# Protocol International field work and excursions

Date: 3 July 2020
Status: To be adjusted based on the experiences of period 1

## Introduction

This protocol serves as a guideline on how to organise international field practicals (teaching method F) and excursions (teaching method EM) while Corona measures are in effect. Due to the variety of excursions and fieldwork and the constantly changing situation with respect to Corona (measures) this protocol will not be comprehensive. It is therefore important to check shortly before the start of the fieldwork/excursion if the plan is still in line with the Corona measures.

Most of the content of this protocol is written for the organisation of international excursions which due to their complexity and ‘risk’ need extra attention. However, this does not mean that the protocol cannot be used for multi/single day excursions in the Netherlands. The only substantial difference is that multi/single day excursions in the Netherlands are not subject to approval by the Dean of education and the Director Operations of the Science Group.

If the course coordinator is of the opinion that the risks are acceptable, ESA and the Science group will take the final decision. This makes it clear that WUR is responsible for the activity.

## General safety measures

It is important that educational activities take place in a safe manner. Obviously, the usual safety measures apply (e.g. ZSS-06200 Fieldwork Safety). Due to Corona, several additional measures apply:

* The guidelines of RIVM (<https://www.rivm.nl/coronavirus-covid-19>) and the Dutch government (<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/coronavirus-covid-19>) are always leading. In addition, the rules of WUR (<https://www.wur.nl/en/article/Corona-guidelines-and-updates.htm>), the locations to be visited and (if applicable) the transport company must be followed. The strictest rules apply.
* Students and teachers keep a distance of 1.5 meters;
* Students and teachers with Corona related health symptoms stay at home;
* Additional hygiene measures are taken:
	+ Disinfectants will be used if no running water and soap are present;
	+ Materials such as field equipment will be disinfected after use.

## Approval procedure for international excursions

* Make sure you fill in the Risk Assessment and Travel Plan as detailed as possible and send it for approval to arnold.bregt@wur.nl and the Director Operations of your Science Group.

## Points of attention

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| **1** | **Destination*** Check [www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl](http://www.nederlandwereldwijd.nlW) and WUR travel policy.
* Check whether the situation seems to be under control: the spread of COVID-19 has significantly decreased and stabilised for a sustained period of time.
* Keep a close eye on the travel advice during the trip.
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| **2** | **Transport** * Check the latest rules for (public) transport in the Netherlands and abroad.
* Check the maximum capacity and arrange more buses/cars if necessary.
* Check the cancellation conditions and book more expensive tickets with better conditions if necessary.
* Choose an off-campus gathering point in order to avoid extra crowds on campus (e.g. Unifarm).
* In case students travel by themselves: make sure you inform them how to use the transportation of their choice safely.
* Develop a plan on how to act (including isolation) if a student/staff member shows Corona symptoms or is tested positive during travel or on location.
* Develop a ‘transport plan B’ in case the group must return to the Netherlands unexpectedly.
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| **3** | **Accommodation and activities*** Check whether the accommodation can be visited with a group.
* Check whether the trip will have limited / negligible effect on the local community.
* Check whether the general safety measures can be applied.
* Check the latest rules in the countries to be visited and book overnight-stay where the rules can be complied with. Book a more expensive accommodation (e.g. a hotel instead of a dormitory) if necessary.
* Provide extra space during your stay where someone can stay in isolation in case of illness.
* Avoid large crowds, popular areas and activities making it hard to socially distance.
* For each location a leisure plan is formulated and clearly communicated to students. It is strongly advised to limit leisure activities to the boundaries of the accommodation site and to only allow bar visits if it is in a closed/private setting.
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| **4** | **Health care*** Check whether the health care system in the area handled the Corona outbreak appropriately and has not been overwhelmed. Remote touristic areas may have limited health care services.
* Check the applicable rules if someone shows Corona-related symptoms. Determine what the implications for the rest of the group will be.
* Check the possibilities to test for Corona in the area.
* Organise that teachers and students who get sick during the activity can be provided with the necessary help and can comply with the required measures (e.g. quarantine).
* Arrange sufficient staff to be able to help a sick student or replace a sick teacher.
* Conduct a health check before and after the excursion.
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| **5** | **Staff and students*** Staff is not obliged to supervise an activity abroad. Find a replacement if a teacher does not want / is not able to go.
* Students are not obliged to participate in an activity abroad. Check whether students want to participate (e.g. with a poll) and cancel the trip / change it into a domestic trip if many students do not want to go.
* Demand staff and students to stay at home in case of Corona related health symptoms or a housemate with a fever.
* Convince staff and students who are in the high risk or vulnerable category to stay at home.
* Make staff and students aware of the risks of the activity, such as a longer stay than planned due to an unexpected lockdown, quarantine, hospitalisation abroad.
* Regularly consult students (e.g. with a sounding board group) during the preparation, so that their concerns and comments can be considered.
* Communicate the safety measures clearly to staff and students and emphasize that they must always be complied with, also before and after study-related activities.
* Find an alternative for students who cannot or don’t want to participate in the activity, for instance:
	+ Using GoPro to enable students to participate online;
	+ Taking pictures or making movies so students can do their assignments from home.
	+ An alternative assignment with Peek app;
	+ Participate in a subsequent excursion;
	+ An (individual) excursion in The Netherlands.
* Make sure you have an ICE list available for all students and staff
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| **6** | **Equipment*** Contact Practical Support for the reservation of headsets for students and lectures to enable good communication while keeping a distance of 1.5 meters.
* Contact Practical Support for disinfectants\*.
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\* Practical Support is currently facing delivery issues for disinfectants, so if possible buy it yourself and include costs to the excursion expenses.