**Edinburgh Napier University**

Reference No.

**RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

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| **SCHOOL/SERVICE:** | **LOCATION:** | **DATE:** |

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| **Description of event/activity:** |

| No. | Hazards identified | People at risk from hazards | Existing control | Risk | Further action / recommendations | Action by whom | Action by when | Completed |
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| **H** | **M** | **L** |
| 1 | Risk Physical threat or abuse  | Researcher  |  |  |  |  | Planning research to minimise risks Effective means of communicationIf deemed high risk researcher must not work alone Dress appropriatelyEmergency plan in place Staff training in confrontation etc. |  |  |  |
| **2** | Risk of physiological trauma  | Researcher |  |  |  |  | Planning research to minimise risks Effective means of communicationUniversity support mechanismsUse of consent formsStaff training etc. |  |  |  |
| **3** | **Driving**  | **researcher** |  |  |  |  | Compliance with road traffic legislation Adequate insurance for car business use  |  |  |  |
|  | ***Lone Working-*Miscellaneous Hazards****Difficulties in summoning help when required**; risk of abuse/attack |  |  |  |  |  | * Where possible work, as a minimum, in pairs.
* Where possible carry a mobile phone.
* Leave details of the field site and a work plan (include contact name and address) with colleagues in the department or at home prior to any trip.
* Specify dates and times of departure and return. If your plans change, inform someone as soon as possible.
* Do not carry valuables or large sums of money unless you need to.
* Carry a personal alarm (This advice is directed to males as well as females - all are equally vulnerable when alone!)
* Instigate a "check-in" system with a colleague or supervisor - Phone in at regular intervals. If you do not phone or return at a certain time arrange for suitable action to be taken.
* Trust your intuition - If you feel scared or uneasy, do not ignore it.
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|  | ***Lone Working-*Travelling alone****On foot** - risks of personal attack/abuse |  |  |  |  |  | * Whenever possible avoid walking alone at night.
* Keep to busy, well lit roads.
* Avoid poorly lit or rarely used underpasses.
* Walk facing on-coming traffic to avoid kerb-crawlers.
* Do not use a personal stereo - you will be unable to hear anyone approaching from behind.
* Plan your journey in advance - tell someone which route you mean to take and estimated time of arrival at your destination.
* Walk with confidence and purpose - try not to look as if you are not sure of where you are going.
* Make sure wallets, cameras, jewellery and expensive watches and other valuables are not on display.
* Dress appropriately - try to fit in without attracting attention.
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|  | ***Lone Working-*Travelling alone****By Car** |  |  |  |  |  | * Make sure the vehicle is in good working order before setting off.
* Make sure you have change for a telephone in an emergency.
* Plan your journey in advance - tell someone which route you mean to take and estimated time of arrival at your destination.
* Do not leave valuables visible in the car - even when you are in it. Keep bags etc. out of reach of open windows.
* When parking in daylight, consider what the area will be like after dark.
* When returning to the vehicle, quickly look around it to make sure there is no one waiting for you.
* If you are forced to stop by another car, stay in the car, lock the doors and speak through a slightly open window.
* Make sure you know what to do if the car breaks down. (i.e. who to phone; where to phone from etc.)
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|  | ***Lone Working-*****Staying in Hotels** |  |  |  |  |  | * At reception, try to avoid letting other people overhear your name and room number.
* Do not go into other people's rooms unless you know it is absolutely safe.
* Do not allow people into your room unless you know who they are.
* If you hear a disturbance, stay in your room and phone for help.
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|  | **Other people’s homes Risk of personal attack/abuse** |  |  |  |  |  | * Do not enter the house if the appropriate person is not available.
* Wait to be invited in or at least ask to enter.
* Acknowledge that it is their territory; let them lead the way.
* If the person is drunk or aggressive, do not enter.
* Ensure you can get out quickly if necessary.
* If you feel threatened at any point, make an excuse to leave.
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|  | **Causing offence, leading to abuse/attack** |  |  |  |  |  | * Try not to react to dirty or smelly surroundings.
* Do not spread your belongings around.
* Take care with documents you may not want them to see, but avoid being "secretive".
* Let them know how much of their time you will need.
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|  | **Other People's "Pets**" - risk of injury, allergy, etc. |  |  |  |  |  | * Be aware that not all pets are "friendly"
* If entering a house with a dog or cat, ask that the animal be put in another room if you feel uncomfortable.
* If you are "wary" of a dog, do not enter the house unless the owner is prepared to remove the animal from the room you are going to be in. (Be polite and tactful when asking!)

See also *allergies* |  |  |  |
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|  | **Aggressive Behaviour** |  |  |  |  |  | * Do not underestimate the importance of body language.
* Talk yourself out of problems; placate rather than provoke.
* Do not turn your back on someone who is behaving aggressively.
* Stay Calm, speak gently and slowly.
* Do not be enticed into an argument.
* Avoid an aggressive stance. Crossed arms, hands on hips or raised hands will challenge and confront.
* Keep your distance.
* Never try to touch someone who is angry -this will not calm the situation.
* Keep your eye on potential escape routes
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|  | **Physical attack**  |  |  |  |  |  | * Try to get away as quickly as possible. Move towards a place where you know there will be other people.
* Carry a personal alarm - set it off as close to the aggressor's ear as possible and then throw it out of reach.
* Shout and scream - shout something practical like "call the police!" or "Fire!" - people rarely react to cries of "help!" or "rape!"
* If grabbed and unable to break free - pretend to vomit. This will often have the desired effect!
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|  | **Dealing with people**  |  |  |  |  |  | * Seek training in good interview techniques.
* Where possible "vet" interviewees first over the phone.
* Conduct interviews at neutral locations or public spaces or where neither party could be at risk.
* Where possible conduct any interviews with an observer.
* Seek advice and support from local groups.
* Do not wear clothes that might cause offence.
* Always carry your ID card and be prepared to identify yourself.
* Consider your dress carefully - is it suitable for the location.
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|  | **Environment district**  |  |  |  |  |  | * Avoid areas known to be "unpleasant"
* Seek information on areas before setting out.
* Consult Local Community groups, Local Authorities, Police etc. for information and possible contact names before setting out.
* Do not enter unfamiliar neighbourhoods alone.
* Walk with confidence and purpose - try not to look as if you are not sure of where you are going.
* Do not carry more money than you need to.
* Dress appropriately - try to fit in without attracting attention..
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| **Review Date:**  |  | **Signature:** |  | **Job Title:** |  |