



## Off-site Activities Procedure

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### Procedure Number PROSA19 Off-site Activities Procedure

The Procedure for Off-Site Activities consists of 4 (four) components:

1. [Obtain in principle support for the activity.](#)
2. [Organise the detail of the activity.](#)
3. [Have the necessary forms completed and have the activity formally approved by the accountable Centre Manager](#)
4. [Conduct the activity with due care and responsibility](#)

#### 1. Obtain in-principle support for the activity

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##### Activity organiser

- Discusses the concept of the activity with the accountable Centre Manager.

##### Accountable Centre Manager

- Discusses the concept of the activity with the activity organiser.
- Provides verbal in-principle support (or the alternative) for the activity organiser to proceed with organising the activity and preparing all the necessary paperwork to obtain formal approval to proceed with the activity.
- **Note:** High risk or extreme risk activities must be referred to Senior Management (direct report manager) for endorsement.

#### 2. Organise the detail of the activity

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##### Activity Organiser

- Decides the total number of students to be involved in the activity.
- Decides the number of staff and/or external specialist personnel required to provide effective supervision of students.
- **Note: The minimum staff-student ratio for off-site activities are:**
  - **Day activities** (not involving adventure or high risk activities) – in general, one (1) staff member per twenty (20) students.

Where the activity involves students under the age of 18 the ratio should be 1:15.

- **Overnight activities** (not involving adventure or high risk activities)
  - Base camps in residential premises or under canvas – one (1) staff member per ten (10) students.
  - Study camps in residential premises – one (1) staff member per fifteen (15) students.
  - Tours, including interstate tours – one (1) staff member per fifteen (15) students.
- **NOTE** – Overnight stays for mixed gender groups should, include staff of at least one person of each gender. Single gender groups should be accompanied by staff of that gender.
- **Adventure activities** – see Attachment A (Important reference for ratios)
  - High risk adventure activities – see Attachment B.
  - Other high risk activities such as entering high risk premises, tasks involving working at heights, using power tools – sufficient staff to ensure the safety of students.
  - All staff involved in surfing activities are required to have a current Patrol Bronze Medallion of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia and a current Surf Patrol Rescue Certificate of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia.
  - Attachments A and B to be read in conjunction with the BHI Risk Estimate Matrix below:

**BHI Risk Estimate Matrix**

		Descriptor	CONSEQUENCE OR IMPACT				
			Minimum	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	Almost certain (96 – 100%)	Is expected to occur in most circumstances	H	H	E	E	E
	Likely (81 – 95%)	Will probably occur in most circumstances	M	H	H	E	E
	Possible (21 – 80%)	Should occur at some time	L	M	H	E	E
	Unlikely (6 – 20%)	Could occur at some time	L	L	M	H	E
	Rare (≤6%)	May occur only in exceptional circumstances i.e. less than 6% probability of occurring	L	L	M	H	H
E: Extreme risk; immediate action required							

**Tolerance**

H: High risk, senior management attention needed
M: Moderate risk, management responsibility must be specified
L: Low risk, manage by routine procedure

**LEGEND:**

**E:** extreme risk; Unlikely to be approved. Refer to Senior Management.

**H:** high risk; Senior management endorsement required.

**M:** moderate risk; management responsibility must be specified

**L:** low risk; manage by routine procedure

- Decides the itinerary for the activity.
- Considers the - accessibility of the activity to all students and any reasonable adjustments indicated to support participation. If necessary, liaises with the Institute's Disability Support Services to address issues relating to reasonable adjustments including support worker attendance e.g. additional accommodation, entrance fees.
- Decides transport arrangements for the activity, including consideration of the following:
  - If practical, students could make their own way to/from off-site activity venues and meet teachers at the venues.
  - In the above circumstances, the organiser must advise the students and, in the case of students under the age of 18 years and not living separately and independently, their parents/guardians, that the Institute accepts no responsibility or liability for the safety of the student while he/she is travelling to/from an off-site activity venue or if the student chooses of their own volition to either drive a car to/from an off-site activity venue or, alternatively, to travel to/from an off-site activity venue in a car driven by another student.
  - In normal circumstances hired transport (such as buses) or Institute-owned vehicles should be used to transport participants to/from the off-site activity, and private vehicles of staff should not be used.
  - In exceptional circumstances where the Institute's duty of care obligations are foremost, eg in cases of medical emergency, and if hired, or Institute owned vehicles are not readily available, private vehicles may be used to transport students. Such incidents will be treated on a case by case basis and if a claim is subsequently made against the staff member as a consequence of taking such action, the Institute will make every effort to support the staff member.
- Develop a Safety Management Plan for the activity, including communication and emergency arrangements. **The approved Safety Management Plan form must be completed.** Special consideration must be given to risk management issues for adventure or high risk activities (see Attachments A and B) such as:

- Knowing the whereabouts and contact details of local emergency services.
- Providing local police or park rangers with an itinerary and emergency contact details
- Establishing the support and role of an instructor or resource person with expertise, experience or knowledge related to the activity context or environment.
- Establishing emergency plans for contingencies such as fire or severe weather conditions.
- Having a vehicle accessible to provide assistance or evacuation in an emergency.
- Arranging for an emergency contact person to be available.
- If practical, arranging access to someone with remote area first-aid training. Consideration in developing the Safety Management Plan may be usefully informed by perusing the following resource:  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/risk.htm>
- Discusses likely matters of concern (in relation to the activity) with the accountable Centre Manager as they arise from time to time.

#### **Accountable Centre Manager**

- Discusses matters of concern relating to the activity brought to his/her attention from time to time by the activity organiser and resolves these matters in liaison with the activity organiser or does not approve the activity.

### **3. Have the necessary forms completed and have the activity formally approved by the accountable Centre Manager**

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#### **Activity Organiser**

- Completes accurately all eight (8) sections of the Off-site Activity Request Form – Activity Request Form.
- Ensures that an accurate Off-site Activity Safety Management Plan is prepared which addresses duty of care responsibilities.
- Completes the safety plan accurately to address duty of care, or, if the activity is organised by an external company, ensures that the nominated representative of that company completes the safety plan accurately, and to address duty of care.
- Submits for Centre Manager approval, the Off-site Activity Safety Management Plan – Safety Plan.
- Ensures that all students or, if the student is under 18 years of age and not living separately and independently from parents/guardians, their parent or guardian, complete accurately and sign the Off-site Activity Consent Form – Causes all of the above-mentioned forms to be delivered to the attention of the Centre Manager accountable for the

activity preferably at least 5 days prior to the date of the proposed activity.

### **Accountable Centre Manager**

- Ensures that no off-site activity occurs in his/her Centre without his/her
  - Sighting a completed and signed Off-site Activity Consent Form for every student under 18 participating in the activity.
  - Viewing and considering a completed Safety Management Plan form
  - Approval by signing an accurately completed Off-site Activity Request form.
  - Seeking senior management (direct report manager) endorsement of extreme or high risk activities.

## **4. Conduct the activity with due care and responsibility** [Back to Top](#)

### **Activity Organiser**

- Takes all reasonable steps to protect the safety of self and others.
- Ensures that staff are deployed to supervise students throughout the conduct of the activity, to meet duty of care guidelines.
- Adheres to the Institute's Staff Code of Conduct.
- Ensures that all staff and external specialists participating in the activity are aware that the Institute's Staff Code of Conduct applies during the activity and takes action to address concerns if required.
- Ensures that staff are fully briefed.
- Instructs staff and specialists in Institute expectations.
- Ensures that all students participating in the activity are aware that the Institute's Student Code of Conduct applies during the activity, taking action to address concerns as required.

### **Staff participating in the activity**

- Take all reasonable steps to protect the safety of self and others.
- Supervise students throughout the conduct of the activity.
- Adhere to the Institute's Staff Code of Conduct.

### **External specialists participating in the activity**

- Take all reasonable steps to protect the safety of self and others.
- Supervise students throughout the conduct of the activity.
- Adhere to the Institute's Staff Code of Conduct.

### **Students participating in the activity**

- Take all reasonable steps to protect the safety of self and others.
- Adhere to the Institute's Student Code of Conduct.

## **Forms**

Off-site Activity Request Form

Off-site Activity Consent Form

Off-site Activity Safety Management Plan

Off-site Activities Procedure  
**Attachment A – Adventure Activities**

**Adventure activities are those that involve greater than normal risk such as:**

- **Travel into a relatively undeveloped area of country in which vehicle contact is difficult and/or uncertain**
- **Less than normal contact, by person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life**
- **Exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life**
- **Confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life**
- **Base camping, bushwalking, canoeing, snow activities, orienteering, cycling, horse riding, rock climbing and abseiling, swimming (other than school swimming programs), surf activities, water-skiing, snorkelling, scuba diving, shooting, sailing, sailboarding and other similar activities.**

**Information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in adventure activities should also be taken into account.**

**In line with existing practices, teachers or contracted instructors who lead adventure activities must have the required experience and qualifications or document these in lieu of certification or accreditation. Activity organisers need to carefully check the qualifications and experience of any teacher or instructor who is leading any adventure activity, and make sure that these are appropriate for the activity planned.**

**The following guidelines provide a summary of the minimum instructor staff–student ratios required for adventure activities and the BHI Risk Estimate Matrix assessment:**

***Boating activities***

Canoeing

- **Instructor staff–student 1:12 - Moderate**
- **One (1) staff member per six (6) students - High**

Dinghy sailing

- **Enclosed waters 1:8 - Moderate**
- **Open waters 1:6 - High**
- **Open waters with stronger wind 1:4 - High**

Rafting: 1:6 - High

Rowing: 1:9 - Moderate

Sailboarding - High

- **Beginners 1:3 - High**
- **Semi-experienced 1:5 - Moderate**

Sea kayaking: 1:6 - High

Water skiing

- **In tow 1:1 - High**
- **In tow, if students are highly experienced 1:2 - Moderate**

### ***Swimming-based activities***

Recreational swimming

- **Swimming pools and confined, shallow, natural water 1:10 - Low**
- **Open deep water 1:10 - High**
- **Surf beaches 1:5 - High**

Scuba diving

- **In a pool for skills training 1:8 - Low**
- **Open water (two buddy pairs) 1:4 - High**
- **Introductory dive after one skills training session 1:2 - High**

Snorkel swimming

- **Swimming pool or closed pool-like water 1:15 - Low**
- **Open, chest-deep water in optimal weather conditions and using mask, snorkel, fins and wetsuit 1:12 - Moderate**
- **Open, deep water in optimal weather and water conditions, and using mask, snorkel, fins and wetsuit 1:10 - High**

Snorkel diving

- **Swimming pool or closed pool-like water 1:15 - Low**
- **Open, chest-deep water in optimal weather conditions and using mask, snorkel, fins and wetsuit 1:10 - Moderate**
- **Open, deep water in optimal weather and water conditions, and using mask, snorkel, fins and wetsuit 1:8 - High**

Surfing

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/edoutdoors/activities/surfing/people.htm>

- **Without a board 1:5 - High**
- **With a board and dependent on the type of venue 1:8 - High**

### ***Other adventure activities***

Bushwalking

- **Day walks 1:10 - Moderate**
- **Overnight 1:6 - High**

Cycling: 1:10 - Moderate

Horse riding

- **Beginners 1:1 - High**
- **Beginners in an enclosed area 1:8 - Moderate**
- **Beginners on a suitable trail ride 1:6 (minimum of two staff on the ride) - Moderate**
- **Semi-experienced in an enclosed area 1:10 - Moderate**
- **Semi-experienced on a trail ride 1:8 (minimum of two staff on the ride) - Moderate**

Orienteering

- **City or town parklands with defined boundaries 1:20 - Moderate**
- **Streets and small areas of bushland with well-defined boundaries 1:15 - Low**
- **Larger and more remote areas of bushland 1:10 - Moderate**

Rock climbing

- **Top rope, bottom belay (yo-yo)**
  - Beginners 1:6 and two ropes maximum** )
  - Experienced students 1:9 and three ropes maximum** )
  - All ropes in close proximity** } **High**
  - Students who belay must have a back-up belayer** )
  - Two staff must be present at all times** )
  - Maximum group size 15** )
- **Top rope, top belay**
  - All climbers 1:6 and two ropes maximum** )
  - All ropes in close proximity** )
  - Students who belay must have a back-up belayer** } **High**
  - Two staff must be present at all times** )
  - Maximum group size 15** )
- **Multi pitch**
  - Experienced climbers 1:4** )
  - Qualified staff at each belay for tramline system** )
  - Students who belay must have a back-up belayer** } **High**
  - Two staff must be present at all times** )
  - Maximum group size 15** )

Abseiling

- **Single pitch**
  - Beginners 1:1** )
  - Some experience 1:6 and two ropes maximum** )
  - All ropes in close proximity** } **High**
  - Students who belay must have a back-up belayer** )
  - Two staff must be present at all times** )
  - Maximum group size 15** )

- **Multi pitch**
- Experienced climbers 2:4 )
- Qualified staff at each anchor for tramline system )
- Students who belay must have a back-up belayer } **Moderate**
- Two staff must be present at all times )
- Maximum group size 15 )

Shooting

- **Beginners 1:1 - Extreme**
- **Semi-experienced 1:5 - Extreme**

Skiing

- **Ski village areas for alpine and cross-country skiing:**
  - One-day visit 1:10 - Moderate
  - Overnight stay 1:8 - High
- **Non-ski village areas day and overnight 1:5 - High**

Snow activities for non-ski activities 1:10 - Moderate

Off-site Activities Procedure  
**Attachment B – High Risk Extreme Risk Adventure Activities**

The nature of some adventure activities means that additional precautions need to be taken to minimise and control the risk to students.

In addition to the requirements and guidelines for adventure activities (Attachment A) the following guidelines apply:

***Caving - Extreme***

- **Only teachers and other adults who have extensive caving experience are to lead and supervise students involved in caving activities.**
- **Only the simplest caves are to be attempted with novices.**
- **There should be a ratio of no more than five students to one instructor with a minimum of two excursion staff members always present.**
- **Permission to enter caves should be obtained from the appropriate land manager.**

***Flying and hot air ballooning - Extreme***

- **Only commercial operators appropriately licensed to carry passengers may be used for Institute-organised activities.**

***–Hot Air Ballooning – High***

- **Only commercial operators appropriately licensed to carry passengers may be used for Institute-organised activities.**

***Gliding - Extreme***

Institute-organised activities involving gliding may only be undertaken through gliding clubs. These can occur as:

- **'Joyflights', under the auspices of an Air Operator's Certificate, with the glider commanded by a pilot holding a Gliding Federation of Australia charter rating. Persons undertaking such flights do so under the terms of the Commonwealth Carrier's Liability Act with the associated limited liability that this confers. No membership of the Gliding Federation of Australia is required.**
- **'Trial instructional flights', which will involve becoming a daily member of the Gliding Federation of Australia. Such flights are commanded by a pilot holding a minimum of a Gliding Federation of Australia air experience instructor authority and come under the protection of the comprehensive range of Gliding Federation of Australia insurances.**

***Other***

The following activities are considered to be unsuitable for Institute students because of the potential risks involved:

- **Bungee jumping - Extreme**
- **Hang gliding - Extreme**
- **Parachuting - Extreme**
- **Flying ultra light aircraft - Extreme**

Adventure Activity Standards have been developed by the outdoor recreation and adventure tourism industry that cover:

- **Artificial climbing structures**
- **Mountain biking**
- **Recreational fishing**
- **River rafting**
- **Rock climbing**
- **Four wheel driving.**

These Adventure Activity Standards are agreed minimum activity standards for adventure operators and they do not necessarily reflect the greater duty of care owed to students.

In the absence of alternative advice staff must comply with these standards when planning or endorsing an Institute adventure activity, and consider the greater duty of care that may be required for students.

The Adventure Activity Standards can be found at <http://www.orc.org.au> under the heading 'Adventure Activity Standards'.

**Note:** The Institute has a range of insurances in place that cover most endorsed off-site activities.

However, not all activities, especially recreational activities, can be covered.

In some cases additional insurance may be required, or a host agency required evidence of the Institute's insurance. In both instances, this should be referred to the Executive Manager, Risk Management, for advice when the activity is being planned.