Safety information &  
risk assessment for visiting groups

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# Version information

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Owner | Date and source of approval | Version and OLARIS# | Description of changes | Next review due |
| Senior Director, Office of the Clerk | October 2022 | V1.0 | Updates regarding COVID and visitors attending programs or visiting the Assembly building. | July 2028 |
| Senior Director Office of the Clerk | February 2024 | V 1.1 | Removing social distancing requirements and outdated program/room limits | February 2026 |

# Essential information

**Venue name**: ACT Legislative Assembly

**Location**: 196 London Circuit, Canberra City, ACT 2600.

**Legislative Assembly:** (02) 620 50439 or [ola@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:ola@parliament.act.gov.au)

**Education program**: (02) 6205 3016 or [laeducation@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:laeducation@parliament.act.gov.au)

**Website**: [www.parliament.act.gov.au](http://www.parliament.act.gov.au)

# Purpose

This document has been prepared to assist MLAs, Education and Engagement staff, and those visiting the Assembly (particularly schools and community groups participating in the Assembly’s education and engagement program).

It sets out:

* general information about visiting the Assembly;
* emergency management arrangements;
* arrangements for effectively managing risks associated with COVID-19; and
* a general risk assessment examining the risks associated with groups (and individuals) visiting the Assembly, along with the relevant controls in place to effectively manage those risks.

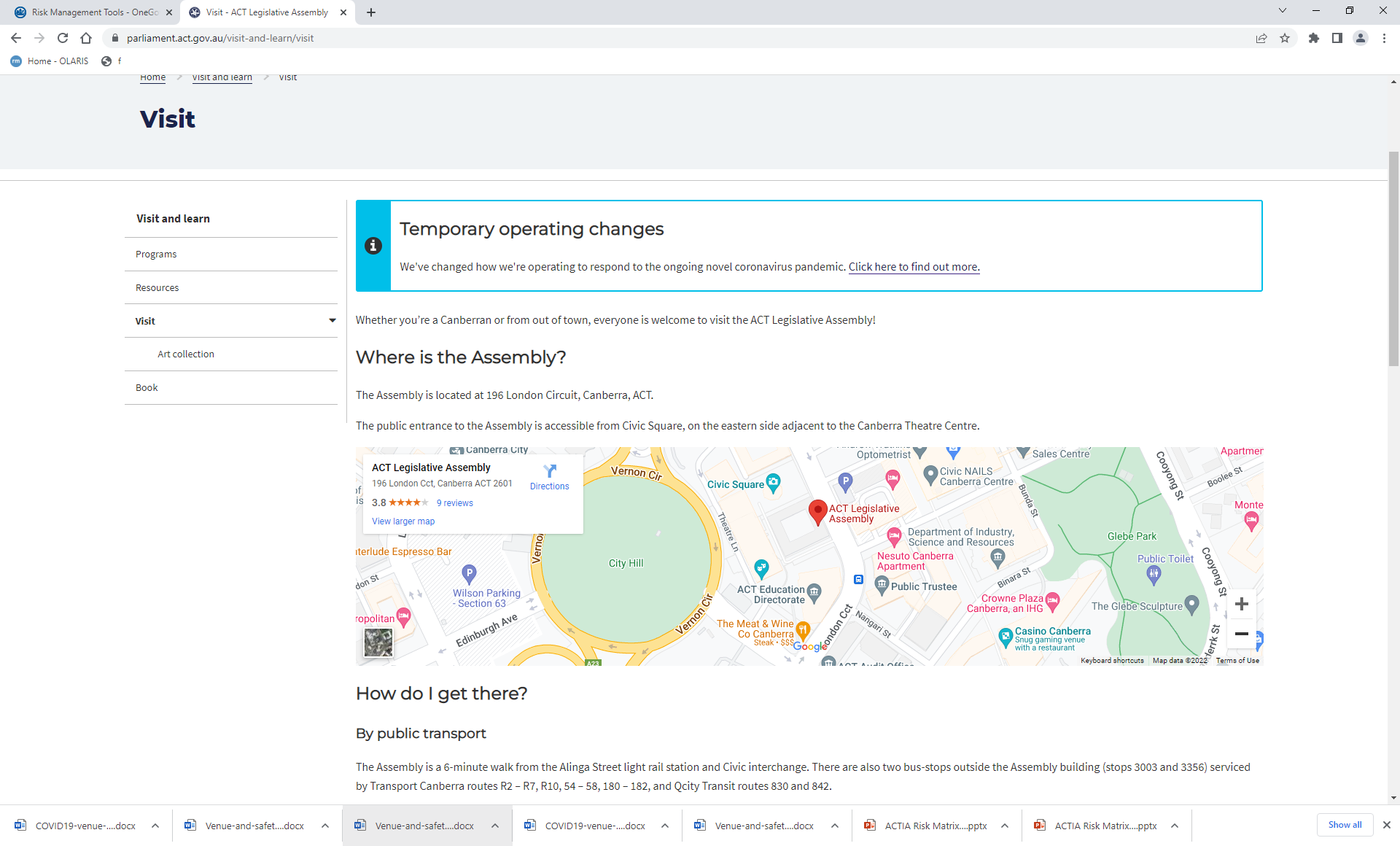
This information is not intended to replace an individual’s or participating groups’ (including schools’) own risk assessment processes.

# General information

The following general information is provided to assist groups and persons visiting the Assembly.

## Getting to the Assembly

The Legislative Assembly is located at 196 London Circuit, the public entrance is located on Civic Square.



### By school or chartered bus

Buses are able to set down visitors in the designated drop off point on London Circuit, adjacent to Civic Square. However, availability of these spaces cannot be guaranteed.

To avoid having to cross the road, visiting groups should disembark on the northbound side of the road which is immediately adjacent to the Assembly.

**Due care should be given to ensure that school students do not wander onto the road when exiting or entering buses.**

### By public transport

The Assembly is a 6-minute walk from the Alinga Street light rail station and Civic interchange. There are also two bus-stops outside the Assembly building; stops 3003 and 3356.

### By car

Paid short-and long stay public parking is available at:

* Southeast Constitution Avenue carpark (access off Constitution Avenue);
* Constitution Place, 220 London Circuit (basement carpark); and
* London Circuit carpark beside the CMAG building (access off London Circuit).

## COVID-19

The safety, health and wellbeing of all visitors to the Assembly is our priority. The following restrictions apply:

* Covid-positive persons are not permitted in the Assembly precincts within five days of a positive test.
* A household contact of a covid-positive person is not permitted in the precincts within 7 days.
* Anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms is not permitted in the precincts.

**In the case of school visits as part of the Assembly’s education and engagement program, it is essential that, prior to arriving at the Assembly, schools assure themselves that no students or teachers are sick, symptomatic or the subject of isolation/quarantine arrangements issued by public health authorities.**

All relevant public health directions issued by ACT Health ACT must be observed.

For more information, see section 4 of this document below.

## Arrival & departure

Upon arrival, individual visitors to the Assembly should present to the public entrance to the Assembly, located next to Civic Square.

Prior to entry, visitors are subject to the relevant security screening procedures and any public health requirements that may be in place (see below).

### Road safety

In relation to school visits, teaching staff are responsible for ensuring the safety of students participating in the Assembly’s education and engagement program as they exit or enter buses. **Care should be taken to ensure that students do not wander onto the road when embarking or disembarking buses.**

Education and Engagement staff from the Office will meet groups at the public entrance to the Assembly, which is located next to Civic Square.

## Security

All visitors to the building, including visiting school groups and those participating in education events, are required to undergo security screening.

Screening is similar to that which applies in airports, including metal detection scanning and x-ray scanning technology.

Teachers should allow about 10 minutes for security processing for a school group of 30 students.

Potentially threatening items such as knives, metal scissors, cricket bats and box-cutters cannot be taken into the building as such items are not permitted under Legislative Assembly access control policies and procedures.

Where security personnel detect a prohibited weapon (e.g. firearms, certain bladed weapons, tasers) during the screening process, it is the Assembly’s protective security policy and procedure that the Australian Federal Police will be called. CCTV cameras are installed throughout the Assembly building.

Due to the limited space available, the Assembly asks that students’ school bags are not brought to the Assembly precincts during class visits.

## Group size

Visiting school groups must not be larger than 60 people (excluding staff). A visiting school group must be accompanied by a teacher (at least one teacher per class group of 30 students).

The contact details for the organising teacher must be provided to Education and Engagement staff prior to visits.

## Duty of care and workplace health and safety (child safety)

The Assembly, and the Assembly Education and Engagement program takes children’s health and safety—physical and psychosocial—very seriously.

Teachers have a duty to, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of children who are under a school’s care and charge while visiting the Assembly precincts. All students must be accompanied by a teacher.

The Speaker, Clerk, MLAs and Assembly staff also have duties under the [Workplace Health and Safety Act](https://legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35/) to ensure that relevant WHS risks are managed effectively and that the Assembly precincts are safe. Through the Assembly’s Health and Safety Committee relevant WHS risks are identified, assessed and treated to minimise health and safety risks to the greatest extent possible.

After consultation with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, the Speaker and the Clerk have adopted a [child safety code of conduct and policy](https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/function/footer/childsafety).. These are available on the Assembly website and the Assembly intranet.

## Public liability insurance

The Assembly is covered by appropriate public liability insurance and school groups visiting the Assembly to participate in its education programs are covered under this policy.

## First aid

The Legislative Assembly has a first aid room, first aid kits and a number of staff with first aid qualifications available throughout the building. For more information on first aid contact the Principal Attendant on (02) 6205 0439.

The Assembly also has a defibrillator located near the public entrance.

## Emergencies

The Office of the Legislative Assembly has in place appropriate evacuation procedures dealing with a range of scenarios. Exit points are clearly sign-posted, evacuation instructions are listed near key entry and exit points, and evacuation alarms and an emergency intercom system can be deployed in the event of an emergency of some type (see section 4 below).

## Staff background checks

Education and Engagement Officers, who have direct contact with vulnerable persons, including children, are registered pursuant to the *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011.*

## Accessibility

Visitors can move between the floors of the building via lifts. Accessible toilets are available on the ground floor of the London Circuit side of the building.

## Toilet facilities

Public toilets are located on the ground floor of the London Circuit side of the building (in between the committee rooms) and the ground floor adjacent to the reception room.

## Hospitality / allergies

From time to time, refreshments may be provided to visitors.

It should be noted that because food is prepared offsite, the Assembly does not guarantee that any of the food provided will meet the needs of people with dietary requirements such as celiac or those with allergies to foods such as peanuts.

**To ensure safety, schools are advised to make their own arrangements for students/participants who may have food allergies or sensitivities.**

## Photography and filming

Photography and filming within the Assembly building is not permitted without the prior approval of the Speaker.

## Student behaviour

Teachers are expected to ensure that students maintain appropriate standards of behaviour in the chamber, public gallery and throughout the building generally. Students should be adequately supervised by teachers at all times.

Students should be reminded that the use of mobile phones, speaking loudly and other disruptive behaviour is prohibited in the chamber. No food or drinks are allowed in the chamber.

# What to do in an emergency

A full emergency evacuation will be initiated in response to a potentially life-threatening situation or when the building cannot function due to service malfunctions.

The following procedure outlines the actions that must be taken by building occupants, including by visitors and school groups, in the event of an emergency evacuation.

## Procedure

In the event of an emergency, an alert by the following alarm signals will be broadcast over the building's Emergency Warning Intercom System (EWIS):

* Alert—an intermittent "beep, beep" sound
* Evacuate—a continuous "whoop, whoop" sound

### **Alert alarm signal**

**When the "alert" alarm is sounded, all building occupants should:**

1. gather personal belongings (if safe to do so)—if a building occupant is on another floor do not attempt to return to work area for personal belongings;
2. secure your workstation and any sensitive documentation and switch-off and/or isolate all equipment etc. (if time permits);
3. do not use desk telephone;
4. wait until directed by a Warden to evacuate;
5. ensure any visitors to the workplace are aware of emergency procedures; and
6. tradespersons on site should make the site that they are working on safe (if time permits).

### Evacuate alarm signal

When the "evacuate" alarm is sounded or when directed by a Warden, building occupants should:

1. close but do not lock the door;
2. move into the corridor in an orderly manner;
3. ensure any visitors to the building move to the corridor;
4. advise the Warden or Floor Warden of any person not participating in evacuation;
5. assist any person who is physically impaired to follow the directions of the Wardens or the green EXIT signs to a safe area (do not use lifts); and
6. go to the designated assembly point on the steps of the Canberra Theatre and assemble in work groups to assist in positively identifying that all building occupants have been successfully evacuated and to aid in subsequent planning.

## Evacuation/assembly point

The evacuation/assembly point for staff and visitors in the Assembly precincts is on the steps of the Canberra Theatre. There are a five different emergency exists from the Assembly building as shown in the below diagram.



# Parliamentary education Covid-19 policy and procedures

## Policy requirements

The following requirements apply to all groups and persons visiting the Assembly as part of the Assembly’s parliamentary education program:

1. A person who has tested positive for Covid is not permitted in the precincts for a period of five days from their positive test.
2. A person who is a household contact of a Covid-positive person is not permitted in the precincts for a period of 7 days.
3. Any person exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms is not permitted in the Assembly precincts.
4. All public health directions and any restrictions must be observed.
5. Groups must not be larger than 60 people (excluding office staff).
6. All visitors must be screened at the public entrance (only two people are permitted in the vestibule next to the screening point at any one time).
7. Contact details of all visitors to be obtained, for school groups all teacher contact details required.
8. All posted room limits must be observed.
9. Visiting groups are not permitted in the secure areas of the building.
10. Visitors are to follow instructions given by education and engagement officers and Assembly attendants.
11. Limited or no catering depending on prevailing assessment of risk.

## School visits to the Assembly

The following procedures and requirements apply to the Assembly’s Education and Engagement staff, attendant staff and other staff involved in delivery of the Assembly’s parliamentary education function.

### Program

1. Clear communication with visit organisers to ensure compliance with COVID-19 health and safety requirements, including:
   1. reusable resources and equipment will be cleaned between groups;
   2. security screening and use of sanitiser on entry to the building;
   3. any rubbish/recycling to be placed in appropriate bins by participants at conclusion of the program;
   4. all instructions by Assembly staff must be followed to ensure safe conduct of the program.

Maintaining regular communication between Education and Engagement staff and school/community group organisers to be sure that the most recent public health advice is properly considered in organising an event.

Where public health advice affects the Assembly’s assessment of risk, program cancellations may occur at short notice.

Education and engagement staff to advise all organisers of group bookings that the health of all participants should be monitored and if anyone is sick the group should not proceed with the visit.

**No person who is sick or has cold or flu-like symptoms is permitted entry to the Assembly precincts.**

### Venue preparation

1. Education and engagement staff will:
   1. check all sanitiser dispensers, organise refills as required (relocate mobile dispensers to venue);
   2. wipe down/sanitise mace and other educational aids after each use.

Posters for hand hygiene, prevent the spread of germs and your COVID responsibilities are displayed in areas where visitors participated in programs, events or meetings ([www.covid19.act.gov.au/signs-and-factsheets](http://www.covid19.act.gov.au/signs-and-factsheets)).

### Arrival and check-in at the precincts

1. Upon arrival, education and engagement staff will:
   1. Explain venue and safety information including in relation to emergency management, evacuations etc.
   2. ensure contact details of all adults are obtained during security screening process (or beforehand in the case of school groups); and
   3. advise of sanitiser arrangements, everyone to use on entry to the Assembly.
   4. .

Once in the room where program is to be conducted education and engagement staff will adhere to room limits in all areas.

During breaks, education and engagement staff willadvise that courtyards can be used as a breakout space.

### Leaving the precincts

1. Education and engagement staff to:
2. direct students to place all materials placed in correct bins or taken by participants before leaving.
3. advise attendants to contact cleaners to undertake thorough cleaning of rooms/equipment.
4. thoroughly wash their hands after doing any cleaning of program resources at the conclusion of an event (e.g. mace).

## Education and engagement staff visits to schools

1. The following procedures and requirements apply to the Assembly’s Education and Engagement staff, attendant staff and other staff involved in delivery of the Assembly’s parliamentary education function.
2. Clear communication to the visit organiser to ensure compliance with COVID-19 health and safety requirements are met.
3. The following requirements/procedures apply:
4. Education/engagement officers will enter the school, sign in and go straight to the classroom where the program is to be conducted, run the program and leave again immediately afterwards. Ensure any paperwork required by schools has been completed prior to the visit.
5. Mock mace, this will be cleaned prior to the visit, handled only by education staff and one student during the roleplay (as sergeant-at-arms) and cleaned again at the conclusion of the visit.

Role-play scripts will be cleaned prior to the visit and cleaned again at the conclusion of the visit.

# Risk assessment for individuals and school group visits to the Assembly

## Context

The Office of the Assembly has as a statutory function the provision of parliamentary education about the Assembly and its committees. This risk assessment is directed towards articulating the risks that confront the Office in relation to the education function, it includes modifications to the program arising from the COVID-19 pandemic to establish the controls and treatments that will be/have been implemented to lower the likelihood and consequence of these risks to within acceptable parameters. Risks have been assessed against the [ACT’s whole-of-government risk matrix.](https://apps.treasury.act.gov.au/insurance-and-risk-management/risk-management)

The Office will decide when to conduct school and community group visits based on the prevailing public health advice and an assessment of risk.

### Risk assessment for individuals and school groups

| Risk | Source and contributors | Controls | Additional treatments | Assessment with treatment |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Road safety risks associated with arrival and departure** | * Bus drop-off zone on Civic Square is a main road (London Circuit), potential for interaction with traffic. | * Groups should disembark/embark on the northbound side of the road which is immediately adjacent to the Assembly. * School groups should make their way to the public entrance of the building and present to the security attendants for screening. The Venue and safety information for visiting groups is provided to teachers/schools prior to their attendance at the precincts. This allows for expectation management and situational awareness on the day. | * Teaching staff are responsible for ensuring the safety of students as they leave or enter buses, as well as safe passage to and from the Assembly building. | Likelihood—1  Consequence—4 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Slip, fall and trip accidents** | * Poor/risky behaviour * Lack of supervision * General slip/fall/trip risks outlined in WHS risk register | * Students sit one per seat during programs and move between areas in an orderly manner, no running or pushing. * Ensure teacher/staff supervision or students. * No running, jumping in the courtyard area, move carefully between different surfaces (concrete, paving and grass), do not walk on or over garden beds. * General hazards giving rise to possible slips, trips etc are identified as part of the Office’s hazard identification process. | * Assembly education team to remove any potential hazards when setting up an area for an education program. * Ongoing monitoring of ad hoc hazards that might arise in the course of set up / delivery. * Teachers remain with the students and are responsible for their supervision at all times in all spaces. * The Assembly building has a first aid room, security staff are trained in first aid. Teachers are able to bring a bag containing first aid items into the building. The Assembly building also has a defibrillator which is located at the public entrance. | Likelihood—3  Consequence—2 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Poor health / safety outcomes for children or young people** | * Visiting groups of students under 18 years of age * Work experience/internship placements for students (under 18 years) * Inadequate policy provision for working with vulnerable people (child safety) | * All Education Officers have a current Working with Vulnerable People registration card. * Develop and adopt child safety code of conduct and policy (communication by Speaker/Clerk to all members and their staff. * Policy requirements around supervision, no off-site components (i.e., members not to stake students out of the precincts) in connection with work experience program. * Implementation of revised induction arrangements for MLAs and participants in vocational programs addressing duty of care and particular requirements for hosting/participating. * After consultation with the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure, the Speaker and the Clerk have adopted a [child safety code of conduct and policy](https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/function/footer/childsafety). These are available on the Assembly website and the Assembly intranet. | * Students to remain at the Assembly precincts for all work experience activities. * Induction program on HROnboard. | Likelihood—2  Consequence—3 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Allergic reactions and medical emergencies** | * Catering at events * Allergens in offices/workspaces | * To ensure safety, visitors with any food allergies should arrange to bring their own food. Food provided by the Assembly cannot be guaranteed to be free of allergens. * Offices hosting work experience or internship students advised of allergies/medical conditions to ensure a safe working environment. * Education staff to request allergy/medical information from work experience/internship students to ensure supervisors can be appropriately briefed to provide safe workspaces. |  | Likelihood—2  Consequence—3 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium** |
| **Student separation from the group** | * Students going to bathrooms * Students left behind in a room as part of a tour | * Students are moved between activities in a coordinated manner. Rooms in the building are located in close proximity to each other and security staff are able to direct students to the correct location in the unlikely event of a separation from the group. | * Teachers remain with the students and are responsible for their supervision at all times in all spaces. * Education staff to check spaces to ensure all students have exited before proceeding with a program/tour. | Likelihood—3  Consequence—2 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Theft, damage to Assembly property** | * Inadequate teacher supervision, students left unattended * Lack of clarity about behaviour in the chamber | * CCTV—deterrent, post incident investigation * Teacher supervision * Signage about not playing with/interfering with furniture, items in the chamber. |  | Likelihood—2  Consequence—2 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Theft, damaged, or lost visitor property** | * Student bags and valuables bought to the Assembly | * Storage of bags is limited, it is encouraged that students do not bring bags as all equipment required for programs is provided. * Any bags will be screened by security and stored in the room where programs are conducted. | * Security of valuables cannot be guaranteed, visitors are asked to remove valuables from bags and keep them on their person | Likelihood—4  Consequence—2 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Assembly Education officers and students/teachers exposed to coronavirus** | * Transmission between Assembly Education officers and students/teachers during programs run in schools. * Failure to comply with physical distancing requirements and other COVID safe requirements. * Inadequate sanitisation between events/visits * Inadequate screening of visitors, students, staff, teachers etc. | * Visit can only take place in the event that there are no students and/or teachers who are symptomatic (confirm on the day prior to the visit that this is the case and again upon arrival at the venue on the day). * Education Officers not to proceed with program if they are symptomatic. * Use of hand sanitiser before, during and after visit * Sanitising any materials that are used in the visit (e.g. mock mace) * Leave single use resources with the teacher and students. | * Provide contact details to the school so notification can occur in the event of a COVID contact being identified * Keep teacher contact and class details for the conducted program so notification can occur in the event of a COVID contact being identified | Likelihood—2  Consequence—3 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |
| **Transmission of coronavirus between education program participants and occupants of the Assembly precincts** (MLAs, Office staff, members’ staff etc) leading to illness/COVID-19 | * Poor screening * Poor policy/administrative controls * Inadequate hygiene arrangements * Lack of cleaning/sanitation * Lack of PPE * Poor understanding of implementation/enforcement of internal controls * Inadequate response where a suspected or confirmed case has been present in the precincts as part of the education program | * Cleaning procedures following attendance by groups/visitors * Use of sanitiser * Signage regarding room limits, hygiene requirements * Observation of rooms limits * Limited or no catering depending on prevailing assessment of risk Application of [Safework Australia procedure](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/Infographic-Suspected-or-Confirmed-Cases-COVID_19.pdf) related to suspected or confirmed cases as circulated to all occupants of the precincts. Notify Manager, Security and Building Services/Manager, HR and Entitlements, public health/WorkSafe authorities. | * Adoption and application/implementation of Procedure for check-in (see above), procedure for conduct of programs (see above)—Education Officers (As at time that visits within the precincts resume) | Likelihood—2  Consequence—3 (in the form the impact is most likely to take)  Risk: **Medium.** |

# Appendix A: Risk matrix

