Health and Safety
Performance Standard HSPS 012

Travelling and Working Overseas
## Safety, Health and Environment Unit

**Title**  
Travelling and Working Overseas

**Reference Number**  
HSPS 012

### DOCUMENT HISTORY

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<td>1</td>
<td>20.10.2009</td>
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<td>Bernard Angus</td>
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<td>Sue Morley</td>
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## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Purpose of Performance Standard</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Related procedures and other documents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Responsibilities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Overseas Team Leader</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Travel Planner</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Work Planner</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Planning and Organisation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Head of School or Department</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Arrangements</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Risk Assessment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Training and Information (All Groups)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Supervision of Students (Group 2 only)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Placement Supervision (Group 3 only)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Lone Working (All Groups)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 Local Transport and Expeditions</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Equipment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Health Matters and Emergency Action</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Emergency Action</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Personal Safety</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Monitoring and Review</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Information Sources</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1 Work Planner Checklist</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2 Overseas Travel Risk Assessment Form</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 3 Checklist for Overseas Travel Risk Assessment</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 4 Guidelines to Overseas Travel Health Assessments</td>
<td>20</td>
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1. Purpose of Performance Standard

The purpose of this standard is to outline the steps which should be taken by staff and students to ensure their personal safety when travelling and working outside of the United Kingdom, in places which are not under the direct control of the University of Kent.

2. Related procedures and other documents

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (Sections 2 and 3)
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
UCEA Health and Safety – Safety in Fieldwork
UCEA Health and Safety Guidelines for Working Overseas
UCEA Health and Safety Guidelines for the placement of Higher Education students
BS8848 Specification for the provision of visits, fieldwork, expeditions and adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom

3. Introduction

This standard is intended to be general in nature and more specific rules and guidance are likely to be issued by individual schools and departments. However, more specific documents should comply with the principles defined in this document.

Schools and departments which produce their own documentation should not only consult with this document, but also with other guidance which is available, for example on the UCEA website.

In general terms overseas travel and work can be divided into the following groups:-

Group 1  Staff on their own or with colleagues

Group 2  Students and staff in groups where the visit is part of a course of study

Group 3  Students on placement

This standard follows the principles of planning, control and monitoring and periodic review.

The standard requires a course of action, which will help identify foreseeable problems, difficulties and events and the implementation of appropriate precautions. It suggests some strategies and includes checklists that can be used to improve the safety of those travelling and working overseas. However, such checks should be modified and developed in the light of personal experience and changing situations, in particular political changes.

Safety at the University of Kent is based upon a risk assessment culture. All activities involving travel and/or work overseas must be risk assessed by a responsible person from within the relevant school or department. These risk assessments must be undertaken prior to the activity taking place and be fully understood by the staff/students involved in the activity.

These risk assessments should be reviewed on arrival at an overseas location to take into account local hazards or issues which were not apparent at the time of production. This supplementary information should also be used to inform future risk assessments, for this or other activities.
Where travel or work activities are embarked upon without the prior knowledge of the University, for instance at very short notice, a dynamic risk assessment will need to be completed at the earliest convenient opportunity.

It is recommended that information stored in risk assessments should be stored locally so that it can be used to inform risk assessments for future activities, thereby reducing the amount of duplication of effort in this process.

In accordance with normal risk assessment procedures the manager responsible for producing the risk assessment should ensure that all relevant staff and, if appropriate, students have been involved in the production process and have read and understood the risk assessment.

4. Responsibilities

Heads of Schools or Departments who are responsible for overseas travel or work should delegate authority to relevant managers to undertake the roles of Overseas Team Leader, Travel Planner and Work Planner. In many cases two or more of these roles will be undertaken by the same person, but there may be some situations where the travel activity will be separated from the work activity, e.g. student placements.

4.1 Overseas Team Leader

This role should normally be undertaken by the most senior person in the group travelling and working overseas. This person will be responsible for leading the group when overseas - this may or may not be the Work Planner, or the Travel Planner. When either the Travel Planner or Work Planner is not travelling overseas, the Overseas Team Leader must assume responsibility for some of the activities assigned to those roles.

The Overseas Team Leader will be charged with the responsibility for making decisions at the location about whether the work is safe and productive and if work needs to cease for any reason. If it becomes evident that the work being undertaken is breaching the scope of the agreed risk assessment, then the Overseas Team Leader, in conjunction with the Work Planner (if appropriate), should ensure that work stops until the risk assessment has been revised and any appropriate additional control measure have been put into place.

4.2 Travel Planner

This person should be a manager or supervisor who is fully conversant with the requirements of the travel to be planned. The Travel Planner will ensure that a risk assessment is produced for the travel to be undertaken. This risk assessment may form part of the overall risk assessment for the project, but all of the items below must be addressed and there should be no confusion about these defined responsibilities.

The following actions should be undertaken and where appropriate, used to inform the risk assessment:-

- Consult the latest information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [FCO] website on the country to which travel is to be undertaken
- Consult other local or HE Sector information
• Ensure that all persons travelling complete the appropriate travel health questionnaire (these are available through the Schools or Departments or downloaded from the Occupational health website) see appendix 4 for further guidance
• Review the completed forms to see if any health issues are identified by potential travellers
• Any special needs of the staff or students travelling should be considered in the risk assessment
• Obtain medical advice to determine necessary vaccinations, immunisations, first aid requirements, etc.
• Obtain information on climate, local culture and other local information, as appropriate
• Obtain tickets, using authorised suppliers only, visas and any other necessary documentation for travel
• Check all participants have a valid passport, for the full duration of the trip
• Others?

In addition, the Travel Planner should take reasonable steps to ensure that all persons travelling log on to the University’s Insurance Office website, to register their travel. Staff and students must be reminded that if they fail to do this, it could affect their insurance cover.

4.3 Work Planner
This person should be a manager or supervisor who is fully conversant with the work activity(ies) to be undertaken. In many cases this person may also undertake the travel planning role. The Work Planner is responsible to the Head of School or Department for the pre-planning, organisation, review and monitoring of the work and all the associated arrangements for ensuring that adequate safety arrangements exist and are observed. The Work Planner should:

• Ensure that known hazards have been identified and relevant risk assessments undertaken. On arrival at site, other hazards may be identified so the risk assessment should be reviewed and modified accordingly. This should be undertaken by the Work Planner (if present) or by the Overseas Team Leader. All members of the group should then be informed of any significant amendments to the original briefing(s).

• Define a clear command structure in any group (e.g. through Overseas Team Leaders to group leaders to individuals). Team/group leaders should be selected by the Work Planner to organise and direct small groups, where appropriate.

• Confirm legal and authorised access to any site not owned by the University.

• Inform all persons involved of the nature of the work, the anticipated hazards and the precautions that will be adopted. Where necessary, support training may need to be given.

• Register all overseas work in the same way as fieldwork. This may include the itinerary and return times; likely deviations from the itinerary; the members constituting the group and their details; how they may be contacted; emergency contacts/next of kin etc.

• Ensure all queries by press and public are addressed through the Work Planner or Overseas Team Leader.
It is essential that the risk assessment be undertaken prior to departure for work overseas and that any risks which are not addressed satisfactorily are discussed further and if appropriate brought to the attention of the SHE Unit to obtain specialist advice, at least three weeks prior to departure. Work activities which have risks which cannot be addressed should not be progressed. It may be that those activities can be undertaken in a different way, which removes the identified ‘difficult’ risks.

Normal risk assessment procedures should be followed, but in addition consideration should be given to the following:-

- Are there any aspects of the work which could be exacerbated by the fact that the activity is being undertaken overseas? (e.g. high or low temperatures or humidity)
- Is any of the equipment being used for the activity more likely to become unserviceable in the local environment?
- Are spare parts or local repairs likely to be available?
- Are there likely to be any communication difficulties and how will these be addressed?
- What are the local arrangements for emergency services, if any, and are you equipped for a worst case situation?
- What are the local standards of electrical safety?
- How will food and water hygiene standards be maintained?

5. Planning and Organisation

An overseas activity may well be controlled by other employers in the country visited through co-operative ventures. These will be subject to the health and safety regulations of the country in question. Employers may have produced their own health and safety codes of practice to which university staff and students will be required to adhere. Where possible, any such codes of practice should be obtained in advance so that proper assessments and all necessary preparations can be made. The following must be addressed when planning an overseas visit:-

5.1 Head of School or Department

The Head of School or Department must ensure that:-

- Appropriate members of staff are appointed to the roles identified in 2
- An adequate risk assessment has been made and that a safe system of operation is devised
- Proper organisational arrangements have been established and both the conduct and role of all concerned is clearly understood
- Individual members of staff and leaders of groups that are working overseas are authorised, competent and, where necessary, qualified
- Local conditions have been explored sufficiently, commensurate with the likely risk
- Proper communication arrangements are in place to ensure that the Head can be kept up to date with the situation
- Any group is as well prepared as is reasonably practicable
6. Arrangements

6.1 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment(s) **must** be made for all work undertaken overseas.

See Overseas Travel Risk Assessment (Appendix 2). However, the nature and complexity of the risk assessment will vary with the type of activity and therefore should be commensurate with the actual risk that the identified hazards pose in the particular circumstances e.g. comprehensive risk assessments would be expected for organised field trips.

The Work Planner will usually be responsible for carrying out the risk assessment (section 4.3 and Appendix 2). In many cases the work itself will not be unusually hazardous and consideration will only need to be given to local conditions. Where hazardous work is undertaken, some assumptions may need to be made based on the work as it would be undertaken in the UK. The Work Planner Checklist contained in Appendix 1 may be relevant in undertaking the appropriate risk assessment.

The assessment should be based on previous knowledge, information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, travel agents, and contacts in the place being visited.

A Checklist for Overseas Travel Risk Assessment covering potential hazards when travelling overseas including personal safety, physical hazards, biological hazards, transport, climate, etc. is contained in Appendix 3 and sources of information contained in Section 9. Departments and individuals may amend and add to this checklist. Where the travel is not by recognised passenger carrier, the risk assessment should also include the travel arrangements.

The findings and conclusions of the risk assessment should be communicated to all participants and any significant factors communicated in writing whenever possible.

A copy of the risk assessment should be forwarded to Occupational Health to assist in the Overseas Travel Health Assessments.

**The Work Planner should be satisfied that each individual appreciates the salient points and understands fully what is expected of them.**

Individuals embarking on an overseas trip have a responsibility to co-operate with the University in the execution of its responsibilities. Every person proposing to work overseas must pay careful attention to any advice, training, instruction and guidance given to them (see section 7.2).

6.2 Training and Information (All Groups)

The training requirements of those participating in the work activities should be clearly identified and the necessary instruction and information provided. Appropriate records should be maintained.

Where staff are supervising students (**Group 2**), it is important to ensure that they have the relevant skills, competency and knowledge to discharge fully the duties expected of them.
Special training and instruction may be necessary and the Work Planner should ensure that this is provided.

The information and instruction given to all participants needs to cover areas other than those concerned directly with the work activity itself. There is, for example, a need to:

- maintain security of personnel, materials and equipment
- minimise intestinal upsets due to dietary changes or poor food hygiene standards
- exercise some control over leisure time pursuits.

The above points need to be considered by the Overseas Team Leader and Work Planner and adequate controls put in place. Students should be issued with a written code of conduct before an overseas trip begins, reminding them of their responsibilities to the University, its staff and their fellow students.

6.3 Supervision of Students (Group 2 only)

**Fully supervised courses**
These are normally of comparatively short duration in low hazard environments. Safety instruction should be provided to the students. Independent working is not normally permissible. It is recommended that supervision levels should require one staff member per ten students, with a minimum of two members of staff on any one course. Maximum and minimum party sizes may be set dependant upon the environment, the activity or the likelihood of foreseeable emergencies.

**Expeditions**
These may be prolonged and in environments which are remote and potentially hazardous. Participants (either staff or student) will normally be experienced but should still be reminded of safety practices and procedures. The Overseas Team Leader should have experience of local hazards and conditions and, as appropriate, sufficient knowledge of survival, communication and navigation techniques. Another member of the group should be given the responsibility to take over should the Overseas Team Leader become incapacitated. Expeditions to remote areas or in arduous conditions should follow BS 8848 or equivalent.

6.4 Placement Supervision (Group 3 only)

Before any placements are agreed, information about the local arrangements should be sought (e.g. accommodation, teaching routines, local safety and security etc.) The student supervisor may not visit the site, but regular communication should be maintained (e.g. by phone, fax or email) and “distance” checks made on the practices on site.

6.5 Lone Working (All Groups)

Lone working is discouraged as far as possible. Where it is not practicable to avoid it, lone working should only be sanctioned after a thorough assessment of the risks has been carried out. Reference should be made to the Lone Working and Avoidance of Violence Performance Standard [http://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/hs/pages/loneworking/loneworkingperfstandard.html](http://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/hs/pages/loneworking/loneworkingperfstandard.html) and a safe system of work devised.
6.6 Local Transport and Expeditions

When travelling on foot, suitable clothing should be worn and adequate rest periods allowed. When using private transport (as opposed to public transport) it should be suitable for the purpose, properly maintained and the driver(s), licensed, insured and adequately trained. If the use of a vehicle is necessary at least two members of the party should be able to drive it. On public transport, university staff and students should conduct themselves in a safe manner so as not to endanger themselves or other people. Appropriate regulations and legitimate instructions of the operator must be complied with. Dangerous items should not be carried on public transport.

6.7 Equipment

Equipment should be checked and able to withstand the rigours of travel and must be suitable for the conditions under which it is to be used.

Protective clothing requirements, availability of appropriate storage and the transport and use of dangerous substances should be considered when assessing the risks, considering suitable control provisions and making travel arrangements. If the equipment is not being taken from the UK, arrangements for the local procurement and the safe use of all necessary equipment should be made. Appropriate training or instruction should be given prior to it being brought into use.

Work Planners should ensure that full instruction and training is given for all equipment to be used whether it has been provided by the University or not, and that proper visual safety inspections are performed before every period of use. Students in particular must be encouraged to practice this and to appreciate the value of it, in support of personal safety.

7. Health Matters and Emergency Action

Travel Planners and those who intend travelling overseas on University business should ensure that they and all staff and students travelling with them undertake the following actions:

- Complete the appropriate Overseas Travel Health Questionnaire. See the guidelines in appendix 4 for further information.

- Obtain a copy of Health Advice for Travellers from any Post Office

- Obtain necessary vaccinations and immunisations through their GP, or by other arrangements advised by Occupational Health (staff) or the University Medical Centre (students)

- Obtain any ‘Fit to Travel’ medical, as required by some countries, through their GP

- Access the Fit to Travel website - http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home.aspx

- Ensure all travellers have either been ‘cleared’ for travel by the Travel Planner or are in receipt of a Fitness to Travel Certificate issued by Occupational Health (staff) or the Medical Centre (students).
It is strongly recommended that at least one member of staff attending an overseas trip involving five or more persons is trained and holds a valid First Aid at Work Certificate. It is recommended that others, such as group leaders should be trained in Emergency First Aid.

7.1 Emergency Action

- Any incident should be reported to the Head of School/Department and Insurance Office as soon as possible.

- All individuals embarking on an overseas trip should pay careful attention to the advice, training, instruction and guidance given to them and act upon it.

7.2 Personal Safety

Although the University has a responsibility to ensure it has in place management arrangements designed to protect the health and safety of its staff and students, every person has a responsibility to conduct themselves in a reasonable manner and to co-operate with the University in the execution of its responsibilities. As an aid to staff and students travelling and working overseas Personal Safety is included in the Checklist for Overseas Travel Risk Assessment (Appendix 3).

8. Monitoring and Review

Effective management of overseas working requires review and feedback. It is important to learn from experiences and a debriefing session should follow each and every trip overseas. The information learned can then be used to improve arrangements for future trips.

Students should be encouraged to use log books in which they can record all their observations. Certain matters which should be given consideration during the debriefing:

- Would the work have progressed more smoothly
  - At a different time of year, in a different location or with different personnel?
  - With better preparation, etc.?

- Were anticipated hazards encountered?

- Were adequate precautions adopted to counter the associated risks?

- In hindsight could they have been improved upon?

- Would the department repeat the exercise?

- Would changes be needed for any future similar work overseas?
9. Information Sources

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office [FCO], Reuters or the travel agent dealing with the booking will be able to provide information on the necessary vaccinations, local politics, areas to avoid etc. Travel agents are obliged to provide this information.

When travelling abroad see the University Occupational Health website at http://www.kent.ac.uk/safety/oh/help/travelinfo/index.html and associated links.

If access to the internet is not available then the following publications also provide a good deal of relevant information:

- Foreign and Commonwealth Office – Tel 0171 270 4129 Public ‘Advice to Travellers’ enquiry line on safety abroad

- Department of Health: Health Advice for Travellers, London: HMSO 2006. Free from Department of Health, Tel 0800 555777. Free leaflet on basic health advice including avoiding insect bites, accidents, sun, food and water, and E111 form

- Living Safely, Personal Safety in Your Daily Life, a guide written and published by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust
## WORK PLANNER CHECKLIST

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<th>Access</th>
<th>Pre-Planning</th>
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<th>Training</th>
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<th>Catering</th>
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| • Travel arrangements to, from and at location  
• Permission to work on site  
• Provision for disabled, if necessary  
• Assistance (medical, legal, consular, local, etc.).  
• Additional insurance, if necessary | • Travel documents ordered/received  
• Local conditions evaluated  
• Risk assessments made  
• Health questionnaires completed and action taken  
• Next of kin recorded  
• Medical problems noted  
• Vaccination received by all participants.  
• Draft itinerary available and updated as necessary  
• “Base” contact in UK informed of all necessary details | • First-aid kit(s) obtained  
• Overseas Travel Health questionnaire completed. | • First-aid cover appropriate for work  
• Language differences  
• Hygiene/health education advice  
• Interpersonal skills  
• Information to participants  
• Specific skills | • Staff/student ratios (if appropriate)  
• Leaders established  
• Deputising arrangements, if necessary  
• Competency of all leaders for specialist or hazardous activities | • Equipment fit for purpose and suitable for transport  
• Instructions for proper use available  
• Equipment well maintained  
• Equipment capable of repair on site  
• Is there a need to duplicate equipment? | • Drinkable water or water purification tablets available  
• Ability to cater for special dietary needs actioned  
• Availability of food provisions  
• Food preparation and storage facilities  
• Availability of fuel for cooking (remote fieldwork) |

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<td>• System for emergency communication established</td>
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<td>• Accident and emergency plans in place</td>
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<td>• Are personal attack alarms necessary and available?</td>
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<td><strong>Physical hazards</strong></td>
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<td>• Extreme weather (if outdoor work involved)</td>
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<td>• Severe terrain exposure, e.g. mountains, cliffs, glaciers, crevasses, ice falls, caves, mines, quarries, forests, fresh water, sea and seashore, marshes and quicksand</td>
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<td>• Normal weather for the area, e.g. hot and sunny (sun protection factor) recognised</td>
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<td><strong>Biological hazards</strong></td>
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<td>• Venomous, lively or aggressive animals</td>
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<td>• Plant risks assessed</td>
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<td>• Pathogenic micro-organisms (tetanus, leptospirosis, etc.) and similar risks evaluated</td>
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OVERSEAS TRAVEL RISK ASSESSMENT FORM  
(BASED ON HSE "FIVE STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT")

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Department/Section</th>
<th>Work Area</th>
<th>Date of Assessment</th>
<th>Assessor</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date of Review</th>
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<tr>
<th>HAZARD (List)</th>
<th>PERSONS AT RISK AND HOW (Consider all persons, including those who may not be involved with the job)</th>
<th>EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES AND ADEQUACY (List the control measures appropriate to each hazard and consider the level of residual risk; is it high, medium or low?) If using a risk matrix then show risk factor ((R) = (\text{hazard} \times \text{risk}))</th>
<th>ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (If the residual risk is high, you must take additional practicable measures to reduce it, or abort the proposed task)</th>
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NOTE: All assessors should read the Performance Standard for undertaking risk assessments and have been trained in risk assessment. On completion, appropriate employees should be briefed by the assessor who should ensure that they fully understand the risk assessment.
Appendix 3

CHECKLIST FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL RISK ASSESSMENT

Department........................................................................................................................................

Location of Work Activity................................................................................................................

Description of Work Activity...........................................................................................................

Names of Staff/Students....................................................................................................................

Dates of Work Activity......................................................................................................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Climatic extremes e.g. dry/desert, storms etc.</td>
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<td>2. Contact with wild or domestic animals e.g. bites, dermatitis, rabies etc.</td>
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<td>3. Contact with insects e.g. bites, stings</td>
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<td>4. Contact with reptiles e.g. bites</td>
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<td>5. Contaminated food and/or water</td>
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<td>6. Compatibility of electrical equipment – safety standards etc.</td>
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<td>7. Emergencies – arrangements for first aid and other assistance including contact numbers</td>
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<td>8. Local environment e.g. culture, customs, religion</td>
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<td>9. Excavation/confined spaces – safe system of work</td>
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<td>10. Hazardous substances/chemicals</td>
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<td>11. Local laws/other standards</td>
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<td>12. Natural phenomena e.g. avalanche, volcano, earthquake</td>
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<td>13. Contaminated needles/sexual contact – HIV, Hepatitis B</td>
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<td>14. Stress – causing problems – accommodation, remoteness, sickness, language, lack of support, vandalism and violence, crime, extremes of hot/cold, fatigue</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Transport – competent drivers, suitability</td>
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PERSONAL SAFETY

Out and About

1. Does anyone know where you are?
2. If your travel plans change, have you told your supervisor or Placement/Work Planner (in respect of students) or colleagues (in respect of staff)?

3. Have you made sure you can be contacted?

4. Do you know where you are going and how to get there?

5. If returning home after dark have you considered possible risk – where you parked car, availability of public transport?

6. Have you asked hosts for help and information?

7. Are you likely to carry valuable items? Are valuable, easily stolen items too visible or accessible e.g. laptop, PC, mobile phone, briefcase, handbag etc.

8. Do you carry a personal alarm?

**When driving a vehicle**

**Before setting off:**
1. Make sure vehicle is regularly serviced – check tyres, oil, fuel etc.
2. Join a national breakdown organisation
3. Plan route in advance
4. Tell people at your destination what time you expect to arrive
5. Carry change and phonecard for payphone in an emergency. Carry a mobile phone.

**On the road:**
1. Keep bags, mobile phone etc. out of sight
2. Keep doors locked and windows and sunroof closed as far as possible especially in stop/go traffic
3. Do not pick up hitchhikers
4. Keep an up-to-date map handy so you will not have to stop and ask for directions

**Leaving the vehicle:**
1. Always lock vehicle and put anything valuable in the boot.
2. If returning to the vehicle after dark park in a well lit place. Park as close to destination as possible.
3. In a multi-storey car park reverse vehicle and park as close to exit as possible, near ground level and away from pillars.
4. Have keys ready when returning to vehicle. Check back seat for intruders before getting in.
### When taking a taxi:

1. If you cannot hail a taxi carry the telephone number of a reputable company or ask hosts for a recommendation.

2. Whenever possible book by telephone and ask for driver’s name and make and colour of car. Do not get into any taxi you have not asked for.

### Travel by train:

1. Wait where it is well lit and there are other people

2. Stand well back on the platform

3. Avoid compartments which have no access to corridors or other parts of the train

4. Try to sit with other people and avoid empty carriages

5. If you feel uneasy move to another seat or carriage or get off at the next stop

6. If the carriage is crowded and someone molests you make a fuss straight away.

7. If you feel threatened or there is an incident act immediately:
   - alert the driver, guard or conductor by making as much noise as possible
   - pull the emergency alarm
   - look for station staff, transport police or a Help Point if there’s an incident on the platform

### Long haul travel e.g. outside Europe via air travel:

1. Inform Occupational Health (for staff) or the Medical Centre (students) of any medical conditions that may affect your ability to travel. All travel companies make arrangements if they are given adequate notice

2. Ensure appropriate vaccinations are organised well in advance

3. Check information regarding vaccinations, local politics, areas to avoid etc. – see Sources of Information

4. Carry money and valuables safely
5. Carry following items separately: number for cancelling credit cards, phonecard, travel card or small change, keys

6. Obtain copy of University travel insurance document and medical emergency number

7. Where there is a particular risk of infection in the event of injury a first aid kit should be available throughout the trip

8. When on a long haul flight, try not to remain static in the seat for long periods. Stretch the legs by taking short walks to maintain good circulation

9. When using public transport on landing
   - have small change ready for fare
   - know where you are going and which stop you need
   - when getting off public transport at night or in an unfamiliar area attach yourself to groups of people and walk purposefully to your destination or arrange to meet someone

10. A recovery day should be allowed for long haul flights of over eight hours’ duration crossing time zones.
Appendix 4

Guidelines to overseas travel health assessments

Overseas travel health assessments

The University of Kent is concerned for your health, safety and welfare and also has a legal responsibility to ensure (as far as reasonably practicable) your health and safety not only whilst attending University but also when you are undertaking courses of study and/or visits in the UK and abroad. In order to ensure that we have taken account of any medical condition that you may have, or whether it could be affected by the hazards associated with travel or certain locations, we need to undertake a “travel health assessment”.

All staff and students travelling abroad on University business or as part of their studies are required to complete one of the Overseas Travel Health Questionnaires at least once prior to travel, in accordance with the Health and Safety Performance Standard HSPS 012 - Travelling and Working Overseas. Repeat trips to the same destination can be covered by the first assessment unless a medical condition has developed in the meantime. In these circumstances complete a ‘self declaration of health’.

The type and extent of the health assessment required depends very much on the nature of your trip and what it will involve. Each trip must be considered separately. Some trips may require health assessment and health clearance before a ‘Fitness to Travel Certificate’ is issued. Staff and students travelling on University business are covered by the University’s travel insurance policy. Insurance cover is conditional upon the traveller complying with University policies. If you receive medical advice before you depart on your journey, including any given under this travel health assessment procedure, that you should not undertake the proposed journey but you nevertheless embark on the trip, you might incur unrecoverable personal costs if you fall ill abroad. For further guidance on insurance please visit the Insurance Office web page.

http://www.kent.ac.uk/finance-staff/services/insurance/travelstaff/index.html

There are three different levels of health assessment and three different Overseas Travel Health Questionnaires

1. Full health assessment

Staff will need full health clearance from the University Occupational Health Service and students will require full health clearance from the Medical Centre for trips that may pose significant risk to health, either because of the destination or the nature of activity undertaken, if they fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- Travel to any tropical country or a country where vaccinations or prophylactic medication (i.e. malaria) are recommended
- Travel to remote locations where you will be more than 24 hours from the nearest medical facility
- Any trip abroad lasting for more than four weeks
- Travel that involves activities posing high risk in the event of sudden illness or incapacity e.g. working at altitude, working at sea, technical climbing, abseiling, diving, caving, archaeological digs etc.
The aim is to ensure that those travelling receive recommended vaccinations and use appropriate protection against malaria and that health problems which may affect safety or require treatment in the field will be managed appropriately.

Health clearance will only be withheld in exceptional circumstances where there is clear danger to the individual or others, should the person become incapacitated whilst abroad.

2. **Basic health assessment**

Basic health assessment is required for all other overseas travel that does not fall within the criteria for a full health assessment, including:

- Travel to other destinations e.g. U.S.A, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or Europe. As previously mentioned this will only need to be carried out once. Frequent travellers are not required to complete a questionnaire for each trip but are required to notify the University on a ‘self declaration of health’ form of any change in their health since last completing a questionnaire.
- Where the travel is within destinations outlined above and there is an existing health condition. In these circumstances, the form needs to be forwarded to Occupational Health Service (staff) and Medical Centre (students).

In most cases the Basic Overseas Travel Health Questionnaire will be held by the School/Department administrator, or Travel Planner and that is all that is required. You are required to notify your Travel Planner or Overseas Team Leader if there has been a change in your health between completion of the questionnaire and, the start of your travel. You may be required to provide the Occupational Health Service (staff) or the Medical Centre (students) with further information.

3. **Self Declaration of Health**

This should be completed only if there is a change in health or once a Full or Basic Overseas Travel Health Questionnaire or Fitness to Travel Certificate is held on file.

**For more information and to download forms:**