



Royal Roads
UNIVERSITY

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

RISK MANAGEMENT

HANDBOOK

FIELD EXPERIENCES:

STUDY, TRIPS, RESEARCH & SCHOOLS

A resource for Faculty, Course Instructors
and Staff

LIFE.CHANGING

Context

This handbook provides detailed information for RRU employees (faculty, course instructors and staff) to support safe and barrier free off campus experiential learning opportunities. The focus is on the essential responsibilities and legislation that affect and support students in an inclusive off campus learning opportunity. The recommended practices adhere to RRU's [Off Campus Risk Management for Activities and Experiential Learning](#), [Accessible British Columbia Act](#), [RRU Study Abroad Policies](#), and where applicable [WorkSafeBC \(WSBC\) insurance coverage](#), the Canada Labour Code, [Standards for Work-Integrated Learning Activities Regulations](#), guidelines outlined by the [Panel on Research Ethics](#), and considerations of countries outside of Canada where EL opportunities may be occurring. The following information, constraints and resources ensure that everyone understands their role and responsibilities to ensure the safety of every student during all experiential learning opportunities.

Experiential Learning Defined

Experiential Learning (EL) engages students in relevant off campus opportunities to explore specific learning objectives in practical environments and then reflect upon and construct meaning from their experience. EL is an intentional and formal pedagogical approach that immerses learners in academic learning, professional experiences, and critical reflections to deepen theoretical knowledge.

CARE Team

Students experiencing distress or an incident in a study abroad or field trip, or an RRU employee in contact with them should immediately contact RRU's [CARE Team](#).

Resources

[RRU's CARE Team](#)

[RRU Experiential Learning Hub](#)

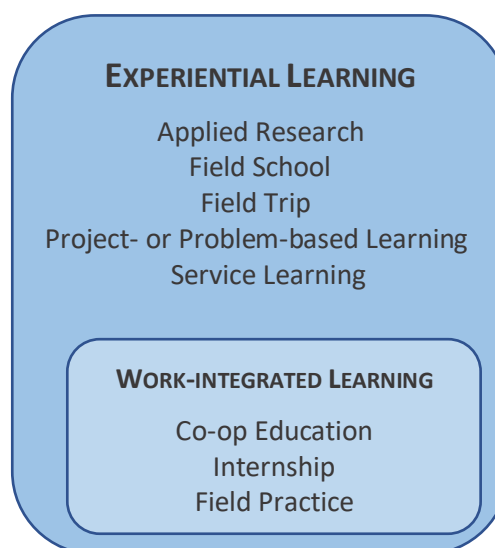
[VPA Experiential Learning Framework](#)

[CEWIL-Canada Experiential Learning Framework](#)

[RRU Safety Policy](#)

[RRU Sexual Violence & Misconduct Policy](#)

[RRU Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)



1.0 RRU Student Risk Assurance

RRU embeds robust off campus experiential and study abroad learning (EL) into many programs: undergraduate and graduate, blended, online, and on-campus. Insurance policies do not cover all students or all forms of off campus EL. For insurance purposes, "students must conduct or attend all off campus EL course hours within the parameters of the academic course start and end date". Students who participate in activities outside of the academic course are not considered RRU students. In these situations, students will not be covered under any RRU risk policies, or safety insurances.

Students who report an off campus EL incident will be referred to communicate with the following:

1. If you are part of a group, contact your group leaders who will follow RRU risk response and communication protocols.
2. If you are separated from the group or on your own and experiencing an emergency within Canada (not necessitating a 911 response),
 - a. The CARE Team for RRU integrated support and service: [Contact Care Team](#)
3. If you are separated from the group or on your own and experiencing an emergency within Canada (necessitating a 911 response),
 - a. please contact 911 and if able RRU Care Team: (1) 250-391-2525.
4. If you are separated from the group or on your own and experiencing an emergency outside of Canada (not necessitating a 911 or country specified emergency number response),
 - a. Please contact ISOS through contact card for assistance such as translation, or location of medical facility with English personal. (Students will receive ISOS information and registration directions prior to travel)
 - b. Please contact RRU Care Team (1) 250-391-2525
5. If you are separated from the group or on your own and experiencing an emergency outside of Canada (necessitating a 911 or country specified emergency number response),
 - a. If able contact the appropriate in country emergency number
 - b. Please contact ISOS through contact card for assistance such as funding for medical facility and translation (students will receive ISOS information and registration directions prior to travel)
 - c. If able contact RRU Care Team (1) 250-391-2525

Please note: All students embarking on an off campus EL opportunity will receive orientation to appropriate risk mitigation and response protocols prior to travel.

1.1 Private Insurance

- . RRU's private group insurance covers students in specific blended or online programs that offer off campus EL opportunities. It is the student and staff responsibility to obtain appropriate personal insurance for travel and health for EL opportunities outside of Canada.

Resources:

- o [Off-campus Risk Management for Activities and Experiential Learning](#)

1.3 Non-insured Experiential Learning

Specific forms of off campus EL are not covered by RRU's group insurance policy. Examples of common EL opportunities that are not covered by insurance include:

- Extra-curricular activities
- Co-curricular activities not detailed in the program, course or itinerary description and have no evaluation criteria.
- Students participating in field trips or site visits for the purposes of learning enrichment.
- Students collecting data for research (ex. all applied research activities) 1.3.b. Applied or Industry Research:
- International students who elect to return to their home country for any form of EL
- Students who elect to travel abroad for academic EL purposes. These students automatically qualify for travel support through [International SOS](#) but are required to purchase their own travel and travel health insurance.

Students who conduct a form of off campus EL not covered by RRU or provincial insurance must provide proof of individual insurance, travel insurance or travel health insurance as part of their EL orientation to the activity. This will also include signing of appropriate informed consent or release of liability waivers. *As noted, all students doing an EL experience outside of Canada will qualify for emergency travel support through International SOS (ISOS). This is not an insurance company but an emergency liaison network who will facilitate emergency care, translation services and liaison with the host institution.

1.3.a. Field Trips and Field Study Opportunities:

RRU's [Off-Campus Risk Management for Activities and Experiential Learning](#) Moodle resource helps staff and faculty plan, organize and execute safe and successful off-campus local, domestic and international student events. The resource provides risk management guidelines and documents.

1.3.b. Schools, Study Abroad and Research:

P EL opportunities through schools, study abroad or research courses, where students are engaged in a learning environment outside of the RRU campus will be guided appropriately by their program office and the ethical review unit.

Please also reference 1.3 Non-insured Experiential Learning.

2.0 EL Site Safety

2.1 Bullying and Harassment Regulation

Student safety during an EL opportunity is a mutual responsibility between hosts, the student and the course instructor and/or Program Office.

A student who reports activities of bullying or harassment during their off campus EL opportunity will be taken seriously and investigated by the University. Please encourage students to connect to their

Program Office or [CARE Team](#). Students on their own in an international environment may also contact ISOS for counselling available in multiple languages.

Resources

- [RRU Counselling, Accessibility and Wellness](#)
- [RRU Sexual Violence Prevention Response](#)
- [RRU Commitment to Accessibility](#)
- [RRU Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Freedom of Expression at RRU](#)
- [RRU Anti-racism Statement](#)

2.2 Alone and Remote EL Experiences

2.2.a. Individual EL experience

Off campus EL students who are alone or in a remote area, are at an increased risk of delayed first-aid response and confrontations or violence. A risk assessment must be conducted by the PO and ethics unit prior to approval of the EL experience to ensure:

- risk factors are identified,
- risk factors are mitigated,
- and emergency response mechanisms are clearly outlined.

Resources:

[Research ethics | Royal Roads University](#)

2.2.b. Remote Work

Students engaging in remote off campus EL are equally responsible for ensuring adequate insurance, identifying, and communicating unsafe conditions and activities, and for reporting incidents of safety concern.

Students should also understand the potential IT risks when working remotely or in unfamiliar contexts, including risks such as unsecured networks, particularly when using personal or mobile devices; video conference security; and malware, ransomware and phishing attacks. To reduce IT risks, students should ensure work devices have appropriate antivirus and firewall software.

Resources:

- [RRU IT Services Knowledge Base](#)

Related Section

- Insurance

3.0 Accommodations for Students

Students who require accommodations to reduce temporary or permanent barriers to accessing off campus EL opportunities can contact their Program Office, or [Accessibility Services](#) on [LibCal](#).

At Royal Roads, we work together for an equitable, diverse and inclusive community.

Accommodations that may be explored include:

- Accessible parking, building access and transport.
- Co-created itinerary
- Established communication channels for feedback opportunities (verbal or written)
- Extended due dates for assignments
- Accessible equipment access

4.0 Criminal Record Check

As a public BC institution, RRU is required to follow the Criminal Records Review Act (CRRA). The CRRA helps to protect members of vulnerable populations from physical, sexual or financial abuse. A vulnerable person, as defined by the Government of Canada in section 6.3 of the *Criminal Records Act*, is a person who, because of age, a disability, or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent are (a) in a position of dependence on others or (b) are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed by a person in a position or authority or trust relative to them.

Off campus EL opportunities in other countries may be required to connect with the nearest consulate of that country for guidance of protocols.

The Program Office, Ethics Unit and students will accept equal responsibility for reviewing the responsibilities of the off campus EL opportunity to assess the chance of connections with vulnerable populations. Students who elect to self-develop an EL opportunity in an environment that includes vulnerable peoples are required to adhere to ethical considerations and potentially criminal record checks as required by RRU through your program office.

*Please do not contact the ethics unit without a prior discussion with your faculty or supervisor.

5.0 Crisis Response

5.1 Emergency and Natural Disaster

Students in an off campus EL experience are at higher risk in an emergency or disaster situation. These situations range from natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods and wildfires, to physical harm, such as assault or armed robbery, to localized emergencies, such as gas leaks, chemical spills and transit accidents.

During any emergency or disaster response, students and any accompanying RRU staff and faculty are required to follow instructions provided by police and local emergency response authorities.

Students who are proposing an international EL opportunity will be guided by the Program Office and International Unit through the international process, including registering their trip with [International SOS](#). International SOS is RRU's emergency, medical and disaster response service for students and employees.

Students in an **international EL opportunity** experiencing:

- an emergency will contact the country's equivalent to 911 emergency number, then notify International SOS and CARE if able, in tandem with accompanying RRU staff if present.
- a disaster situation will follow local emergency responder instructions and call International SOS (as detailed in 1.3) and CARE if able, at the soonest possibility in tandem with accompanying RRU staff if present. Students will be knowledgeable of this process through Program and International Office communication.

Students in a **domestic off campus EL opportunity** experiencing:

- an emergency or feel in imminent danger will call 911, followed by CARE if able.
- a disaster situation will follow the instructions of local police and emergency response authorities, followed by CARE if able.

Resources:

- [Off-campus Risk Management for Activities and Experiential Learning](#)
- RRU Risk Management for Activities and Experiential Learning: [Contact Us](#)
- [International SOS](#)
- [RRU CARE](#)

5.2 Individual Distress or Crisis

RRU employees who hears from a student stating personal distress or emotional unwellness will encourage the:

- Refer the student to ISOS for emergency counselling if the student is in an off campus EL opportunity internationally, AND call Campus Security (250-391-2600) to connect with the CARE Team member on call.
- Refer the student to contact the CARE team if the EL opportunity is domestic.

The RRU employee may also follow-up with RRU CARE for confidential support for the student.

Resources:

- [RRU: Campus Security](#) for first response and refer to the on-call CARE team member
- [RRU: CARE Team Support and Services](#)
- [RRU: Counselling, accessibility and wellness resources](#)
- [BC Government: Here2Talk](#) mental-health counselling and referral services