



# Procedure

## Managing risks in school curriculum activities

### Audience

All state schools

Implementation Date: 24/10/2017

Version: 5.7

### Purpose

The department is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others involved in all curriculum activities at schools or other locations. This procedure outlines the responsibilities of regional directors, principals, teachers and others to manage health and safety as well as student protection hazards and risks associated with the planning and delivery of school curriculum activities.

### Overview

This procedure:

- establishes the context for effective curriculum activity risk management
- outlines the responsibilities of school staff and others for the safe delivery of curriculum activities
- establishes a minimum process for approval and implementation of risk management for curriculum activities undertaken in schools and other locations
- applies to all curriculum activities organised and/or conducted by school staff.

Those responsible for any school curriculum activity have legal obligations and a common law duty of care to ensure the safety of all those involved in the activity through risk management. This requires that reasonably foreseeable risks are identified, assessed and effectively controlled.

When effectively implemented, risk management processes enable staff to demonstrate a systematic approach to safely managing curriculum delivery thereby fulfilling their legal obligations.

Curriculum activity risk management forms part of a school's overall [risk management](#) framework.

The risk management of curriculum activities involves the identification of hazards, assessment of risks, control of these risks, and review of control measures.

All curriculum activities, especially new or unusual ones, must be considered in terms of their *inherent level of risk*.



This procedure, the [Curriculum activity risk planner](#) and [Curriculum activity risk assessment \(CARA\) activity guidelines](#) are to be used to determine the inherent risk level of an activity and, where necessary, plan *control measures* according to the '*hierarchy of control*' so the activity can be conducted with an acceptable level of residual risk.

[CARA activity guidelines](#) have been developed for many curriculum activities to assist schools to identify and manage risks.

The majority of routine classroom curriculum activities involve minimal risk to safety, and can therefore be considered *low risk*. As these activities have little inherent risk, a formal written risk assessment is not required. Schools can manage this risk through regular class planning.

For *medium risk* activities, schools can document risks and controls, and manage risk, through regular curriculum planning processes.

For *high and extreme risk* activities, a CARA must be prepared and approved, and recorded in the [School curriculum activity register](#) if not recorded in OneSchool.

Parent/carer consent is recommended for high risk activities, and must be obtained for all extreme risk activities and any activities that are conducted off school premises (i.e. covered by the [School excursions and international school study tours](#) procedure).

## Responsibilities

### Regional Directors:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that curriculum activity risk management strategies are implemented in schools in accordance with this procedure.

### Principals:

- promote a safe, supportive and productive learning environment and ensure the safety of all those at the workplace under the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#), [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) and [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- establish curriculum activity risk management processes at the school that meet the requirements of this procedure.

### Deputy Principals, Heads of Programs (i.e. Head of Department, Special Education, Curriculum):

- provide support to teachers and others in preparing CARAs and managing risk.

### Teachers:

- identify hazards and risks associated with planned curriculum activities
- undertake assessments of identified risks
- ensure that risks and identified controls associated with the activity are documented

- seek required approval and document this where required
- plan, implement, manage, monitor and review risk management practices for curriculum activities to ensure the safety of students and others.

**Others supporting the delivery of curriculum activities (e.g. sporting club coaches, qualified instructors, parents/carers, volunteers):**

- implement effective risk management strategies to ensure the safety of students and others.

## Process

### Regional Directors:

- provide training for principals to ensure their competence in risk management of curriculum activities.

### Principals:

- ensure all staff are aware of, and understand the need for compliance with this procedure
- establish a process for [Curriculum activity risk management](#) which facilitates:
  - identification of potential hazards
  - assessment of risk level of proposed activity
  - determination of control measures to mitigate risk
  - implementation of control measures
  - consideration and approval of CARAs for high and extreme risk curriculum activities, noting that only the principal can approve CARAs for extreme risk activities
- record whether the approval of CARAs for high risk activities has been delegated to any relevant deputy principal or head of program (such as head of department, special education, curriculum)
- use OneSchool or establish a process to maintain a [School curriculum activity register](#) of high and extreme risk curriculum activities, including the following activity details as a minimum:
  - date/s of the activity
  - staff responsible for the activity
  - student groups undertaking the activity
  - activity description including the inherent risk level
  - date of approval to undertake the activity
- ensure staff responsible for the planning and/or delivery of curriculum activities are provided with induction and annual refresher training, to ensure competence in risk management of relevant activities
- include a curriculum activity risk management component in staff induction programs, conducted as soon as practicable after appointment, to ensure all new and returning staff:
  - are competent in risk management for relevant activities
  - understand processes for the documentation and approval of CARAs (and recording on register if not using OneSchool)

- be satisfied the competence of the nominated leader is appropriate for the activity
- ensure a registered teacher takes overall responsibility for a curriculum activity (even when another adult is engaged for instruction in an activity)
- ensure any incident or injury that occurs in association with a curriculum activity is reported, recorded, investigated and notified in accordance with [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management](#).

### **Deputy Principals, Heads of Programs (i.e. Head of Department, Special Education, Curriculum):**

- consider and approve CARAs for high risk activities as delegated by the principal
- ensure details of the approved high risk activities are recorded in the [School curriculum activity register](#), if not prepared in OneSchool
- monitor curriculum activities to determine whether an appropriate level of risk management is being undertaken.

### **Teachers:**

#### **Activity planning and risk assessment**

- Refer to the [Curriculum activity risk planner](#) to guide the risk assessment process when planning curriculum activities (i.e. when teachers are planning units of work or when a school is developing its curriculum) and identify the level of risk of the planned activities.
- Adhere to the minimum requirements in the [CARA activity guidelines](#) for the curriculum activity (if one exists) and consider any other risks relevant to the activity. If a minimum requirement in the CARA activity guideline cannot be met, the following are to occur:
  - modify the activity, or elements of it, to ensure that available controls will be effective; and/or
  - identify and implement alternative controls that mitigate the identified risk to a level equivalent to the 'minimum requirements'.
- If a mandatory requirement cannot be met, the activity is not to occur.
- Review available information about any condition (e.g. physical or medical) that may impair a student's capacity to safely engage in an activity; implement precautions as required.
- Comply with the following requirements for the risk management of curriculum activities, as a minimum:
  - for low risk activities:
    - manage through regular curriculum planning processes
  - for medium risk activities:
    - document risks and control measures and manage through:
      - regular planning, or
      - completing a CARA in OneSchool, or
      - using the CARA generic template.
  - for high risk activities:
    - discuss the intention to undertake the activity with your supervisor

- complete a CARA (in OneSchool or use the [generic template](#)) – considering and documenting any other supervision and/or equipment/facility requirements and relevant hazards/control measures
  - when a specific activity guideline does not exist, document the risk management strategies in the ‘Other’ category in OneSchool or use the [CARA generic template](#)
  - obtain documented approval to undertake the activity from the principal, or a delegated deputy principal or head of program, prior to the activity being undertaken
  - if not using OneSchool, record the activity in the [School curriculum activity register](#)
  - consider obtaining written consent from parents/carers for students to be involved in the activity.
- for extreme risk activities:
    - consider whether the activity should be done as part of the curriculum – do the potential benefits of the activity warrant the inherent extreme level of risk? Consider alternatives or modifications to the activity
    - discuss the intention to undertake the activity with your supervisor
    - complete a CARA (in OneSchool or use the [CARA generic template](#)) – considering and documenting any other supervision and/or equipment/facility requirements and relevant hazards/control measures
    - when a specific activity guideline does not exist, document the risk management strategies in the ‘Other’ category in OneSchool or use the [CARA generic template](#)
    - obtain documented approval of the principal to undertake the activity in accordance with the CARA prior to the activity being undertaken
    - if not using OneSchool, record the activity in the [School curriculum activity register](#)
    - obtain written consent from parents/carers for students to be involved in the activity.
- **Note:** Schools may choose to take a more detailed approach than using OneSchool or the generic template. At a minimum, any alternative risk assessment pro forma must include the following essential information:
    - activity details (date, locations, etc.)
    - identification of the hazards and risks
    - inherent risk level of the activity
    - students participating in the activity
    - level of supervision and competence of leaders
    - explanation of the planned control measures
    - date of submission for approval
    - approval details (who approved, approval date)
    - activity review notes.
  - The [Curriculum activity risk management flowchart](#) summarises the minimum processes required for activities at each risk level.

- Whenever there is a change of circumstance or environment for an activity (e.g. venue, student cohort, time of year, weather, number of participants etc), any existing risk assessment is to be reviewed – to ensure that identified controls will continue to be effective – and updated as necessary.

### Managing the activity

- Manage the hazards and risks associated with all curriculum activities
- Continue to assess the effectiveness of control measures during the activity, and adjust and/or supplement as necessary
- Respond to any risk that emerges to ensure the safety of all involved in the activity
- Conduct any curriculum activity in accordance with the approved and documented risk management strategies
- Provide comprehensive safety instruction in the processes and techniques associated with the activity to all involved
- Ensure others supporting the delivery of curriculum activities are aware of all relevant responsibilities and risk management strategies e.g. provide a copy of the CARA or instruction information
- Emphasise students' personal responsibility for:
  - their own safety and the safety of others
  - following safety procedures and instructions
  - safely managing and reporting additional hazards identified
- Reinforce safety considerations throughout the activity
- Maintain adequate supervision of students at all times
- Ensure students adhere to all safety instructions and directions in relation to the activity and the use of equipment, materials and personal protective equipment
- Ensure Blue Card requirements are met in accordance with the [Working with children check - blue cards](#) procedure.

### Monitoring, reviewing and responding to events

- Maintain an ongoing review of control measures to ensure adequate reduction of risks associated with hazards
- Modify or add control measures as necessary to ensure safety, and document these amendments so they can be used the next time the activity is undertaken
- Report all injuries, illnesses and dangerous incidents that occur as a result of the activity in accordance with the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management](#) procedure.

### Others supporting the delivery of curriculum activities (e.g. sporting club coaches, qualified instructors, parents/carers, volunteers):

- Implement risk management processes as provided by the supervising teacher
- Follow instructions and/or CARA
- Raise any concerns with responsible staff immediately

- Report any incidents to the supervising teacher immediately
- Comply with Blue Card requirements in accordance with the [Working with children check - blue cards](#) procedure.

## Definitions

<b>Acceptable level of residual risk</b>	An acceptable level of risk exists when the educational outcomes expected to be achieved in undertaking an activity justify doing the activity, given the level of risk. Residual risk is the level of risk remaining after the controls have been put in place.
<b>Controls/control measures</b>	Actions implemented to eliminate or minimise a risk as far as is reasonably practicable. Control measures should be regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.
<b>Curriculum activity risk assessment (CARA)</b>	A document that records the risk management process that a school has undertaken prior to the curriculum activity occurring.
<b>Curriculum activity risk assessment (CARA) activity guideline</b>	Information that has been collated about an activity to assist staff to assess and minimise risks and conduct the activity as safely as possible.
<b>Curriculum activity risk management</b>	<p>The process of managing the risks of curriculum activities, involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identification of potential hazards</li> <li>• assessment of the inherent risk level</li> <li>• identification and implementation of controls to mitigate risk</li> <li>• monitoring and review of controls to ensure ongoing effectiveness.</li> </ul> <p>For high and extreme risk activities, a CARA (and approval) is also required prior to the activity being undertaken.</p>
<b>Duty of care</b>	<p>Under common law, those responsible for curriculum activities must take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable risks of injury, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• making sure that activities are safe and appropriate for students' ages and abilities</li> <li>• ensuring students are properly instructed and prepared for the activities</li> <li>• ensuring all equipment is in a safe condition</li> <li>• providing adequate supervision.</li> </ul>
<b>Extreme risk activity</b>	An activity that is inherently dangerous. There is a high chance of a serious incident occurring that would result in a highly debilitating injury.
<b>Hazard</b>	Anything that has the potential to cause harm to a person (e.g. electricity, chemicals). Hazards generally arise from the physical environment, equipment or materials used, and how the activity is designed, performed and managed.

<b>Hierarchy of control</b>	Control measures should be considered and used in this order: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Elimination:</b> remove the hazard completely from the workplace or activity</li> <li>2. <b>Substitution:</b> replace a hazard with a less dangerous one (e.g. using a softer ball, different location)</li> <li>3. <b>Isolation:</b> separate people from the hazard (e.g. safety barrier)</li> <li>4. <b>Redesign:</b> changing a work process or layout of a work area</li> <li>5. <b>Administration:</b> putting rules or training in place to make a workplace safer</li> <li>6. <b>Personal Protective Equipment:</b> protective clothing and equipment (e.g. helmet, gloves, shin-pads).</li> </ol>
<b>High risk activity</b>	An activity where there is a likely chance of a significant incident resulting in injury or illness requiring medical treatment.
<b>Inherent level of risk</b>	The level of risk existing before any controls are put in place, relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the nature of the activity</li> <li>• those involved, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• age and ability of students</li> <li>• competence of leaders</li> <li>• equipment used</li> <li>• environment in which the activity is undertaken.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Legal obligation</b>	A responsibility under relevant law. For example, the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (Qld) places specific duties on persons.
<b>Low risk activity</b>	An activity that has little chance of an incident occurring which would result in an injury.
<b>Medium risk activity</b>	An activity that has some chance of an incident occurring which would result in an injury requiring first aid.
<b>Others</b>	Parents/carers, volunteers, external coaches and leaders involved in planning, delivering or supervising any curriculum activity.

## Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) Parts 3 and 4
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) Part 2
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(Qld\)](#)

## Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

## Related policies

- Nil

## Related procedures

- [Enterprise risk management](#)
- [Managing first aid in the workplace](#)
- [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management](#)
- [Working with children check - blue cards](#)
- [School excursions and international school study tours](#)

## Guidelines

- [Curriculum activity risk management guidelines](#)
- [Curriculum activity guidelines](#)

## Supporting information/websites

- [Curriculum activity risk assessment induction training](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Curriculum activity risk planner](#)
- [Curriculum activity risk assessment generic template](#)
- [School curriculum activity register](#)
- [Consent template](#)
- [Curriculum activity risk management flowchart](#)

## Contact

For further information, please contact:

- Email: [CARA@qed.qld.gov.au](mailto:CARA@qed.qld.gov.au)

## Review date

31/05/2017

## Superseded versions

*Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.*

- 2.0 HLS-PR-012: Curriculum Activity Risk Management
- 3.0 HLS-PR-012: Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities
- 4.0 HLS-PR-012: Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities

5.0 Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities

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