

Health & Safety

The University has a responsibility for your health, safety and welfare while you are lawfully on University premises and business (see <https://www.socsci.ox.ac.uk/services/health-and-safety>). Meanwhile, members of the University have a responsibility to comply with university policies and procedures, as set out in the University policy on [Health and Safety management responsibilities](#).

Departmental Safety Officer

Each department has a Departmental Safety Officer (DSO) who acts as a point of contact and advice on Health and Safety matters. This responsibility is sometimes undertaken by the Head of Administration, and sometimes by another administrative or academic colleague.

Statement of Safety Organisation

Each department has a Statement of Safety Organisation which set out local responsibilities. Ask your DSO if you do not have access to a copy.

Divisional Safety Officer

The Social Sciences Division has a full-time Divisional Safety Officer, [Chris Williams](#), whose job is to advise and assist departments in discharging their Health and Safety responsibilities and to have an overview of relevant matters across the division.

Fieldwork

Fieldwork can be described as **any practical work that is carried out away from University premises by University staff or students for the purpose of teaching and/or research**. Sound management of fieldwork and the associated risks is a priority for social sciences departments and for the division as a whole. Your department should have appropriate administrative processes to support good practice in this area, including a **risk assessment form** which students and staff should complete prior to undertaking fieldwork. In the case of student fieldwork, **academic supervisors have responsibilities to their students**, including to ensure that the appropriate risk assessments are completed satisfactorily and any relevant training undertaken, as set out in the [University policy on supervisors' responsibilities](#). The division produces a fact sheet and practical guide for fieldwork supervisors – please contact the [Divisional Safety Officer](#).

Further information is available on [our fieldwork pages](#). For help and advice on managing fieldwork, or any other aspect of health and safety, please get in touch the [Divisional Safety Officer](#).

Overseas travel

The University has an [Overseas travel policy](#). In all cases, supervisors/academic line managers are required to approve Overseas travel/fieldwork. High-risk travel (e.g. to FCO flagged areas) must in addition be approved by the Head of Department. Individual departments will have their own wider approvals processes in place, which are likely to include Head of Department maintaining oversight/approval of all travel.

The University provides travel insurance to all staff and to students at a cost to the department of £15 per capita for each month during which the student is included on the insurance. Staff and students must complete the [Travel Insurance Application Form](#) and submit it to the DSO ahead of travel. Full information is available on the University's [travel insurance policy pages](#).