

HEALTH & SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS ON ACTIVITIES, EDUCATIONAL TRIPS and VISITS (including Adventure Activities) POLICY

CATEGORY	Finance & Estates
POLICY OWNER	Head of Atlantic Experience
DATE & VERSION	19th September 2023 - Version 3.1
APPROVED BY	Finance & Estates Committee
REVIEW FREQUENCY	Annual

Contents

SECTION	CONTENT	PAGE NUMBER
1	Policy Purpose	3
2	Policy Statement	3
3	Policy Implementation 1. Responsibilities	3 3
4	Related Information 1. Relevant Legislation and Guidance 2. Relevant Policies	4 4 4
5	Policy Measurement and Reporting	4
6	Appendix 1 - Policy Guidelines	5

1. Policy Purpose

At UWC Atlantic (UWCA) we recognise that learning outside the classroom is an essential component of the curriculum and experience. Our activities, educational trips and visits are many and varied, but with a clear purpose offering participants unique opportunities to develop their resourcefulness and initiative, to extend their learning and to spend time together in another environment.

2. Policy Statement

It is the UWCA's duty to ensure that all activities, educational visits and trips are safely managed and that the health, safety and welfare of participants, staff and volunteers are maintained in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Welsh Assembly Government (through Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel for National Guidance. www.oeap.info 2016) and the Adventure Activities Licencing Regulations (2004)

3. Policy Implementation

To accompany this policy there is a comprehensive set of operational procedures which can be used by both Visit Leaders (VL) and the Visits Coordinator (VC) to ensure any visit, trip or activity is carried out in a safe, meaningful and risk managed way.

The policy guidelines are listed in **Appendix 1**.

3.1 Responsibilities

The Board of Governors, as employer, will satisfy itself that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed.

The Principal, with guidance from the Head of Atlantic Experience (HoAX), ensures that if the VC's role and responsibilities are designated to another senior member of staff, that member of staff is appropriately experienced and suitably trained to undertake the role.

The HoAX has delegated responsibility from the Principal and the approval of the Board of Governors to authorise all off-site visits and to ensure that all trips are prepared and conducted in accordance with required standards.

The VL has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the activity, visit or trip and continues to monitor the arrangements to ensure the on-going health and safety of the

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 3 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

group. The VL is responsible for seeking approval and advice from the VC, assessing the risk levels of the trip and making the necessary safety arrangements.

4. Related Information

4.1 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

Welsh Assembly Government (through Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel for National Guidance. www.oeap.info 2016)

[Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations \(2004\)](#)

4.2 Relevant Policies

[Accident, Incident and Near Miss reporting Policy and Procedures](#)

5. Policy Measurement and Reporting

The Health and Safety of Participants on Activities Policy is reviewed annually by the Finance and Estates Committee of the Board, the Director of Operations & Sustainability and the Head of Atlantic Experience, as part of the operations review cycle and as part of the whole College development plan. Part of this review process will consider to what extent the policy is being used as an active working document.

The policy is communicated to the school community electronically on **Every** and is available on the UWCA website.

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 4 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

Appendix 1 - Policy Guidelines

1. Risk Assessment

The VL must carry out an assessment of the risks covering all aspects of the proposed activity, visit or trip which must be approved by the VC. On-going ‘dynamic’ risk assessment will be continued by the VL throughout the trip to ensure that hazards and risks are monitored and appropriate control measures are implemented. It is the responsibility of the VL to ensure that all accompanying staff are familiar with the risk assessment and to continue to brief staff throughout the trip.

2. Medical Information

When assessing risk, particular attention is paid to any member of the group with a disability, medical condition or specific educational need. Participants are requested to provide up to date medical information prior to participating in any activity, visit or trip. Key staff such as the Health Care Professional, is consulted where further information and advice is required as well as parents. It is the VL’s responsibility to have, to hand, all medical information on the activity, visit or trip and to ensure the relevant supervising staff are provided with appropriate information. Participants must be reminded and checked that they have all the necessary medication and equipment.

3. Staffing

UWCA recognises the key role of staff and VL is to ensure the highest standards in learning, challenge and safety on activities, visits and tips. The selection of staff for such visits and activities is a key priority in determining the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff must receive training and have gained approval as leaders through a process of demonstrating competence, experience and (where appropriate) qualifications which is logged by the VC. Newer members of staff are encouraged to work alongside established leaders to gain experience and leadership experience. Staff should also be trained in undertaking risk assessment, visit leadership and group management.

4. Approval Procedure and Consent

All activities, visits and trips are submitted (where necessary) through the Evisit System to the VC which guides the VL through the process of approval notification and pre-trip planning. This is an approved system created in consultation with the OEAP.

The time frames for submission and the process of approval is clearly defined in operational procedures including aspects of physical/geographical boundaries, adventurous activities and

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 5 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

residential visits. The VC must consult with the HoAX in cases where they require further support or if the planned activity is beyond the remit of the VC.

In addition, activities that involve external providers must also be approved by the VC (and HoAX where necessary) through a documented process. In the case of UWCA Students blanket parental consent is gained through the admissions process and regular communication for key periods of activity (e.g. Project Week, CAS, Camps etc.) is provided to parents / carers. In addition, the College is very explicit in its Student Handbook, website and parent documentation in the range, type and nature of activity and visits offered at the College. Participants external to the college are provided with full information about the activities, trips and visits provided as part of the joining process. Parents/Carers are invited to direct any questions or concerns to the HoAX. Parents are also requested to ensure that emergency contact details and medical information is up-to-date so that the appropriate first aid and care arrangements can be put in place. Participants may not go on an activity, visit or trip if authorised consent has not been received.

5. Base Contact

The VL should ensure that, prior to leaving the site or starting an activity they have informed a designated person of their plans and whereabouts. In addition, a full register of attendees (including staff) should be submitted to the base contact as well as a ‘cut off’ time for initiation of any emergency action. It is vital that the VL updates the base contact of any changes or details that may be required in the event of an emergency. The ‘Welcome Team’ of UWCA provide the function of base contact and have received training on how to deal with a situation where the base contact is called on. The HoAX will have prior knowledge of the planned visit through the approval process and may well act as an additional base contact for support and guidance for more specialist and/or adventurous activities (see Escalation Procedures).

6. Emergency Procedures

The VL and staff must be familiar and act in accordance with the Emergency Action Procedures. Staff must ensure that they keep emergency contact details for participants and staff with them at all times, and that they have the correct insurance information readily available.

UWCA staff will:

And in accordance with emergency procedures for trip organisers UWCA staff will:

- know that no-one in the group should speak to the media. All media enquiries should be handled by the designated UWCA media spokesperson

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 6 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

- know that names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families
- record accurately as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.

Parents/Carers are to be provided with the contact details of the ‘Welcome Team’. The VL can then in turn be contacted by that team should there be any urgent communication needed. The College will retain all key information so that routine communication with parents/carers can still occur without disrupting the trip / visit and therefore the attention of the group and staff.

7. First Aid

First Aid requirements form part of the risk assessment carried out by the VL. As a minimum a suitably stocked first-aid box and a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements will be in place for every activity, visit or trip. Increased levels of first aid cover will be dependent upon the nature of the trip and the participants taking part. Participants with serious medical conditions such as anaphylaxis, or insulin dependent diabetes will require a higher level of first aid competence during the trip. Activities which are potentially hazardous or remote from medical assistance will also require a higher level of first aid competence and experience.

8. Behaviour

For all activities, visits and trips the participants should be adequately briefed about the aims, expectations, codes of conduct for the visit. Participants should be engaged in evaluating the risks of the tasks they are about to undertake. In all cases parents/carers and participants should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the sanctions which may be used in cases where the standards are breached. In all cases the participant consent form requires a declaration that confirms that UWCA reserves the right to remove/return a participant at the participants expense if he/she jeopardises their safety, the safety of others, or the reputation of UWCA.

9. Staff to Participant Ratios

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to participants for any activity, visit or trip. The National Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom www.oeap.info (2016), note that this is best done by consideration of:

Staffing: who is needed and available. The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 7 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

Activities to be undertaken: what the group will do and what is possible?

Group characteristics: prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.

Environment: indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance. For residential visits the accommodation and surrounding area will be considered. For outdoor environments, remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions are all important factors for consideration.

National Governing Bodies will also provide guidance and definitions of acceptable ratios and competence for leaders.

For extended trips, remote locations and/or adventure activities (including residential and trips overseas) there will be a higher staff to participant ratio. These ratios are determined by the risk assessment for the activity and careful consideration must be given to the demographics of the group and staff involved. Where the risk assessment for the trip requires considerations to the safeguarding of participants (e.g. on sleeping or changing arrangements) then further advice can be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP).

The DfES publication HASPEV (1998) suggests a starting point ratio of 1:15/20 for young people over the age of 12. However, without special safeguards or control measures, these ratios will **not** be adequate. Ratios of 1:10 are considered more appropriate to meet the needs of most residential or more complex visits.

10. Travel Arrangements

Only reputable companies are to be used for transport. The travel requirements will be risk assessed taking into account all the relevant factors such as distances traveled and likely weather conditions and appropriate arrangements are made to ensure optimal safety conditions for travel. All staff who drive participants are checked for valid licenses and if they are driving a minibus be authorised by UWCA. The VL must carry out all reasonable checks to make sure that safety is maintained as far as is reasonably practicable.

11. Terror Alerts and High Risk Areas

At the time of writing there is an increasing chance of terror threat for any visit or trip to built up areas and high risk cities and countries. The very nature of the current climate of terror attacks makes

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 8 of 9
--	-------------	-------------

predicting the risk very hard. However, it is essential that VLs are aware of any potential threats, check local and regional information for any updates and if in any doubt they do not travel or go ahead with the planned trip. For trips overseas then the advice from the British Foreign Office website and national embassy should be taken in combination with the Emergency Action Plan and the advice/support of the HoAX and the Leadership Team at UWCA.

12. Monitoring

The VC is responsible for the monitoring of visits and trips. VLs should have at least 1 monitoring visit per year unless there is justifiable reason for subsequent and additional monitoring. This may be required in the case of a concern or an increase in the remit of the VL. All monitoring should be transparent, discussed with the VL and recorded (including any action plans, comments or referrals for additional monitoring). The HoAX may be required to monitor visits involving adventurous activities and also may be required to provide further support to the VC in his/her role.

13. Evaluation

UWCA recognises that every trip, activity and visit requires considerable time and effort to organise, and there are associated costs such as staff planning time, lessons missed, study and revision time lost. For this reason, the VL is required to state the purpose of the visit at the outset when seeking initial approval. The VL is also encouraged to keep an evaluation / journal of their activities, visits and trips so that continual improvement and development needs can be ascertained. In the case of incidents, accidents and near misses the staff member must log and report these appropriately. (see Accident, Incident and Near Miss reporting Policy and Procedures).

H&S of Participants on Activities Policy	Version 3.1	Page 9 of 9
--	-------------	-------------