

## Field Safety and OCASP (Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy) forms

For Queen's students there are two specific procedures to follow depending on the affiliation of the professor teaching the course:

A) Courses offered by Queen's professors: You do not need to do anything until you are contacted by your professor at Queen's via the OCASP system. At that point, you will be directed to the safety form submitted by your Queen's professor, that you will be required to read and sign off. Queen's professors are familiar with the OCASP process, and are familiar with hazards, risks and mitigation plans associated with their course, and their responsibility to provide a safe as possible environment for our field courses.

B) Courses offered by professors not employed by Queen's (i.e. the affiliation of the professor is from another Ontario institution): once accepted into your module, you MUST fill out and submit an OCASP form that will be approved by the Field Course Coordinator (Shelley Arnott), the Biology Department Head (Brian Cumming), and Queen's Health and Environmental Safety. The rationale and instructions for this are found below. As we are not directly responsible for professors at other institutions, we want to ensure that you are aware of potential hazards of the region to which you are heading, and have contact information to help you should an incident occur.

### Why do you need to do this?

1. Field course activities in remote locations or foreign countries have hazards associated with them. It is important that every student is aware of these hazards and associated risks and how to mitigate them. Individual students and course instructors are jointly responsible for safety, and participating students should be aware of all potential hazards. Do not hesitate to ask your instructor about safety hazards and mitigation strategies (e.g., is there a first aid kit, who has first aid training, is there a communication plan and devices to seek help?).
2. Contact information is critical should an emergency arise at the field site. We require personal contact information (e.g., family members) and the contact information for you at the field site. This will enable us to provide appropriate and timely assistance should an emergency arise.

Students taking a non-Queen's University field course (option B above) should go to the following link to fill out the required OCASP form once they are accepted into their modules.

<https://www.safety.queensu.ca/campus-activities-ocasp>

At the end of each page, select the 'continue' button. NOTE that some of the required information can be found on the second page of the individual module descriptions and some information will need to be provided by the instructor.

1. Login using your Queen's netid.
2. Choose the option that indicates you are the PLANNER of an off-campus activity
3. Select **Higher-Risk Activities** and create a new Safety Planning Record

## Planners

Select the risk category that is consistent with the risk definitions in the **Off-Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP)**:

Choose this

### Higher-Risk Activities: ?

Refer to OCASP, section 4.2b (Manageable, Higher Risk)  
This includes, among others, any international activity involving undergraduate or professional (J.D., MD, B.Ed) student participants and all Athletics Recreational Club and University Club activities, but excludes students attending the Bader International Study Centre.

- Create a new Safety Planning Record which includes registering in the Emergency Support Program
  - Continue with an existing or archived Safety Planning Record
4. Fill out personal details, including university status (undergraduate), academic year of activity, and information about incoming or exchange student.
  5. Activity details – choose **“I am undertaking one of the following activities”**, then select **‘field course’** from the dropdown menu, and **“Biology – 307/317”**
  6. Write a short description of the activity – this should be the module number and the course title.
  7. Indicate if you will be travelling outside of Canada (yes or no). If **yes**, fill out the required information about citizenship, passport number, and setting for activity (remote, urban, etc). If **no**, fill out the location of the activity, the setting (remote, urban, etc), nearest city and distance to nearest city.
  8. Travel dates – fill out departure and return dates for the field course
  9. Hazards & Risk – this portion of the form is critical. You will need to identify the **hazards, risks, and risk management plan** associated with your activities. Some of this information will be found on the field course description (page 2+). You may have to contact your instructor for more details.

Consider the following categories of risk:

- a. Poisonous plants (e.g., poison ivy, hogweed, etc).
- b. Poisonous or disease-carrying insects (e.g., ticks, mosquitos, etc.)
- c. Weather-related risks (e.g., lightning, high winds, heat/sun, etc.)
- d. Wildlife risks (e.g., bears, wolves, etc.)
- e. Physical activities (boating, hiking, scuba diving, etc.)
- f. Vehicles/roads
- g. Harassment

**Table of hazards.** Example for a typical field station (see QUBS field safety for additional examples - <https://qubs.ca/booking/field-lab-safety>).

Hazard	Risk to participant	Mitigation plan
Poisonous plants	Participants will be hiking in forest and open fields and may encounter poison ivy, giant hogweed ( <i>you should list plants that are of concern for your specific course</i> ). Contact with these plants can result in skin blisters, itchiness, burning sensation.	Participants will learn how to identify hazardous plants and will avoid contact with them. Long pants and long shirt sleeves will reduce potential contact. Wash clothing and skin if contact occurs. Calamine lotion may relieve itching associated with poison ivy. Seek medical help if reaction is severe.
Disease-carrying insects	Ticks are common near the field station. Some carry the bacterium, <i>Borrelia burgdorferi</i> , which causes Lyme Disease. An early symptom is a bullseye rash where the bite occurred. Headaches, fever, sore joints are also common symptoms.	Personnel should wear long pants with the legs tucked, long-sleeved shirts that fit tightly at the wrist, and closed shoes. Light-coloured clothing makes ticks more visible. Insect repellents containing DEET may help repel ticks. After being in the field it is wise to do a careful self-inspection for attached ticks. Prompt removal of attached ticks reduces the transmission of the Lyme disease. After removing ticks, wash the bite site with soap and water or disinfect the area with alcohol or antiseptic. Should symptoms arise personnel should contact a doctor as soon as possible.
Storms	Lightning storms may occur, putting participants at risk of lightning strikes resulting in injury or death. Rain and cold weather may cause hypothermia.	Participants should check weather conditions every day before going in the field. Rain gear and dry warm clothing should be carried in the field each day because sudden storms may arise. If a lightning storm arises, participants should get off the water, avoid standing near tall trees, remain at low elevation.
Sunstroke/heatstroke	Participants will be outdoors for much of the day and could suffer heatstroke or sunburn.	Participants should carry at least 1 L of water and either a water filter or water purification tablets. Wear light-coloured clothing, hat, sunscreen and sunglasses to reduce exposure to sun. Take breaks and seek shade as needed.
Strenuous activities	Participants will be hiking over rough terrain, carrying equipment and backpacks. There is a risk of sprained ankles, fatigue, and other injuries.	Field activities should be done in groups of two or more people. Sturdy footwear with ankle support should be worn. Loads will be distributed among the group. Rests will be taken when needed. First aid kits and communication devices (cell or satellite phones) will be carried at all times.
Vehicle/road incidents	Participants will be driving to some field sites and may work near roads. There is a risk of injury in car accidents or being hit by a car.	Drivers must abide by all traffic laws including speed limits. All passengers must wear seatbelts. Drivers should be mindful of fatigue. If working along roadsides, participants should wear bright or reflective clothing. Pay attention to traffic, and don't get distracted by your phone.
Harassment	Participants will be working and living in close quarters with other people.	Every participant must be treated with dignity and respect and should strive to create an inclusive, equitable environment. Any participant who feels they have been the victim of harassment, discrimination, exclusion, or other such treatment has the right to report the incident. Reports can be made to the instructor, the Biology Department Head, or Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee ( <a href="https://biology.queensu.ca/resources/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-committee/">https://biology.queensu.ca/resources/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-committee/</a> ). The university has numerous support systems and policies that are available.

## Travelling to a foreign country

Students travelling to foreign countries for field courses will have additional hazard considerations. The OCASP form provides country-specific links to the Government of Canada's travel reports and warnings. Consult this before completing the hazards, risk, and risk mitigation form.

Foreign travel – links to [GAC \(Global Affairs Canada\) Travel Reports and Warnings](#) for your Host Country. Please read the risks that have been identified by the Government of Canada for the country you are visiting. Be sure to access information through the OCASP form for each of the risk categories indicated below.

Risk level(s)	Safety and security	Entry/exit requirements	Health	Laws and culture	Natural disasters and climate	Assistance
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Print format

For out of country trips, fill out the sections provided (e.g., below). Please pay attention to the hazards and risks listed under each section of the GAC report. The GAC reports are thorough and please read through the entire document. You should report those risks that are most relevant to your field course.

**HAZARDS and RISKS related specifically to your travel and Activity outside Canada:**

You have indicated that you will be conducting an Activity outside Canada. You must now identify all of the Hazards and related Risks, and prepare mitigation plans, related to travel to and from your Host country [or countries], as well as any implications of living and conducting your planned Activity in that location.

Using the [GAC \(Global Affairs Canada\) Travel Reports and Warnings](#) for your Host Country [or Host Countries], address any Hazards and related Risks in each of the following GAC Section that you will find outlined there. Indicate where any Section does not apply to your Activity so the Reviewer(s)/Approver know that you have considered the Section.

International SOS also provides additional information regarding potential Hazards and related Risks for your Host Country [or Host Countries]. The [International SOS Members Portal](#) should also be consulted when completing a Safety Planning Record for OCASP.

Find risks for countries here

Applicable: Yes  No

**Country Alerts**  
Using the link above, identify the following:

HAZARD (Refer to Country Travel Advice and Advisories at <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>):

RISKS:

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Remove

10. Immunizations – fill out form, including name of health insurance provider.
11. Disabilities, special needs, or life-threatening health conditions – fill out as appropriate, including a management plan
12. Emergency response – Queen's provides contacts for field course participants (record these for your potential use), allows you to indicate additional contact numbers at Queen's, and requests local contact information for you while you are on the field course. Obtain the local information from your field course instructor. Provide emergency contact information for Queen's (e.g., family members).
13. Review and electronically submit form for approval.