

# STUDENT OFF-CAMPUS SAFETY AND TRAVEL POLICY



**THOMPSON  
RIVERS  
UNIVERSITY**

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<b>AUTHORITY</b>	President
<b>CATEGORY</b>	Administrative
<b>PRIMARY CONTACT</b>	Faculty of Student Development and TRU World (for international activities)
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE CONTACT</b>	(TBD)

## POLICY

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Thompson Rivers University strongly believes in the benefits of a global approach to learning, research, scholarship and citizenship. The University is committed to providing its students with the opportunity for meaningful Off-Campus national and international learning experiences.

The purpose of this policy is to set standards enabling safer student learning experiences Off-Campus, nationally and internationally and ensure that University sanctioned activities incorporate specific measures to mitigate risk and facilitate emergency response to students when travelling off-campus.

This policy applies to any student travel Off-Campus in connection with University sanctioned activities and participation in those activities. These activities include but are not limited to: University-approved courses (credit or non-credit), student exchange programs, term abroad programs, clinical placements, field trips, research projects, study tours, varsity sports, apprenticeships, practica, internships and cooperative education programs that have been organized by, and/or contracted with, the University (any or all of the foregoing are referred to in this policy as “**Off-Campus Activities**” or “**Off-Campus Activities and Travel**”).

In this policy, “**Off-Campus**” means away from TRU’s physical campuses in connection with University sanctioned activities where the on-campus protections provided by TRU facilities, security personnel, and safety measures cannot extend.

This policy does not apply to employee travel and student Off-Campus Activities over which the University exercises no control and for which it can therefore take no responsibility. Specifically, among others, it does not include TRU students at institutions that have an accreditation agreement with TRU and it does not cover activities related to: TRU Student Union (TRUSU), TRUSU Clubs, Open Learning (OL), and routine research and scholarship activities of low risk that are subject to the University’s Integrity in Research and Scholarship policy provided the Principal Investigator has established appropriate measures to ensure the safety of student researchers while participating in a research project.

Thompson Rivers University will take reasonable steps to support and promote the health, safety and security of students in Off-Campus Activities and Travel. Faculties, schools, departments, and individual travelers share responsibility with the University to assess and manage the risk of Off-Campus Activities and related travel.

## REGULATIONS

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All University sanctioned Off-Campus Activities must incorporate, at a minimum, the following elements to protect the well-being of students, manage risks, and support a positive learning environment:

1. An approval process in place for the off-campus activity within the relevant unit and authorization by the appropriate authority as identified in the Regulations;
2. An identification and an assessment of risks associated with the activity;
3. A student code of conduct for the activity;
4. A process for approving students to participate in the activity;
5. Risk management resources to enable student travelers to identify, be informed of, and manage the risks associated with the activity;
6. An emergency response process.

Members of the University community who are organizing, leading, or supervising Off-Campus Activities and Travel will take reasonable steps to familiarize themselves with the risks of the activity and will consult and seek the expertise of others to address risks that fall outside their own areas of knowledge.

Off-Campus Activities and Travel involving students may be cancelled or recalled by the appropriate authority as identified in the Regulations, if they believe the risks are unacceptable or unwarranted or cannot be reasonably managed.

Students must comply with a cancellation or recall of this nature and those who do not:

- Will be considered to be on personal travel and will no longer have access to University assistance; and
- Will be solely responsible for any harm incurred as a result of their failure to comply with the cancellation or recall.

This does not apply to students who are unable to comply due to reasons beyond their reasonable control.

The decision to cancel or recall is a serious one that is not taken lightly and should be made in consultation with the relevant institutional units.

The University recognizes that there are many well established and recurring programs involving student travel. The history and importance of these programs is acknowledged in the regulations and procedures associated with this policy.

It is understood that research and scholarly activities involving students must receive ethics review approval and remain subject to the University's Policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship, with the primary responsibility for compliance resting with the Principal Investigator.

While undertaking Off-Campus Activities and Travel, other Thompson Rivers University policies and procedures (except those inconsistent with local laws or applicable rules and policies of a host institution) continue to apply. Students must also obey the policies of international host institutions and the laws and cultural customs of the host countries they are in.

## **1. Approval and Responsibility for the Off-campus Activity**

Faculties, schools, departments and other TRU organizational units offering, facilitating, and/or sponsoring student Off-Campus Activities covered by this policy must have in place an internal review process for the (1) Proposed Activity and (2) a Risk Assessment of the Proposed Activity, based on the Risk Assessment Worksheet attached to this policy as Appendix A, approved by the relevant unit head or his/her designate.

### **1.1. Approval**

- 1.1.1. Off-campus student activities offered, facilitated, or sponsored by faculties or schools must be approved by their relevant Dean or his/her designate.
- 1.1.2. Off-campus student activities offered, facilitated, or sponsored by non-academic units must be approved by their relevant unit head, i.e., Director, Manager, or his/her designate.
- 1.1.3. International off-campus student activities require additional approvals as set out in the Risk Assessment Worksheet attached to this policy as Appendix A.

### **1.2. Process**

- 1.2.1. Given the diverse nature of student Off-Campus Activities and organizational units at TRU, unit heads or their designate will develop an internal process to develop and review proposed student Off-Campus Activities based on merit criteria relevant to the unit and its mandate.
- 1.2.2. Approval of the proposed off-campus activity and its risk assessment will follow the *Risk Assessment for Off-campus Travel Involving Students Procedure* attached to this policy as Appendix A.

### **1.3. Responsibility**

The primary responsibility and accountability for safety in Off-Campus Activities are borne by those in positions of authority closest to the activity. Potential discipline-

specific risks are normally best understood at the department/unit level, and the ability to make initial assessments of these risks is likely to be better at that level. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- The development and implementation of a student code of conduct for the activity;
- The approval of students to participate in the activity;
- Developing and providing risk management resources for students tailored to the nature and risk level of the activity, including: emergency and contingency plans, mandatory pre-departure training, on-site orientation, re-integration support, and post-activity evaluation;
- Ensuring that the activities comply with any relevant industry, trade, professional, and/or regulatory standards and requirements; and
- Monitoring and maintaining a record of the planning and conduct of Off-Campus Activities undertaken by the department/unit.

## **2. International Travel**

### **2.1. Travel Planning and Responsibilities**

- 2.1.1. The University provides resources and support services aimed at facilitating safe international travel experiences for student travelers. The University maintains the Study Abroad Centre to among other functions educate student travelers about health and safety issues related to international travel and to act as a resource for student travelers, activity leaders, and heads of units.
- 2.1.2. TRU Students are strongly encouraged to use TRU's travel provider when making international travel arrangements. Our travel provider is able to assist in:
  - Pre-trip travel risk assessment
  - Real time travel alerts and advisories
  - Worldwide event monitoring of issues arising such as natural disasters/political coups
  - Traveler tracking and assisting traveler rescue and/or rescheduling
- 2.1.3. To facilitate more effective risk management for TRU students studying abroad, TRU will consider alternate models for field schools in the future.
- 2.1.4. The University cannot ensure that student travel will be problem free or account for all the potential health and safety risks that students might experience while out of country. As a result, all student travelers have the primary responsibility to prepare themselves in advance of international

travel, to research and be aware of the risks involved in their planned trip, to ensure that they are physically, medically and mentally prepared for the travel, to ensure they have appropriate medical and other insurance for the travel, to conduct themselves in a safe manner while travelling, and to bring any concerns they may have to the attention of the activity leader as well as the TRU World Study Abroad Centre as soon as possible after the concern arises.

- 2.1.5. Prior to participating in University activities outside of Canada, students must register their travel plans with the University through the TRU World Study Abroad Centre and obtain any approvals to travel that are required in the Procedures to this Policy.
- 2.1.6. Any student planning to participate in Off-Campus Activities and Travel who has concerns about their personal safety during the upcoming Off-Campus Activities and Travel should identify their concerns with the activity leader and/or their head of unit as well as the TRU World Study Abroad Centre who will work with the student to assess the issue.
- 2.1.7. Activity leaders must consult with the TRU World Study Abroad Centre regarding University activities outside of Canada and must comply with the directions of the TRU World Study Abroad Centre.

## **2.2. Travel Support**

The TRU World Study Abroad Centre provides support for the implementation of this Policy by:

- Maintaining the TRU Student Travel Abroad Registry (STAR), including student emergency contact information;
- Staying informed of changing conditions as articulated in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) Travel Advisories and communicating these changes to affected University units and students traveling abroad;
- Working with activity leaders, academic units and other programs to provide advice and assistance;
- Offering pre-departure checklists, workshops, resource materials, and information to outgoing student travelers.

**Related Policies and Procedures**

ED 12-0 International Education:

[http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/International\\_Education5667.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/International_Education5667.pdf)

ED 07-0 Debarment of Students: [http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/ed07-05659.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/ed07-05659.pdf)

ED 15-2 Integrity in Research and Scholarship

[http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/Integrity\\_in\\_Research\\_and\\_Scholarship5669.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/Integrity_in_Research_and_Scholarship5669.pdf)

ADM 02-2 Confidentiality of Student Information: [http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/adm02-25613.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/adm02-25613.pdf)

ADM 05-0 Health and Safety: <http://www.tru.ca/policy/hsafety.html>

ADM 05-3 Alcohol: [http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/adm05-35601.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/adm05-35601.pdf)

ADM 19-0 Expenses: Travel: [http://www.tru.ca/\\_shared/assets/Travel\\_Expenses5597.pdf](http://www.tru.ca/_shared/assets/Travel_Expenses5597.pdf)

Travel and Risk Management procedures and guidelines - Insurance Coverage:

[http://www.tru.ca/finance/pro\\_manual/payroll\\_insurance.html](http://www.tru.ca/finance/pro_manual/payroll_insurance.html)

Occupational Health and Safety Department – Roles, responsibilities and procedures:

<http://www.tru.ca/hsafety.html>

Risk Assessment for Off-campus Travel Involving Students Procedure

- ✓ Review column 1 and determine the appropriate risk level based on the category of student traveling.
- ✓ Review column 2 and determine the appropriate risk level based on where the activity is taking place.
- ✓ Assign a final risk level. This will be the highest risk level identified in any of the two columns.

<b>Chart 1: Risk Assessment</b>			
<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>(1) Who is traveling &amp; What are they doing?</b>	<b>(2) Where are they going?</b>	
		<b>Travelling within Canada</b> <i>Typically travel within Canada is low risk. However, possible risks such as dangerous sports, natural disasters and public health and safety issues should be taken into consideration in determining whether the risk level should increase</i>	<b>Travelling outside of Canada</b>
<b>Low</b>	Individual graduate or undergraduate students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged in supervised research or directed studies</li> <li>• Studying abroad at a partner institution</li> <li>• Attending a meeting or conference</li> </ul>	An activity that entails hazards or risk no greater than those encountered by ordinary persons in their everyday lives	A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports indicate “exercise normal security precautions”
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual graduate or undergraduate students engaged in internships, practica, or co-operative work placements</li> <li>• Graduate or undergraduate student GROUP travel</li> </ul>	Activities that entail a higher level of risk than ordinary persons would encounter in their daily lives, but those risks can be mitigated through planning, training, standard and operating procedures	A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports indicate “exercise high degree of caution”
<b>High</b>		An activity for which there is substantial risk to participants, which strategic planning cannot effectively mitigate with any reasonable probability	A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports include a Travel Warning that indicates “avoid non-essential travel” and  A location where Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Travel Reports include a Travel Warning that indicates “avoid all travel”

**Related Links:**

- ✓ Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Travel Reports and Warnings: [http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries\\_pays/menu-eng.asp](http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp)
  - ✓ Public Health Agency of Canada Travel Health Notices: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/tmp-pmv/pub-eng.php>
  - ✓ Public Safety Canada: <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/index-eng.aspx>
  - ✓ Emergency Info BC: <http://emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/>
- ✓ Review the row associated with the final risk level assigned from chart 1

- ✓ Obtain approval as indicated in the “approval” column
- ✓ Perform the actions listed in the “actions” column

<b>Chart 2: Approval and Actions</b>		
<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>For travel within Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None required</li> </ul>
	<b>For travel outside Canada</b> Unit head of the TRU World Study Abroad Centre or his/her designate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculties/schools or departments must advise the TRU World Study Abroad Centre of any activities they are planning that involve student travel outside Canada AND comply with the TRU World Study Abroad Centre risk management processes and requirements in effect for student international travel, including mandatory pre-departure training offered by the TRU World Study Abroad Centre and any program-specific training offered by the sponsoring unit</li> </ul>

<b>Chart 2: Approval and Actions</b>		
<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>For travel within Canada</b>  For graduate students engaged in research: the faculty supervisor  For all other student travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relevant Dean or his/her designate for off-campus student activities offered by or facilitated through faculties or schools</li> <li>• The relevant unit head: Director, Manager, or his/her designate for off-campus student activities offered, facilitated, or sponsored by non-academic units.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise the “relevant unit head or designate” of the travel plans prior to departure</li> <li>• Provide emergency contact information for all travelers to the “relevant unit head or designate” as appropriate</li> <li>• Student travelers must complete the appropriate waiver form if required as outlined in the Finance website under: Travel and Risk Management procedures and guidelines – Insurance Coverage</li> <li>• Comply with all unit-specific risk-management processes and requirements in effect for the proposed activity – including any relevant industry, trade, professional, or regulatory standards</li> </ul>
	<b>For travel outside Canada</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculties/schools or departments must advise the TRU World Study Abroad Centre of any activities they are planning that involve student travel outside Canada AND comply with the TRU</li> </ul>



Chart 2: Approval and Actions

Risk Level	Approval	Actions
	<p>The unit head of the TRU World Study Abroad Centre or his/her designate</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The Provost &amp; VP Academic or his/her designate</p>	<p>World Study Abroad Centre risk management processes and requirements in effect for student international travel, including mandatory pre-departure training offered by the TRU World Study Abroad Centre and any program-specific training offered by the sponsoring unit</p>
<b>High</b>	<p>Same approvals required for MEDIUM Risk Level Travel</p> <p>AND</p> <p>The Provost &amp; VP Academic or his/her designate will only grant approval for this travel in <b>exceptional circumstances</b></p>	<p><b>For travel within Canada</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise the department/unit as appropriate of the travel plans</li> <li>• Provide emergency contact information for all travelers to the Department/Unit</li> <li>• Student travelers must complete the appropriate waiver form if required as outlined in the Finance website under: Travel and Risk Management procedures and guidelines - Insurance Coverage</li> <li>• Comply with all unit-specific risk-management processes and requirements in effect for the proposed activity – including any relevant industry, trade, professional, or regulatory standards</li> </ul> <p><b>For travel outside Canada</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculties/schools or departments must advise the TRU World Study Abroad Centre of any activities they are planning that involve student travel outside Canada AND comply with the TRU World Study Abroad Centre risk management processes and requirements in effect for student international travel, including mandatory pre-departure training offered by the TRU World Study Abroad Centre and any program-specific training offered by the sponsoring unit</li> </ul>

## Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Procedure

This procedure applies to the ***Student Off-Campus Safety and Travel Policy*** (ADM XXX-X)

The purpose of this Procedure is to outline the requirements and processes for assessing risks, obtaining approval, and managing risks related to off-campus activities and travel involving students.

### Procedure:

All non-exempted off-campus activities and travel involving students must follow the risk assessment process outlined below. The person organizing or leading the activity will be responsible for following the risk assessment process and obtaining the necessary approvals as indicated below.

The assessor will:

1. Use Chart 1 in "*Appendix A: Risk Assessment Worksheet for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students*" to assess the risks of the proposed activity and assign a risk level for the activity.
2. If required in Chart 2 of *Appendix A*, obtain approval of the risk assessment. This is not intended to be an approval of the merits of the off-campus activity and travel. It is to verify that the risk assessment has been performed appropriately and that the off-campus activity and travel may proceed.
  - 2.1. Approval requests should include information such as location, duration of travel, the activity being performed and strategies to manage identified risks. Assessors may use existing approval mechanisms within their faculties/departments/units, or they may choose to use the sample "*Approval of Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students form*".
  - 2.2. The approver may ask the assessor to re-visit and re-submit any portion of the assessment if they conclude that it was not appropriately or adequately completed.
  - 2.3. The approver may seek advice from others such as the TRU's Faculty of Student Development, Legal Counsel, Research & Graduate Studies Office, TRU World's Study Abroad Centre, Occupational Health and Safety Department, program or discipline-specific health and safety committees, etc. when deciding whether or not to approve and if they feel it necessary, may escalate the level of approval required to a higher authority within the appropriate faculty/school, department or unit.
  - 2.4. The approver may require specific risk management strategies be developed and implemented.
  - 2.5. The approver may choose not to approve the off-campus activity and travel to proceed if they believe the risks are unacceptable or unwarranted and cannot be reasonably managed.
3. The actions identified for the assessed risk level must be completed prior to departure.
  - 3.1. Some off-campus activities and travel programs may involve different domestic locations for each participant (e.g.: co-op and practicum placements) or several trips within a period of time to different domestic locations (e.g.: varsity athletics). In such cases the risk assessment should be performed for the

program as a whole, rather than for each individual placement or trip. However, individual risk assessments should be performed for instances that are unique or different from the rest of the program (e.g.: domestic vs. foreign location, office work vs. field work).

- 3.2. Recurring off-campus activities and travel with a person of authority such as a faculty or staff member as the leader do not have to have a new risk assessment prior to each recurrence unless there has been a change to the category of student travelling, the type of activity being performed, the location, or the risks associated with any of these. If there has been a change of this nature the leader will follow the full risk assessment process outlined above.

**Related Documents:**

1. *Appendix A: Risk Assessment Worksheet for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students*
2. *Approval of Risk Assessment for Off-Campus Travel Involving Students Form*