

Risk management process

The purpose of excursion risk management is to make excursions as safe as possible. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards, assess 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 student group. For excursions that have previously been planned and conducted, previous risk management plans may be reviewed and reused.

To support schools, a [database of venue and safety information](#) from common excursion sites will progressively be made available by the OHS Directorate. 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 and parents.

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, having meals, staying at the 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. Provide relevant information to participants and their families.

- **Monitor and review**

Monitor the effectiveness of controls and change if necessary. 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.

Checklist

- Step 1 Is a previous risk assessment for the excursion available? If so, review and update, considering such issues as changes to the student group, the effectiveness of the controls and any previous incidents; then go to Step 8. If not, proceed to Step 2.
- Step 2 [Obtain venue information](#)
To assist in planning excursions, information is available on the [OHS website](#) for frequently used venues.
- If no venue and safety information is available on the database, contact the venue. Depending on the nature of the excursion and the proposed activities, enquire about:
- Public liability cover
 - Accreditation of the venue and its staff for the task/activity
 - Access and special requirements e.g. for students with special needs
 - Emergency procedures and relevant training of venue staff
 - Known hazards and controls related to proposed activities
 - Equipment available; ask venue to confirm that equipment and machinery are maintained, repaired and in good working order with safety features operational
 - Use of licensed personnel for construction, maintenance and repairs
 - Availability of appropriate facilities e.g. showers, refreshments, toilets.
- Step 3 Assess venue and safety information for your student group. Note this on the proforma and attach the venue and safety information to your risk management plan.
- Step 4 In consultation with key stakeholders, analyse the excursion and list the activities, that is, break the excursion into its parts e.g. getting to and from the venue, being at the venue, each of the major activities at the venue, having meals, staying at the accommodation etc.
- Step 5 Identify the hazards associated with the activities and the potential risks associated with these hazards. Take account of previous incidents and venue and safety information. See Guidance in completing the Excursion Risk Management Plan Proforma for categories of hazards and the Sample Excursion Risk Management Plan for examples.
- Step 6 Assess the risks associated with the hazards using the risk assessment matrix in the Guidance in completing the Excursion Risk Management Plan Proforma. This gives a risk ranking and thus a priority order for managing the hazards.
- Step 7 Develop appropriate strategies to eliminate or control the risks using the hierarchy of controls on the Guidance in completing the Excursion Risk Management Plan Proforma sheet. See also the Sample Excursion Risk Management Plan for examples.
- Step 8 Document the risk management plan. The attached proforma may be used.
- Step 9 Communicate the plan to excursion supervisors. Provide relevant information to participants and their families.
- Step 10 Review the excursion risk management plan on completion.