

The Glasgow School of Art

GSA Lone Working Procedure

August 2016

Policy Control

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Section 2, sets out a Duty of Care on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees whilst at work. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3, states that every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of 'foreseeable' risks that employees might face in the course of their duties. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) has highlighted this issue by making it the subject of a Guidance Note (Working Alone INDG 73).

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure systems are devised and implemented to support the Policy commitment made by Glasgow School of Art (GSA) to protect employees who are required to work alone for significant periods of time, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the risks associated with working alone, and to meet the requirements of legislation. This document should be read in conjunction with GSA's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure.

This document is not intended to prohibit or place rigid restrictions on lone working but rather to provide guidance to enable Schools and Services to develop their own local rules based on the principles of measured risk management.

In many situations e.g. typical office work, the risks of lone working are no greater than being alone at home, and can take place without additional precautions or with minor adjustments to working practices. In offices, for example, the risk of accidental injury is very low. The main perceived risk may be to personal safety and security, either from intruders in the building, or from walking alone to the car park or public transport, particularly if this is late at night or in the dark. Basic precautions can be taken, such as locking the office door, arranging to walk to the car park with a colleague, keeping to well-lit areas, not taking short-cuts. Other situations where lone working may arise include staff visiting off site facilities. The principles of risk assessment also apply to these situations.

At all times, staff and students should use existing, recognised building practices for access and egress. This includes the use of barrier systems and/or signing-in books (where these exist) or other means of keeping records of who is in buildings out-of-hours.

2 LONE WORKING

Lone work is work which is specifically intended to be carried out unaccompanied or without immediate access to another person. It is not the same as the chance occurrence of finding oneself on one's own. For example, in every workplace there is somebody who arrives first or leaves last, or an individual may need to go into an unoccupied storeroom.

Departmental procedures need to take account of the possibility of both situations arising and should define what constitutes 'normal working hours'. Flexible working hours are a valuable and necessary component of the working environment. However, the argument for working outside normal working hours should not be used to justify poor planning and undisciplined working arrangements. Wherever reasonably practicable, work should be contained within recognised working hours.

Working alone is specifically prohibited by law only in a small number of well-established dangerous situations such as working with live electrical conductors, entry into confined spaces, etc. However, there is no general legal prohibition on lone working and GSA's responsibility is to ensure the health

and safety of staff working alone and others affected by these activities.

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

Lone Worker: “An employee whose work activities involve working time operating in situations without the benefit of interaction with other workers, or without any kind of close or direct supervision”. (Health & Safety Executive)

It is recognised that any members of staff or a student may spend a limited amount of their time working alone. However, for the purpose of this procedure, lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision such as:

- Employees working away from their base where their work may be carried out
- Employees working alone in fixed establishments i.e. staff working separately from others, staff working outside normal hours
- Employees transiting between sites whilst on GSA business
- Maintenance staff and service engineers
- Individuals who work on their own in a studio or workshop
- Members of staff or students undergoing fieldwork within the UK or abroad
- Staff or students undertaking research based in the community
- Students undertaking practical or experimental work as part of their academic programme
- Home workers
- Members of staff travelling alone on University business.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to the responsibilities laid down in GSA’s Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure, there are further specific duties inherent within this procedure. These are detailed below:

3.1 Heads of School or the equivalent in Professional Support Areas:

- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- Ensuring that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training
- Ensuring that the lone worker risk assessment is communicated to all staff members involved in the activities and keeping signed documentary evidence that those employees

have read and understood the risk assessment and will comply with the control measures put in place for their safety

- Ensuring that all reported incidents are fully investigated
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through a suitable system of reporting, investigation and recording of incidents.

3.2 Heads of Departments and Programme Leaders or the equivalent manager in Professional Support Areas (referred to as line manager):

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedure
- Nominating in writing departmental risk assessors and making sure that those nominated attend the Risk Assessment Training to ensure competence
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly

3.3 Employees

There is a legal requirement for employees to bring to the notice of their employers any workplace health and safety risks or incidents. There is also a requirement for employees to co-operate with their employers to enable compliance with statutory duties.

Therefore, employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions
- Familiarising themselves with the lone worker risk assessments in place for activities they are involved in
- Co-operating by following all procedures designed for safe working
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of this procedure

3.4 Students

Health and safety is both a collective and individual responsibility for all persons affected by the activities of GSA. Students have a duty to adhere to GSA's policies and procedures and to co-operate with GSA in occupational health and safety matters. Each person must take reasonable care of their own occupational health and safety but also that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Students, must not disregard, interfere or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety. This includes such acts as unauthorised removal of guards from machinery, discharging fire extinguishers without proper cause, removing or obliterating safety notices.

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 Section 8 places a duty on all persons, including students. It states:

No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

A breach of this section is a criminal offence.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management, and must be carried out only by nominated competent persons. For more information relating to risk assessment, you should refer to the *GSA Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure*. This principle also applies to specific risk assessments, including those conducted for lone working activities.

The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone working is no different to that followed when assessing more conventional activities.

The important point is to carry out the assessment in the following way:

4.2 Identify the hazards associated with the work and carrying it out unaccompanied

The hazards associated with the task are likely to be the same whether it is carried out alone or accompanied, although the possibility of violence towards the lone worker should always be considered. Those carrying out assessments should therefore use the techniques they normally employ for hazard identification when considering the hazards of lone working.

4.3 Assess the risks associated with the work and decide on the safe working arrangements to control the risk

Although working alone may not introduce any new hazards, the risks may differ significantly when a task is carried out unaccompanied. Assessments may need to be conducted on the following basis: Generically, for example to consider one particular discipline; or Individually, for example to consider a particular risk relating to a domiciliary etc. visit.

Some of the issues that need special attention when evaluating the risks and planning safe working procedures are as follows:

4.3.1 Can one person adequately control the risk?

Lone workers should not be placed at more risk than other employees and extra control measures may be required. Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Those with responsibility for carrying out risk

assessments should ask questions such as:

- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there safe access and egress? (This may include the immediate local environment or the surrounding location, for instance in the case of remote work)
- Can one person safely handle any necessary temporary access equipment, such as portable ladders or trestles?
- Are the welfare facilities adequate?
- Can one person safely handle all plant, substances and goods involved in the work?
- Is there a risk of violence?

These and many more questions are contained in the Lone Worker Risk Assessment Form at Appendix 5.

4.3.2 How will the person be supervised?

Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, there is still a duty on the employer to provide appropriate control of the work. Supervision complements the information, instruction and training provided and helps to ensure that staff understand the risks associated with their work and that necessary safety precautions are carried out. It also provides guidance in situations of uncertainty.

The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues. The level of supervision required is a management decision which should be based on the findings of the risk assessments. The higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance.

Procedures that may need to be in place to monitor lone workers include:

- appropriate member(s) of staff periodically visiting and observing people working alone
- maintaining contact with lone workers using either a telephone, radio, e-mail or SMS as available
- ensuring contact arrangements are documented as part of the risk assessment
- use of the barrier systems and/or signing in/out system (where applicable) – these will provide information on who is in the building and help to ensure that everyone can be accounted for in an emergency
- checks that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of their tasks

Contingency plans should specify the action to be taken if a pre-arranged contact cannot be reached, or if an alarm device is activated, and should be included as part of the risk assessment

4.3.3 Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?

Medical fitness should not be a significant factor when considering typical office activities conducted outside normal hours. However, where a manager is aware that a lone worker has a medical condition, they should check whether they require any additional support in order for them to work alone safely. When medical advice is necessary, Human Resources or Student Support should be consulted.

4.3.4 What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or there is an emergency?

The risk assessments should take account of the fact that a lone worker is more vulnerable when the unexpected happens. Risk assessment should identify foreseeable events and emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them.

Where there is genuine concern, for example, as a result of a lone worker failing to attend a visit or an arranged meeting within an agreed time, or to make contact as agreed, the manager should use the information provided in a log or Outlook diary to locate them and ascertain whether they turned up for previous appointments that day.

If it is thought that the lone worker may be at risk, it is important that matters are dealt with quickly, after considering all the available facts and that contact arrangements, once in place, are adhered to.

4.4 Record the findings of the assessment

A risk assessment including lone working risk assessment should be conducted in accordance with *GSA's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure* and the guidance within this procedure. Specific assessments need to be recorded individually. The aim should be to record the findings in a way that provides a useful working document for staff. They will understand the action they need to take and will find it easier to decide when the assessment needs to be reviewed or where further preventative measures are necessary.

All records of risk assessments should include information on:

- The hazards identified
- The safe working procedures that are necessary, including the physical controls, training, supervision and monitoring/contact arrangements
- The contingency plan, should the monitoring/contact arrangements fail to operate
- Any limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone
- In the case of work outside normal hours, the definition of the term 'normal hours'

4.5 Implement the safe working arrangements

The risk assessment will have identified the physical controls, systems of work, training and supervision necessary to ensure the safety of the lone worker. If all of these arrangements are not

already in place, they will need to be implemented in a structured way before the lone working can be permitted to commence.

An action plan with target dates for completion of the outstanding work is often the most appropriate way of ensuring that the necessary arrangements are put in place effectively.

4.6 Monitor and review the safe working arrangements

Once the safe working arrangements have been implemented they need to be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure they remain effective. Monitoring the way in which people are working is a routine day-to-day management function. More formal monitoring of the arrangements will also take place as part of the Active Monitoring Inspection Programme. Lone workers must be actively encouraged to report any incidents which could affect their safety, to allow a proper review of the adequacy of the working arrangements.

All risk assessments should be reviewed at regular intervals, at least once a year or whenever there is a reason to believe that the existing assessment is no longer valid. A record should be made of every review carried out.

Whether staff and students work alone in buildings or carry out visits, etc., Heads of Departments and Programme Leaders or the equivalent manager in Professional Support should first complete the relevant lone worker risk assessments.

Appendices 1 to 3 provide guidance on how to assess lone workers in the following situations:

Appendix 1: Lone Working – Working Alone in (or immediately adjacent to) Buildings

Appendix 2: Lone Working – Field Work including those in remote or rural locations

Appendix 3: Lone Working – Domiciliary Visits and Mobile Workers

5 INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

Managers responsible for staff identified as lone workers must ensure that information is communicated to them regarding the hazards and risks associated with their activities. The outcomes of risk assessments must be shared with employees, including control measures put in place to minimise the risk to their safety and well-being. Staff should be instructed on the appropriate procedures to follow to carry out their duties as safely as possible. In particular they should be given information on the limits as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone. There should also be instructions on the circumstances in which it is appropriate to stop work and seek advice.

In addition staff should be instructed on local management systems (e.g. the use of “checking in” systems and sharing information on their expected schedule of appointments with colleagues etc.). The importance of compliance with procedures must be stressed.

The contents of this Procedure must also be communicated to all relevant staff. This will include temporary staff, agency staff, students, volunteers and contactors. Managers must make staff aware of their individual responsibility to adhere to the arrangements.

New staff and students should be made aware of their responsibilities, in terms of both local management procedures and the contents of the Lone Working Procedure, as part of their local induction. The purpose of this is to increase staff awareness of the personal safety issues associated

with lone working and to equip staff with the knowledge and skills required to recognise hazards and what measures to take to minimise the risks to their safety.

The level of training required by each staff group will be determined by the outcome of local risk assessments.

Anyone identified as a lone worker must receive from their line manager the appropriate instructions and training to their department's protocols on working safely

6 Measuring Performance

It is essential that the instructions provided within this procedure are monitored and accurately evaluated in order to ensure its continued effectiveness. This will be done by the Health and Safety Team as part of any GSA Active Monitoring Inspection Programme.

7 Review of Procedure

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed by Health and Safety Team at least every two years, or in the event of any significant change which impacts on the validity of the document.

8 Useful information

- **GSA Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure**
<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1242524/GSA-Health-and-Safety-Risk-Assessment-Procedure.pdf>
- **Health and Safety in Fieldwork Procedure**
<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/1243844/GSA-OHSMS-Procedure-Health-and-Safety-in-Fieldwork.pdf>
- **'Working Alone – Health and safety guidance on the risks of lone working'**
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>

Appendix 1: Lone Working – Working Alone in (or immediately adjacent to) Buildings

The purpose of this appendix is to provide information relating to the safety of workers working alone in (or immediately adjacent to) GSA buildings.

When considering the associated risk of working alone in a building and/or its grounds, line managers must take into account the following factors:

- Risk associated with the activity being undertaken
- The individual's capacity to undertake the activity
- Security of the building and grounds

You should refer to the *On Campus Lone Worker Checklist* which will act as an aide-memoir. To reduce the risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable, risk assessment must consider control measures. Entry to buildings should be controllable so that unwanted visitors do not gain access. Progress beyond a reception area should be restricted to staff who are responsible for admitting people into the body of the building. A risk assessment for lone workers in buildings (maintenance, cleaners, janitorial staff etc.) should be put in place.

In particular, it is vital that local management systems are in place to protect employees alone in an area of the building. Contact procedures should be agreed and implemented so that others are aware of the presence and movement of lone workers and what procedures to follow should the lone worker fail to make contact at predetermined times. These procedures are especially important during out of hours work, as there will be fewer staff members in other areas of the premises to offer support should an incident occur. Entrance security systems should be in place in areas where staff work alone to ensure there are no unwanted callers. Consideration should be given to the quality of lighting and whether security cameras or panic buttons, linked to a manned location, are also required.

In addition to the above, all lone working staff must undergo training appropriate to the level of risk, as determined in the risk assessment.

Staff working alone within a department should:

- Ensure they have access to a telephone to call for help if needed
- Ensure that keys are secured
- Contact the Reid reception or emergency services as appropriate if they become anxious regarding their safety
- If an incident occurs, report the circumstances no matter how minor to an appropriate manager who should complete an accident report. Details of this are outlined within GSA's *Reporting of Accidents, Incidents and Near Miss Events Procedure*.
- Be aware of any personal risk factors arising from a medical condition
- On leaving the area, ensure that all windows and doors are secured to prevent unauthorised access, so that the working environment is as safe as possible

Appendix 2: Lone Working – Field Work including those in remote or rural locations

This appendix should be read in conjunction with *GSA's Health and Safety in Fieldwork Procedure*. The purpose of this appendix is to provide information relating to the safety of workers working alone in the course of carrying out field work which may be in remote and/or rural areas. This type of fieldwork will be in-directly supervised. The risk assessment and overall fieldwork documentation must take account of the lone working and ensure that specific controls are in place (e.g. supervisory arrangements, emergency plans in case the lone worker fails to check in, and the training and experience required on the part of the participant).

When considering the associated risk of carrying out field work in remote areas, whether urban or rural, managers must take into account the following factors:

- Risk associated with the activity being undertaken
- The individual's capacity to undertake the activity
- Suitability of equipment in use for exposure to elements
- Availability/ Suitability of personal protective equipment for use in exposed situations
- Distance from nearest A&E and other emergency services and First Aid provision
- Risks associated with travel in remote areas
- Likelihood of having to deal with confrontation
- Communication availability
- Personal safety and security

To reduce the risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable, the risk assessment must consider control measures such as:

- Whether a minimum of 2 people should be allocated to this fieldwork activity
- Whether alternative communication technology is available for use in isolated situations
- Implementation of a management control system ensuring that information (such as where the field work is taking place; the duration of the activity; anticipated time of arrival on site, departure from site and return to normal work base; any special contact arrangements; location and contact details of accommodation etc.) is easily available to manager or other suitable colleagues.
- Provision of alternative work equipment for use in exposed conditions
- Provision of basic or enhanced first aid equipment
- Advanced notification of field work activity to emergency services
- Training appropriate to the level of risk

Appendix 3: Lone Working – Domiciliary Visits and Mobile Workers

Introduction

This Appendix has been written with the intention of ensuring the safety of staff who are expected to carry out work in private homes. This could include, for example, HR practitioners, line managers or other staff conducting home visits to staff, researchers visiting the homes of participants.

Risk Assessment

It is essential that all such visits are subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Therefore, when considering the associated risks, managers must take into account factors including:

- Known history of the person being visited
- Family circumstances
- Living arrangements
- Concerns considered relevant by the referrer
- Travelling to isolated or rural areas
- Travelling between appointments
- Communication availability
- Personal safety and security

To reduce the risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable, the risk assessment must consider control measures such as:

- Arrange for meetings to be held in GSA or other suitable premises rather than at participants home where possible
- Allocate two members of staff to make visit, particularly if this is a first visit
- Implementation of a management control system ensuring that information (such as where the lone worker is going; who they are visiting; contact address and telephone number; estimated arrival time and duration of visit; time expected to return to office; time and location of next visit or, time when they are due to arrive home) is shared with colleagues
- Training appropriate to the level of risk

Appendix 4: GSA On campus Lone Worker checklist

GSA On campus Lone Worker checklist

This checklist is an aide-memoir to assist in the production of a risk assessment and safe system of work.

They are not exhaustive and should be developed and refined further for specific circumstances.

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1.	Does the workplace present any special risks to a person working alone?				
2.	Is there safe access and egress?				
3.	If there is temporary access such as ladders, trestles, etc, can they be safely handled and used by a lone person?				
4.	Can all plant and equipment to be used during the lone working be safely handled and used by a lone person?				
5.	Can all substances (and other hazardous materials such as biological material) be safely handled and used by a lone person?				
6.	Can any manual handling that may be carried out be safely done by a lone person?				
7.	Is there a risk of violence?				
8.	Are young workers (under 18 years) at a higher risk due to their lack of experience, knowledge, etc?				
9.	Are there adequate arrangements for travel to and from the work?				
10.	Are adequate first-aid facilities available?				
11.	Is there a need to train the lone worker in first aid?				
12.	In an emergency can help easily find and reach the lone worker?				
	Communication and Supervision				

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
13.	Are there arrangements for regular contact between the lone worker and the supervisor?				
14.	Will supervisors periodically visit the lone worker?				
15.	Are automatic monitoring and warning devices appropriate and used (e.g. personal movement or inactivity alarms, radio panic alarms, etc)?				
16.	Is there easy access at all times to communication with the "outside world" and emergency services?				
The Lone Worker					
17.	Does the lone worker have any medical condition that increases the risk of working alone?				
18.	Does the lone worker have any medical condition such that any foreseeable emergencies may impose additional physical and mental burdens which are unacceptable?				
19.	Is the lone worker sufficiently experienced?				
20.	Is the lone worker provided with adequate information about the risks involved with the tasks and the precautions to be taken?				
21.	Is the lone worker provided with suitable training to allow the premises, equipment, any substances, and protective equipment to be safely used?				
22.	Is the lone worker provided with suitable training to allow them to deal with any foreseeable emergencies?				

Appendix 5 : Lone Working Risk Assessment Form

Description of work activity :	Role of Lone Worker:	Number of people exposed:
School:	Department:	
Risk assessment carried out by:	Date completed:	Review date:
Assessor's signature:		

Hazard:	Controls and precautions against the hazards:	Comments/ Action Required (including who and when):	Action Party:	By when:
Individual				
<p>Medical fitness: Is the Lone Worker subject to any medical condition that may place them at increased risk when working alone. [Where they may be in doubt refer the Lone Worker to Human Resources or Student Support]</p>	<p>The Lone Worker must ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully discussed with their line manager and, if necessary, Occupational Health and own GP. Individuals must not work alone if any such condition is assessed as placing them at increased risk. <i>Any person who requires assistance to get out of the building in an emergency must not work alone.</i></p>			

<p>Supervision : What arrangements are in place to maintain contact with the Lone Worker ?</p>	<p>The Lone Worker must comply with the out of hours log in/out arrangements in operation within the building. Set up contact arrangements with family member. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular contact by phone - identify who is responsible for maintaining contact with the Lone Worker and how it will be achieved. • End of shift contact • Periodic site visit to lone worker by supervisor • Identification of co-worker to be within visual or audible contact of the lone worker • Signing in arrangements 			
<p>Training & Competency : Has necessary information instruction and training been given to the Lone Worker and is the Lone Worker competent to carry out the work alone?</p>	<p>Any person authorised to be in the building outside normal hours must be fully competent to carry out the work safely and be fully conversant with emergency procedures.</p>			
<p>Location & Premises</p>				
<p>Building security: Is the building secure?</p>	<p>Access to the building is restricted to authorised personnel outside normal hours. In the event that the Lone worker has concerns about security or suspects there is an intruder in the building they must contact the Reid Reception.</p>			

<p>Access: Is there a safe means of access/egress for the lone worker (consider lighting and personal security issues and means of escape in emergency)</p>	<p>Entrances in the vicinity of the building and car park are well lit. The Lone Worker should plan how to get to car/public transport after leaving, taking account of potential personal safety issues.</p>			
<p>Emergencies: Does the Lone Worker have access to emergency warning devices to raise the alarm in event of emergency e.g. fire alarm, motion sensors /manual device (panic alarms).</p>	<p>Lone Workers must know local arrangements on how respond in event of fire or other emergency</p>			
<p>First aid: Are there arrangements in place to deal with a situation where the Lone Worker becomes ill or has an accident? (Access to First aiders and facilities)</p>	<p>First aiders are unlikely to be present. First aid boxes are available and contents checked regularly. In the event of a Lone Worker feeling unwell they should if possible return home or contact the Reid Reception for assistance.</p>			

<p>Welfare facilities: Is there adequate heating, lighting, access to drinking water and toilets.</p>	<p>The Lone Worker should be aware that heating/cooling in the area may be much reduced unless the business need for after hours working has been established.</p>			
<p>Process/Work Activity</p>				
<p>Use of computers and general office equipment</p>	<p>Lone Worker should ensure their work station complies, and is set up in accordance with GSA's Display Screen Equipment Procedure and has undergone a DSE assessment. Lone Worker should take regular breaks from DSE work</p>			
<p>Slip/trips/falls</p>	<p>Regular inspection of areas to ensure that any trip hazards [torn carpets, uneven flooring, trailing cables etc] receive prompt attention. Individuals with temporarily impaired mobility must not work alone.</p>			
<p>Electrical equipment</p>	<p>Ensure all office equipment is electrically tested. Electrical cables and plugs visually inspected for damage. Do not interfere with plugs or power supply.</p>			
<p>Work with hazardous substances and or machinery</p>	<p>Not permitted for students.</p>			

Single handed lifting or handling of any load that is of such a weight as to cause injury.	Not permitted for students.			
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