1 Purpose and application

(1) These procedures are to give effect to the Work Health and Safety Policy 2012 ("the policy").

(2) These procedures apply to:
   (a) staff, students, affiliates and visitors; and
   (b) all activities conducted by and on behalf of the University.

2 Commencement

These procedures commence on 19 December 2012.

3 Interpretation

(1) Words and phrases used in these procedures and not otherwise defined in this document have the meanings they have in the policy.

   Note: See clause 6 of the policy.

(2) In these procedures the following terms have the meanings set out below.

   dangerous incident has the meaning given to it in section 37 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. As at the date of these procedures, that definition is as set out in the schedule to these procedures.

   emergency means an event that arises internally, or from external sources, which may adversely affect the occupants or visitors in a facility, and which requires an immediate response.

   health and safety representative means a worker elected by their fellow workers to represent the health and safety interests of their work group, in accordance with clause 9 of these procedures.

   notifiable means the death of a person, a serious injury or illness of a person,
incident or a dangerous incident.

serious injury or illness has the meaning given to it in section 36 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. As at the date of these procedures, that definition is as set out in the schedule to these procedures.

work group means a grouping of workers that is largely aligned to an organisational unit, determined in consultation with workers, and listed as such on the work and health and safety website.

4 Work health and safety action plans

(1) A work health and safety action plan must set out work health and safety goals specific to the organisational unit concerned, taking into consideration its risks and resources.

(2) Work health and safety action plans should address the following, where relevant:
   (a) identifying and managing priority work health and safety risks;
   (b) reporting and investigating incidents and taking corrective action;
   (c) emergency preparedness;
   (d) organising work health and safety training, including induction and specific risk management training;
   (e) managing hazardous substances, including labelling and disposal;
   (f) procuring goods and services, including managing contractors and service providers; and
   (g) monitoring work health and safety practices, including through workplace inspections and safety conversations.

(3) Work health and safety action plans should be monitored on a regular basis and reviewed annually.

Note: Further guidance and a template for documenting a work health and safety action plan is available on the work health and safety website.

5 Work health and safety risk management steps

(1) Identify hazards or hazardous tasks
   (a) Identify workplace hazards or hazardous tasks by:
      (i) reviewing incident reports and records;
      (ii) observing work activities;
      (iii) asking workers and others to raise work health and safety matters during regular discussions e.g. during work group meetings. This might include discussion of recent incidents, new or changed processes, maintenance issues or suggested improvements;
      (iv) reviewing standard operating procedures; and
      (v) referring to labels, instructions and literature relating to a particular workplace, activity, equipment or materials. These may include operator manuals, safety data sheets, industry bulletins, or journals.
(2) Prioritise risks

(a) Prioritise risks for attention by giving consideration to:
   (i) the likelihood of exposure, including how many people are or may be exposed, frequency, duration and intensity; and
   (ii) the potential consequences of exposure, that is, whether serious injuries may result.

(b) Each faculty, school and administrative unit should identify its top five work health and safety risks. These priorities may be altered as the risks are appropriately controlled. Other lower priority work health and safety risks should also be addressed.

(3) Assess risks

(a) Proposed or existing activities should be subject to a risk assessment. Priority for assessment should be given to the top five identified WHS risks.

(b) A risk assessment should consider each of the following:
   (i) the physical activity required, such as whether it involves physical exertion, repetitive action or uncomfortable posture;
   (ii) the work environment, such as lighting, layout, temperature, egress routes, isolation or traffic;
   (iii) the nature of the hazard itself, such as whether it involves hazardous substances, machinery, sharps or blades, radiation, potentially violent clients or intruders;
   (iv) the individuals involved in the process, including their level of training and expertise, their physical capacity to perform the task and any existing condition that may increase the risk, such as injury, pregnancy or allergy; and
   (v) any other apparent risk factors.

(4) Control risks

(a) Suitable risk controls should be chosen on the basis of the risk assessment.

(b) Each identified risk factor should be addressed when choosing risk controls.

(c) The following hierarchy of hazard control lists different risk control options, commencing with the most effective. The most effective option should be chosen where possible, and a combination risk controls is usually required.
   (i) Eliminate the hazard or task if the risks outweigh the potential benefits.
   (ii) Substitute with something less hazardous, e.g. substitute a toxic substance with another that is non-toxic.
   (iii) Isolate by using barriers or distance, e.g. put insulation around noisy equipment.
   (iv) Use engineering controls, such as local exhaust ventilation to remove dust or fumes, or automate the process.
   (v) Minimise the size or volume of the hazard and the duration of exposure.
   (vi) Rearrange the work area and work flow, e.g. have deliveries made to the end-point to avoid re-handling, or intersperse repetitive activity with different tasks to avoid overuse injuries.
(vii) Establish safe work practices, such as restricting access to the area, keeping the area free of clutter, and being prepared for emergencies like spills.

(viii) Prepare and use safe work method statements for hazardous tasks.

(ix) Provide appropriate training and supervision. As a minimum, this would include familiarisation with local hazards and their control, safe work methods and emergency procedures.

(x) Wear suitable personal protective equipment appropriate to the work where needed, such as robust footwear, gloves, laboratory coats, safety glasses, ear plugs or muffs and dust masks, as a secondary measure to supplement the other agreed risk controls.

Note: Further guidelines are available on the work health and safety website.

(5) Review control measures

(a) The chosen risk controls should be monitored after implementation to ensure they remain effective. As a minimum, a review should be done annually if the work is still performed.

(b) In addition, a review is required whenever:
   
   (i) there is a relevant reported incident;
   
   (ii) there is a significant change in the work process such as new equipment, or new staff; or

   (iii) new information about the hazard or process becomes available.

(c) If a review discloses that risk controls are not in place or not effective, the risk must be re-assessed and appropriate controls adopted.

6 Monitoring work health and safety performance

(1) Work health and safety must be a standing first item on any general management meeting agenda to allow active monitoring of performance.

(2) The University’s performance planning and development program should be used annually to review individual performance in work health and safety.

(3) The Work Health and Safety Services Unit will ensure that the work health and safety performance of faculties and administrative units is audited annually, alternating between a general work health and safety management systems audit and a specific audit of those areas involved in working with known hazards.

   (a) Work health and safety audits will be conducted by an independent auditor.

   (b) The auditor will provide results and recommendations arising from the audit, which will be made available to relevant managers and University committees.

(4) Workers who observe another person engaged in conduct in breach of the policy should inform that person of this fact, so that the conduct may be rectified. If the issue is not addressed after a reasonable period, the matter should be escalated in accordance with these procedures.

7 Incident and hazard reporting

(1) All notifiable incidents must be reported immediately.
(2) Other incidents should be reported within 24 hours of the occurrence.

(3) Hazard reports should be made as soon as possible after the hazard is observed.

(4) Incident and hazard reports should be made orally to the supervisor of the person or activity or hazard involved, and submitted online using RiskWare - the University’s system for reporting and managing incidents.

(5) The supervisor who is responsible for the person or activity involved must:
   (a) immediately notify the Work Health and Safety Services Unit of a notifiable incident;
   (b) as soon as possible, notify the Work Health and Safety Services Unit of any other incident;
   (c) investigate all matters promptly, and submit, using RiskWare, proposed corrective actions for hazards and incidents within seven days of the initial report.

(6) Work health and safety issues relating to University buildings, grounds or associated services, or physical safety, may be referred directly to Campus Infrastructure & Services using Campus Assist Online.

8 Consultation

(1) Workers must be consulted whenever:
   (a) identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety;
   (b) deciding ways to eliminate or minimise those risks;
   (c) deciding on the adequacy of facilities for workers’ welfare;
   (d) proposing changes that may affect workers’ health and safety; or
   (e) when making decisions about the procedures for:
      (i) consulting with workers;
      (ii) resolving work health and safety issues at the workplace;
      (iii) monitoring the health of workers;
      (iv) monitoring the conditions at any workplace under the management or control of the University; or
      (v) providing information and training for workers.

(2) Consultation requires that:
   (a) relevant work health and safety information is shared with workers;
   (b) workers are given a reasonable opportunity to express their views and to raise health or safety issues;
   (c) workers are given a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process relating to a health and safety matter;
   (d) the views of workers are taken into account; and
   (e) workers are advised of the outcome of any consultation in a timely manner.
9 Health and safety representatives

(1) Workers may elect one or more health and safety representative to represent the health and safety interests of their work group.

(2) The number of health and safety representatives for each work group will depend on the work group’s size and level of work health and safety risk and will be specified on the work health and safety website.

(3) Health and safety representatives:
   
   (a) should be invited to attend management meetings for their work group to monitor work health and safety management and compliance;
   
   (b) must refer work health and safety matters brought to their attention to the relevant supervisor or manager for corrective action;
   
   (c) may assist in reviewing, investigating and resolving work health and safety matters for their work group, including complaints from members of the work group that cannot be adequately resolved through the usual line of management; and
   
   (d) should meet regularly to discuss work health and safety issues in common with fellow work group health and safety representatives, departmental safety officers, campus assist officers and Work Health and Safety Advisers, collectively known as the Local Safety and Infrastructure Group (LSIG).

(4) One health and safety representative from each of the ten Local Safety and Infrastructure Groups is elected by their fellow health and safety representatives to represent them on the Senior Executive Group Work Health and Safety Committee.

10 Local safety appointees

(1) A head of school or head of administrative unit may, by agreement with the nominated workers, appoint workers to fill the following local safety roles.

(2) Local safety officer, whose role involves:
   
   (a) assisting to promote work health and safety awareness;
   
   (b) advising on work health and safety issues where able, or obtaining advice from the Work Health and Safety Services Unit;
   
   (c) providing information to staff and students on relevant work health and safety hazards;
   
   (d) bringing unresolved work health and safety issues to the attention of the relevant head of school or head of administrative unit;
   
   (e) assisting to investigate significant injuries and incidents; and
   
   (f) helping to resolve issues according to the policy and these procedures.

(3) Chief warden, who will be responsible for developing and maintaining local emergency procedures for a particular building, in accordance with the University’s emergency management framework.

Note 1: In buildings that have multiple tenants, the chief warden will generally be appointed by the head of school or head of administrative unit with the largest number of building occupants, in consultation with other heads whose workers occupy the same building.
Note 2: Further guidelines on emergency management are available on the work health and safety website.

Note 3: The University’s emergency management framework will be set out in the Critical Incident and Business Continuity Policy which is currently under development.

(4) Nominated first aid officer, who will be responsible for providing first aid services for people within a particular building and possibly for others nearby.

11 Local safety committees

(1) The structure of each local safety committee will be determined by the relevant head of school or head of administrative unit, subject to the provisions of this clause.

   (a) The committee should be chaired by a senior staff member. In academic units the chair should be a senior academic staff member.

   (b) Membership of the committee should comprise at least:

       (i) the relevant head of school or head of administrative unit, or a senior representative nominated by that person;

       (ii) senior representatives of major work groups;

       (iii) any local safety officer who has been appointed; and

       (iv) any health and safety representative who has been elected in accordance with these procedures.

(2) A local safety committee should report regularly to relevant executive and management committees.

12 Emergencies

(1) Emergencies should be reported immediately to Campus Infrastructure & Services by telephone on 9351 3333.

(2) To prepare for an effective response to emergencies heads of schools and heads of administrative units should ensure:

   (a) the appointment of a Chief Warden and Nominated First Aid Officer where needed in accordance with clause 10 of these procedures;

   (b) their WHS Action Plan addresses emergency preparedness in accordance with clause 4 of these procedures; and

   (c) all workers are familiar with procedures for plausible emergency situations, including but not limited to fire, medical emergencies, chemical spills, bomb threats, and civil disorder.

Note 1: Further guidelines on emergency management are available on the work health and safety website

Note 2: The University is currently developing a Critical Incident and Business Continuity Policy.
13 Resolving work health and safety issues

(1) Attempts should be made to resolve work health and safety issues at the local level in the first instance via the manager in charge of the person or activity.

(2) Minor issues

(a) Where an identified work health and safety issue can be easily resolved with minimal effort or disruption, individuals are encouraged to take action themselves if they are appropriately skilled and it is safe to do so. An example would be moving an obstacle from a walkway to prevent trip and fall incidents.

(b) Recurring minor work health and safety issues should be reported to the relevant supervisor in charge of the person or activity.

(3) Resolution procedure for other issues

(a) Anyone who has a work health and safety issue which has not been resolved using the procedures outlined in subclauses (1) and (2) may commence the resolution procedure by informing all interested parties:

(i) that there is an issue to be resolved; and
(ii) the nature and scope of the issue.

(b) As soon as they are informed of the issue, all parties must meet or communicate with each other to attempt to resolve it.

(c) The parties must have regard to all relevant matters, including:

(i) the degree and immediacy of risk to workers or other persons affected by the issue;
(ii) the number and location of people affected by the issue;
(iii) the measures (both temporary and permanent) that may be implemented to resolve the issue;
(iv) who will be responsible for implementing the resolution measures.

(d) A party may be assisted or represented by a person nominated by them.

(e) If the issue is resolved, details of the issue and its resolution must be recorded in writing.

(f) If a written agreement is prepared, all parties to the issue must be satisfied that it reflects the resolution of the issue.

(g) A copy of the written agreement must be given to:

(i) all parties to the issue; and
(ii) if requested, to the health and safety representative for the workplace (where elected).

(h) Where a work health and safety issue is unresolved after following this procedure, or where it is inappropriate to raise the issue with the supervisor who is directly responsible, assistance may be sought from a manager, dean or director, local safety officer (where appointed), head of school or head of administrative unit, health and safety representative (where elected) or the Work Health and Safety Services Unit, to resolve the issue.

(i) If, after making reasonable efforts to achieve a timely, final and effective resolution of the issue in accordance with this clause, the issue has not been resolved; either party may refer it to the WorkCover Authority of NSW to seek their assistance in the resolution of the issue.
14 Recordkeeping

The Recordkeeping Policy applies to all work health and safety records.

Note: Detailed guidance on recordkeeping matters is available in the University Recordkeeping Manual.

Schedule

Extracts from Work Health and Safety Act 2011

36 What is a “serious injury or illness”

In this Part, serious injury or illness of a person means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

(a) immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or
(b) immediate treatment for:
   (i) the amputation of any part of his or her body, or
   (ii) a serious head injury, or
   (iii) a serious eye injury, or
   (iv) a serious burn, or
   (iv) the separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as degloving or scalping), or
   (v) a spinal injury, or
   (vi) the loss of a bodily function, or
   (vii) serious lacerations, or
(c) medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance, and includes any other injury or illness prescribed by the regulations but does not include an illness or injury of a prescribed kind.

37 What is a “dangerous incident”

In this Part, a dangerous incident means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person’s health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

(a) an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance; or
(b) an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire; or
(c) an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam; or
(d) an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance; or
(e) electric shock; or
(f) the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing; or
(g) the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations; or
(h) the collapse or partial collapse of a structure; or
(i) the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation; or
(j) the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
(k) the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel; or
(l) any other event prescribed by the regulations;

but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.
NOTES

Work Health and Safety Procedures 2012

Date adopted: 14 December 2012
Date registered: 18 December 2012
Date commenced: 19 December 2012
Date amended: 1 February 2013
Administrator: Director, Human Resources
Review date: January 2015

Related documents:

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (NSW)
Chief Warden Performance Bonus Policy
Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates
Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions
First Aid Procedures
Injury Management Policy and Procedures
Record Keeping Guidelines
Smoke-Free Environment Policy
The University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2009 – 2012
Workplace Bullying Prevention Policy and Resolution Procedure

AMENDMENT HISTORY

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