



OXFORD UNIVERSITY EXPEDITIONS COUNCIL

Rules of Expeditions Approved by the University

1. General

The University is prepared to offer official recognition and support of an overseas expedition, permitting it to use the title of *Oxford University Expedition*, providing:

- i. The membership consists of at least 50% current members of the collegiate University. The Expeditions Council supports the principle of enabling all students to participate in an Expedition in the calendar year in which their degree course is completed;
- ii. The aims are worthwhile and that planning is such as to make it likely that the aims will be met;
- iii. Adequate safety precautions and medical provision have been demonstrated;
- iv. The proposed duration of the Expedition in the field should normally be at least five weeks;
- v. Appropriate entry visas and travel, research and collection permits have been obtained; in the event of these not being obtained appropriately, the Council must be informed in advance.
- vi. Any involvement of local participants follows ethical best practice approved by the University's CUREC.

The Oxford University Expeditions Council recommends to the University those proposed expeditions which it believes meet the criteria. Once recognised, the Expedition is subject to the following rules, drawn up by the University to clarify various responsibilities incumbent upon an enterprise explicitly associated with its name.

2. Responsibility of the Expedition Leader

The Leader of the Expedition is directly responsible to the University, through the Proctors, for the proper management and conduct of the Expedition, along the lines described in its Expedition proposal including any modifications that may have been made at the May meeting and approved by the Expeditions Council, and in accordance with these Rules. Where a change of plans or of membership becomes necessary for whatever reason prior to departure, the Leader must consult with the Chairman of the Expeditions Council. After departure, and in the field, the Leader has the authority to make such reasonable modifications to the programme as he or she thinks fit, aiming to ensure the changes are likely to have been agreed by the Expeditions Council had it been consulted. In particular, no changes should be made which might compromise the safety of Expedition members. No modification to the programme may be made that might reasonably be expected to have caused the host country to withhold its permission for the Expedition to visit, had it been aware beforehand (see 3 below).

The Leader is responsible for all publicity and contacts with the media, unless there is a clear prior agreement that another individual Member of the Expedition has been allocated that role.

In the event of an emergency, the University Security Services must be informed immediately, with details of the event and the location and contact details for all members. However, the University should not be regarded as capable of providing emergency advice or care: these should be obtained as per the Contingency plan.

3. Responsibility of the Expedition Members

At all times all Expedition Members must be sensitive to the customs and practices of the countries, cultures and people visited. All the Expedition Members are individually and collectively responsible for not acting in any way that might bring the name of the University into disrepute, for example, by inappropriate behaviour or dress, or by offensive comments to or about local people. Maximum care must be taken to avoid any involvement in political, religious or partisan controversies. It should be borne in mind that Expeditions will be seen as ambassadors of the University of Oxford, and that any impression made, whether good or bad, may affect the attitude of the country towards future expeditions for many years to come.

4. Health and Safety

The University requires *written* assurance before departure that all members of the Expedition have received appropriate medical advice, first aid training and any recommended vaccinations and antimalarial chemoprophylaxis. It is mandatory that one Member of the Expedition be nominated as Medical Officer, who is required to obtain advice from the Oxford University Occupational Health Service, to ensure Expedition members undertake appropriate first aid training, and that they follow any recommendations with regard to vaccinations and prophylaxis. Details of the necessary procedures, and pro-formas for completion by the Occupational Health Service and University First Aid Unit are circulated to the Expedition at the same time as they are notified of their recommendation by the Expeditions Council. **Failure to return the signed pro-formas by the due date(s) specified will result in the University withdrawing its recognition.**

All members of the Expedition must take out suitable travel insurance including adequate accident and health cover. All relevant risks and existing medical conditions should be declared to the insurance company and the University Occupational Health Service, and if there is doubt as to the relevance they should be declared as a precaution.

Expedition members should as regularly as possible consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for travel advice (www.fco.gov.uk) and must abide by this advice. They should also notify the local British High Commission/Embassy of the planned Expedition including arrival and departure dates.

Members are also required to draw up a Risk Assessment for the Expedition. The resultant list of hazards, risk levels and control measures should be agreed and signed by every member of the Expedition who is a member of the University, and the signed form should be sent to the Secretary of the Expeditions Council no later than 10 weeks prior to the proposed departure date. Other Expedition members must read and agree this assessment. In addition, a contingency plan for emergency must be drawn up and signed by all university members and returned to the Secretary of the Expeditions Council by the same date.

5. Home and Field Agents

A Member of Congregation must be appointed as Home Agent of the Expedition whose purpose is to act as a link between the Expedition and home in an emergency. The Home Agent should let the Secretary of the Expeditions Council know how he or she may be contacted and must be aware of how best to contact the Expedition, during its time abroad. The Home Agent should also have a copy of the insurance details of the Expedition.

A Field Agent must be appointed, and should be someone in the country or region to be visited, who is both contactable from home, and is likely to know how best to contact the Expedition in the field in an emergency.

The Home and Field agents should each be provided by the Expedition Leader with a copy of the Contingency plan.

6. Finance and Equipment

Personal Contributions: Each member must pay a personal contribution to the costs of the Expedition before it departs. The minimum sum is set by the Expeditions Council at a figure nominally equivalent to the amount that would have been spent had the Member remained at home, at the present time £400, though a higher figure may be required for particularly expensive Expeditions.

Equipment: Members of the Expedition are not permitted to purchase standard personal equipment on the Expedition budget but must provide their own. This includes such items as clothing, tents, sleeping bags, standard cameras, and binoculars. Any other items of equipment that are purchased on the budget must be disposed of for the benefit of the Expedition, or returned to the Oxford University Exploration Club for use by future Expeditions. The Expeditions Council will consider requests to leave equipment behind for use by the host country, but the Chairman must be consulted beforehand.

7. Financial Liabilities

All the Members of the Expedition are jointly and equally responsible for the payment of all the debts of the Expedition within a reasonable period, unless a prior written agreement has been made detailing an unequal division of financial liability.

Surplus Funds: Any surplus funds, after all the liabilities of the Expedition have been met will be returnable to the Expeditions Council for the support of future Expeditions.

Expedition Income: Unless there is a prior formal agreement to the contrary, any income from books, articles, films, photographs, broadcasts, etc. based on the activities of the Expedition, and produced before the winding up of the finances of the Expedition or two years, whichever is the longer, shall be payable to the Expeditions Council for the support of future Expeditions. If the production of such material for commercial gain represents a significant part of the aims of the Expedition, the Chairman of the Expeditions Council must be consulted beforehand about any proposed agreement.

8. Results

During the Expedition, large amounts of raw data and potentially biological samples will be generated. The Expedition must consider how these data will be archived, who will have access to these data. It is essential that all Members of the Expedition are clear about issues associated with image, text and data copyright, and make agreements on how data will be used in Expedition outputs. To avoid disputes and ensure maximum use is made of them, all specimens, maps, photographs, results etc. remain at the equal disposal of all Members of the Expedition. Expedition Members are strongly encouraged to put in writing how results are to be used before the Expedition departs. In any case, where it is intended that arrangements should apply in favour of specific Expedition Members, for example, if the results are to form part of an individual's examination, Project or Thesis, this must be agreed in writing before the Expedition departs. In the event of any dispute, the final arbitrator will be the Leader of the Expedition (unless there is a conflict of interest) in consultation with the Chairman of the Expeditions Council.

9. Preliminary Report and Bulletin

On its return, each Expedition is required to provide the University with a brief Preliminary Report of its results, including a financial statement. A copy must reach the Secretary of the Expeditions Council by the end of fourth week of the term following the Expedition.

There is an obligation to prepare a full report of the Expedition and its results. This should be completed within two years of the return of the Expedition. In the case that such a report is published elsewhere, the Expedition may instead provide a brief summary.

Revised January 2024



One copy of these rules must be signed by all members of the Expedition and returned to the Secretary of the Expeditions Council before departure

We have read and agreed to abide by the Rules for Expeditions

Name / College	University member (Y/N)	Date	Signature

Oxford University Expedition to: