
Off-Campus Activities Policy

Governance Policy

1 Purpose

Victoria University of Wellington recognises that it has statutory obligations under the [Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992](#) to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff members and students participating in off-campus activities. Accordingly there is a need for the delegation of health and safety responsibilities and the promotion of strategies and procedures germane to off-campus activities that will achieve compliance with this and related legislation.

2 Organisational Scope

This is a University-wide policy, and applies to all off-campus activities participants.

3 Definitions

Off-Campus activity: Any authorised and approved research, study sport and recreation activity that takes place outside of any of the University campuses where participating staff member(s) and students are deemed to be at work in terms of the [Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992](#)

4 Statute Content

4.1 *Off-Campus Activities Policy*

Off-campus activities are a vital part of research and many courses in the University curriculum. It is important that these activities are conducted in a manner that demonstrates that all practicable steps are taken to provide for the safety and health of all participants. This means that staff and students participating in off-campus activities have a responsibility with respect to protecting their wellbeing and the well being of others.

4.2 *Responsibilities*

- (a) The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the safe, healthy and effective management of all off-campus activities and requires every manager with responsibility toward staff and students involved in off-campus activities to implement this policy.
- (b) Heads of Schools / Units must:
 - (i) Ensure that there is a system in place to provide for adequate pre-trip planning including a written hazard analysis.
 - (ii) Ensure that post-graduate students understand that no off-campus activities may be undertaken without specific written approval from their supervisor(s).

- (iii) Satisfy themselves that the leaders of off-campus activities have the necessary training and experience to fulfil their duties.
 - (iv) Ensure that there is adequate equipment, including vehicles available, that it is well maintained and that the intended users are fully trained in its use.
- (c) Activities Organisers/Leaders must:
- (i) Provide effective leadership at all times in order to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all involved.
 - (ii) Familiarise themselves with the nature of the activity and ensure that the trip is adequately planned and resourced.
 - (iii) Complete an Off-Campus Activities Hazard Assessment Form (copy from Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities) and obtain authorisation where required.
 - (iv) Conduct a pre-activity briefing for all participants.
 - (v) Leave details of the trip and its participants with the Head of School and Campus Care.
- (d) Staff carrying out off-campus activities, solo or in groups must:
- (i) Follow the guidance provided in Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities and the referenced legislation and publications.
- (e) Postgraduate students must:
- (i) Discuss with their supervisor all relevant details of the activity in advance.
 - (ii) Follow the guidance provided in Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities and the referenced legislation and publications.
- (f) Undergraduate students must:
- (i) Advise any medical issues that may affect their ability to fully participate in the activity to the Head of School/Activity Organiser/Leader prior to commencement of the activity.
 - (ii) Ensure they have the required equipment prior to the commencement of the activity.
 - (iii) Comply with all instructions of the Activity Organiser/Leader prior to and over the duration of the activity.

4.3 Procedure

4.3.1 Planning

Once an activity has been programmed, the running of the activity needs to be properly planned to ensure that the well being of the participants will not be compromised at any time during the activity. An Off-Campus Activity Hazard form must be completed and authorised by the Head of School/Unit or programme Director (See Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities, section 4 for exclusions). This should be completed alongside the planning process, and the hazards identified as each stage of the activity is planned. The following points need to be considered during the planning process:

- (a) What is the purpose of the activity and is it likely to fulfil the research/study criteria?

- (b) What hazards are present in each stage of the activity and what controls can be put in place that will at least minimise each hazard?
- (c) Is there a required level of fitness for all participants (including participants with disabilities)?
- (d) Do participants require specialist skills or a specified level of experience and/or training?
- (e) What are the minimum levels of personal clothing and safety equipment required? Participants who do not meet the minimum standard for safe participation must not be allowed to continue, even if this means that course work cannot be completed.
- (f) How many trained first-aid people will be required?
- (g) Is there a need to notify any Government department, authority, company, or person of the group's presence in any location?
- (h) Are there obligations under the [Historic Places Act 1993](#)?
- (i) Is there a need to contact local iwi to determine if the proposed venue is culturally significant to Māori and may or may not be disturbed? Cultural restrictions which ban smoking and the presence of food at such sites should be observed and respected by all, as should the necessity for Māori participants to have access to water whilst visiting them.
- (j) The establishment of reporting procedures for the end of work sessions, including the role for each group member.
- (k) The provision of information to be made available to the University in case of emergency. An Activity Details form (copied from Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities) is to be completed and left with the person authorising the activity. It is to contain the following information as a minimum:
 - (i) Names of leaders and participants
 - (ii) Means of transport
 - (iii) Planned times of departure, arrival on site, and return
 - (iv) Planned route and alternatives
 - (v) Emergency contact with the party
 - (vi) Designated contact person(s) within the Department
 - (vii) Communication carried with party

4.4 Pre-activity Briefing

The Activity Leader/Organiser must ensure that all participants are made aware of the potential hazards of the specific activity, their personal responsibilities with regard to those hazards, and the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. Solo activities need to be discussed with a responsible person familiar with the specific activity. As a minimum the pre-activity briefing needs to contain the following:

- (i) The name(s) of the leader(s).
- (ii) The individual role and activities they may be involved in.
- (iii) Information on hazards which may occur, and the risk assessment.
- (iv) Minimum level of personal safety equipment and its proper use.

- (v) Transport arrangements.
- (vi) Any arrangements for communication between parties, and for regular call-in procedures.
- (vii) Emergency procedures, including communication, first aid, treatment of hypothermia, or other likely emergencies.
- (viii) Any physical or medical conditions of the party that may require special attention (eg hearing impairment).
- (ix) Information on the use of alcohol and drugs during the activity.

5 Legislative Compliance

The University is required to manage its policy documentation within a legislative framework. The legislation directing this policy is the:

[Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992](#)

[Historic Places Act 1993](#)

6 References

[Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Conduct Policy](#)

Previous version: [Off Campus Activities Policy](#)

7 Appendices

[Appendix A: Guide to the Management of Off-Campus Activities](#)

8 Approval Agency

Vice-Chancellor

9 Approval Dates

This statute was originally approved on: 23 November 2007

This version was approved on: 23 November 2007

This version was reviewed on: 19 August 2009

This version takes effect from: 19 August 2009

This statute will be reviewed by: 19 August 2012

10 Statute Sponsor

Director, Human Resources

11 Contact Person

The following person may be approached on a routine basis in relation to this policy:

Lew Holmwood
Manager, Health and Safety
Ext. 6611