*This document is under review, if you have any input, please email safety@unsw.edu.au.

HS406 – Fieldwork Guideline

Introduction

This guideline provides information and recommended practice for health and safety risk management of fieldwork. It should be used as the starting point for fieldwork risk management.

1. Scope

Where parts of this guideline indicate a prescriptive need, such as "must", then deviation from this must be justified as to how the risk has been otherwise controlled to be as safe or safer and documented in your risk management form or procedures.

This guideline applies to activities undertaken during fieldwork. Not all types of fieldwork activities or locations will be covered in this guideline. Those not covered, such as overseas fieldwork or researching street gangs should be risk assessed and risk managed to as low as reasonably achievable using suitable authoritative sources of information, expert advice and reference material.

2. Fieldwork Transport

2.1. Private Motor Vehicles

The use of private vehicles for undertaking University business is discouraged.

Local travellers must utilise University Fleet Services, rental cars, taxis, shuttle services or public transport before using private vehicles for travel on University business.

Travelers choosing to use a private vehicle should complete a Travel MV1 Approval to Use Private Vehicle on University Business Form which is to be signed by the head of your business unit. Refer to UNSW Travel Procedure for current details.

2.2. Authority to Drive and Training

Drivers must hold a current and valid license to drive a registered University vehicle. Students, voluntary workers, consultants, visiting academics, etc., require written approval from the Head of School to operate University vehicles.

The training, qualification and level of skill required to operate other than standard passenger vehicles should be documented and be relevant to the context the vehicle is expected to be used in, including any foreseeable high risk, unusual, or emergency recovery use.

2.3. Motor Vehicle Selection

All vehicles must be fit for purpose and operated within the manufacturer's specifications. Normal sedans and station wagons are suitable for bitumen and all-weather dirt roads. For off-road situations including mountainous terrain, sandy shores, and desert areas, a specialist vehicle such as a four-wheel drive must be considered.

Side by Side Vehicles must be considered in preference to quad bikes as Side by Side's have seat belts, an enclosure, and better rollover resistance. Quad bikes are likely to rollover, even at low speeds and present a high risk of death or serious injury as a result of pinning the rider. Detailed information on quad bike safety is available at http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/health-and-safety/safety-topics-a-z/quad-bikes.

3. Driving and Fatigue Management

Critical Point: Once you have begun to feel drowsy, it is time to stop, regardless of hours at the wheel or at work.

It is recommended that a driving period be no longer than two and a half hours. Before continuing the journey, a change of driver or a half an hour rest period should occur.

In preparing and approving fieldwork plans, Fieldwork Leaders should ensure that there is adequate rest regimes incorporated into the travelling plans. There should be no need to exceed the maximum driving period suggested unless there is an emergency or extenuating circumstance. Drivers have a greater risk of accident if driving follows an arduous day.

Driving should take up no more than 8 hours in a 24-hour period. Total travel time, including breaks, should not exceed 10 hours per 24-hour period.

Ordinary duties combined with driving duty should not exceed 10 hours in any 24-hour period.

After a person has been the sole driver for three consecutive days and driven for at least 6 hours each day, the fourth day should be a non-driving day.

Where an employee drives half an hour or more to or from their place of residence to attend work, such time shall count as travelling time when observing any of the above periods.

The UNSW Code of Conduct, notwithstanding the Alcohol and Drugs Procedure, requires staff, affiliates and students to ensure that they do not attend work or perform duties or functions for the University under the influence of alcohol or drugs and this includes fieldwork and driving.

All Australian Road rules must be complied with and in particular:

- No mobile phone use while in control of a vehicle.
- Ensuring the driver and each passenger has an available individual seat belt and wears it as required by law.
- Stay within legal blood alcohol concentration and preferably zero Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC).

4. Trailers and Loads

Towing trailers and loading vehicles adds a level of complexity to vehicle operations.

Safe work procedures must be developed and be put in place in order to safely manage trailering of anything larger than a small box trailer. Check SafeSys for existing material.

Consideration in risk management documents must be given to the suitability of the trailer to the load and vehicle, safe working load limits, stability, braking distances, safe reversing and parking, load height limits and load distribution.

5. Vehicle Recovery

In attempting any recovery or repair of a vehicle additional risk will exist. The repair or recovery may only proceed if the Fieldwork Leader assesses the risks on site and determines that controls are appropriate to safely manage the operation with the personnel on hand. Should this not be deemed safe or if there is any doubt about safety then the vehicle should remain “stuck or broken” and external assistance sought.

6. Boating

For boat use there must be, as a minimum, documented Safe Working Procedures, qualifications, licensing, and training requirements. Boats that fall within the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety must also have a Safety Management System.

In the case of activities involving vessels not owned by the University, the Fieldwork Leader must satisfy themselves as to the capability of the vessel for the intended use. If in doubt, then advice from a suitably experienced person must be sought.

If personal or private vessels are to be used, then insurance advice must be discussed with “Risk Advisory and Internal Audit”.

The use of chartered or hired vessels will need to incorporate the requirements of contractor management.

Details of procedures relating to boating activities can be found at www.bees.unsw.edu.au/boats or by contacting the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences: Boating Safety Officer.

7. Airborne Operations

This does not include Australian domestic or international travel.

It is expected that all airborne operations will be conducted in accordance with the Civil Aviation Act (1967), the Civil Aviation Regulations, the Civil Aviation Orders and the Aeronautical Information Publications as promulgated by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and Airservices Australia.

When seeking the services of local operators, a check of their Air Operator's Certificate must be made to determine if they are authorised to conduct the type of flights required.

8. Medical Conditions and Health

Any person with a medical condition that may affect his or her performance on fieldwork should discuss the matter in confidence with their Fieldwork Leader. A first aid plan may need to be prepared. It may be necessary in some cases to refer the question to the person's medical practitioner.

The HS009 Fieldwork Participant Form will capture medical needs and emergency contact information for each individual participant.

Staff and students with particular medical conditions that would not be evident in the case of an accident (e.g., allergy to penicillin) should wear 'medical alert' bracelets or pendants and make this known via the HS009 Fieldwork Participant Form.

Adequate supplies of any prescribed medication(s) required for the duration of the field activity must be carried. Approximately 1.5 – 2 times the normal supplies should be packed in case return from the field activity is delayed. This is the responsibility of the person requiring the medication.

Participants should be informed well in advance of the trip if there is a risk of exposure to venomous animals, insects that can spread diseases such as Ross River or Barmah Forest Virus, and plants likely to cause allergic reactions. The controls to minimise risk in these circumstances include wearing appropriate clothing, applying insect repellent, and carrying antihistamine drugs.

8.1. Immunisation

Vaccination against tetanus is recommended for all participants in field activities involving outdoor work with likely exposure to animals, soils or manure. Refer to the UNSW HS435 Immunisation Guideline.

Fieldwork risk management documents should identify any possible zoonoses from research involving animals during fieldwork. The HS427 Immunisation Questionnaire and Authorisation Form can assist in determining the need for vaccination and to record the decision.

Note: Tetanus, Hepatitis A, acute Hepatitis B, newly identified chronic Hepatitis B and Q fever are notifiable diseases in all states and territories in Australia. In NSW, if an employee contracts Q fever it must be reported to UNSW Health and Safety Personnel who will then contact SafeWork NSW.

Any infection, to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, is a notifiable incident which must be reported as soon as possible to the Head of School or Research Group and to UNSW Health and Safety Personnel.

A comprehensive guide to vaccination is available online (NHMRC Immunisation Handbook 10th edition). UNSW staff and students who are travelling overseas for any purpose are advised to consult the travel advisory services, Federal Government's Smart Traveler website, International SOS website, the NHMRC Immunisation Handbook, the World Health Organisation (WHO) website and consult with their general practitioner and/or the UNSW Health Service for both general and specific information related to the need for travel vaccinations.

8.2. First Aid

A first aid assessment should be undertaken to determine the number and level of training required of First Aiders present on fieldwork. Refer to HS906 First Aid Assessment Checklist.

For fieldwork in the metropolitan area, it is desirable but not essential to have at least one trained First Aider.

All fieldwork to rural areas, e.g., bush, outback or ocean should include as many First Aiders as practicable and these should be trained to at least Provide First Aid with additional appropriate modules (e.g. oxygen administration, remote first aid). The following table is a guide to minimum levels to rural areas:

Groups up to 10 people	1 person trained in Provide First Aid
Groups of 11 to 30	2 persons trained in Provide First Aid

Groups of 31 to 60 3 persons trained in Provide First Aid or higher, plus an extra trained person for every additional 10 people above 60.

In remote areas, the starting point should be at least two First Aiders with remote area first aid training and then additional First Aiders with Provide First Aid training. Remote area first aid training is recommended for all workers in remote areas.

It is recommended that at least one person trained in Mental Health First Aid or an equivalent course attends rural/remote off-campus fieldwork.

Whenever practicable, First Aiders should be spread throughout the travelling party.

8.3. First Aid Kits

A first aid assessment should be undertaken to determine the kit contents. Contents will be determined by the likely hazards to be encountered. Kits must have contents capable of handling the most serious first aid emergencies identified in the risk assessment. See the HS905 First Aid Procedure.

9. Permissions to Access Land

9.1. Restricted Access to Public or Private Land

Identify landowners, lessees, local councils, State/Territory Government agencies and Commonwealth Government departments and in some cases tourist and recreational groups who have rights and interests in the area of proposed fieldwork. Seek approval before accessing property for fieldwork. Businesses or landholders may require evidence of insurance and may require specific training, induction or notification to be completed prior to granting approval. All reasonable instructions regarding health and safety or property management stipulated by the landholder must be followed.

9.2. Aboriginal Land

A check should be made to ascertain whether your fieldwork or journey will take you onto or through Aboriginal land. Even if you are traveling through such places you should be mindful of key things like not having any alcoholic beverages in your possession as this may offend the landholders or be a breach of law.

Permission to visit some communities is required by way of a permit in order to protect privacy, preserve culture and look after the natural environment. It can also help protect visitor safety, particularly in remote areas.

There is often no cost for permits and they are usually granted for a period of time sufficient to allow travel through the reserve by the most direct route. In some cases, permission can be obtained directly from an Aboriginal community for visitors who want to travel off the main road.

In places which are open to tourists, permits are not always required if you stay on public roads, though if you venture off the main road within an Aboriginal community or reserve, a permit may be required. This may be the case even if you are just looking to enter an Aboriginal community for fuel or food supplies.

A useful resource to consult is "Ask First – A Guide to Respecting Indigenous Heritage Places and Values" available from Department of the Environment website.

Are there special rules to observe? (Excerpt from Northern Land Council website http://www.nlc.org.au/articles/cat/frequently-asked-questions/)

> *Yes. A full list of general conditions for entry onto Aboriginal land are listed on the permit application forms. Traditional owners or the relevant Land Council may stipulate special conditions of entry. You must carry your permit with you at all times.*
>
> - ***Liquor**: Many Aboriginal communities and areas of Aboriginal land have been declared dry. Alcohol must not be consumed on those areas of land. There are very severe penalties under the Liquor Act for breach of these provisions.*
> - ***Environment**: A number of permit conditions aim to protect the environment. These include conditions relating to the condition of motor vehicles, litter disposal etc.*
> - ***Activities**: Other conditions point out that the permit does not authorise a range of activities, including taking animals onto the land, cutting down trees, fishing and hunting and carrying firearms.*
> - ***Privacy**: We ask that you respect the privacy of people living in the communities as you are travelling through. Aboriginal people tend to be more polite to strangers than most non-Aboriginal*

groups and are therefore more inclined to "agree" to requests from visitors - for example to take photographs - so it is important to avoid taking advantage of people's hospitality, offending people or intruding into people's lives uninvited. Please also be aware of local views on such matters as dress, as skimpy attire can offend in some regions.

10. Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment (PPCE)

Any PPCE necessary for the fieldwork must be included in the risk management documentation.

Each participant should ensure that adequate protection from sunlight, cold, heat and adverse weather is carried and used.

Further guidance on PPCE is available in the HS659 Personal Protective Equipment Guideline.

10.1. Footwear

The minimum footwear appropriate for a range of situations include:

- For immersion in water – thick-soled sport shoes (e.g. runners) or wet-suit boots.
- For wet conditions – gumboots or ankle boots.
- For wet boat decks – fast draining, quick drying non slip boat shoes.
- For construction, mines, quarries, etc. – solid boots which include steel-capped toes.
- For other situations – thick-soled sports shoes as a minimum.
- In most cases bare feet or thongs/flip flops/sandals will be seen as inappropriate for fieldwork. Allowance of this must be risk assessed.

See Australian Standard 2210 Part 1 for more details on selection of safety footwear.

10.2. Specialised Safety Equipment

The wearing of specialised safety equipment will be required in many field situations. Examples are as follows:

- **High visibility safety garments** – brightly coloured vests with reflective surfaces should be worn in all situations when being visible is a risk control (e.g. working within 5m of roads, traffic, or moving machinery).
- **Hard hats** – should be worn in situations where risk of head injury is present (e.g. falling objects, low headroom, construction sites).
- **Safety glasses or goggles** – should be worn whenever there is a risk of eye injury (drilling, hammering, sawing, grinding, wood chopping).
- **Hearing protection** – should be used whenever there is a risk of noise-related injury.
- **Respiratory protection** – should be used where there is an adverse risk associated with inhalation of dust, hazardous aerosols or chemicals.
- **Personal** protective clothing and equipment against bushfires where the risk assessment has identified that there is bushfire potential in the proposed area.

Safety equipment should be of approved design (i.e. Australian Standard); of suitable quality for the conditions; and inspected and well maintained.

11. Fieldwork Hazards

11.1. Weather

The weather is an important factor for consideration during the planning phase and conditions should be monitored in the field. There are many sources of weather information available such as internet, smart phone, radio or television.

Fine weather hazards such as UV exposure and heat stress should also be considered. The HS419 Outdoor Workers Guideline addresses these hazards and the recommended control measures such as rest breaks, shade, fluid intake and sun protection.

Exposed activities outdoors shall cease immediately in the event that a lightning flash is followed by thunder less than 30 seconds later. Activities shall not resume until 30 minutes after the last such lightning flash. If there is a safe location nearby then go to it quickly.

11.2. Fire

Fire events arise from many sources: vehicle electrics; hot exhaust on dry grass; powered equipment; mixing of chemicals; naked flames. Participants should be aware of fire hazards and what to do in the event of a fire.

Bush fires are an ever-present risk in the Australian bush. All fire restrictions and bans must be observed. To prevent starting a bush fire, all fires must be extinguished properly. There are various Smartphone Apps available to monitor bush fire information in real time so consider these in your planning.

For information on responding to a bushfire contact the Rural Fire Service.

11.3. Electrical Safety

All portable electrical equipment to be used in the field must comply with HS418 Portable electrical equipment inspection testing and tagging guideline. This usually requires an annual testing regime.

All field equipment to be used in a hostile environment must incorporate a portable residual current device (RCD) or be plugged in to a circuit which is protected by a RCD. See the HS437 RCD Guideline for selection, testing and use of RCD's.

11.4. Catering and Food Hygiene

Food provisions should be suitable for the conditions and duration of the fieldtrip and should include adequate supplies in case of emergency or extended duration.

The following is an excerpt from Food Safety Standards Australia and New Zealand and should be observed:

- All food items must be prepared hygienically, using clean hands and utensils.
- Food should be selected and prepared carefully. In many parts of the world raw food (salads etc.), shellfish and ice-cream should be avoided and fruit should be washed and peeled before eating. In cases of doubt, food should be thoroughly cooked to kill any contaminating microorganisms.
- A constant supply of potable water must be available. If necessary, the water should be sterilised by boiling, filtration or use of tablets. Always assume stream and river waters are unsafe, even in wilderness areas.
- Food must be kept clean and covered to prevent contamination by dust, insects etc. It should be kept cool (below 5°C) or hot (above 60°C).
- Pre-prepared foods should be wrapped tightly or protected in sealed containers before packing them in a cooler. Raw meats should be placed at the bottom of the cooler and ready-to-eat items above.
- The practice of cooking food for consumption one day ahead should be avoided.
- Utensils must be kept clean.
- when cooling cooked potentially hazardous food, cool the food –
  within two hours – from 60°C to 21°C; and
  within a further four hours – from 21°C to 5°C;
- when reheating previously cooked and cooled potentially hazardous food to hold it hot, use a heat process that rapidly heats the food to a temperature of 60°C or above.

11.5. Hygiene of food handlers

- (1) A food handler must, when engaging in any food handling operation –
  a) take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  b) take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
  c) ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted;
  d) only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering;
  e) not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  f) not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  g) not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled; and

- (2) A food handler must wash his or her hands –

a) whenever his or her hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food;
b) immediately before working with ready-to-eat food and after handling raw food;
c) immediately after using the toilet;
d) before commencing or re-commencing handling food;
e) immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and
f) after touching his or her hair, scalp or a body opening.

- (3) A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands –
  a) use the hand washing facilities provided;
  b) thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm (if possible) running water; and
  c) thoroughly dry his or her hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic microorganisms to the hands.

11.6. Food Allergies

Food allergy occurs in around 2 in 100 adults. The most common triggers are egg, cow's milk, peanut, tree nuts, seafood, sesame, soy, fish and wheat. Some food allergies can be severe, causing life-threatening reactions known as anaphylaxis. Persons with known serious allergies should have an action plan completed by their doctor and made known to the Fieldwork Leader. They may also carry an adrenalin auto-injector.

In general adrenaline auto-injectors should not be in first aid kits, as it is the individual's responsibility to carry their own medication for personal use. However, if a risk assessment determines that these are required then the HS905 First Aid Procedure outlines how they are to be managed.

As there is currently no cure for food allergy, strict avoidance is essential in the management of food allergy.

It is important for individuals with food allergy to:

- Provide this information on the HS009 Fieldwork Participant Form;
- Carry their adrenaline auto injector (if prescribed) and Action Plan with them at all times;
- Know the signs and symptoms of mild to moderate and severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) and what to do when a reaction occurs;
- Read and understand food labels for food allergy;
- Tell wait staff that they have a food allergy when eating out;
- Be aware of cross contamination of food allergens when preparing food.

More information is available at: www.allergy.org.au

11.7. Marine/Aquatic Environment

Participants in fieldwork in marine, stream or lake environments, where the work is carried out in water deep enough to require swimming instead of wading, should be strong swimmers or should wear flotation as appropriate or as required by legislation.

There are several types of Personal Flotation Devices in use at UNSW: Refer to http://www.lifejacketwearit.com.au/ for details on the types, where and when they are required and lifejacket law.

Personal Flotation Devices will be supplied by the School or Unit undertaking the fieldwork activity.

If swimming or snorkelling is required on fieldwork, participants should undergo an assessment in the relevant skill by a competent person before engaging in the activity. Wetsuits are recommended for snorkelling and swimming as they provide added buoyancy as well as thermal, sun and abrasion protection.

11.8. Scientific Diving

Underwater operations will be conducted in accordance with the *Scuba Diving Operations Manual*. This manual indicates responsibilities and provides guidelines for the assessment of the safety of all diving operations.

The *Scuba Diving Operations Manual* is available from the School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences website.

11.9. Working On or Near Roads

Fieldwork involving traffic or pedestrian behavior should not impose additional hazards to the public or fieldwork participants. The fieldwork should not distract the public, especially vehicle drivers. For works on roads adequate and appropriate warning signs should be deployed in accordance with AS 1742.3-2009: Manual of uniform traffic control devices - Traffic control for works on Roads.

Participants must wear high visibility safety garments when working within 5m of moving traffic or moving vehicles where visibility has been determined to be an essential risk control.

11.10. Chemical Safety

The carriage and use of chemical substances (e.g. fuel, liquid nitrogen, dry ice, nitric acid, preservatives e.g. formaldehyde, ethanol) at off-campus locations may present a variety of hazards, which must be effectively managed to protect persons from harm.

Fieldwork risk management must include assessment of the chemicals to be used, outlining the potential hazards and risks posed, and the controls required to ensure the process is performed safely.

If the fieldwork requires the use of chemicals, it is necessary for the trip participants to have completed the appropriate chemical safety training before undertaking the work.

There are mandatory packaging requirements for certain volumes and classes of dangerous goods, which vary also on the mode of transport being used e.g. car, plane, road or rail. If chemicals are to be transported, staff should check well in advance of the trip with the Work Health and Safety Coordinator or local Health and Safety advisers, whether there are any special requirements for packaging and carriage.

Dangerous goods must not be transported in your possession on any form of public transport and must be properly packaged, declared and sent as cargo. Never carry hazardous materials onto a plane in your carry-on or checked luggage. If you need to fly to your research site, you will need to ship your hazardous materials via an approved commercial carrier.

In some cases, it may be possible for you to order your chemicals to be delivered to the place where you will be conducting your fieldwork to avoid transporting. If possible, have the vendor direct ship to the field location or ship the chemical yourself. Remember that you will also need to make provisions for shipping the material back to the University once the fieldwork is completed.

If you are transporting chemicals, the following advice should be followed:

If shipping via a commercial carrier is not an option, take only the amount necessary to conduct the work. If transferring chemicals from the original (manufacturer's) container into smaller containers, ensure that the container and lid are suitable, and that the labelling meets the requirements outlined in the HS429 Labelling of hazardous chemicals guideline.

Package appropriately and securely e.g. double contain and place in your chemicals in secondary containers. (A secondary container must be capable of containing the materials if the primary container breaks or leaks.) Absorbent materials must be included in the secondary container to absorb any liquids. This will also cushion the materials and help prevent container breakage. For multiple compatible materials transported in the same outer box, include packing material, such as Styrofoam peanuts between containers.

Only store in the tray of a vehicle e.g. a Ute to ensure there is no risk of accidental exposure to persons during transport.

Include on the outer packaging a listing of the materials being transported and an emergency phone number. The driver should also have a copy of this information in easy reach of the driver's seat.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and Emergency Procedure Guides (EPG's) should also be available for hazardous substances and dangerous goods transported to off-campus work locations and field sites.

Cryogens must be transported only in approved storage vessels (for example dry shippers). Cryogens should never be transported where off gassing can enter the passenger area of the vehicle.

11.11. Gas Cylinder Transport

Gas cylinders should not be transported in the trunk of a car. Transport in a Ute or a trailer so that it may be tied down with safety straps and chocked to prevent movement. The choice of hired trailer or vehicle should allow for a secure tie down of the cylinder.

If possible, the cylinders should be orientated in an upright position for liquefied gases and may be lying down for compressed gases. As with transportation within buildings, the protective caps must be on cylinders and for toxic gases and valve outlets must be capped or plugged with an approved closure device.

The safest way to transport the gas cylinder is NOT in the passenger compartment of the vehicle.

A station wagon has its cargo area in the passenger compartment so this is not safe to transport an asphyxiant or hazardous gas.

It is definitely unsafe to transport a gas cylinder inside a station wagon or hatchback without a safety barrier.

A station wagon with a safety barrier may be used for non-hazardous gases such as air or dive tanks.

Additional information is available from ANZIGA, Australia New Zealand Industrial Gas Association Guideline 4 - Load restraint guidelines.

Advice and assistance can be obtained by contacting Health and Safety Personnel.

12. Fieldwork involving face to face interviewing

12.1. Equipment to be carried by all Interviewers

To reduce risk all fieldworkers should carry the following:

- Mobile phone - personal or University provided
- First aid kit for motor vehicle journeys
- Cab charge vouchers
- UNSW photo ID card

12.2. Transport and Travel

The researcher should use a UNSW hire vehicle should they have concerns regarding the use of public transport.

Long motor vehicle journeys may place researchers at risk if they have worked long hours, are tired, emotionally drained or distressed.

The driver must have an option of arranging overnight accommodation if the journey and interview times are greater than 10 hours or the interviewer does not feel able to make the return journey.

Travel time is included in your work time.

12.3. Training, Experience and Supervision

Only experienced interviewers should be conducting face-to-face interviews and focus groups. Researchers without experience should receive on the job training from their supervisor or their nominee.

12.4. Interview Timing

Wherever possible, interviews should be arranged during daylight hours.

12.5. Maintaining Communication

To ensure safety of interviewers a system of recording their whereabouts should be implemented.

All researchers engaged in fieldwork of this type must apply section 3.7 Notification of Fieldwork of the HS917 Fieldwork Procedure.

Hence, in advance of the interview, email their whereabouts and anticipated start and end time of the fieldwork to the responsible or designated officer or call back person. This information must include a link to access addresses and phone numbers of the people you are planning to interview (this would only be accessed in case of an emergency!)

At the time of the interview, the researcher should inform the responsible or designated officer or call back person when they have arrived at interview location, have moved from one location to the next and when they return safely to their home or accommodation.

Should the researcher fail to notify safe arrival by the agreed time the nominee should attempt to contact them and their home. Failing that, a concern for welfare must be lodged with the police.

12.6. Carrying Valuables

It may be necessary for researchers to pay interviewees/focus group participants. Cash is not a possible payment method. Gift vouchers and other form of 'gifts' designed for the project are an alternative.

Expensive or irreplaceable items of value should be removed prior to interviews and left in a safe and secure location.

12.7. Interview Location

The researcher will from time-to-time plan to visit an unfamiliar location which they feel may place them at risk or about which they do not feel confident.

- On the first (or subsequent) visit/s, they may ask for another staff member to accompany them. Where possible the support person should be engaged on the same project.
- If possible, the interview should be arranged in a busy public place such as a park or fast-food restaurant where the interviewee's confidentiality will not be compromised.

If an interview is conducted in a private home, the researcher should, upon entry, identify any exit points to the property.

12.8. Personal Safety

The researcher may experience the threat of or be subject to actual aggressive behavior from an interviewee.

All workers conducting face-to-face interviews must be appropriately qualified and experienced. If the researcher is required to interview individuals with particular needs or challenges, the researcher should have access to appropriate training on working with this group if they feel the need (i.e. working with individuals with mental illness). These should be incorporated into project budgets. Should the interview participant/s become aggressive in any way the interview should be terminated.

Researchers may also experience a threat to their personal safety on their way to or way home from an interview. Researchers should notify their project managers immediately and, where appropriate, notify police.

The experience of interviewing may at times cause the interviewer to be emotionally distressed, challenged or upset.

- Every interviewer should debrief regularly with their supervisor or avail themselves of the Employee Assistance Program for regular debriefs (phone 1300 360 364 or see www.hr.unsw.edu.au/employee/eap.html).

Interviewers should not travel should they feel distressed. They should either wait until they feel able or, in consultation with a support person, make accommodation arrangements.

The researcher may be required to use external transcription/translation services during fieldwork. Transcribers / translators engaged externally are required to sign the 'Mutual Confidentiality Agreement' prior to undertaking their services.

Appendix A: Acknowledgements

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (nsw.gov.au)
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (nsw.gov.au)
List of codes of practice | SafeWork NSW

Monash University – Off-Campus Activities Procedure 2013

University of Queensland – Fieldwork and Off-Campus Safety Guidelines 2013

Macquarie University – Biological Sciences Department

University of Wollongong – Fieldwork Guidelines 2013

Australian National University – Fieldwork health and off-campus work safety 2013

Charles Sturt University – Driving Hours Guidelines 2011

Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork – Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) United Kingdom

Appendix B: Version control

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	On RMU web site	16/08/2002	16/08/2002	Document modifications not adequately recorded. May not have been formally approved but was in active use at UNSW.
2.0	Director, Human Resources	01/11/2006	01/11/2006	Revised all sections and reformatted the document
3.0	Director, Human Resources	01/01/2007	01/01/2007	Added Evaluation & History
4.0	Director, Human Resources	23/10/2009	23/10/2009	Include non-field site visits, industrial training and placements
4.1	Manager, OHS Unit	10/04/2010	10/04/2010	Updated all links
4.2	Manager, HS Unit	22/04/2013	22/04/2013	Updated legislative references. Referred to local area documents for boating safety information
5.0	Director, UNSW Safety & Sustainability	13 November 2015	13 November 2015	Completely revised and updated document. Procedural matters relocated to a new Fieldwork Procedure.
6.0	Director, Risk & Safety Management	8 August 2022	8 August 2022	Template update. Administrative update. Removed from Governance.

Updates to this document

Any suggestions, recommendations or updates to this document should be emailed to safety@unsw.edu.au with the email header stating *GUIDELINES UPDATE Fieldwork Guideline (HS406)*.