

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES

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Introduction

The University strives to provide a healthy and safe work environment for all University staff, students and visitors whilst undertaking work or study. To this end, policies, procedures and guidelines have been developed to aid in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace.

Field trips are recognised as integral to study and teaching. These guidelines are intended to provide information and direction for ensuring the field work is undertaken as safely as possible and risks are appropriately managed and mitigated, as far as reasonably practicable.

For the purposes of this document, field trips are off campus activities, managed by the University or in association with an external party for the purposes of approved research or teaching. They are not intended to include: marketing/promotional events; work integrated learning/service learning; excursion/visit to another business/workplace; meetings off-site or conference/seminar attendance; inter-campus travel; or Outreach Programs.

Where the classification of any proposed off-campus activity is uncertain, the determination of an activity as a field trip activity should be at the discretion of the relevant Heads of School/Department and Directors of Institute/Centre (Head/Director) or a designated Deputy Head of School/Director.

Heads of School/Directors are responsible for ensuring the appropriate amount of planning, the risk management process has been applied and that they approve field trips in their area of responsibility.

As with all University related activities, all participants of University field trips and their related activities must follow related legislation and Griffith University policies and procedures.

Glossary of Terms

Call-in: phone call or another method of communication back to a designated contact made at a pre-determined time.

Call-In Contact: an approved Griffith staff member NOT participating in the field trip, who will be the receiver of scheduled call-ins made by the field trip leader. They must have the capacity to initiate an emergency response as required.

Communication Plan: details the appropriate systems, devices and nominated participants, for the purposes of routine and emergency communication for the duration of the field trip.

Competent Person: a person who has the combination of training, skills, knowledge, experience, expertise and/or other relevant qualities to complete an allocated task safely and effectively.

Direct supervision: a person having the ability to observe and coordinate field trip participants in person.

Emergency: serious situation requiring immediate action.

Emergency Contact: a nominated Griffith University staff member responsible for coordinating the operational area's emergency response.

External Collaborator: an organisation or individual external to the University with a vested interest in the outcome of the field activity. They may be responsible for managing a field trip in which Griffith University participants are involved.

Field Activity/Field Work: any approved research or teaching activity associated with a Field Trip.

Field Party: collective group of field trip participants.

Field Trip: off campus activities managed by the University or an external collaborator, requiring travel to a location for the purposes of conducting approved research or teaching.

Field Trip Leader: approved person having primary management responsibility for the safe undertaking of field trip activities, including appropriate allocation of equipment and resources, and responsibility for participants as authorised by the relevant Head/Director.

Field Trip Operation Plan: outlines details of a field trip including activities to be undertaken, travel and communication arrangements, emergency procedures and other relevant information.

Field Trip Risk Assessment: a documented process to identify, assess, manage, mitigate and review all foreseeable hazards to minimise injury or illness.

First Aid Officer (FAO): a person holding a current Provide First Aid, or higher-level certificate.

GSafe: The University's online incident reporting system used to record all injury, illness, near miss or hazard.

Head/Director: refers to a Head of School or Department/Director of Institute or Centre (or nominee) who has overall management responsibility for workplace activities conducted by staff and students within their School/Department/Institute/Centre.

Incident: any unplanned event resulting in, or having a potential for injury and/or illness.

Indirect Supervision: supervision where a field trip leader manages participant field trip activities for a period of time without the ability to observe and coordinate in person, or is performed by proxy.

Nominated Operational Area Reviewer: a Griffith University staff member who has technical or specific expertise of what detail is required for the Field Trip (such as research, boating or diving) and is responsible for the review of Field Trip Operational Plans and Field Trip Risk Assessments prior to documents being forwarded to the Head/Director for final approval.

Notifiable Incidents: An incident that arises out of the conduct of a business or undertaking and results in the death, serious injury or serious illness of a person *or* involves a dangerous incident as defined by the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Refer to [Reporting and Recording Procedures for Incidents, Injuries, Dangerous Incidents, Hazards and Near Misses](#) for further details. These incidents must be reported to Work Health and Safety Queensland.

Operational area: a School, Department, Centre or Institute, as is appropriate for the specified field trip.

Participant: any staff, student, visitor or volunteer approved by the Head/Director to actively participate in the field trip.

Risk Management: the process by which all foreseeable hazards are assessed and managed through documented risk assessments to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the safety and well-being of all participants.

Supervisor: for staff, their normal line manager; for students, their primary academic staff supervisor.

Third Party Service Provider: any provider of one or more contracted services to the field trip.

Volunteer: a person who is not being paid by the University as a PAYG employee (irrespective of whether the person receives out-of-pocket expenses).

Working Alone: when a field trip participant undertakes field activities without a buddy or direct supervision.

Field Trip Operational Plan and Field Trip Risk Assessment templates

The *Field Trip Operational Plan* and *Field Trip Risk Assessment* templates outline the minimum risk management standards required to ensure basic risk management obligations are met. Areas may choose to develop their own enhanced field trip risk management process based on these Guidelines and templates.

Completed field trip documents should be reviewed and approved by relevant persons in order for the field trip to proceed.

Field Trip Operational Plan

All activities to be undertaken for the duration of the field trip should be described in sufficient detail to enable an appropriate Risk Assessment to be undertaken. The Field Trip Operational Plan can incorporate daily activities, travel itineraries and maps (where appropriate).

Field Trip Risk Assessment

A Field Trip Risk Assessment should be completed by the Field Trip Leader and copies provided to relevant parties. To assist in identifying field trip hazards, assessing risks and defining control measures, the Field Trip Leader should, as a minimum, refer to:

- the activities described within the Field Trip Details section of Field Trip Operational Plan and;
- the Hazards Identification Checklist.

For further guidance relating to the completion of the risk assessment refer to the University's [Risk Management Guide](#).

Field Trip Participant Declaration form

Participants should be provided with relevant information and training prior to the commencement of a field trip. The Field Trip Participants Declaration form provides a simple 'check and sign' format to ensure important health and safety aspects have been conveyed to participants. .

Field Trip Hazard Identification Checklist

This document provides a reference for the identification of hazards relevant to the specific field trip. Field Trip Leaders should identify in context with their experience and/or using advice from subject matter experts.

Responsibilities and Obligations

Head/Director:

- Field trip leaders are approved and have appropriate competencies for field trip leadership,
- appropriate emergency response plans are in place, and
- authorisation is provided prior to the field trip commencing.

Field Trip Leader is responsible for the health and safety of all participants for the duration of the field trip and will therefore:

- complete a Field Trip Operational Plan and Field Trip Risk Assessment for all field trip activities,
- ensure participants acknowledge and understand information relating to their participation in the Field Trip and the associated hazards and risk controls.
- include any external collaborator information where required,
- ensure participants are at the required level to undertake their role,
- provide participants with briefings, induction and training relevant to the activities being undertaken,
- provide supervision adequate for any given situation,
- ensure health and safety incidents that occur during a field trip are appropriately managed and reported,
- request that Participants complete all relative paperwork prior to commencement of the Field Trip, and
- monitor, assess and manage risk throughout the field trip and modify control measures to mitigate changed or newly identified unacceptable risks.

The Emergency Contact will coordinate the operational area's emergency response, as per the Emergency Response Plan documented in the Field Trip Operational Plan.

Participants:

- are obligated to conduct work safely, and to protect their own health and safety and that of others. They have a responsibility to abide by any reasonable instruction provided by the Field Trip leader or authorised delegate, and to comply with relevant Legislation and University policies and procedures at all times for the duration of the field trip, and
- are to complete any paperwork as requested by the Field Work Leader. A participant with a medical, physical or psychological condition that may impact on their ability to participate safely in the field trip or associated activity should submit a *Medical Information Form* to the Field Trip Leader to ensure appropriate risk management strategies are implemented.
- If performing field work alone, a participant assumes the duties of the Field Trip Leader and their associated responsibilities. Working alone requires increased levels of risk control and prior approval by the Head/Director.

Field Trip Review and Approval

The Field Trip Operational Plan, Field Trip Risk Assessment and associated documentation goes through an approval process as detailed in the templates.

Importantly, submission of documentation for review and approval should occur at least 2 weeks prior to the planned commencement of a Field Trip.

Incident Reporting

All health and safety incidents are to be reported via the [GSafe](#) Incident Reporting system. If an incident is a [Notifiable Incident](#), then the incident must also be reported to the appropriate Authority. (Refer to Griffith [Reporting and Recording Procedure for Incidents, Injuries, Dangerous Incidents, Hazards and Near Misses](#) for details.)

Insurance

The University has insurance cover for staff, students and registered volunteers on approved University business. For general details see the [Insurance and Risk Management page](#) which has a table entitled "Who is covered by Griffith insurance" or contact the [insurance office](#) for specific information.

Induction

It is important for participants to be provided with knowledge and understanding of the purpose of the field trip and what their role is. This can be done through an appropriate induction.

Communication

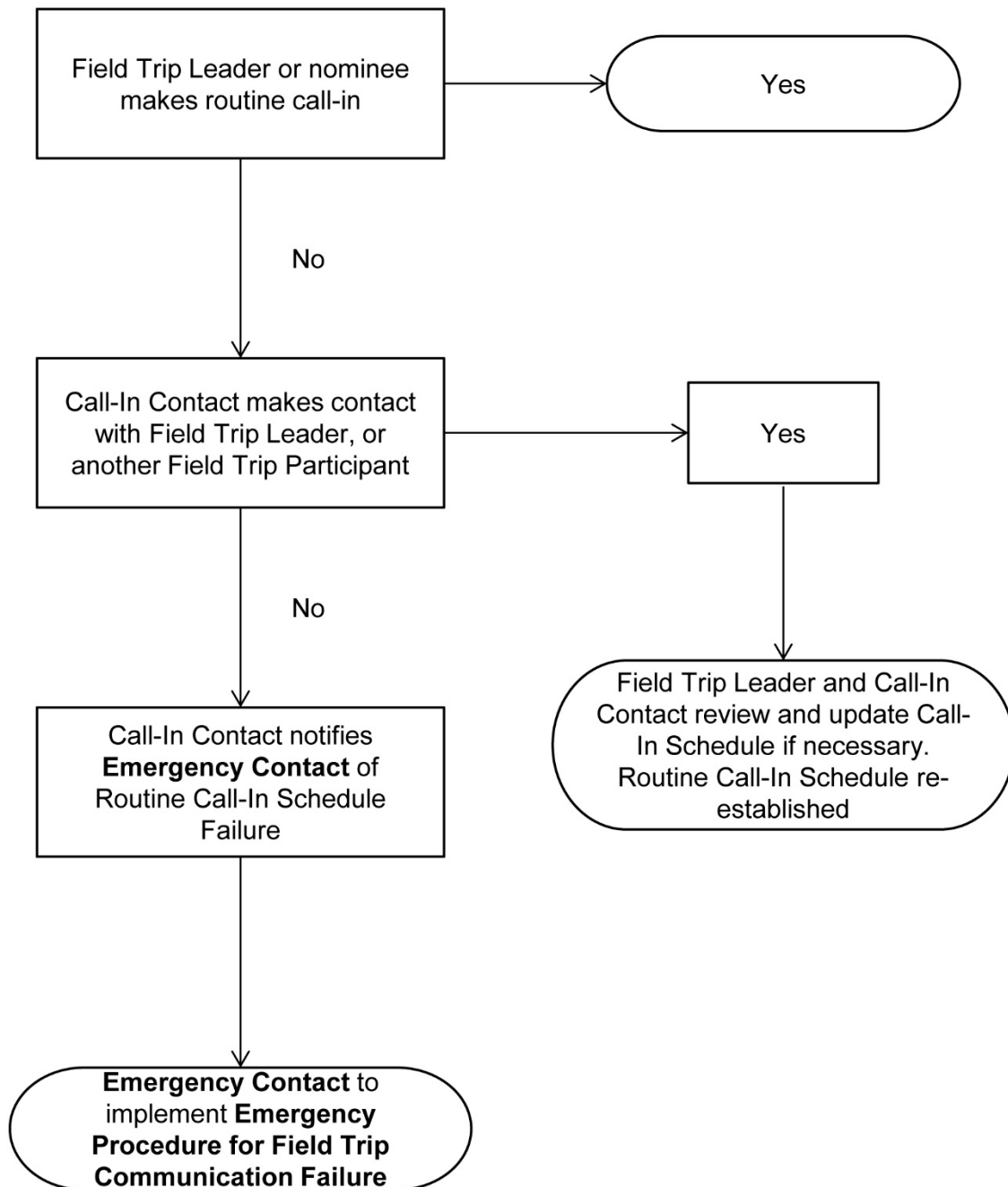
The Field Trip Operational Plan should include a Communication Plan that defines the routine two-way call-in schedule to be followed by the Field Trip Leader, or nominee, and the Call-In Contact for the duration of the field trip. Where possible, contact by the Field Trip Leader, or nominee, should be made at agreed intervals with University staff on campus, and also include protocols in the event that contact is not made.

Where possible, the effectiveness of the Communication Plan should be tested prior to the Field Trip.

Considerations when developing appropriate communication plans may include:

- Who and how often (day/time of day) will routine two-way call-ins occur?
- What procedure should be followed, and by whom, in the event of failure of a routine call-in occurring?
- For remote field work activities, is a Personal Locating Beacon (PLB) or satellite phone necessary to ensure communication with emergency services can be obtained if needed?
- In some cases it may be necessary to establish alternative communication arrangements with regular contact people such as the local police station or national park ranger.
- If boating activities are involved, the use of Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRB) should be considered where they are not otherwise legally required.

Routine Communication/Call-in Schedule Process



In-field Emergency Response Plan

The Field Trip Operation Plan should detail how an emergency involving or impacting participants on a field trip would be responded to. Details might include important duties/tasks of relevant participants in the field trip. It should also include relevant local emergency contact details (e.g. closest medical facilities, speciality services (Royal Flying Doctors)), and process for actioning/engaging required emergency services in the field.

Emergency Response Procedure

An Emergency Response Procedure should outline the operational area's emergency procedure for managing an incident once notified of a Routine Call-in Schedule Failure, and/or notification by any other means of a Field Trip incident requiring an emergency response.

The Emergency Response Procedure should include relevant contact details of personnel who are to be informed of an incident and specific actions to be taken by the nominated personnel. Business and after-hours contact details should be included for relevant personnel and any external services/resources.

Size and Composition of a Field Party

The size and composition of the field party should incorporate appropriate levels of supervision. Under normal circumstances a field party should consist of no fewer than two people. If individual field work is unavoidable then risk must be managed by appropriate risk control measures and approved by Head of School or Director.

Equipment and Plant

All equipment and plant used for field work should be selected on the basis of fitness for purpose, comply with relevant legislation and be maintained. They should be also included in the risk assessment.

Travel and Transport

Travel is an important component of all field work and should be detailed in the risk assessment. The risks should cover:

- transit between point of departure and the field work location;
- transport used during field work activities; and
- nominated vehicle operators.

Driving Activities

Driving is a hazardous part of any work and therefore the following should be considered when assessing risks:

- The use of 4WD vehicles, whether on or off road;
- Driving times - drivers travelling alone should not exceed more than two hours of continuous driving without a break of at least twenty minutes. Wherever possible, two or more drivers should share the driving.

- Fatigue - ordinary duties, which include both non-driving and driving activities, should not exceed twelve hours in any twenty-four hour period.
- Drugs/Alcohol – any substance that may impair the safe operation of the vehicle including medically prescribed, must be avoided.
- Vehicle type, terrain, environmental conditions and distance travelled should be taken into account when planning transit and travel activities.

Boating Activities

Field Trips that incorporate boating activities must comply with the University *Boating Safety Guidelines and Procedures Manual*.

Diving Activities

Field Trips that incorporate diving activities must comply with the University *Scientific Diving Procedures Manual*.

International Field Trips

International Field Trips may introduce increased risks due to:

- environmental conditions,
- culture, politics and religion,
- health issues and emergency response,
- flora and fauna, and
- safety and security.

Field Trip Leaders are required to follow University [Travel Policy](#) recommendations. Further information can be sourced from [Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade \(DFAT\)](#). All international travel should be registered with [SmartTraveller](#) at DFAT.

Griffith University subscribes to [International SOS](#) which can provide information about destinations before staff or students travel overseas, including medical and security risks and how to stay safe and well when overseas. To obtain specific information on the planned Field Trip destination/s - including emergency contact numbers, phone information, voltage and plugs, financial, cultural tips, embassies and visas, country facts, contact [International SOS Employee Travel Assistance Program](#).

Health and Medical Advice

Advice concerning any vaccinations and other health precautions for field trips whether in Australia or overseas is available from www.traveldoctor.com.au. Further travel information is available [here](#).

First Aid Requirements

A [Minimum Recommendations First Aid Kit - Size and Contents](#) list is available from the Health and Safety website. The contents of field first aid kit/s should be based on risks identified in the Field Trip Risk Assessment and checked prior to the field trip commencing.

A First Aid Officer is required on all field trips or appropriate alternative arrangements made, e.g. nearby medical facilities identified and documented in the Field Trip Risk Assessment. The

ratio of First Aid Officers to field trip participants should be based on risks identified in the Field Trip Risk Assessment.

Field Trip Managed by an External Collaborator

When participating in a field trip managed by an External Collaborator, the (University) Field Trip Leader should verify they have appropriate risk management procedures and these procedures have been communicated to the participants.

Third Party Service Provider

When engaging the services of a Third Party Service Provider, the Field Trip Leader should verify they have appropriate risk management procedures and where appropriate, they have been incorporated into the Field Trip Operational Plan.

Accommodation

Accommodation used should meet the needs and objectives of the field trip. Participants should be advised of the accommodation arrangements and provided with additional guidance if required.

Assessment of suitability of accommodation may include:

- A. fire safety (i.e. means of being made aware of a fire, means of escape, and means of firefighting);
- B. personal security and/or protection;
- C. hygiene, including in relation to food and drink;
- D. general safety, e.g. structure and facilities of the accommodation (e.g. electrics, gas heaters, balconies, pools and lifts);
- E. environment around the accommodation;

Children on Field Trips

The [Children in the Workplace Policy](#) describes the University's policy on children on field trips.