessment and have this validated before undertaking any activity in a recognised hazardous areas such as:  Factories  High crime neighbourhoods  Sea, seashore, tides, currents, coral reefs etc.  Marshes and quicksand  Pathogenic micro-organisms  Agrochemicals and pesticides  Dust Hazards (COSHH)  Chemical Hazards (COSHH)  Biological Hazards (COSHH)  Machinery  Power lines and pipelines  Insecure buildings  Slurry and silage pits  Industrial premises, factories etc.  Mountains, cliffs and steep slopes  Glaciers, crevasses, ice falls etc.  Caves, mines and quarries | High | N |
| Off campus working in UK | Research in hostile environments, e.g. large rivers, lakes, the sea or in wild areas. | All members of SEED | You must complete a full Risk Assessment and have this validated before undertaking any activity in a hostile environment. | High | N |
| Off campus working in UK | Ill-Health | All members of SEED | * As a precaution wear waterproof gloves when dealing with soil and water samples and clean hands frequently. Always wash hands before eating, preferably using antiseptic medical wipes. * It is the responsibility of the individual to contact Occupational Health if they have pre-exiting health problems or other relevant conditions, including those with the need to take regular/emergency/specific medication (e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, metal health problems, allergic conditions etc.), should this be the case you cannot use this Generic Risk Assessment, and must complete a separate Risk Assessment. | Low | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Lone working, i.e. working out of eyesight of other colleagues | All members of SEED | * Do not work alone except in neutral locations or public spaces. Otherwise, minimum group size is 2 persons. * If you cannot find somebody to help you must complete a separate Risk Assessment for this activity. You can access the Lone working policy [here](http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/ethics/risk-assessments/) | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Causing offence to people | All members of SEED | Staff or students should ensure that they:-   * Undertake training in the use of questionnaire and interview-based qualitative research methods. * Where possible, "vet" interviewees first over the phone and cancel if you feel uneasy. * Where applicable gain permission * Behave inconspicuously and avoid aggressive behaviour. Don't behave or speak in an officious way, and don't pass comments on the peoples and environments you encounter. * Be aware of any sensitive issues involved in discussions or interviews. Be prepared to explain who you are and what you are doing. * Dress appropriately so that you fit in without attracting undue attention. | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Research with children, animals, illegal substances or illegal activities or where there are ethical considerations (see School ethical procedures) | All members of SEED | You must complete a full Risk Assessment and refer the activity to the Ethical Committee by contacting the Research Office and/or your supervisor and have this validated/approved before undertaking any such work. | High | A |
| Conducting interviews or using questionnaires | Causing harm to people | All members of SEED  Children (aged 18 or less)  (Vulnerable Adults) | Staff or students should undertake training in the use of questionnaire and interview-based qualitative research methods.  Where research involves confidential or sensitive issues, or contact with subjects who might be regarded as vulnerable or a dependent, such as children (under 18 years), which may cause harm this will require a *Full Risk Assessment* to be completed and may have to be referred to the University's Ethics Committee.  It is unlikely that the Head of School will give permission for an undergraduate student to undertake a dissertation that raises such concerns.  Students should seek advice from their supervisor  Staff should refer to the following website for advice: [www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/researchethics/](http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/researchoffice/researchethics/) | Medium | A |
| Working with Children (aged 18 or less) or Vulnerable adults | Causing harm to people | Children (aged 18 or less)  Vulnerable Adults | Children should not partake in off-site activities without a full risk assessment.  Any staff or student working with children should ensure that the SEED ethics committee and/or their supervisor have agreed to the project/work and an appropriate risk assessment is completed.  It will be necessary for any individual working with children to have undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. See the following links: <http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/services/compliance-and-risk/child-protection/> and <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/index.htm> | Medium | A |
| Working with Children (aged 18 or less) or Vulnerable adults | Allegation of  Misconduct | All SEED Staff  Children (aged 18 or less)  Vulnerable Adults | * Ensure a DBS check is in place * Involve teachers, parents/carers and other key influencers wherever possible * Be an excellent role model – this includes not   smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of  children or using inappropriate language   * Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets * Maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Attacks on people and property | All members of SEED | * Plan your journey in advance. * Carry a mobile phone where possible. * Get advice from local people about local conditions. * Avoid areas known to be "unpleasant" and do not enter unfamiliar neighbourhoods alone. If you feel uneasy in any location, trust your instincts and leave. * Do not go into people's homes or areas they may regard as "their space". Meet interviewees in public spaces where neither party could be at risk. Where possible, conduct interviews with an observer. * Avoid walking alone at night and keep to well-lit streets. * Leave any area immediately if you feel uneasy. * Don't flash possessions and/or valuables around. Do not carry more money than you need to. * Don't use personal stereos so you cannot hear what is happening around you. * Do not leave valuables visible in your car or within reach of open windows, even when you are in it. * When parking your car in daylight, consider what the area will be like after dark. When returning to your car, look around to be sure there is no one waiting for you. * If your car is forced to stop by another car, stay in the car, lock the doors and speak through a slightly open window. * Make sure you know what to do in case of a breakdown. | Medium | A |
|  |  |  | * If staying in a hotel, avoid letting other people overhear your name and room number. * Do not allow unknown people into your hotel room and do not enter other people's rooms unless it is safe. * If you hear a disturbance in your hotel, stay in your room and phone for help. |  |  |
| Off campus working in UK | Unsafe travel | All members of SEED | * If you are not able to use your own vehicle (check insurance details permit such use) then use public transport, e.g. scheduled flights, trains, buses and licensed taxis. Only rent a vehicle from a reputable company. * Minibus driving – The Schools operate a ‘recognised driver’ scheme and you should undertake driving instruction before using a minibus for transporting staff and students. | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Traffic | All members of SEED | * Traffic hazards are normal hazards but people may act differently when in a group. * Do not let group activity and/or discussion distract people from normal road safety. Beware of "follow the leader" without personally checking the traffic. * Walk facing incoming traffic in areas with possible kerb-crawling. * Keep to busy and well-lit roads. | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Permission required to work on site from relevant authorities | All members of SEED | * Ask permission to visit private premises or field sites, including private car parks, e.g. at supermarkets. * Follow any health and safety rules in force at the work site. | Low | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Extreme weather | All members of SEED | Listen to weather forecasts and plan work accordingly, including appropriate clothing. | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Alcohol abuse | All members of SEED | * Don't drink alcohol on fieldwork and avoid people who are obviously drunk. * Avoid pubs and night clubs while carrying out fieldwork if possible. | Medium | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Freshwater immersion, ingestion and drowning | All members of SEED | * Do not do fieldwork in large rivers, fast flowing or deep water. You cannot use this Generic Risk Assessment for water deeper than knee depth and you must make a Full Risk Assessment. * Stagnant and slow flowing water can contain Weils Disease so never eat while working in a water environment, wear protective gloves while sampling and wash your hands afterwards. * If stuck in mud, do not struggle as this causes deeper sinking. Roll on back and spread weight evenly while attempting to ‘sledge’ to firmer ground. * Take special care on slippery rocks around lake shores and always look ahead at ground when walking around the water’s edge. Always wear waterproof (rubber), protective gloves if placing hands in very cold water. * When sampling in flowing water environments, be careful of slippery or steep banks and fast currents. If the current is fast or the water looks deeper than knee-height then do not go in. | High | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Dangerous animals | All members of SEED | Exercise caution when around animals and be aware that not all pets and farm animals are friendly. | Low | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Insects (including ticks) | All members of SEED | * Exercise caution when out in the field and follow advice from tour guides. * A Health & Safety questionnaire is circulated to all students prior to the trip taking place requests information on allergies including where allergic to insects. This information is passed to the Fieldwork Lead * Staff and students must notify the Fieldwork Lead if they are aware insects at the destination could cause them harm * If bitten or stung by an insect you must notify the Fieldwork Lead immediately | Low | A |
| Off campus working in UK | Working at heights, use of ladders | All members of SEED | You must have attended the University’s Training Course for working at height before you are permitted to use ladders or any other device. Please see HSE guidance at <http://www.hse.uk/falls/index/htm> | High | A |

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| **Action plan** (14) | | | | |
| **Ref No** | **Further action required** | **Action by whom** | **Action by when** | **Done** |
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**Notes to accompany General Risk Assessment Form**

This form is the one recommended by Health & Safety Services, and used on the University’s Risk Assessment training courses. It is strongly suggested that you use it for all new assessments, and when existing assessments are being substantially revised. However, its use is not compulsory. Providing the assessor addresses the same issues; alternative layouts may be used.

1. **Date**: Insert date that assessment form is completed. The assessment must be valid on that day, and subsequent days, unless circumstances change and amendments are necessary.
2. **Assessed by**: Insert the name and signature of the assessor. For assessments other than very simple ones, the assessor should have attended the University course on Risk Assessments (link to STDU)
3. **Validated by**: Insert the name and signature of someone in a position to validate that the assessment has correctly identified hazards and addressed the risks. This will normally be a line manager, supervisor, principal investigator, etc. who should be competent to identify the hazards and assess the risks. This person should have attended the University’s Risk Assessment course, or equivalent.
4. **Location**: Insert details of the exact location, i.e. building, floor, room or laboratory etc
5. **Assessment ref no**: Use this to insert any local tracking references used by the school or administrative directorate
6. **Review date**: Insert details of when the assessment will be reviewed as a matter of routine. This might be in 1 year’s time, at the end of a short programme of work, or longer period if risks are known to be stable. Note that any assessment must be reviewed if there are any significant changes – to the work activity, the vicinity, the people exposed to the risk, etc
7. **Task / premises**: Insert a brief summary of the task, e.g. typical office activities such as filing, DSE work, lifting and moving small objects, use of misc. electrical equipment. Or, research project [title] involving the use of typical laboratory hardware, including fume cupboards, hot plates, ovens, analysis equipment, flammable solvents, etc.
8. **Activity**: Use the column to describe each separate activity covered by the assessment. The number of rows is unlimited, although how many are used for one assessment will depend on how the task / premises is sub-divided. For laboratory work, activities in one particular lab or for one particular project might include; use of gas cylinders, use of fume cupboard, use of computer or other electrical equipment, use of lab ovens, hot plates or heaters, use of substances hazardous to health, etc
9. **Hazard**: For each activity, list the hazards. Remember to look at hazards that are not immediately obvious. For example, use of a lathe will require identification of the machine hazards, but also identification of hazards associated with the use of cutting oils (dermatitis), poor lighting, slipping on oil leaks, etc. The same activity might well have several hazards associated with it. Assessment of simple chemical risks (e.g. use of cleaning chemicals in accordance with the instructions on the bottle) may be recorded here. More complex COSHH assessments e.g. for laboratory processes, should be recorded on the specific COSHH forms (link).
10. **Persons in danger**: Insert everyone who might be affected by the activity. Remember those who are not immediately involved in the work, including cleaners, young persons on work experience, maintenance contractors, Estates personnel carrying out routine maintenance and other work. Remember also that the risks for different groups will vary. E.g. someone who needs to repair a laser may need to expose the beam path more than users of the laser would do.
11. **Existing measures to control the risk**: List all measures that already mitigate the risk. Many of these will have been implemented for other reasons, but should nevertheless be recognised as means of controlling risk. For example, restricting access to laboratories or machine rooms for security reasons also controls the risk of unauthorised and unskilled access to dangerous equipment. A standard operating procedure or local rules (e.g. for work with ionising radiation, lasers or biological hazards) will often address risks. Some specific hazards may require detailed assessments in accordance with specific legislation (e.g. COSHH, DSEAR, manual handling, DSE work). Where this is the case, and a detailed assessment has already been done in another format, the master Risk Assessment can simply cross-reference to other documentation. For example, the activity might be use of a carcinogen, the hazard might be exposure to hazardous substances, and the existing control measures might all be listed in a COSHH assessment. Controls might also include use of qualified and/or experienced staff that is competent to carry out certain tasks; an action plan might include training requirements for other people who will be carrying out those tasks.
12. **Risk Rating**: The simplest form of Risk Assessment is to rate the remaining risk as high, medium or low, depending on how likely the activity is to cause harm and how serious that harm might be.

The risk is **LOW** - if it is most unlikely that harm would arise under the controlled conditions listed, and even if exposure occurred, the injury would be relatively slight.

The risk is **MEDIUM** - if it is more likely that harm might actually occur and the outcome could be more serious (e.g. some time off work, or a minor physical injury.

The risk is **HIGH** - if injury is likely to arise (e.g. there have been previous incidents, the situation looks like an accident waiting to happen) and that injury might be serious (broken bones, trip to the hospital, loss of consciousness), or even a fatality.

Schools or administrative directorates may choose to use other rating systems. Typical amongst these are matrices (of 3x3, 4x4, 5x5 or even more complex) which require the assessor to select a numerical rating for both “likelihood that harm will arise” and “severity of that harm”. These may give a spurious sense of accuracy and reliability – none are based on quantitative methods. There are methods of estimating risk quantitatively, and these may be appropriate for complex design of load bearing structures and the like. Advice on methods of Risk Assessment is available from HSS. Whatever system of assessment is adopted, it is **essential** that the assessor has received suitable training and is familiar with the meaning of the terms (or numbers) used.

1. **Result:** This stage of assessment is often overlooked, but is probably the most important. Assigning a number or rating to a risk does not mean that the risk is necessarily adequately controlled. The options for this column are:   
   **T = trivial risk**. Use for very low risk activities to show that you have correctly identified a hazard, but that in the particular circumstances, the risk is insignificant.

**A = adequately controlled, no further action necessary.** If your control measures lead you to conclude that the risk is low, and that all legislative requirements have been met (and University policies complied with), then insert A in this column.

**N = not adequately controlled, actions required**. Sometimes, particularly when setting up new procedures or adapting existing processes, the Risk Assessment might identify that the risk is high or medium when it is capable of being reduced by methods that are reasonably practicable. In these cases, an action plan is required. The plan should list the actions necessary, who they are to be carried out by, a date for completing the actions, and a signature box for the assessor to sign off that the action(s) has been satisfactorily completed. Some action plans will be complex documents; others may be one or two actions that can be completed with a short timescale.

**U = unable to decide. Further information required.** Use this designation if the assessor is unable to complete any of the boxes, for any reason. Sometimes, additional information can be obtained readily (e.g. from equipment or chemicals suppliers, specialist University advisors) but sometimes detailed and prolonged enquiries might be required. E.g. is someone is moving a research programme from a research establishment overseas where health and safety legislation is very different from that in the UK.

**For T and A results**, the assessment is complete.

**For N or U results**, more work is required before the assessment can be signed off.

(14) **Action Plan:** Include details of any actions necessary in order to meet the requirements of the information in Section 11 ‘Existing measures to control the risk’. Identify someone who will be responsible for ensuring the action is taken and the date by which this should be completed. Put the date when the action has been completed in the final column.

1. For staff research to be undertaken by Research Assistants/Associates, please list the names of the RAs involved and complete this form in collaboration with them. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)