



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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**Response to Estyn thematic review on
education visits policies in
the further education sector**



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Report title: Review of educational visits policies in the further education sector

Report Details

In February 2015, the Minister for Education and Skills commissioned Estyn to undertake a thematic review of further education (FE) colleges' educational visits policies, following the death of a student on a visit to Barcelona. Estyn was asked to review the FE sector's policies, in order to identify any weaknesses, good practice and recommendations for improvement.

Summary of main findings

The headline finding from the review is that all colleges in Wales have generally appropriate and relevant policies, procedures and guidance for educational visits. All colleges also have suitable general arrangements for assessing levels of risk. However, while all policies meet requirements, a few do not set out clearly enough what is included in each policy or to whom the policy applies.

Most of the recommendations in the report are aimed at FE colleges. Estyn recommend that colleges should review their educational visits policies and guidance to ensure that they conform to best practice. They should:

- R1 review their policies and supporting guidance for educational visits to ensure that they set out clear and straightforward procedures for planning visits and that plans and risk assessments are proportionate to need and the level of risk
- R2 require that group leaders have the knowledge, competence and experience to organise and lead the visit and that they have signed a declaration that they have used the current guidance when planning the visit
- R3 make sure that on residential visits all accommodation is checked for suitability and that supervisory staff stay in the same accommodation as learners
- R4 require that on residential visits there are appropriate arrangements for the supervision of downtime¹ and that all staff in a supervisory role are alcohol free
- R5 always require that all learners and parents are aware of the need to comply with the college's codes of conduct on behaviour and of the consequences of not doing so
- R6 make sure that any assistant leader and/or voluntary leaders have clearly

¹ Downtime is any time when learners are not involved in formal learning activity

understood roles and responsibilities and that they have up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance when leading groups which include any learners who are either aged under 18 years or vulnerable adults

R7 provide clear information to learners and parents of the scope and limitations of their insurance policies in relation to educational visits and clarify the responsibilities and expectations of third party providers

R8 take account of the advice in the National Guidance on educational visits provided by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel when reviewing their policies and guidance on educational visits.

The report makes one recommendation for the Welsh Government. The Department for Education and Skills should:

R9 require that all colleges take account of these recommendations when reviewing and updating their policies and guidance on educational visits.

Officials will attend the CollegesWales Health and Safety network in October 2015 to present and discuss the findings of the review. All colleges will be asked to review their educational visits policies and guidance, taking account of Estyn's recommendations.

Publication Details.

The report will be published on 22 September 2015 on Estyn's website. It can be accessed from this link: <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/thematic-reports>.