

PROCEDURE FOR POLICY 1.53 – Safety Abroad

1. Authorization for University Activities

It is the responsibility of the Activity Sponsor and/or Unit Head to consult with Western International before approving University Activities requiring international student travel to ensure compliance with DFATD risk ratings and to receive other relevant information regarding student safety.

2. DFATD Ratings

2.1 The table below lists the DFATD Ratings and recommendations of DFATD associated with them as well as the level assigned to them when referred to in these Guidelines. The Risk Rating System is generated and maintained by DFATD and other outside agencies. The University is not responsible for the accuracy and content of the travel information provided.

DFATD Rating	Definitions	University Risk Rating
Exercise Normal Security Precautions (Moderate Risk)	There are no significant security concerns	Level 1
Exercise High Degree of Caution (Moderate Risk)	There are identifiable security concerns and travelers should be alert and vigilant to their surroundings	Level 2
Avoid Non-Essential Travel (High Risk)	There is a specific security concern, and travelers should reconsider their need to travel at this time. An official government travel warning.	Level 3
Avoid All Travel (Extreme Risk)	There is an extreme risk to personal safety, and Canadians should not travel at this time. An official government travel warning.	Level 4

2.2 Travel to Level 1 or Level 2 Destination (Moderate Risk Destinations)

The University will normally authorize student travel for University Activities to locations with a DFATD Travel Advisory of Level 1 or Level 2 provided that they have completed the required pre-departure session, safety away registration and any other requirements as required by the Activity Sponsor and/or Western International. Students who do not fulfil these requirements will not be permitted to participate in the relevant University Activities.

2.3 Travel to Level 3 or Level 4 Destination (High and Extreme Risk Destinations)

Travel to destinations under this category is strongly discouraged, and no student will be penalized academically or in any other way by making a decision NOT to travel to such a destination. The University will not authorize student travel for University Activities to locations with a DFATD Travel Advisory of Level 3 or Level 4 unless exceptional

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circumstances exist. Students may apply for special authorization as outlined in Article 2.4 and 2.5 of this policy.

- 2.4 A student applying for special authorization to travel to a destination with a DFATD Travel Advisory of Level 3 or Level 4 must apply to his/her Unit Head to seek authorization following the process provided by Western International.
- 2.5 The Unit Head will review the special authorization to travel in consultation with Western International and at a minimum be satisfied that:
 - 2.5.1 The travel has the written support of the Activity Sponsor and Western International
 - 2.5.2 For a student under the age of 18, the trip has the written support of the student's parents or legal guardians
 - 2.5.3 The travel is academically necessary for the student and if not carried out at the proposed location and time there will be serious negative consequences for the student's academic program
 - 2.5.4 The Activity Sponsor or student has submitted a risk assessment and emergency planning document which has been developed in consultation with Western International
 - 2.5.5 The Activity Sponsor or student can demonstrate that the student has taken adequate steps to mitigate risks at the location and will have adequate support and guidance while in the region. The student's experience and background in the region, whether a University employee is travelling with the Student and/or whether the Student is travelling with an established local organization with expertise in providing safe travel within the region should be considered during the assessment.
- 2.6 Special authorization of this nature will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Meeting the conditions listed above does not ensure authorization will be granted.
- 2.7 Should the DFATD Travel Advisory Risk Rating for a location be increased prior to or while a student is abroad, reasonable effort should be made to follow the appropriate guidelines for the new risk level. This may include suspending a program, or the possibility of a student opting out. If the activity is in progress, the course of action will be determined by Western International in consultation with the Activity Sponsor and/or the Unit Head.

3. Safety Away Database

Western International maintains a Safety Away Database to record student travel details and emergency contact information. Should Campus Police receive a call of an emergency abroad, the International Crisis Management protocol will go into effect.

In the case of a DFATD Travel Advisory or Risk Rating change, Western International can contact students abroad with updated information and instruction.