

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY

STATEMENT 20/6

OVERSEAS TRAVEL DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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This policy has been developed in consultation with the Health and Safety and Whitley Committees and is approved by Executive Group.

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 During the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, travel overseas may be subject to disruption with national control measures being brought in with little notice.

1.2 This policy statement sets out the SAMS Group (henceforth referred to as SAMS) position on both the expectation for travellers in SAMS and how periods of isolation that may be required for people returning to the UK as a consequence of travel will be managed.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with SHE Policy 19.1 'Overseas Travel'.

SECTION 2. SCOPE

2.1 This policy is applicable to staff and students who are considering travel overseas for a SAMS-related activity. This includes travel to attend meetings, training, conferences and for fieldwork but **excludes** research cruises which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

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2.2 It should also be read by staff and students who are considering travel overseas for personal reasons.

2.3 This policy will be applicable during the current coronavirus pandemic and will be withdrawn when the situation is deemed to not be relevant to SAMS anymore.

SECTION 3. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SAMS-RELATED OVERSEAS TRAVEL

3.1 In line with SHE Policy 19.1 'Overseas Travel', all overseas travel for staff and students for a SAMS-related activity must follow the latest FCO advice. This can be found on the [UK Government's website](#). There is additional advice for people travelling during the coronavirus pandemic [here](#).

3.2 If the FCO advises against travel or all but essential travel and a person still wishes to travel on a SAMS-related activity, the permission of the Director should be sought at an early stage. It is anticipated that in all but very exceptional circumstances, approval will not be given. Guidance from the Compliance Manager should also be sought regarding potential travel insurance implications.

3.3 FCO guidance at the point of travel is critical, not at the time of booking. If the FCO guidance changes to an advisory against travel, a claim against SAMS' insurance policy may be possible. However, this does not include the application of any required quarantine. If the FCO advice changes to indicate that quarantine will be required and a decision is made not to travel because of this, the insurance policy will not cover this. The policy does not cover any additional costs experienced due to quarantine restrictions being added, although if quarantine is added to the country being visited, the traveller will be covered by the policy if the trip is extended to cover this period, as long as the paperwork reflect the full trip periods.

3.4 All insurance administration must be completed before travel takes place. Without this, support may not be available if you display COVID-19 symptoms while overseas. You must also carry the 24 hour insurance support helpline number with you throughout the trip. If medical assistance is needed, you can contact this number regardless of whether a claim against the policy is to be made. Reception colleagues will issue this number when all insurance administration is completed.

3.5 You must not travel if you are experiencing any COVID-19 related symptoms. Travel insurance will be invalid if you do.

3.6 You must at all times leading up to and during your travel keep abreast of local and UK Government guidance. Additional guidance issued by the Scottish Government may also be applicable. General guidance is available on the [Scottish Government's website](#) with specific requirements for health measures at international borders available [here](#).

3.7 If you are required to isolate on returning to the UK, you must contact your line manager/supervisor and HR as soon as possible. You must not come onto the SAMS site for any reason during the period of isolation.

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3.8 If travel has been in accordance with this policy and SHE Policy 19.1, you will be able to complete the isolation period through:

- remote working where your work activities and home facilities are suitable; or
- special leave.

3.9 This must be agreed with your line manager and the Directorate.

SECTION 4. PERSONAL OVERSEAS TRAVEL

4.1 If you are planning overseas travel for personal reasons, you are asked to (i) discuss this with your line manager with as much notice as possible before your travel; and (ii) agree a return to work plan. You are strongly advised to keep up to date with all relevant guidance as described above.

4.2 If you are required to isolate on returning to the UK, you must not come onto the SAMS site for any reason during the period of isolation. You must contact your line manager/supervisor and HR as soon as possible.

4.3 Depending on the circumstances, the period of isolation will be completed through:

- remote working where your work activities and home facilities are suitable;
- sick leave if you are experiencing coronavirus symptoms;
- pre-arranged annual leave; or
- unpaid leave.

4.4 Personal circumstances, particularly relating to changes in local or UK Government advice that may have occurred during the period of travel will be considered by your line manager and Directorate.

SECTION 5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

SHE Policy Statement 19.1 'Overseas Travel'

END

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