

Field classes under the auspices of the School of Environmental Sciences

General Safety Principles:

1. Safety will be given the highest priority in the arrangement of field classes.
2. At the beginning of the academic year provisional dates will be agreed for each class and the field class leader will be required to submit a Fieldwork Risk Assessment form to the School Safety Coordinator. Each field class will have an “established” Risk Assessment on file but the need to update each year is emphasised. The Safety Log (see below) should be consulted each year when updating.
3. For many classes there is a requirement for the undergraduates to submit their own Risk Assessment. Those not complying with this requirement will not be allowed to go on that class.
4. At the outset, daily and where there is a significant change in location/conditions on each field trip there should be a Safety Briefing - this should be recorded in the Safety Log (see below)
5. The staff/student ratio will at least 1:20. Staff include academic staff, technical staff and post-graduate students employed as demonstrators. Each field class will be staffed by a minimum of two staff members. Classes where the group splits to significantly different locations on most days will have two staff members for each independent group.
6. The School will endeavour to place a female member of staff on each field class involving female students.
7. Travel by chartered coach is the preferred option and the need for staff to drive should be avoided if at all possible. In the event of the need for staff to drive the School Safety Coordinator should be consulted with reference to approved drivers, number required and other regulations. Reliance upon one means of transport that drops off in the field and then picks up at a later time should be avoided. Provision must be made for transport back-up in emergencies.
8. Ideally every staff member (inc. PGs/technical staff) on a field class should be an emergency First Aider and each group must be accompanied by at least one fully qualified First Aider. The number of fully qualified First Aiders should increase with the class size – the number required will vary with class size and field conditions – the School Safety Coordinator should be consulted for advice.
9. A daily record of safety briefings, head counts, weather conditions, incidents etc., should be recorded (normally by the senior PG demonstrator) in the Field Class Safety Log (specific to each class). These should be collected from and returned to the School Safety Coordinator on each occasion.
10. Any incidents or accidents must be recorded in the Safety Log and if serious (field class leaders should read “Reporting Accidents” on the University Safety website to familiarise themselves with what would be considered “serious”) must be reported as soon as possible to the School Safety Coordinator and/or the University Safety Adviser – e.g. NOT left until return to the University. NB. This can now be done on-line direct to the Safety Office and will also generate communication to the School Safety Coordinator.