



Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure

Version: 6.4 | **Version effective:** 04/04/2024

Audience

All state schools

Purpose

This procedure outlines the responsibilities of departmental employees (regional directors, principals, teachers and others) for the safe delivery of curriculum activities, and provides the process for curriculum activity risk management when conducting curriculum activities in schools and other locations, as part of a school's overall [risk management](#) framework. This process is called Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment (CARA) process.

Note: Non-curriculum activities are not supported by this procedure. Such activities include, but are not limited to, bus travel, school fetes, out of school activities for EQI homestay students and sport representation conducted through Queensland School Sport.

Overview

The Department of Education (the department) is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others involved in all curriculum activities at schools or other locations. Those responsible for any school curriculum activity have legal obligations and a common law duty of care to ensure the safety of all those involved in the activity through curriculum activity risk management.

In order to promote a safe, supportive and productive learning environment, this procedure has been informed by the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#), [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) and the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#).

This procedure provides risk assessment and risk management processes to support:

- implementing a school-wide CARA process
- planning curriculum activities and assessing foreseeable risks
- documenting CARA records
- approving CARA records
- conducting curriculum activities

- reviewing curriculum activities.

Schools must provide risk assessment documentation to demonstrate how they identify, assess and control reasonably foreseeable risks when conducting curriculum activities. The following supporting resources must be used by schools in conjunction with this procedure:

- The [Managing risks in school curriculum activities flowchart](#) visually summarises the CARA process.
- The [CARA planner](#) summarises the planning and documentation requirements for activities at each risk level and explains risk levels and control measures.
- The [CARA guidelines](#) are provided for common curriculum activities to demonstrate the expected safety standard of the activity. Where a CARA guideline exists for a planned activity, it must be used to complete a CARA record.
- The [CARA generic template](#) guides teachers in identifying risks, hazards and control measures for all curriculum activities. It must be used to complete a CARA record (called 'Other' in OneSchool) if a CARA guideline does not exist for an activity.
- The [school-specific CARA slideshow](#) supports schools to conduct bespoke training in the established school-wide CARA process.

Principals make the final decisions in approving curriculum activities in schools. These decisions must ensure all curriculum activities are justified by the expected educational outcomes, given the level of residual risk.

The [Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment \(CARA\) process](#) on the department website is the repository of information contained in this procedure.

Responsibilities

Regional Directors

- Provide support for principals in establishing and implementing a school-wide CARA process in accordance with this procedure.
- Provide regular training for principals in risk assessment and risk management.

Principals

- Develop and establish a school-wide CARA process to plan for the safety of all those involved in curriculum activities, as outlined in this procedure.
- Monitor and review the school-wide CARA process for operational effectiveness and ongoing compliance.
- Provide a program of training, including annual induction/refresher CARA training and annual school-specific CARA training, for all staff responsible for the planning and/or delivery of curriculum activities to ensure all staff are aware of, and comply with, the established school-wide CARA process.
- Encourage and enable school-based activity supervisors to raise their qualifications above the minimum through suitable training.
- Delegate and record, if relevant, the approval of high risk level activities to a deputy principal, head of special education services (HOSES), head of department (HOD) or head of curriculum (HOC) within the school.

- Consider and approve extreme risk level activities.
- Ensure registered teachers maintain overall responsibility for curriculum activities (even when other adult supervisors are engaged to instruct or support activities).
- Be satisfied the competence of nominated activity leaders is appropriate for the activity.
- Ensure blue card requirements, for adult supervisors engaged to instruct or support curriculum activities, are met in accordance with the [Working with children authority procedure](#).
- Ensure any incident or injury that occurs in association with a curriculum activity is reported, recorded, investigated and notified in accordance with the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#).
- Ensure the safety standard of curriculum activities conducted in the school continue to improve through regular review of the school-wide CARA process.

Deputy Principals/HOSES/HOD/HOC

- Act as delegate of the principal to consider and approve CARA records for high risk level activities.
- Provide support to the principal in developing, establishing, reviewing and monitoring the school-wide CARA process.
- Consider and approve medium risk level activities following the established school-wide CARA process.
- Provide support to teachers and others in:
 - implementing the school-wide CARA process when planning curriculum activities
 - sourcing and preparing CARA documentation.
- Regularly monitor the curriculum activities within the three levels of curriculum planning to determine whether an appropriate level of risk assessment is being undertaken and is in accordance with the school-wide CARA process.
- Provide support to the principal in ensuring the improvement in safety standards across curriculum activities by monitoring the review and amendment suggestions added to CARA records at the conclusion of activities.

Teachers

- Consider student safety when planning units of work and plan to mitigate reasonably foreseeable risks. Embed risk assessment and management as part of the three levels of curriculum planning.
- Prepare risk assessment records for curriculum activities in accordance with the established, school-wide CARA process.
- Establish, and provide induction on, emergency and safety details specific to the activity and the location.
- Induct all other adult supervisors with the contents of the CARA record prior to the activity being conducted.
- Confirm blue card qualifications of other adult supervisors engaged to support the activity, where required.
- Maintain overall responsibility for the curriculum activity.
- Conduct curriculum activities to ensure the safety of students and others.

- Review the risks and hazards on the CARA record after the activity to gauge the efficacy of the documented control measures and identify any unforeseen areas of risk that arose during the activity. This will ensure the standard of safety in curriculum activities continues to improve.

Other adult supervisors and activity leaders

- Provide a blue card in accordance with the requirements of the [Working with children authority procedure](#).
- Familiarise with, and follow, emergency and safety procedures provided by induction.
- Raise any concerns with responsible staff immediately.
- Implement the safety and risk management strategies provided on the CARA record to ensure the safety of students and others during the activity.
- Report any incidents to the supervising teacher immediately.

Process

Implementing a school-wide CARA process (training, monitoring, recordkeeping)

- Regional Directors support principals to comply with this procedure that includes, but is not limited to, maintaining records of:
 - annual staff participation in a program training including annual induction/refresher CARA training, and annual school-specific CARA training, in the school-wide CARA process
 - an appropriate delegated officer to approve high risk activities
 - approved high and extreme risk level activities
 - risk assessment and risk management of medium risk level activities embedded in the three levels of curriculum planning (e.g. the unit plan)
 - incidents or injuries occurring in association with a curriculum activity that are investigated and notified in accordance with the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#)
 - Blue card information for adult supervisors engaged to instruct or support curriculum activities, in accordance with the [Working with children authority procedure](#).
- Principals provide induction on the school-wide CARA process to any staff involved in planning and/or supervising curriculum activities (consult the [ready reckoner](#) to determine the list of staff required to complete the training). The [Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment training course](#) (DoE employees only) within QLearn and additional [school-specific information](#) constitute the induction and annual refresher program. The induction must include, but is not limited to:
 - allocating an inherent risk level to curriculum activities
 - identifying hazards and risks in curriculum activities
 - controlling hazards and mitigating risks in curriculum activities using the Hierarchy of Control
 - when and how to plan, conduct, prepare and document CARA records for curriculum activities (e.g. using OneSchool)
 - obtaining approvals and permissions for all off-site activities
 - obtaining required approvals and permissions for medium, high and extreme risk level activities

- how to implement, manage, monitor and review curriculum activity risk management practices.
- A [customisable slideshow template](#) has been provided for schools to conduct annual school-specific CARA training on the school-wide CARA process.
- Principal maintains a record of staff participation in induction and annual refresher training. Training must be undertaken by any staff member involved in conducting curriculum activities with students such as teachers, Science Operations Officers and Teacher Aides.
- Principals use OneSchool to track the completion of staff training.
- Any activity conducted off-site (that is covered by the [School excursions procedure](#) or the [International study tours procedure](#)) requires:
 - documented principal approval of the activity and the CARA record
 - documented [parent consent](#).
- Principal, or the delegate, maintains a record of risk assessment and risk management of high risk level and extreme risk level activities using OneSchool.
- Principals (or a delegate) monitor the school-wide CARA process to determine whether appropriate levels of CARA documentation supports the planning for risks, hazards and control measures in curriculum activities.
- Principals (or a delegate) ensure any incident or injury that occurs in association with a curriculum activity is reported, recorded, investigated and notified in accordance with the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#).
- HOSSES/HOD/HOC maintains a record of risk assessment and risk management of medium risk level activities approved inherently within the three levels of curriculum planning (e.g. unit plans) according to the established school-wide CARA process.

Planning curriculum activities and assessing foreseeable risks

- As part of systematic curriculum delivery, all curriculum activities must be considered in terms of their inherent level of risk.
- Teachers use the [CARA planner](#) to embed risk assessment and management practices when planning units of work. The risk assessment must be specific to the context of the activity (student needs, materials and equipment, location of the activity, supervisors etc.) in order to:
 - identify hazards
 - assess the level of risk
 - determine control measures.
- The [CARA planner](#) and the [Managing risks in school curriculum activities flowchart](#) support teachers in making these decisions.
- Teachers discuss the intention to undertake any high risk level activities with the officer delegated by the principal when planning a unit of work.
- Teachers, when intending to undertake any extreme risk level activities, must consider planning an alternative activity or modifying the activity to reduce the risks. If the activity is deemed to be essential to

the curriculum, discuss the intention to undertake the activity with the principal to seek in-principle support for the activity before planning a unit of work.

- Teachers consult the [CARA guideline](#) (if one exists) for the safety requirements and safety considerations of the activity. The [CARA guidelines](#) are linked in OneSchool for convenience.
- Teachers, in collaboration with other adult supervisors of the planned activity, determine additional risks, hazards and control measures relevant to the activity and the specific school/group circumstances in order to lift the safety standard above the minimum identified in the [CARA guideline](#). Consult review comments from previous CARA records to improve safety standards based on the advice from the previous supervisors of the activity at the school.

Documenting risk assessments (CARA records)

- Teachers are required to complete CARA records in OneSchool for:
 - any activity conducted off-site
 - all high and extreme risk level activities conducted on-site.
- Where a [CARA guideline](#) does not exist, teachers must complete required CARA records using the [CARA generic template](#) (called the 'Other' activity tab in OneSchool).
- For low risk level activities only:
 - record the risk level of the activity within the three levels of planning
 - teachers document control measures within teacher planning.
- For medium risk level activities only:
 - record the risk level of the activity within the three levels of planning
 - teachers follow the established, school-wide process to prepare risk assessment records according to the risk level of the activity (i.e. either using OneSchool or documenting the control measures within teacher planning).
- For high and extreme risk level activities:
 - record the risk level of the activity within the three levels of planning
 - teachers follow the established, school-wide process to prepare risk assessment records using OneSchool
 - teachers utilise previous CARA records for the activity to inform additional risks, hazards and control measures for new CARA records
 - teachers review and record information about any student condition (e.g. physical or medical) that may inhibit safe engagement in an activity. Include extra risk mitigation strategies as required.
 - teachers complete CARA records in OneSchool using either the [CARA guidelines](#) or the [CARA generic template](#). Record any other supervision requirements, equipment/facility requirements and/or relevant hazards/control measures risks and hazards relevant to the activity to lift the safety standard above minimum. Note: when a specific activity guideline does not exist, teachers complete the CARA record using the 'Other' category in OneSchool or the [CARA generic template](#)

- teachers review and update existing CARA records whenever there is a change of circumstance or environment for an activity (e.g. venue, student cohort, time of year, weather, number of participants etc.).
- For high risk level activities only:
 - teachers seek documented approval to undertake the activity from the principal, or delegate, prior to the activity being undertaken
 - teachers are strongly recommended to obtain and document written parent/carer consent for students to be involved in the activity.
- For extreme risk level activities only:
 - teachers seek documented approval from the principal to undertake the activity prior to the activity being undertaken
 - teachers must obtain and document written parent/carer consent for students to be involved in the activity.

Approving risk assessment records

- HOD/HOSES/HOC must provide documented approval for medium risk level activities in the three levels of curriculum planning. Documented parent/carer consent should be considered for medium risk level activities.
- Principal (or delegate) must provide documented approval for high risk level activities and CARA records on OneSchool. Documented parent/carer consent is strongly recommended for high risk level activities as a condition for approval.
- Principal must provide documented approval for extreme risk level activities and CARA records on OneSchool. Documented parent/carer consent is mandated for extreme risk level activities as a condition for approval.

Note: OneSchool will automatically submit completed CARA records for high or extreme risk level activities to the relevant approving officer for approval.

Conducting curriculum activities

- Teachers ensure all adult supervisors are aware of all relevant responsibilities and curriculum activity risk management strategies (e.g. provide a copy of the CARA record).
- Teachers induct all participants (including adult supervisors and students) on emergency and safety details that are appropriate to the activity, location and conditions. Ensure all participants are aware of their personal responsibility for:
 - their own safety and the safety of others
 - following safety procedures and instructions
 - safely managing and reporting additional hazards identified.
- Teachers and adult supervisors manage curriculum activities in accordance with the risk management strategies that have been documented on the CARA record. Teachers and adult supervisors ensure

students adhere to all safety instructions and the safe use of equipment, materials and personal protective equipment in relation to the activity.

- Teachers and adult supervisors maintain adequate supervision of students at all times and reinforce safety considerations throughout the activity.
- Teachers and adult supervisors continually assess the effectiveness of control measures during the activity, and adjust and/or supplement control measures as necessary.
- Teachers and adult supervisors respond to any risks or hazards that emerge during the activity to ensure the safety of all participants. Cease the activity if emerging risks or hazards endanger participants.

Reviewing curriculum activities

- Teachers report all injuries, illnesses and dangerous incidents that occur as a result of the activity in accordance with established school processes and the [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#).
- Teachers and adult supervisors review the effectiveness of the documented risk management strategies on the CARA record at the conclusion of the activity. Teachers amend the CARA record to add or modify the hazards, risks and control measures as necessary to ensure improved safety standards of future activities. The amended CARA records must be consulted by future supervisors of the activity to improve safety standards during the activity.

Governance and compliance monitoring

Regional Directors

- Specific quality focus
 - Oversight of end to end compliance processes for this procedure in schools.
- Method of assurance
 - Review, advise and provide feedback as required.

Assistant Regional Directors

- Specific quality focus
 - Support schools to comply with this procedure.
- Method of assurance
 - Work with principals to support improvement in areas of non-compliance.

Principals

- Specific quality focus
 - Oversight of end to end compliance processes of the school-wide CARA process established in accordance with this procedure.
- Method of assurance
 - Respond to queries and provide expert advice regarding the school-wide CARA process.
 - Complete [self-assessment checklist](#) to determine compliance.

Deputy Principals/ HOSES/HOD/HOC

- Specific quality focus
 - Monitoring the compliance of the school-wide CARA process as planned and on schedule.
- Method of assurance
 - Show correlation between the three levels of curriculum planning and OneSchool records.

Teachers

- Specific quality focus
 - Ensuring the school-wide CARA process is followed.
- Method of assurance
 - Show evidence that all curriculum activities have:
 - an allocated risk level
 - reasonably foreseeable risks planned for and mitigated
 - written risk assessment and management in accordance with the school-wide CARA process.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Activity leader	A person engaged to provide expertise (knowledge and skills) in the activity. This may include a coach, referee, qualified instructor, parent/carer or other volunteer.
Adult supervisors	Adults engaged by the school to instruct, deliver, supervise or otherwise support student safety during a curriculum activity, under the direct supervision of a registered teacher. This includes, but is not limited to: teachers' aides, parents, carers, volunteers, external coaches, referees, instructors or other activity leaders.
CARA	An acronym for Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment.
CARA activity guidelines	Pre-prepared CARA records that set the minimum safety standards for a variety of common curriculum activities. The CARA guidelines are available as hardcopy and are linked in OneSchool for school convenience.
CARA process	The process undertaken by schools to complete risk assessment documentation prior to a curriculum activity being undertaken.
CARA record	A document that records the risk assessment and risk management process undertaken by a school prior to the curriculum activity occurring.
Control measures	Actions implemented to eliminate or minimise a risk as far as is reasonably practicable. Control measures should be regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness.

Term	Definition
Curriculum activity	<p>Any activity conducted with students to support the delivery of the curriculum from Prep to Year 12.</p> <p>Note: Non-curriculum activities are not supported by this procedure. Such activities include, but are not limited to, bus travel, school fetes, out of school activities for EQI homestay students and sport representation conducted through Queensland School Sport.</p>
Curriculum activity risk management	<p>The process of managing the risks of curriculum activities, involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of potential hazards • assessment of the inherent risk level • identification and implementation of control measures to mitigate risk • monitoring and review of control measures to ensure ongoing effectiveness and improved safety standards. <p>For high and extreme risk level activities, a CARA record (and documented approval) is also required prior to the activity being undertaken.</p>
Delegate	<p>A deputy principal, head of special education services, head of department or head of curriculum appointed by the principal to act as an agent for the principal in approving CARA records for high risk level activities.</p>
Duty of care	<p>Under common law, those responsible for curriculum activities must take reasonable steps to avoid foreseeable risks of injury including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring activities are safe and appropriate for students' ages and abilities • ensuring students are properly instructed and prepared for the activities • ensuring all equipment is in a safe condition • providing adequate supervision.
Extreme risk level activity	<p>An activity that is inherently dangerous. There is a high chance of a serious incident occurring that would result in critical consequences (e.g. multiple serious injuries, permanent disability or loss of life).</p>
Hazard	<p>Anything that has the potential to cause harm to a person (e.g. electricity, chemicals). Hazards generally arise from the physical environment, equipment or materials used, and how the activity is designed, performed and managed.</p>
Hierarchy of control	<p>Control measures that should be considered and used in this order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elimination: remove the hazard completely from the workplace or activity 2. Substitution: replace a hazard with a less dangerous one (e.g. using a softer ball, different location)

Term	Definition
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Isolation: separate people from the hazard (e.g. safety barrier) 4. Redesign: changing a work process or layout of a work area 5. Administration: putting rules or training in place to make a workplace safer 6. Personal Protective Equipment: protective clothing and equipment (e.g. helmet, gloves, shin-pads).
High risk level activity	An activity that is inherently dangerous. There is a high chance of a serious incident occurring that would result in major consequences (e.g. serious injury/injuries requiring specialist medical treatment or hospitalisation).
Inherent risk level	<p>The level of risk existing before any control measures are put in place, relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature of the activity • those involved, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ age and ability of students ○ competence of activity leaders and supervisors ○ equipment used ○ environment in which the activity is undertaken.
Legal obligation	A responsibility under relevant law. For example, the <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> (Qld) places specific duties on persons.
Low risk level activity	An activity with little chance of an incident occurring that would result in an injury.
Medium risk level activity	An activity that has some chance of an incident occurring which would result in an injury requiring first aid.
Three levels of curriculum planning	Part of the whole school curriculum, assessment and reporting plan including: provision of whole curriculum; year or band plans for each learning area and/or subject; and unit plans.
Residual risk	The level of risk remaining after the control measures have been put in place.

Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) Parts 3 and 4
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) Part 2
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(Qld\)](#)

Delegations/Authorisations

- Nil

Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

Supporting information for this procedure

- [CARA generic template](#)
- [CARA Information Sheet](#)
- [CARA planner](#)
- [Managing risks in school curriculum activities flowchart](#)
- [Principal - CARA procedure compliance checklist](#)
- [School-specific CARA training slideshow](#)

Other resources

- [Excursion consent form template](#)
- [Curriculum activity risk assessment \(CARA\) guidelines](#)
- [Curriculum activity risk assessment induction training](#) (DoE employees only)
- [Enterprise risk management procedure](#)
- [Health, safety and wellbeing incident management procedure](#)
- [Managing first aid in the workplace procedure](#)
- [School excursions procedure](#)
- [International study tours procedure](#)
- [Working with children authority procedure](#)

Contact

For further information, please contact:

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9/05/2022

Superseded versions

Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.

6.0 Managing Risks in School Curriculum Activities

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