

Off Site Excursions – A Quick Guide

1. **Approval Forms;** Choose and then complete the appropriate Approval Form
 - a. Form [No.1](#) = day or part day trip, no adventurous activity
 - b. Form [No.2](#) = day or part day trip, adventurous activity
 - c. Form [No.3](#) = residential trip, with or without an adventurous activity
 - d. Form [No.4](#) = all trips abroad
2. **Staff Competencies;** Select staff with the required experience and qualifications, including a relevant and current [First Aid](#) certificate where appropriate.
3. **Driving Minibuses;** Where staff are driving a [Highland Council minibus](#) make sure they have a Highland Council minibus driver's card, and an [appropriate licence](#).
4. **Parents' letters;** Ensure that the parents are adequately informed about the excursion and the hazards associated with participation. With regard to adventurous activities consider using the relevant section of the [Information to Parents](#) document and include the [Youth Participation Statement](#) (YPS) in your parents' letter. Remove and add activities to the YPS to reflect the nature of your planned excursion.
5. **Disability Discrimination Act;** Always take into consideration the DDA, e.g. refer to the [Guidance for Schools](#) document for further information.
6. **Excursion Risk Assessment;** Prepare an excursion risk assessment with your colleagues using the [Worked Example of an Excursion Risk Assessment](#) as a guide.
7. **Share the relevant content;** Within the Excursion Risk Assessment there will be useful information e.g. medical needs. Ensure that all the staff on the excursion are aware of the hazards and are in agreement with the control measures. In addition, where you are using an external provider, inform them of any relevant information as they might have to introduce additional control measures themselves. Where adventurous activities are concerned the external provider might change the;
 - a. Venue
 - b. Ratio of their staff to your participants
 - c. Staff they are providing for others with more suitable experience
 - d. Activity
8. **Generic Risk Assessments;** If you are using an external provider, do not ask for a copy of their risk assessments. Where, as a Highland Council employee you are the provider, refer to Highland Council generic risk assessments where they are provided. E.g. [Generic Risk Assessments for Team Sports](#) and [Generic Risk Assessments for Adventurous Activities](#). If one does not exist, create your own generic risk assessment with guidance as required. Where a provided generic risk assessment does not cover all the hazards, add these additional, probably site specific, hazards to the Excursion Risk Assessment.
9. **Authorisation;** Email the approval form to your Head of Establishment/Lead Officer for authorisation/approval. If an adventurous activity is involved, email the approval form to the Outdoor Education Resource Centre outdoor.ed@highland.gov.uk for comment, prior to seeking authorisation/approval from your Head of Establishment/Lead Officer.
10. **Incidents/Accidents;** Follow the guidance provided in the [Off Site Excursions](#) document remembering to inform your line manager as soon as possible after an incident/accident. All accidents should be recorded on the appropriate Highland Council [form](#) even though an external provider or body might also complete a form. Fuller guidance is provided by the Health and Safety departments [Guidance Notes](#).
11. **Accident Investigation;** For the benefit of all concerned it is important to investigate accidents as soon after the event as possible, your incident/accident report created whilst the detail was fresh will help this process along. Who the investigation officer will be depends on the seriousness of the incident/accident. Fuller guidance is also provided in the [Outdoor Education Safety Document](#) on pages 21 and 22.
12. **Review;** Whilst the excursion is still relatively fresh in everyones mind, review the excursion with a view to providing even better trips in the future. Don't forget to review and adjust the excursion risk assessment where required.