



Guidance for Outdoor teaching

Introduction

University Schools can consider the provision of education in both an indoor and outdoor environment. Many schools already have robust arrangements in place to conduct outdoor education that take account of all the key health and safety considerations and they will require only to apply the Covid 19 measures to reduce transmission to the risk assessment approach.

Some University Schools are now planning to transfer some of their normal indoor activity to an outdoor environment and will require to follow the guidance provided to ensure a risk based approach is taken.

The Scottish Government legislation

(<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2020/279/regulation/8/made>) permits an exemption to the current rule of 6 for the purposes of education indoors and outdoors. We can review the need to conduct teaching face to face and where we do proceed, we are required to undertake a full assessment in terms of both equality impact and health and safety risk assessment.

Risk based approach to outdoor education

All university activities require to be risk assessed with all hazards identified and the associated risk controlled as far as reasonably practicable to ensure the activity can be conducted safely for staff, students and others who may be impacted by the activity. The transmission of Covid 19 must be considered as part of the risk assessment to ensure that suitable arrangements are put in place to mitigate this risk.

A full health and safety risk assessment must be undertaken for any new outdoor teaching, including on University campus, as well as in and around Edinburgh or further afield. Please note if the activity involves fieldwork or work within other parts of the UK or International travel there is an existing risk assessment approach which can be found at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/staff/business-travel>.

A model university risk assessment template is available which should be used and the following must also be taken into account. To assist you with this process we advise that you can utilise the checklist below and add any of the pertinent control measures to the risk assessment template for your intended outdoor teaching activity as well as follow all of the other guidance information. These should then lead into the development of a protocol for outdoor teaching which all participants must be made aware of.

It is also useful to provide an Instruction sheet for both the Leader and participants.



Consideration for Covid 19 measures

- ☐ The activity must be research or teaching related – currently no social events are permitted during this phase
- ☐ 2 m distancing must be in place for all participants throughout the duration of the teaching activity
- ☐ Good hand and respiratory hygiene must be encouraged and hand sanitiser available
 - Encourage participants to bring their own hand sanitiser
- ☐ Ensure all participants are aware of the requirements of the risk assessment and that they must receive this prior to the teaching activity, not on the day
- ☐ It must be clear to participants that no student or staff member should take part if they have any of the covid-19 symptoms
- ☐ Keep a register of all participants and maintain this for a period of 21 days and apply the correct data protection arrangements to the collation of this data.
- ☐ The numbers of participants should be as low as possible, a smaller number is much easier to manage as larger groups at 2, distancing will take up quite a space at an outdoor venue.
 - Maximum number of 30 in total, including teaching and support staff, for on-UoE campus sessions
 - Although the allowed maximum for off-campus teaching is also 30, we suggest you try and keep the number as low as feasible, between 6-15, if teaching outdoors in non-UoE areas. Although the 'rule of 6' applies to 'social' events only under Scottish Government regulations, we need to be cognisant of the wider public opinion who will not know this is a teaching session and want to avoid any unpleasant interactions with well-meaning members of the public who will not be aware this is a teaching event
- ☐ Only the Leader of the teaching event should engage with the public if approached and explain politely the activities being undertaken if appropriate.
- ☐ Ensure participants are reminded to avoid any touchpoints on route touching gates etc.

General Risk Assessment approach for outdoor teaching activity

- ☐ Be clear about where you are meeting and give guidance on transport if appropriate. Any organised transport must be provided to accommodate social distancing and cleaning. Participants should not be encouraged to car share.
- ☐ If your teaching activity involves a walk you will require to plan and even walk the route to identify any issues/hazards that this may present to participants
- ☐ A suitable number of staff should support the activity if off campus.
- ☐ Ensure that you are scheduling times during normal working daylight hours.
- ☐ Ensure you include a plan to manage unwell participants or those who may need first aid. Review the first aid provision and carry a simple first aid kit. The level needed will relate to location, duration and the type of activity. Advice is available through the University First Aid Trainer.
- ☐ Consider how to manage comfort breaks, bearing in mind many public or University toilets will be at reduced capacity or may be closed.



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- ☐ Be mindful of the wider community, even small groups can take up a large amount of space on a pavement or public gardens if staying 2 m apart
- ☐ Ensure you have emergency plans for unforeseen circumstances, for example mobile numbers for all participants or are aware of any specific health issues.
- ☐ Check the weather forecast and have suitable contingency plans in place if it is inclement to cancel the activity.
- ☐ Teaching Group Leader for the activity is responsible managing the participants which would include setting expectation in terms of their reasonable behaviour and includes their adherence to the measures put in place as a result of the risk assessment.