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**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**President and CEO**

## **POLICY**

The policy of the Board of Governors is to encourage the use of field trips and study abroad activities to provide students with relevant skill-oriented learning and to support students in their personal and professional development and growth, while at the same time ensuring that risks associated with off-campus activities are effectively mitigated.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

SAIT recognizes that study abroad experiences help students develop their intercultural competencies, increase their cultural sensitivity, broaden their global perspectives, and attain the competencies necessary in today's global workplace. Study abroad experiences help students become both world-ready and work-ready.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Field school** A program where participants travel to a particular destination to learn about a topic or a range of topics.

**Group study abroad activity** A study abroad activity involving more than one participant.

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**International workplace experiential learning**

A course, or a portion of a course, requiring participants to take part in a supervised workplace experiential learning, directed field study, internship, cooperative or cooperative work term course that is related to their program of study or training, where this learning takes place outside of Canada.

**Participants**

For the purpose of this procedure, participants include students, alumni and industry members whose participation has been pre-approved by the program running the activity.

**Program leader**

A SAIT employee responsible for the overall organization and management of a study abroad activity in the employee's school/department. The program leader may not necessarily accompany the participants on a study abroad activity.

**Program-specific study tour**

A program trip to another post-secondary institution where participants attend classes related to their program at the host institution.

**Study abroad coordinator**

The SAIT employee responsible for coordinating study-abroad activities and for addressing/mitigating risk issues associated with study abroad initiatives, on SAIT's behalf.

**Semester exchange**

A program where a student completes part of a SAIT program by attending a comparable program of studies at a post-secondary institution outside of Canada.

**Service learning**

A program dedicated to a volunteer service project and often carried out in conjunction with a non-profit organization.

**Study abroad activity**

A SAIT-approved activity for an individual or group and which occurs outside Canada. This includes but is not limited to field schools, program-specific study tours, subject-specific study tours, service learning programs, conferences, student competitions, semester exchanges, organized sports competitions, workplace experiential learning placements, other extracurricular activities and student research projects.

**Subject-specific study tour**

A program where participants from several post-secondary institutions come together in one location to study a specific subject.

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**Trip leader**

A SAIT employee accompanying participants on a group study abroad activity and who the program leader has designated as being the trip leader. The role of the trip leader is defined by the school/program responsible for the study abroad activity and set out in Schedule A, Group International Study Abroad Program Guide, an Associated Document to this procedure.

**GOVERNING PRINCIPLES**

1. The safety of all participants and accompanying SAIT employees in study abroad activities is of paramount importance to SAIT. Study abroad activities shall be planned in a manner that assesses and manages risks for the participants, accompanying SAIT employees and SAIT. The extent of planning, preparation and approvals depends on the level of risk associated with a study abroad activity. Risk assessment requires the exercise of good judgment, based on expertise and experience. It is a process that involves identifying hazards associated with each study abroad activity, analyzing the risks related to each hazard and determining how best to manage and mitigate those risks.
2. SAIT and individual schools/programs share the responsibilities for study abroad activities. SAIT's study abroad coordinator is responsible on SAIT's behalf for coordinating study abroad activities and ensuring that risk and liability issues associated with those activities are identified and managed. Schools, programs, program leaders and trip leaders are responsible for managing the logistics, activities, and student conduct for their study abroad programs.
3. SAIT, its employees and study abroad participants share the responsibilities to:
  - a) Conduct themselves in a manner that attends to overall safety and well-being and is in accordance with approved safety policies and standards and with applicable legislation in the country in which they are travelling;
  - b) Identify and address risks inherent in study abroad opportunities;
  - c) Prepare for study abroad opportunities to ensure the safety and well-being of all who participate; and
  - d) Respond to and intervene as necessary to ensure the safety of all participants and accompanying SAIT employees.

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4. This procedure does not cover activities over which SAIT exercises no control and for which it can therefore take no responsibility. Examples of activities not covered by this procedure include but are not limited to:
  - a) Activities undertaken by employees or students that are not part of the individual's employment, duties and responsibilities, or studies.
  - b) Activities organized exclusively by students or student groups without SAIT's expressed written approval, sanction or funding.
  - c) Activities organized by the SAIT Students' Association (SAITSA), including clubs and bodies ratified by SAITSA.
  - d) Travel or activities of any person who is not a student, faculty, staff member or a pre-approved participant.
5. A study abroad activity is not permitted to a destination which has an "avoid all travel" or "avoid non-essential travel" advisory, as per the Canadian government's travel advisory website two business days before the scheduled departure date. If a destination's travel advisory changes to "avoid all travel" or "avoid non-essential travel" while the participants are travelling to or are at the destination and the trip leader is unable to consult with SAIT, the trip leader may take all reasonable steps that the trip leader believes necessary to protect the safety of participants and accompanying SAIT employees.
6. Participants in a study abroad activity must be over the age of 18 at the time of their departure from Canada.
7. Participation on a study abroad activity is limited to students, alumni and industry members whose participation has been pre-approved by the program running the activity, and to accompanying SAIT employees. Family members and friends are not able to participate.
8. A participant must not be suspended or withdrawn from SAIT and must not be undergoing or subject to disciplinary measures for non-academic misconduct proceedings as of the departure date of a study abroad activity.
9. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees on a study abroad activity are bound by SAIT's codes of conduct and SAIT's policies and procedures, and are responsible for obeying international laws and regulations. Student participants may be subject to academic and non-academic disciplinary proceedings under procedures [AC.3.4.3 Student Academic Conduct](#) and [AC.3.4.3 Student Non-Academic Conduct](#).

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10. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees must do all that is reasonably practicable when traveling to ensure that their acts or omissions do not create or increase a risk to the health and safety of themselves or others with whom they are travelling. They are also responsible for regularly checking travel advisories relating to destinations in which they are travelling or intending to travel and for taking reasonable measures to mitigate risks to themselves or others with whom they are travelling. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees who are foreign nationals are responsible for considering the travel advisories issued by their own government.
11. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees are solely responsible for their decision to travel and to participate in a study-abroad activity. SAIT cannot guarantee that study abroad activities will be problem-free, and cannot account for all the potential health and safety risks that participants and accompanying SAIT employees might experience while out of Canada.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **A. Approval**

#### 1. Group Study Abroad Activity

- a) The program leader who is proposing a study abroad activity must complete a Study Abroad Decision Support Package (DSP), available on SAITNow. Contact the study abroad coordinator for more information.
- b) The Study Abroad Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the study abroad coordinator, will review each Study Abroad DSP. The Committee will make a recommendation to the associate vice president responsible for study abroad activities as to whether the proposed study abroad activity should or should not be approved.
- c) The associate vice president responsible for study abroad activities will review the recommendations of the Study Abroad Advisory Committee and will decide whether or not to approve the proposed study abroad activity.
- d) All approvals must be obtained before students can be recruited for the study abroad activity. Please note that approvals must be obtained in sufficient time to allow for visa requirements, immunization requirements, etc. to be met. The amount of time required to complete these logistical requirements will depend on the particular travel destination.

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- e) Travel arrangements made before the Study Abroad Advisory Committee has reviewed and recommended a proposed study abroad activity for approval and before the associate vice president responsible for study abroad activities has approved that activity shall be regarded as unauthorized travel arrangements that are personal and are not related to SAIT business.

## 2. Semester Exchange and Workplace Experiential Learning Placements

- a) A modified procedure will be used for approval of individual semester exchange and workplace experiential learning placements. Contact the study abroad coordinator for more information.

## B. Logistics

### 1. Group Study Abroad Activity

- a) The program leader is responsible for making logistical arrangements for an approved group international study abroad activity, as per the travel authorization procedures set out in procedure [HR.1.4.1 Travel Planning and Approval](#). For details, please see Schedule A, Group International Study Abroad Program Guide, an Associated Document to this procedure.
- b) The program leader must consider the needs of participants with disabilities and medical conditions as part of the planning process and study abroad activity itinerary, and must ensure that the pre-departure orientation session addresses the specific needs of those participants. Please note that the need to reasonably accommodate disabilities can arise because of unforeseen circumstances during a study abroad activity, and the duty to reasonably accommodate remains, regardless of whether or not the participant disclosed the disability prior to departure.
- c) If only one SAIT employee accompanies the participants, the program leader must, subject to exceptions as approved by the study abroad coordinator, ensure that another SAIT employee is ready, willing and able to join the activity and accompany the participants in the event of an emergency whereby the original SAIT employee is no longer able to accompany the participants and must be replaced. If such a situation occurs, the program leader will work with the study abroad coordinator to address the situation.

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- d) All participants and accompanying SAIT employees must depart as a group. Participants may choose to stay on at the end of the study abroad program and make their own way back to Canada, but will be required to sign a waiver and to make their own arrangements, at their own cost, for any additional insurance that is required. The trip leader must accompany the participants returning to Canada.

## 2. Semester Exchange and Workplace Experiential Learning Placements

- a) Students are responsible for making their own travel and other logistical arrangements.

### C. Risk Management

1. All participants in a study abroad activity must be registered in a course that is related to the activity and that has a Course Registration Number (CRN), regardless of whether or not the participants are receiving credit for the study abroad activity. The program leader will work with the study abroad coordinator to ensure this requirement has been met.
2. The study abroad coordinator will provide the program leader with a Trip Information document. The program leader must complete and return this document to the study abroad coordinator at least two business days before the participants are scheduled to depart from Canada.
3. The program leader is responsible for ensuring that the trip leader is:
  - a) Aware of the emergency communication protocol as set out in Schedule B, an Associated Document to this procedure.
  - b) Provided with and takes all necessary information that may be required if an emergency occurs during the study abroad activity. This information includes but is not limited to emergency contact information for each participant and emergency contact information for SAIT.
4. The study abroad coordinator will present a pre-departure orientation session for all participants and accompanying SAIT employees taking part in any study abroad activity. This session is mandatory; if a participant does not attend, this will usually result in cancellation from participation in the activity. The program leader is responsible for contacting the study abroad coordinator to arrange this orientation session.

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5. The study abroad coordinator acts as the liaison and the primary point of contact between participants and accompanying SAIT employees, their emergency contacts in Canada and the embassies of the countries in which participants and employees are travelling or studying.
6. The study abroad coordinator will work with the program leader to ensure that participants and accompanying SAIT employees complete all necessary documentation, including but not limited to the Field Trip Participation form, Exchange Program Waiver form and the Photo Release form, prior to their departure from Canada. Participants are required to sign a Participant Agreement, attached as Schedule C, an Associated Document to this procedure
7. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees are not permitted to rent or drive motorized vehicles during a study abroad activity, unless this has been approved in advance by the study abroad coordinator.
8. Participants and accompanying SAIT employees are responsible for:
  - a) Providing feedback about the trip and study abroad activity as requested, upon their return to Canada.
  - b) Bringing their concerns to the attention of the trip leader and/or the study abroad coordinator.
  - c) Conducting themselves in a safe manner while travelling, with pre-departure orientation sessions being an important source of information for participants on what constitutes safe conduct for a particular destination.
  - d) Disclosing to the program leader and trip leader any health concerns, disabilities or medical conditions they may have that might affect their ability to safely and fully participate in the study abroad activity and/or that might require reasonable accommodation.
  - e) Ensuring they are physically and mentally prepared for the travel.
  - f) Ensuring they have appropriate and adequate medical and other insurance for the travel.
  - g) Ensuring they have obtained appropriate travel documentation and are traveling with that documentation.

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- h) Ensuring they meet the border security requirements of stopover destinations and of the final destination and that their personal history, including criminal records, does not prevent them from entering into or exiting from these destinations.
  - i) Making up any missed school work, in the case of student participants, and meeting all work-related responsibilities, in the case of accompanying SAIT employees.
  - j) Meeting with the International Centre to discuss issues around student visas, in the case of participants who are foreign nationals.
  - k) Obtaining all required immunizations.
  - l) Preparing themselves in advance of travel to meet the requirements of a particular study abroad activity, as identified by the program leader.
  - m) Providing any necessary safety equipment and taking any first aid or other similar training required for a particular study abroad activity.
  - n) Registering with the Government of Canada's Registration of Canadians Abroad service, except for participants or accompanying SAIT employees who are foreign nationals.
  - o) Researching and being aware of the risks involved in their planned trip.
9. A trip leader is responsible for immediately informing the project leader and the study abroad coordinator if a participant decides to leave the study abroad activity before it has officially ended or if a participant cannot be located.
10. In the case of an emergency, the trip leader shall follow the emergency communication protocol set out in Schedule B, an Associated Document to this procedure.

#### **D. Cancellation**

- 1. A study abroad activity may be cancelled at any time, whether prior to departure or partway through the activity, for reasons including but not limited to the following:
  - a) The Canadian government's travel advisory website indicates that the study abroad destination has an "avoid all travel" or "avoid non-essential travel"

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- advisory, or the government issues an advisory for Canadians to immediately leave the destination;
- b) SAIT deems the study abroad activity to carry an unacceptable or unwarranted risk that cannot be reasonably managed for participants and accompanying SAIT employees;
  - c) SAIT determines that it is not feasible to offer or support a study abroad activity;
  - d) The airline cancels flights to/from the destination; or
  - e) Extraordinary situations or circumstances that are beyond SAIT's control.
2. SAIT will cancel a participant's involvement in a study abroad activity, whether prior to departure or at any time during the study abroad activity, if the participant:
- a) Is undergoing or subject to disciplinary measures for non-academic misconduct;
  - b) Is unable to obtain or does not have appropriate travel documentation;
  - c) Has not obtained immunizations where those immunizations are mandatory for participation in that study abroad activity and/or entry into the destination country;
  - d) Is suspended or withdrawn from SAIT;
  - e) Has not obtained medical insurance;
  - f) Has not complied with SAIT's policies, procedures or codes of conduct;
  - g) Has not complied with the destination's laws or regulations; or
  - h) Has acted in such a manner that the trip leader, in consultation with the study abroad coordinator, determines that the participant can no longer participate in the study abroad activity.
3. A participant whose participation in a study abroad activity is cancelled may or may not be entitled to receive a refund of fees, either partial or in full, for that activity, depending on the reason for cancellation. A participant whose participation in a study abroad activity is cancelled due to academic withdrawal from the institute will receive no refund of fees. Please contact the program leader for further information.

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4. Should a participant choose to leave the study abroad activity in progress for personal reasons, SAIT is not responsible for arranging return travel or for any of the participant's associated costs.
5. SAIT has no control over external and international events and will not be responsible to refund any costs or losses associated with the cancellation of a study abroad activity, in situations including but not limited to:
  - a) SAIT has cancelled a study abroad activity or an individual's participation in a study abroad activity pursuant to this procedure;
  - b) A participant chooses not to travel for personal safety or other issues; or
  - c) A participant is denied entry into, or timely exit from, any country associated with the travel for any reason whatsoever, including issues arising from the participant's travel documentation and/or border security issues.

## ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Schedule A Group International Study Abroad Program Guide
- Schedule B Emergency Communication Protocol
- Schedule C Participant Agreement

## POLICY/PROCEDURE REFERENCE

- AC.2.13 Field Trips policy
- AC.2.13.1 Field Trips procedure

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