

# Activity Risk Management Policy

**Category:** Operations

**Approval:** PVP

**Responsibility:** Director, Risk Management

**Date:** May 26, 2009; Revised February 21, 2018

## Definitions:

**Activity Supervisor:** the individual who is supervising the activity at the site. In some cases, the Activity Supervisor could also be the Activity Coordinator. An Activity Supervisor is considered a supervisor under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Trent Health and Safety Policy.

**Activity Coordinator:** the individual with direct responsibility for an activity. Examples include course instructors, principal investigators, directors of year abroad programs, managers, supervisors, team coaches and student leaders. An Activity Coordinator is considered a supervisor under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Trent Health and Safety Policy.

**Person in Authority:** the person who has the operational and budget authority to approve the activity and includes Department Chairs, Directors, AVPs, Deans, Registrar and the University Librarian. A Person in Authority is considered a supervisor under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Trent Health and Safety Policy.

**Senior Administrator:** The President's and Vice-Presidents Executive Group (PVP) member to whom the Person in Authority reports. Senior Administrators are considered the employer under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Trent Health and Safety Policy.

**Authorized Volunteer:** an individual who voluntarily assists in conducting an activity without monetary compensation or academic credit with the approval of the Activity Coordinator and the Person in Authority.

**Critical Incident:** an incident that causes a serious loss, including but not limited to serious illness, a critical injury as defined under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), sudden deaths, hate crimes, assaults (including sexual assault) or other violent occurrences, political or civil unrest, natural or environmental disasters, significant property damage or loss, acts by participants that result in legal action or damage to Trent's reputation and loss or theft of sensitive or personal information.

**Hazard:** a situation or a circumstance that could result in personal injury or death, property damage, financial loss, legal action or reputational damage.

**Risk:** uncertainty about the outcome of an activity or issue that can impact, either negatively or positively, Trent's ability to meet its objectives.

**Unmanageable Risk:** activity for which planning, preparation and training, taking into account the experience of the participants, the circumstances and the resources available, cannot reduce the

likelihood and/or severity of a loss to a level that the Person of Authority is willing to accept on behalf of the University.

**Higher-Risk Activity:** any activity that entails risks greater or substantially different than those encountered by participants in their regular day-to-day, working, and studying environment.

**Sanctioned Activity:** all activities undertaken in the legitimate course of academic or employment related endeavours. Higher-risk activities must receive approval from a Person in Authority or other university employee that the Activity Coordinator believes in good faith to be a Person in Authority to become a university sanctioned activity.

**Risk Management Plan:** a planning tool, attached as Appendix A to the Activity Risk Management Procedure, to assist Activity Coordinators in conducting a risk assessment and selecting appropriate risk controls.

**Risk Controls:** techniques used and measures put into place to eliminate or reduce the frequency and severity of losses.

**Student Event Risk Management Procedure:** Procedure to be used to manage risk in student-run events.

Link to “event planning risk assessment”: <https://www.trentu.ca/currentstudents/work-lead/event-planning-risk-assessment>

Where a student-organized activity receives University sanction or funding, the University official who provides the sanction or funding assumes the responsibilities of Person in Authority for that activity.

#### Purpose/Reason for Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that, from the initial stages of planning,

- all sanctioned activities are evaluated for risk and that appropriate risk controls are put in place to ensure that the activity can achieve its intended outcome without undue risk to the health and safety of participants,
- protects the University, and its employees, students and volunteers from legal liability and reputational damage,
- minimizes the risk of financial losses to the University, and
- is consistent with and supportive of the strategic and operational objectives of the University.

This Policy and its associated procedures establish a framework and provide guidance to assist persons responsible for activities to exercise due diligence and effectively manage the risks associated with each sanctioned activity.

#### Scope of this Policy:

This Policy covers all Trent higher-risk activities, both on and off campus and applies to all employees, students and authorized volunteers involved in the activity.

If a particular activity is not sanctioned in accordance with this policy, the University exercises no control and will therefore assume no responsibility. Individuals undertaking non-sanctioned activities do so at their own risk and will not be covered by the University’s liability insurance program.

This Policy does not cover sanctioned student run events. Student run events shall be managed under the Student Event Risk Management Process.

### **Policy Statement:**

It is the policy of Trent University to assess the risks presented by all higher-risk activities and to take reasonable measures to eliminate, prevent, reduce or transfer risk to a level that is acceptable to the University, as determined by the Person in Authority and/or Senior Administrator for each activity

Once sanctioned, university activities will comply with applicable legislation and approved Trent policies, procedures and guidelines. If this cannot be done, the activity will not be sanctioned by the University.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in cancellation of the activity and/or disciplinary action. Members of the University community are reminded that activities resulting in death, injury, or other loss may result in criminal prosecution and/or civil liability for individuals deemed responsible for those activities. Non-compliance with this policy may expose individuals to greater risk of being found negligent in any legal actions taken against them and could void coverage under the University's liability insurance program.

### **Responsibilities**

The University and its members have a shared responsibility to manage the risks inherent in all Trent activities. This responsibility includes understanding and acknowledging that:

- activities undertaken are to be consistent with and supportive of the strategic and operational goals of Trent University;
- before the higher-risk activity is sanctioned, a risk management plan is to be developed as part of the activity planning and preparation process; and
- all participants are required to prepare themselves as required by the risk management plan in advance of activities and to conduct themselves in a safe manner while engaging in activities.

The following sections define the responsibilities of key members of the University with respect to implementation of this Policy.

**The Department of Risk Management** is responsible for:

- Risk management training for members of the University community concerning risk management and the implementation of this Policy;
- providing advice to Activity Coordinators and Persons in Authority, including quantification and analysis of risk;
- receiving, archiving and making available all related forms and reports;
- investigating health and safety incidents and fulfilling external reporting requirements; and
- coordinating all insurance claims.

**Senior Administrators** are responsible for:

- ensuring that all persons in their area of responsibility are aware of and comply with the provisions of this policy and procedure;
- considering cases of unmanageable risk within their portfolio to determine whether the activity should be cancelled, the safety plan should be revised to reduce the risk to

manageable levels, or the activity should be referred to PVP in accordance with the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Program.

**Persons in Authority** have primary accountability for determining whether a higher-risk activity will be approved and therefore sanctioned by the university. Once approved, the **Person in Authority** is responsible to ensure that the risks are appropriately managed, as they best understand the risks associated with their operations. The **Person in Authority** is specifically responsible for:

- ensuring that all persons in their area of responsibility are aware of and comply with the provisions of this policy and procedure;
- ensuring that all higher-risk activities within their area of responsibility have been assessed by the activity coordinator and the level of risk determined. For many routine activities, this can be an informal process that ensures existing policies, procedures and guidelines are followed;
- using good judgement and exercising reasonable due diligence to adapt the procedures of this Policy to the specific operational challenges of each activity;
- ensuring personal versus academic or work time is clearly defined, especially if the activity involves over-night accommodation;
- seeking the expertise of others to address risks associated with the activity that fall outside their own areas of understanding;
- before approving an activity, ensuring that there are sufficient resources available to the Activity Coordinator to implement the risk controls noted in the Risk Management Plan;
- approving the Risk Management Plan or, in the case of activities with unmanageable risk, either cancelling the activity or referring it to their Senior Administrator;
- when advised that a critical incident has occurred, assessing whether continuing the activity entails unmanageable risk and altering or terminating the activity as appropriate;
- ensuring that information about hazards that are encountered and critical incidents that occur during an activity are taken into account in the planning of future activities; and
- Advising their Senior Administrator of risks that may constitute enterprise risks in accordance with the Enterprise Risk Management policy.

**Activity Coordinators** are responsible for organizing activities. If there is no Activity Supervisor they are also responsible for conducting activities and are responsible for the Activity Supervisor duties listed below. The Activity Coordinator is specifically responsible for:

- designing the activity and planning the travel itinerary (if required);
- making a determination of the overall risk level of the activity, in consultation with the Person in Authority, the Risk Management Office or other sources as necessary;
- using good judgement and exercising reasonable due diligence to adapt the procedures of this Policy to the specific operational challenges of each activity, based, where possible, on university sector best practices for that activity;
- ensuring appropriate risk controls are put in place as laid out in the procedures to this policy;
- completing a Risk Management Plan and obtaining approval from the Person in Authority for all higher-risk activities; and
- promptly reporting critical incidents to the Person in Authority.

The **Activity Supervisor** is the person who directly supervises the activity and may also be the Activity Coordinator. The Activity Supervisor is responsible for:

- understanding and complying with all relevant components of the Activity Risk Management Policy and the approved Risk Management Plan (for higher-risk activities);
- ensuring implementation of the risk-management procedures established by the Activity Coordinator;
- ensuring that the participants use the appropriate safety equipment, follow appropriate safety procedures, and take medical precautions as necessary;
- conducting ongoing risk assessment during the activity and reporting any new hazards or critical incidents to the Activity Coordinator or Person in Authority; and
- dealing with and resolving any safety concerns which arise during the activity, including concerns about unsafe practices raised by participants, through the exercise of good judgment.

**Participants** are all individuals approved to take part in an activity. Regardless of the overall assessed risk level of the activity, participants have a responsibility to exercise judgment and common sense in respect to their own safety, taking into account their own capabilities and the circumstances at the time. Specifically, each participant is responsible for:

- understanding and complying with all relevant components of this Policy and any other legislation or Trent University policies and procedures pertaining to the activity;
- familiarizing themselves with, and acknowledging the risks of, the activity;
- in the case of a person with a disability or medical need, bringing to the attention of the Activity Coordinator any special needs requiring accommodation;
- attending preparatory briefings and completing all designated training sessions;
- reading and signing the Informed Consent Record;
- in the case of international activities, completing the TIP Pre-departure Orientation Program and registering in both the Trent Emergency Contact Program and the Global Affairs Canada travel registration program;
- acting safely and in a responsible manner and exercising good judgment at all times to prevent harm to himself/herself and to others;
- bringing to the attention of the Person in Authority any concern that appropriate safety preparations have not been made, or that an activity is not being conducted with due regard to safety, as soon as possible after the concern arises;
- reporting any newly identified hazards to the Activity Supervisor in a timely fashion; and
- immediately reporting all critical incidents to the Activity Supervisor.

Contact Officer:

Director, Risk Management

Date for Next Review:

February 2023

### Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines

- a) Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Program
- b) Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- c) Student Activity Risk Management Program Vehicle Policy
- d) Trent International Program Emergency Contact Policy and Procedures on Risk Management; and Undergraduate Study Abroad
- e) Laboratory Safety Handbook

### Policies Superseded by This Policy:

- a) N/A