

## Excursions – Risk management process and proforma

The purpose of excursion risk management is to make excursions as safe as possible. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards, assess risks and then eliminate or control risks associated with excursions.

The degree of planning required is influenced by the nature of the excursion, the level of risk and the individual members of the student group. For excursions that have previously been planned and conducted, previous risk management plans may be reviewed, updated where required and reused.

To support schools, a [database of venue and safety information](#) (Intranet only) from common excursion sites is on the Work Health and Safety webpage. These should be considered and attached to the excursion risk management plan.

An important component of the risk management process is consultation, which should include staff, and where appropriate external venue providers, parents and students.

### Steps in developing the excursion risk management plan

- **List the activities of the excursion**

List the activities of the excursion, that is, break the whole excursion into its parts e.g. getting to and from the venue, being at the venue, each of the major activities at the venue, meals (including their distribution), overnight accommodation, etc.

- **Identify the hazards**

Determine the hazards associated with the activities. Consider hazards associated with travel, the venue, activities at the venue, equipment used in the activities, the environment, people (e.g. behaviour and medical conditions), and accommodation.

- **Assess the level of risk**

Using the [risk assessment matrix](#), determine the seriousness of the risks associated with the hazards by considering both the likelihood and severity of risks. This gives you a risk ranking from 1 being the most serious to 6 being the least serious.

- **Eliminate or control the risks**

Consider the most suitable control strategies for each of the identified hazards using the [hierarchy of controls](#).

- **Document plan**

Document the excursion risk management plan.

- **Communicate the plan**

Communicate the plan to excursion supervisors, staff and other adults on the excursion. Provide relevant information to participants and their families.

- **Monitor and review**

Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. Monitor for new risks that arise during the excursion. Review the risk assessment if an incident or a significant change occurs.

An [Excursion Risk Management Plan Proforma](#) and [Guidance in completing the Excursion Risk Management Plan Proforma](#) provide assistance on hazard identification, the risk assessment matrix and the hierarchy of controls. This material may be used to develop and document the risk management plan. A [Sample Excursion Risk Management Plan](#) is also provided.

Principals should retain the documented plan as verification of the planning undertaken. The documentation will aid communication of the plan, and can also be used in future planning of excursions.

## Guidance in Completing the Risk Management Plan Proforma: Excursion

### Hazard Identification

The following may assist with identifying hazards relating to activities at each stage of an excursion. Consider what could go wrong, that is, the potential injuries or illnesses that could occur. Hazards are the sources of these potential injuries or illnesses.

**Travel** – Consider aspects of travel that may present a hazard such as walking to and from the train, crossing the road, transport to the venue. If CBD location, consider travel arrangements in the event of lockdown or evacuation.

**Venue** – Consider aspects of the excursion venue that may present a hazard such as location near water, cliffs, crowds, slippery floors. If CBD location, consider possibility of CBD lockdown or evacuation due to evacuation trial or major emergency

**Excursion Program Activity** – Consider aspects of the activities of the excursion program that may present a hazard such as hazards of bushwalking, collecting leaves, observing animals, swimming, singing at an eisteddfod, climbing, eating at different venues for students with severe food allergies.

**Equipment** – Consider any equipment that may present a hazard such as sporting equipment, high risk equipment at the venue.

**Environment** – Consider aspects of the environment that may present a hazard such as weather conditions, natural hazards such as bushfires, floods or storms, the nature of the terrain, plants, animals and insects.

Consider common allergens that may pose a hazard e.g. foods, insect stings or bites, latex (e.g. balloons or swimming goggles and caps) that may trigger allergic reactions. These must be considered as part of the risk assessment for students with allergic conditions (including those diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis).

**People** – Consider aspects of people that may present a hazard such as poor behaviour, the nature of participants such as maturity, age and skill, child protection issues, medical conditions or disabilities. This includes whether a learning difficulty impacts on the ability of a student to understand and implement risk management strategies.

**Accommodation** – Consider aspects of accommodation that may present a hazard such as insufficient supervision, standard of accommodation and amenities, meal menus and allergies, security and child protection issues.

**Other** – Consider other hazards related to specific excursions such as access to first aid and mobile phone reception. Investigate access to emergency services and equipment. A first aid kit must be taken on each excursion and must contain at least one general use adrenaline autoinjector (i.e. EpiPen® /Anapen®) and the relevant ASCIA action plan for anaphylaxis. You document this in your plan.

### Risk Elimination or Control

**Eliminate the risk.** Eliminate the item or activity; e.g. do not undertake a particular high risk activity such as abseiling in high wind; do not use high risk equipment. If elimination is not reasonably practicable, control the risk as far as practical using the hierarchy of controls below. Select the highest possible control and/or use a combination of controls to reduce the risk.

**Substitute the hazard:** Replace the activity, material, or equipment with a less hazardous one eg choose an easier bushwalk; substitute a food known to cause severe allergic reactions (for example, peanut butter or tree nuts) with alternative nutritious food.

**Isolate the hazard:** Isolate the hazard from the person at risk; isolate through distance e.g. select a lunch location well away from the water; check if a coastal walk has fencing. Care should be taken that measures implemented to isolate the hazard from the person do not constitute unlawful discrimination.

**Use engineering controls:** e.g. Have access to equipment to counteract the hazard; consider hiring coaches with seatbelts and ensure these are worn if available; ensure that an appropriately trained person is with the student at all times and has immediate access to a general use adrenaline autoinjector (i.e. EpiPen® /Anapen®) in the event of an emergency.

**Use administrative controls:** Establish procedures and safe practices e.g. supervision of students, clear rules, instruction in safe methods, training of staff, volunteers and students in the excursion activities or in the use of equipment and qualifications of instructors. Ensure individual health care plans are reviewed and updated for the excursion for students. Discuss student health needs with caterers, in consultation with parents/carers.

<b>Risk Assessment Matrix</b>				
<i>How serious could the injury be?</i>	<i>How likely is it to be that serious</i>			
	Very Likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Death or permanent injury	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Long term illness or injury	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Medical attention & several days off	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
First aid needed	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Severity</b> – is how seriously a person could be harmed		<b>Likelihood</b> – is an estimate of how probable it is for the hazard to cause harm.		
<b>Legend</b>				
<b>1 and 2</b>		Extreme risk; deal with the hazard immediately		
<b>3 and 4</b>		Moderate risk; deal with the hazard as soon possible		
<b>5 and 6</b>		Low risk; deal with the hazard when able.		

**Use personal protective equipment:** Use appropriately designed and properly fitted equipment such as safety goggles, sun safe hats and at least 30+ sunscreen and helmets, in conjunction with other control measures identified from above. Encourage students and staff to wear appropriate footwear and protective clothing at all times