

Excursion Guidelines

Environment

South Coast NRM conducts **no-cost** excursions with school groups on a regular basis at a variety of locations. While the teacher in charge has ultimate responsibility for selecting the location, South Coast NRM will assist teachers assess the location for foreseeable and reasonable risks to determine if the proposed location is appropriate for the proposed excursion. This may include consideration of physical environment, seasonal, cultural and social factors. Visits to the location can be arranged on request prior to an excursion taking place. South Coast NRM will confirm with the location owner that permission is granted to access the location for the purposes of the excursion. The school is responsible for ensuring that the required public liability cover is held for its staff and students whilst on excursion.

Transport

Transport is the responsibility of the school.

Students' Capacity

In general the types of activities are:

- Water quality testing: Students use simple electronic meters to read pH and electrical conductivity and other simple instruments to measure temperature and turbidity. Results are recorded on data sheets and can be interpreted with previous data from the site or against common guidelines.
- Macroinvertebrate sampling: Students sort water samples containing aquatic invertebrates, they then identify and classify the organisms found. The equipment used can include plastic containers, plastic tea spoons, identification charts, magnifying lens' and stereo microscopes, and data recording sheets.
- Site assessment: Students work in small groups to make observations and complete a checklist designed to give an indication of the condition of the surrounding vegetation and detail nearby activities that could affect water quality. Bird surveys are often included in this assessment, where students can have the opportunity to use binoculars, telescopes and Bird identification charts.
- Revegetation activities (if offered) can include tree planting using common garden equipment.

It is not essential for students to enter a waterbody to collect samples but it may be an important part of the learning experience. Whether students enter the water to collect samples depends on a variety of factors, including complying with the Department of Education and Training's water-based excursion requirements. Site safety issues such as depth, flow, access to water, and the age and level of responsibility of the students will be considered in consultation with the qualified supervisor and / or teacher in charge. If students of any age are permitted to enter the water, (no matter how shallow) then compliance with the Department of Education and Training's, "Outdoor Education and Recreation Activities" policy is essential. Section 19 of the policy covers water-based activities and requires that at least one member of the supervisory team holds a current, recognized lifesaving qualification such as RLSSA Bronze Medallion or an equivalent approved by the Director General. Compliance with this requirement is the responsibility of the school, including the provision of qualified personnel. *Note: Ribbons of Blue activities are exempt from compliance with the policy above only if there is **no** intention for students to enter the water.*

Supervisor/Supervisory Team

South Coast NRM staff will lead, demonstrate and present activities but will not undertake any roles in a supervisory context (unless specifically agreed with the school supervision team).

Communication Strategies

A communication strategy between students and the supervisory team is the responsibility of the school.

Emergency Response Plan

Schools will have their own emergency response plan pertaining to the particular needs of their students.

Briefing Students and Supervisors

Students, teachers and supervisors will be briefed on arrival at the excursion site on all aspects of the excursion. Where possible, necessary information will be provided to the teacher and / or supervisors prior to the excursion. This information will vary with the nature of the excursion and the site.