

University of Glasgow

Policy for Business & Study Travel

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is this policy about?

This policy sets out the University's approach to business and study travel. It aims to ensure that where travel is proposed, consideration is given to the value it will add to the work or study activity in question and that these benefits outweigh any risk posed by the trip, the overall cost of the trip, and its impact on the environment. It outlines the measures in place, and required actions from travellers, to minimise the risks associated both with travel and associated activity and emphasises the potential tax implications for individuals and the University in relation to certain types of travel.

Who should follow this policy?

All staff and students should be aware of this policy. However, it is the responsibility of each College, School and Service to ensure that their employees and students involved in overseas business travel, its planning, authorisation, monitoring and administration, are fully conversant in the principles and arrangements highlighted herein.

Any students planning trips as part of a study abroad/ exchange programme or other overseas placements through a global mobility programme should initiate their enquiries through the Global Opportunities team within Student and Academic Services at GoAbroad@glasgow.ac.uk

Who should I contact with any queries about this policy?

Please contact Selina Woolcott, Director of University Safety & Resilience

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The nature of the University of Glasgow's activities means that a large proportion of its work and study is conducted away from its main campus locations, much of it in overseas destinations.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to identify the University's strategy for considering, prioritising, planning, enabling, supporting and monitoring travel to minimise the risk to its travelling employees and students, reduce environmental impact, and ensure regulatory compliance.

2. TRAVEL RISK

- 2.1 Risk can be defined as the threat or possibility that an action, event or set of circumstances will adversely or beneficially affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives.
- 2.2 The risks associated with business/ study travel, particularly travel overseas, arise from the following key factors:
 - The travel itself, whether to or within the UK or destination country
 - Local political/ democratic/ legal/ military/ ethical/ cultural or religious features

- International relations between UK and the destination country
- Local health hazards, whether general or epidemic in nature
- Pandemic situations
- Travellers' individual health status
- Other personal features such as religion/ beliefs/ politics, sexuality/ sexual identity
- Climatic issues and environmental conditions
- The work/ study activity itself and how it is affected by or likely to affect the local environment and its population/ community
- Terrorism

3. KEY STRATEGIC THEMES

3.1 There are 6 key themes to this strategy:

- Risk assessment and planning
- Travel and insurance booking
- Pre-travel information, advice and training
- In-trip traveller communications, support and monitoring
- Emergency support, care and extraction
- Incident reporting, recording and post-trip debriefs

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Line Managers and Academic Supervisors.

- a) Ensuring staff and students are made aware of this policy and the associated systems and procedures in place to support safe and compliant travel.
- b) Monitoring travel requests in their area of responsibility to ensure that proposed trips are essential to the work or study of the traveller.
- c) Contributing to (where necessary) and reviewing travel risk assessments to ensure they give appropriate consideration to the foreseeable range of hazards likely to be encountered during the travel and identify suitable control measures to minimise the risk from these hazards.
- d) Supporting travellers to source any equipment, insurance, sustainable travel and [tax advice](#), training, or other materials identified in the risk assessment as suitable control measures.
- e) Approving travel, and in the case of higher risk trips, signing off completed risk assessments to indicate that b) and c) above are satisfied.
- f) For overseas travel, with a risk rating of moderate or above, bringing the risk assessment to the attention of the Head of School/ Director of Service for secondary authorisation for the trip to proceed.

4.2 Heads of School/ Directors of Services

- a) Ensuring managers/ academic supervisors, staff and students are made aware of this policy and the associated systems and procedures in place to support safe travel.

- b) Monitoring travel requests in their area of responsibility to ensure that proposed trips are essential to the work or study of travellers and that environmental and tax implications, where appropriate, are considered.
- c) Putting in place arrangements to resource suitable control measures to support safe, sustainable and compliant travel for their staff and students.
- d) Scrutinising moderate or higher rated risk assessments for travellers within their area of responsibility to ensure they are suitable and sufficient before authorising travel to take place.
- e) Highlighting to the Head of College/ Chief Operating Officer any proposed travel that is against Government travel advice and for which the risk rating is High or Very High and forwarding them the associated risk assessments for their consideration, authorisation and sign-off.

4.3 Heads of College/ Chief Operating Officer

- a) Ensuring the Schools and/ or Services within their area of responsibility are made aware of this policy and the associated systems and procedures to support safe and compliant travel.
- b) Monitoring travel requests across their College/ Services to ensure that proposed trips are essential to the work or study of travellers.
- c) Having suitable resource strategies in place within their College/ Services to support safe, sustainable and tax compliant travel for their staff and students.
- d) Scrutinising and signing off risk assessments for travellers within their area of responsibility, where the proposed travel is against Government travel advice and for which the risk rating is High or Very High, to ensure they are suitably and sufficiently robust to justify the proposed travel taking place.

4.4 Principal and Vice Chancellor

- a) Ensuring appointment of suitable competent person(s) to advise on the safety, security, sustainability, insurance and tax aspects of work and study-related travel
- b) Having arrangements in place for the monitoring of travel requests across the University to ensure that proposed trips are essential to the work or study of travellers.
- c) Ensuring necessary policies, procedures, resources and systems are in place to support safe, sustainable and tax-compliant travel for the University's staff and students.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT & PLANNING

- 5.1 The Safety & Environmental Protection Service (SEPS) has developed, in consultation with areas of the University who typically have a high number of travellers, risk assessment templates and guidance for business/ study travel which take the user through the key considerations to be made at the planning stage of a trip. The templates include a Generic Travel Risk Assessment for types of trips generally considered as low risk, with the traveller only then having to consider any additional higher risks using a Trip-specific Risk Assessment. All business/study travel must be risk assessed, but the lower risk travel will usually be covered in the Generic Travel Risk Assessment, requiring only completion of the Trip-specific Risk Assessment for higher risk travel. The templates and an explanation of the process can be found on the SEPS [travel safety and overseas work website pages](#) .

All travel, including lower risk travel, must be approved by the traveller's line manager/ academic supervisor or at a higher level, depending on risk rating, as in the table below.

Type and level of risk	Authorisation type and level	Approver/ signatory
<p>UK travel not involving flights or an overnight stay, traveller and manager assessed as both low risk and adequately covered by the Generic Travel Risk Assessment, with no significant additional travel risks.</p>	<p>Verbal or written agreement of the travel and that the Generic Travel Risk Assessment is suitable for the trip (or for a routine and regular type of travel.)</p> <p>Where additional significant risks are foreseeable a Trip-specific Risk Assessment should be completed to determine the risk rating.</p>	<p>Immediate line-manager/ academic supervisor</p>
<p>UK travel involving flights or overnight stay, that is traveller and manager assessed as both low risk and adequately covered by the Generic Travel Risk Assessment, with no significant additional travel risks.</p> <p>Overseas travel to areas with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Government FCDO warning against travel, and • Traveller and manager assessed as low risk and adequately covered by the Generic Travel Risk Assessment with no significant additional travel risks. 	<p>Verbal or written agreement of the travel and that the Generic Travel Risk Assessment is suitable for the trip (or for a routine and regular type of travel.)</p> <p>Where additional significant risks are foreseeable a Trip-specific Risk Assessment should be completed to determine the risk rating.</p>	<p>Immediate line-manager/ academic supervisor.</p>
<p>UK travel, with a risk rating of moderate.</p> <p>Overseas travel to areas where there is a Government FCDO warning against “<i>all but essential travel</i>”, or the travel is assessed to have a risk rating of moderate.</p>	<p>Formal sign-off of a Trip-specific Risk Assessment.</p>	<p>Head of School/ Director of Service (or depute)</p>
<p>UK travel, with a risk rating of high or very high.</p> <p>Overseas travel to areas where there is a UK Government FCDO warning against “<i>all travel</i>”, or the travel is assessed to have a risk rating of high or very high.</p>	<p>Formal sign-off of a Trip-specific Risk Assessment.</p>	<p>Head of College/ Chief Operating Officer (or depute)</p>
<p>All student travel undertaken as part of an institutionally organised study abroad/ exchange programme</p>	<p>Agreement and sign-off of risk assessment</p>	<p>Global Opportunities Team</p>

- 5.2 The risks associated with student travel, where this is undertaken as part of an institutionally-organised study abroad/exchange programme, are assessed by the Global Opportunities team; in case of questions, further information is available from GoAbroad@glasgow.ac.uk.
- 5.3 Agreement/ sign-off is taken as indicative that those parties are happy that:
- the travel is essential to the work or study of the traveller, that
 - the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient for the proposed trip and
 - that the School/ Service now authorises the trip to take place.
- 5.4 The Trip-specific Risk Assessment template includes a process for risk-rating overseas travel. Although not a requirement for low-risk travel, the template can be used for any trip to help assess the level of risk. When rating risk it is important to consult authoritative sources such as the [UK Government Travel Advice](#) website, [Scottish Government travel advice](#) site reputable media sources and trusted local intelligence to inform the rating.
- 5.5 The Trip-specific Risk Assessment template asks travellers to highlight any pre-existing physical or mental health conditions, or other personal circumstances which may place them at greater risk during the trip, to their line manager/ academic supervisor/ trip organiser. This could be due to a wide range of reasons including isolation, climatic impact on a condition, potential difficulty carrying or accessing essential medication or treatment, local cultural or religious perspectives of an illness, pressure or excitement of a trip exacerbating a condition. It is important that any personal factors which may materially impact on the risks identified are discussed and addressed by the trip organiser with the traveller. This is to ensure the traveller understands the implications and that they are suitably prepared, with ample supplies of medication (if it can be legally taken into the country), an understanding of local health care provision, any support available from the University and robust personal coping strategies. Whilst relevant circumstances or conditions should be discussed in sufficient detail to identify any necessary control measures, no personal data should be recorded on the risk assessment form. Rather, they should be recorded separately, with the consent of the individual and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations. Travellers are also asked to consider how personal and/or cultural factors concerning e.g. protected characteristics, may also impact on safety.
- 5.6 Authorisation must be obtained at Head of College/ Chief Operating Officer level before undertaking any travel that is against Government travel advice, or for which the risk rating is High or Very High. It is recognised that such trips may be justifiable but the expectation is that this will be the exception rather than the norm. Academic or business merit/ need must be balanced against the potentially higher risks before undertaking this type of travel. Travel on this scale of risk must always be supported, not only by a full risk assessment, but also by a robust academic or business case.
- 5.7 Completed agreed/ signed-off risk assessments must be shared with all trip participants.
- 5.8 Consideration should be given to the [University's guidance for sustainable business travel](#) which is designed to reduce the Institution's carbon footprint.

6. TRAVEL REGISTRATION & INSURANCE BOOKING

- 6.1 The University has a contract for domestic and international travel provision services with [Selective Travel Management](#).
- 6.2 There are a number of benefits in using the travel provider to book travel. For instance, Selective receive continual updates, from a variety of recognised sources, on new and ongoing threats, from impending severe adverse weather, diseases, major accidents, political events or terrorism. Their staff filter all the information they receive to assess the most serious risks to travellers, and will contact travellers and advise accordingly, offering ongoing assistance and repatriation, if appropriate. The company will then contact the traveller by phone/ SMS text/ email to offer advice and support.
- 6.3 The travel provider's website also helps the traveller identify the carbon footprint of their proposed travel to enable informed decisions on travel options in relation to environmental impact as well as access to a scheme to offset this impact towards carbon-neutral travel.
- 6.4 University employees/students are required to arrange insurance for all international work/ study travel through the University's travel insurance arrangements, as well as domestic travel involving flights, or overnight stays. All employees and students travelling for work/ study purposes must be insured, and the insurance may also be extended to include staff spouse/ partner where appropriate.
- 6.5 The University operates a Travel Registration, Insurance, Compliance and Approval Portal (TRICAP) which requires registration of certain types of trips and enables activation of required travel insurances. Where required, travel insurance must be applied for on a trip-by-trip basis via the [on-line insurance booking service](#) . Within the TRICAP registration system, higher risk travel or travel that is against UK Government travel advice triggers a request to supply a copy of the risk assessment undertaken for the trip that has been signed off at the appropriate level. Such travel will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and is subject to approval by the Head of College or the Chief Operating Officer.
- 6.6 The University's travel insurance policy also provides additional features that can help an individual both prepare for a journey and assist them during the trip. Staff and students are encouraged to make use of these support facilities which include detailed updates on the location(s) being visited and a health portal which gives the employee 24/7 access to a remote nursing service.
- 6.7 Staff and students can register at the [travel insurer's web site](#) to access the various services available.

7. PRE-TRAVEL INFORMATION, ADVICE & TRAINING

- 7.1 The University promotes use of the UK and Scottish Government Travel Advice websites, as well as the insurer's information service, to both inform the travellers on sensible precautions in the destination country and on when to take the decision to cancel travel plans, return early from trips and any government support available for evacuation.
- 7.2 The [Security and Operational Support](#) team can also provide ongoing advice, assistance and support for travellers at the planning stage of travel as well as during travel.
- 7.3 The University has purchased a licence for [Critical Arc's SafeZone](#) – an App which facilitates support for lone workers and travellers. Employees/ students undertaking

work/ study travel are required to download the App onto their devices before travel so that they can be easily advised of developing situations in country and alert the University to any emergencies.

- 7.4 For higher risk trips, the Trip- specific Risk Assessment process requires the person completing the assessment to establish whether training in hostile environments, cultural differences or other risks is required. Advice on how to access Hostile Environment Awareness training, and whether it would be recommended for a particular trip can be sourced through Security and Operational Support. It could take the form of a formal detailed course delivered by an external contractor or a more compact summarised course delivered internally, free of charge, by security personnel – depending on the requirement. PGRs should also discuss with the Graduate Schools. Costs associated with training, and other necessary safety measures, should be factored into funding applications.
- 7.5 The Security & Operational Support service is also able to deliver the Suzy Lamplugh trust training on safe lone-working which may also be a feature of work/ study- related travel.
- 7.6 Safeguarding policy and guidance developed by the Research Strategy & Innovation Office with researchers in mind, is available to all staff and students and covers a range of topics, many of which may be valuable to all work and study travel (including UK-based fieldwork). [Safeguarding in Research](#)
- 7.7 The University recognizes the potential impact on mental health of working in remote locations or overseas alone, or with emotionally challenging research fields. This can have an effect both during the trip and on return due to the, sometimes difficult, content of research and needs to be considered at the planning stage so that suitable mental health support can be put in place. The University has an [Employee Assistance Programme](#) with access to telephone, online and face-to-face counselling for staff members and the [Counselling and Psychological Services for students](#) that can also offer face-to-face and remote options of support.

8. IN-TRIP TRAVELLER COMMUNICATIONS, SUPPORT & MONITORING

- 8.1 The SafeZone App mentioned in 7.3 above provides a range of facilities for communicating with employees/ students, whether here or overseas, which enables alarm raising, travel monitoring, push notifications and other supportive measures to be taken.
- 8.2 The Security and Operational Support 24-hr control room team receives live feeds from key media websites and news feeds, as well as the UK Government Travel Advice website for information that could impact our travellers overseas and in the UK.
- 8.3 The team also has access to databases from both our Travel Provider and Travel Insurer which help them to check if we have travellers in an area that has become unsafe for any reason or in which travel may become difficult.
- 8.4 Our Travel Provider also monitors local conditions for our travellers and will contact them by email, sms text or phone call to advise them on any necessary revisions to travel plans and to assist them with alternative travel arrangements as required.
- 8.5 If travellers require additional assistance, they have an emergency contact number provided by the Travel Insurer to assist them with medical and financial emergencies or emergency evacuation.

- 8.6 Accompanied travellers must keep in regular contact with the trip organiser in the party. Sole travellers must keep in regular contact with the University. The risk assessment should identify how, when, how frequently and with whom the traveller is making regular contact.

9. EMERGENCY SUPPORT, CARE AND EXTRACTION

- 9.1 The SafeZone App is designed to enable travellers to summon help through a one-touch activation on their mobile 'phone screen. This will connect to the Security and Operational Support 24-hr control room team.
- 9.2 Travellers should always carry the emergency contact number provided by the Travel Insurer to assist them with financial and medical emergencies or emergency evacuation.
- 9.3 In extreme circumstances, where our Travel Insurer is unable to support evacuation or other emergencies, British nationals, and nationals of EU and Commonwealth Member States (where there is not a local embassy or consulate) can contact the local [British Consulate](#) for in-country advice and assistance. Please note that Nationals of other countries are not eligible for advice and assistance from a British Consulate, even if they have been living legally in the UK. They can only contact their own national embassy or consulate for this.

10. INCIDENT REPORTING, RECORDING AND POST-TRIP DEBRIEFS.

- 10.1 It is important that any accidents, incidents, injuries, ill-health or near-misses during trips are reported to the Safety & Environment Protection Service as soon as possible. There is a UofG Help Desk report to facilitate this which can be accessed via SEPS guidance on how to [report an incident](#) .
- 10.2 Reports are used to enable ongoing support, investigation of more serious events, identify trends and inform any remedial actions, either a local management level or in policy, guidance and protocols. The data, excluding personal data, arising from the reports populates our overall accident and incident statistics which are reported at quarterly Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committees.
- 10.3 Once travellers return from trips, it is important that they are de-briefed by the trip organiser to capture useful experience and practice arising out of the trip, to ensure sharing of good practice and reduce the likelihood of recurrence of undesirable experiences and ensure they have been reported.

11. MONITORING & REVIEW

- 11.1 The implementation of this policy will be monitored through the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee with a review at 2-yearly intervals.