



ALCOHOL AND DRUGS IN THE WORKPLACE POLICY

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Responsible Division & Unit:	Wellbeing Health & Safety Unit, People & Culture Division		
Supporting documents, procedures & forms:	University of Wollongong WHS Risk Management Guidelines University of Wollongong Employee Assistance Program University of Wollongong Fieldwork Safety Guidelines		
Relevant Legislation & External Documents:	Workplace Health and Safety Policy Guidelines on the Use and Management of Alcohol at University Functions Children in the Workplace and Study Environment Policy Student Conduct Rules University Code of Conduct Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy University of Wollongong (Academic Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2011 University of Wollongong (General Staff) Enterprise Agreement 2010		
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1 Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Assist the University fulfil its obligations and duty of care to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all workers, students and visitors in the workplace.
2. Assist workers, students and visitors to fulfil their responsibility to take reasonable care for themselves and others in the workplace.
3. Preserve the reputation of the University in the community.
4. Promote awareness of personal safety and security in relation to alcohol and drug consumption.
5. Minimise the University's exposure to legal action arising out of the abuse or inappropriate use of alcohol and prohibited drugs.
6. Ensure that individuals preserve the dignity and professionalism expected of them by students, co-workers and the community.
7. Provide University workers, students and visitors with adequate information about the ways in which drugs and alcohol can impair safe and competent performance of work and the consequences of their inappropriate use.
8. Provide guidelines to workers who are in a supervisory role in relation to managing alcohol and drug problems in the workplace.

2 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition (with examples if required)
Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Refers to the amount of alcohol present in the bloodstream. For example a BAC of 0.05% means that there is 0.05g of alcohol in every 100ml of blood. For the purposes of this Policy a person is not considered to be in breach of this Policy if their blood alcohol concentration is under 0.05 unless where specified as high risk in section 5.3.
Impaired or Impairment	The inability to perform one's job in the manner prescribed for that particular function or in accordance with established practice. Impairment includes, but shall not be limited to, the inability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use or operate equipment properly• Communicate clearly or coherently• Exercise reasonable judgement in making decisions, or• Interact with others, and act, in an appropriate manner.
Medically prescribed drugs	Drugs which are prescribed by a medical practitioner.
Over the counter drugs	Drugs which can be purchased legally without prescription e.g. paracetamol, antihistamine or ibuprofen.



Prohibited drug	Those drugs which are prohibited according to Schedule 1 of the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985. Examples include but are not limited to alkoxy-amphetamines, cannabis, heroin, isomethadone and LSD.
Worker	Any person who carries out work for the University which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employees• Trainees• Volunteers and affiliates including visiting and honorary fellows• Outworkers• Apprentices• Work experience students• Contractors or sub-contractors• Employees of a contractor or sub-contractor• Employees of a labour hire company assigned to work for the University.
Workplace	Is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

3 Application & Scope - Exclusions or Special Conditions

9. This policy applies to all University related work, coursework or research undertaken by University workers, students and visitors whether on or off campus.
10. The Guidelines on the Use and Management of Alcohol at University Functions must also be considered in conjunction with this policy.

4 Policy Principles

11. Being affected by alcohol or drugs at work, particularly in high-risk environments, can seriously compromise the health, safety and welfare of workers, students and others in the workplace. It also may impair an individual's ability to perform their work competently and professionally.
12. Inappropriate or unlawful conduct arising out of alcohol or drug use may expose the University to legal liability in some circumstances.

5 Policy Requirements

13. Workers, students and visitors must not possess, distribute, sell or consume prohibited drugs in the workplace.
14. Workers, students and visitors must not consume alcohol, medically prescribed drugs or over the counter drugs while at work, coursework or research, other than in accordance with this policy.



15. Workers, students and visitors must not be impaired in their ability to perform their duties safely, competently and/or professionally by alcohol or drugs including medically prescribed or over the counter drugs. Unless specified, a BAC of 0.05 will be considered a breach of this requirement.
16. The following University activities or locations have been determined as high risk and as such workers, students or visitors must not consume or be impaired by alcohol and/or drugs (i.e. their BAC is required to be 0.00):
 - a. While operating or driving any mobile equipment on campus grounds in the course of undertaking their work, coursework or research. This includes private or commercial vehicles, lawn mowers, excavation equipment, forklifts, tractors and the like. This does not include driving for personal reasons such as to and from work. The Australian Road Rules apply in these instances.
 - b. Working in confined spaces, laboratories, workshops or at height which includes rooftops (unless they have been assessed as low risk in accordance with WHS Risk Management Guidelines).
 - c. Undertaking medium to high levels of physical exertion during work, coursework or research, whether for short or long duration.
 - d. During the use or handling of medium or high-risk substances, (such as dangerous goods, hazardous chemicals, genetically modified organisms, bio-hazardous or radioactive substances).
 - e. Providing first aid or other emergency roles such as Emergency Coordinator or Building Warden. Therefore, any worker who is receiving a first aid allowance is not permitted to drink alcohol while on duty.
 - f. Operating equipment or handheld power tools.
 - g. Performing any construction work including any licensed work e.g. plumbing, electrical tasks.
 - h. Any other activity which has been determined as high risk upon completion of a risk assessment in accordance with the WHS Risk Management Guidelines.
17. Workers, students or visitors should seek advice from their medical practitioner or pharmacist in regard to information on the possible effects of taking medically prescribed drugs or over the counter drugs. A risk assessment is to be completed in accordance with the WHS Risk Management Guidelines where a person's ability to perform the requirements of their work is impaired.
18. Workers, students and visitors must not possess, distribute, sell or consume prohibited drugs in the workplace.
19. Assistance and support will be offered to workers where there is a perceived or identified substance abuse or dependency problem via the University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

6 Impairment Related to Drug and Alcohol Use

20. The following actions must be taken if a worker, student or visitor, appears to be intoxicated or impaired to undertake their duties safely or adequately, or behaves in a manner which may cause harm to themselves or to others.



21. The relevant supervisor or UOW Security is to be informed and actions required to make the workplace safe undertaken as reasonably practicable.
22. In the case of suspected impairment, the person's supervisor will take the following action:
 - a. The supervisor will discuss the observed impairment with the worker at the earliest opportunity. This should include outlining the behaviours that have been observed and asking if there is a reason for this. Mitigating factors provided by the worker which may be provided by the person. This may include but not limited to:
 - i. unexpected impairment from prescription or over the counter medication
 - ii. side effects from medical treatment or an illness or injury
 - iii. impairment from fatigue due to a personal trauma, sleep deprivation or other issue, or
 - iv. any similar factor that may cause impairment but is not the result of alcohol or other drug consumption.
 - b. The supervisor of the worker must submit a SafetyNet report pertaining to their observations regarding the impairment and inform the Chief People & Culture Officer if a worker, or appropriate Executive Dean if a student, including any mitigation factors that have been identified with the person.

7 Testing

23. In the case of a worker, the Chief People & Culture Officer, or delegate will make an assessment on information provided by the supervisor to determine whether the worker will be directed to undergo drug and/or alcohol testing at the earliest opportunity.
24. Testing will be organised and paid for by the University.
25. Testing will be conducted by a qualified medical practitioner at a nearby test facility and follow the relevant Australian Standard. Test samples will be handled and disposed of in line with the facility's procedures.
26. The worker may have a support person attend the test facility with them.
27. Transportation will be provided. The worker must not drive to the test facility.
28. If the worker provides a negative test result, or a result lower than the acceptable levels identified in this policy, the person will be permitted to recommence or resume their normal duties.
29. If the worker provides a positive test result or a result higher than the acceptable levels identified in this policy, they will be deemed unfit to work and arrangements will be made to transport the worker home. The worker will then be required to submit for a further test at the first available opportunity on the next working day before being able to resume their normal duties. The worker will be required to take leave until they are deemed fit for work.
30. If the worker refuses to undertake testing as directed this will have the same consequence as a positive result, i.e., the worker will be deemed to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol.

8 Breaches of this Policy

31. The University views any breach of this policy as extremely serious. Depending on the severity of the breach, a worker, student or visitor may face disciplinary action in accordance with the University's disciplinary procedures, which may include a warning, final warning or dismissal.



32. Where appropriate, the University may recommend or direct a worker, student or visitor to attend internal or external drug and alcohol counselling.

9 Information and Assistance

33. The University is committed to providing information to workers and as such, education forms a key part of the implementation phase of this Policy. Information on alcohol and prohibited drugs is available via the EAP website or upon request to the WHS Unit.
34. The University will support any worker requiring assistance with drugs or alcohol related issues via the EAP, which includes confidential counselling services at no cost. For further information on the EAP contact one of the P&C Business Partners via telephone on 02 4221 5902, Manager WHS on 4221 3204 or self-refer on 1300 361 008.

10 Roles & Responsibilities

35. Executive Deans and Directors are responsible for:
 - a. The implementation of this Policy in their area.
 - b. Compliance with the Guidelines on the Use and Management of Alcohol at University Functions.
36. Heads of School, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring that this Policy is implemented and communicated to their workers, students and visitors.
 - b. This includes ensuring that:
 - i. All workers, students and visitors in their units are made aware of the policy.
 - ii. Risk assessments are undertaken on work tasks in consultation with workers and students as per the WHS Risk Management Guidelines.
 - iii. Any concerns or issues are addressed proactively and expediently to ensure health and safety of all workers, students and visitors.
 - iv. Any suspected breaches of this policy are reported to the Manager WHS, or P&C Business Partners to seek advice on management of that specific case.
 - v. The Guidelines on the Use and Management of Alcohol at University Functions are implemented.
 - vi. Any necessary action is taken under the Student Conduct Rules in relation to student consumption of drugs or alcohol in a manner contrary to this policy.
37. All workers, students and visitors must fulfil their responsibilities and obligations as outlined in this Policy. This includes:
 - a. Observing all directions from their supervisor in regard to this Policy.
 - b. Notifying their supervisor if they have a concern or believe they or a co-worker presents a threat to the health and safety of themselves or others.
 - c. Notifying their supervisor where their work performance could be affected by alcohol or drugs and to implement appropriate risk control measures.



- d. Not undertaking duties if their ability to perform their duties safely, competently and/or professionally is impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- e. Not consuming alcohol while on duty, other than in accordance with this Policy.
- f. Not possessing, distributing or otherwise consuming any prohibited drugs while on duty or on University premises.
- g. Compliance with the Guidelines on the Use and Management of Alcohol at University Functions.

38. The WHS Committee is the main forum for consultation with workers and students on this Policy.

11 Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1	15 April 2005	University Council	First Version
2	24 July 2007	Administrative Committee	Reviewed for currency and formatting.
3	6 May 2009	Vice Principal (Administration)	Migrated to UOW Policy Template as per Policy Directory Refresh
4	26 August 2010	Vice-Principal (Administration)	Updated to reflect divisional name change from Personnel Services to Human Resources Division
5	1 March 2011	Senior Manager, Policy & Governance	Updated to reflect name change to University Code of Conduct and amend links to include Academic & General Staff Agreements.
6	14 October 2011	Senior Manager, Policy & Governance	Reference to Children on Campus Policy updated to Children in the Workplace and Study Environment Policy.
7	3 September 2013	Finance and Resources Committee	Scheduled review of policy. No significant changes. Addition of worker definition, students and visitors. Title change.
8	18 August 2023	Workplace Health and Safety Unit	Updated definitions, stricter and more defined policy requirements, inclusion of a new Impairment Related to Drug and Alcohol Use and Responding to Suspected Breaches of this Policy and testing requirements.