



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

UOW SAFE@WORK

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY

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1 Introduction

The University of Wollongong is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees, students, visitors and contractors. As such, the University Executive and management have workplace health and safety (WHS) responsibilities, authority and accountabilities as outlined in position descriptions, policies, guidelines, procedures and as summarised in this document.

By recognising, reporting and addressing potential hazards in the workplace, the campus community can assist the University of Wollongong in taking every reasonably practicable step to provide a safe environment. In support of this, the University will give appropriate priority and support to eliminate or reduce the risk of hazards that pose a threat to health and safety.

The University strives to foster the development of safety consciousness in all members of its community in order to minimise the risk of injury to persons and/or damage to property or facilities. In addition, the University has both a moral and legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for its employees, students and visitors.

All staff have a responsibility and the authority to ensure that a safe work environment exists within the University. The University will put in place accountability mechanisms to ensure that WHS responsibilities are performed effectively.

The University will ensure that the requirements outlined by the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and associated legislation are complied with at all University facilities. Legislated and other accredited standards in health and safety are accepted by the University as minimum standards. The University will apply a risk management approach and establish and enforce more stringent standards where appropriate. The University will develop, implement, evaluate and improve health and safety policies, procedures and programs according to legislative requirements and University needs. These policies and procedures are considered as binding upon all staff, students and visitors which include contractors.

The University will monitor and assess any updates or changes to health and safety legislation, codes of practice or standards and will communicate any changes via the UOW WHS consultation arrangement.

2 WHS Duties and Responsibilities

Duties for WHS are legislated in the *Work Health and Safety Act (WHS) 2011*. The *Act* details the duties of a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), officers and workers as well as suppliers and manufacturers.

The following principal applies to all duties in the *WHS Act 2011*:

1. a duty is not transferable
2. a person may have more than one duty
3. more than one person can have the same duty
4. risks are managed to ensure they are eliminated or minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Appendix 1 outlines the WHS responsibilities, authority, and accountability mechanisms for each role in the University.

2.1 University

In accordance with the *WHS Act 2011*, as a PCBU the University has a primary duty of care to ensure workers and others are not exposed to a risk to their health and safety.

A primary duty of care is owed by the University when it:

- directs or influences work carried out by a worker
- engages or causes to engage a worker to carry out work (including through subcontracting)
- has management or control of a workplace.

The University must meet its obligations, so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide a safe and healthy workplace for workers or other persons by ensuring:

- safe systems of work
- a safe work environment
- accommodation for workers, if provided, is appropriate
- safe use of plant, structures and substances
- facilities for the welfare of workers are adequate
- notification and recording of workplace incidents
- adequate information, training, instruction and supervision is given
- compliance with the requirements under the work health and safety regulation
- effective systems are in place for monitoring the health of workers and workplace conditions.

The University must also have meaningful and open consultation about work health and safety with its workers, health and safety representatives and health and safety committees (which includes Workplace Advisory Committees and Workplace Advisory Representatives). Additionally, the University must consult, cooperate and coordinate with other PCBUs with whom they share duties.

The University will also have further obligations if involved in specific kinds of activities such as:

- the management and control of workplaces, or fixtures, fittings or plant at workplaces
- the design, manufacture, import or supply of plant, substances or structures
- installation, construction or commissioning of plant or structures.

2.2 Officers and Directors

The *WHS Act 2011* outlines the duties of officers of a PCBU. Officers are defined in the *Act* as a person who makes decisions, or participates in making decisions, that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking and has the capacity to significantly affect the financial standing of the business or undertaking. If a person is responsible only for implementing those decisions, they are not considered an officer.

It is an officer's duty to exercise due diligence to ensure their business or undertaking fulfils its health and safety obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The essential elements of due diligence for an officer are interrelated and cumulative in nature.

These elements require an officer to:

- acquire and keep up to date knowledge of work health and safety matters
- gain an understanding of the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved
- ensure appropriate resources and processes are provided to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised
- ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received and the information is responded to in a timely way
- ensure the PCBU has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation, and
- ensure processes are verified, monitored and reviewed.

2.3 Workers, Students and Visitors

The term 'worker' includes any person who works for the University as an:

- employee
- trainee
- volunteer
- outworker
- apprentice
- work experience student
- contractor or sub-contractor
- employees of a contractor or sub-contractor
- employee of a labour hire company assigned to work for the University.

Workers, students and visitors must undertake the following while at the University:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- take reasonable care for the health and safety of others
- comply with any reasonable instruction from the University
- cooperate with any reasonable policies and procedures of the University.

2.4 Specific WHS Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities for roles within the University have been documented in Appendix 1: WHS Responsibilities, Accountabilities and Authority Matrix. Further detail on WHS responsibilities shall be outlined in position descriptions, policies, guidelines, procedures and other WHS management system documentation where appropriate.

3 WHS Authority

Commensurate with responsibility, the level of WHS authority defines the level of control a role has to act on WHS matters or implement risk controls.

All workers, students and visitors of the University have the authority to report hazards in the workplace and exercise their responsibilities under the *WHS Act 2011* to improve workplace health and safety. However, the authority to make decisions in the workplace to eliminate or reduce the risk from workplace hazards varies according to the organisational structure. Further information is outlined in Appendix 1.

The University's [Delegations of Authority Policy](#) should be referred to for matters where expenditure is required to implement risk control measures.

4 WHS Accountability

The term WHS accountability refers to the measurement of whether managers, supervisors, employees and others in the workplace are meeting their allocated health and safety responsibilities. WHS accountability mechanisms which are utilised at the University to verify the implementation of assigned WHS responsibilities include:

- [Hazard and incident reports](#)
- [Review of WHS performance indicators](#)
- [Internal WHS verification audits](#)
- [Review of business plans](#)
- [Performance enhancement and career development record](#)
- [Performance planner process](#)
- [UOW performance management procedures.](#)

4.1 Supervision

All Supervisors and/or employees with supervisory functions will ensure the adequacy of the supervision they provide to employees or teams under their control. The form of supervision required to be provided will vary when applied to differing employees or teams under differing circumstances.

All supervisors and/or employees with supervisory functions will apply the most appropriate form of supervision of individual/s or teams for which they have direct responsibility.

To determine the form of supervision required the following factors are considered;

- complexity of the assigned tasks
- risks associated with those tasks;
- competency of the individual or team to perform the task/s.

The above factors are to be taken into consideration and applied in determining the forms in which supervision will be undertaken. The following forms of supervision are applied:

4.2 Direct Supervision

Direct Supervision is required where:

- the employee/s or team have had minimal former experience with or exposure to:
 - a particular task/s or
 - the item/s of plant or equipment
- the complexity of the task/s and the associated risk/s are high
- the employee/s or team are undergoing training
- The consistent monitoring of conformance with procedures and safe systems of work and risk assessment control measures is required.

Direct supervision will be identified in a risk assessment or safe work procedure where the need is required.

4.3 Periodic Supervision

Periodic Supervision is required where:

- the employee/s or team have had former experience with and exposure to:
 - a particular task/s, or
 - item/s of plant or equipment
- the complexity of the task/s and the associated risk/s are lower,
- the employee/s or team have been deemed competent to perform the task,
- the intermittent monitoring of conformance with procedures and safe systems of work and risk assessment control measures is required.

4.4 Minimal Supervision

Minimal Supervision is required where:

- the employee/s or team have had extensive former experience with and exposure to:
 - a particular task/s, or
 - item/s of plant or equipment
- there is little or no complexity in the task/s and the associated risk/s are acceptable
- the employee/s or team have been deemed competent to perform the task, and
- documented risk control measures are not required.

The level of supervision may decrease as the employee/s or team are demonstrating compliance and the Supervisor, assesses a lower level of supervision is acceptable. The above forms of supervision will be undertaken unless otherwise indicated by a risk assessment.

The University recognises that there will be a period where employees will be required to undergo training to gain experience and skills prior to formal assessment of competence. During this (learning) phase, the team leaders and/or employees with supervisory functions or a trainer must ensure that appropriate supervision is provided until competency can be demonstrated through the process of assessment.

5 Reporting Relationships

Reporting relationships for WHS matters will be in accordance with the University organisational structure. Visit the following link for more information: [UOW Organisational Structure](#).

6 Review and Evaluation

To ensure that these guidelines continue to be effective and applicable to the University, this document will be reviewed biennially in consultation with the WHS committee. More frequent reviews may be required according to legislative requirements, organisational change or WHS performance.

7 Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1	January 1996	Manager WHS	Document created
2	April 2003	Manager WHS	Minor revisions
3	March 2005	Manager WHS	Minor revisions
4	December 2005	Manager WHS	Minor revisions
5	March 2007	Manager WHS	Scheduled review
6	February 2009	Manager WHS	Scheduled review and inclusion of School Safety Committee and Contractor Responsibilities.
7	August 2010	Manager WHS	Document updated to incorporate the Personnel name change to Human Resources Division.
8	January 2010	Manager WHS	Document updated to include the roles and responsibilities of Workplace Advisory Representatives.
9	August 2012	Manager WHS	Scheduled review. Document updated to include rebrand, inclusion of requirements in accordance with WHS Act 2011 and tenant responsibilities.
10	August 2014	Manager WHS	Minor amendment.
11	July 2016	Manager WHS	Rebrand.

8 Appendix 1: WHS Responsibilities, Authority and Accountability

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
University Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation of due diligence requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters - gain an understanding of the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved - ensure appropriate resources and processes are provided and used to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised - ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received and the information is responded to in a timely way - ensure the University has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation - ensure processes are verified, monitored and reviewed. ▪ Monitor the University's implementation of the WHS Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May act in all matters concerning the University in such manner as appears to the Council to be best calculated to promote the object and interests of the University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UOW Act (1989) ▪ WHS Monthly Report
Vice Chancellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide leadership and exercise due diligence in taking reasonable steps to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters - gain an understanding of the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved - ensure appropriate resources and processes are provided and used to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised - ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received and the information is responded to in a timely way - ensure the University has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation - ensure processes are verified, monitored and reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management for the University and as outlined in the as described in the Delegations of Authority Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Council performance criteria review

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
SDVC, DVCs, PVCr and CAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure areas of responsibility comply with work health and safety legislation and the UOW WHS management system ▪ Provide resources to implement the requirements of WHS policy and procedures ▪ Participate in the monitoring and review of the implementation of the WHS management system for area of responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management within their area of responsibility as described in the Delegations of Authority Policy and applicable WHS Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CareerNet performance reviews ▪ UOW strategic plans ▪ WHS verification audits.
Deans, Administrative Directors and University Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure activities of the Faculty/Division comply with work health & safety legislation and UOW WHS management system, including implementation and monitoring to ensure legal compliance ▪ Ensure WHS consultation arrangements are implemented ▪ Allocate appropriate resources to fulfil WHS requirements ▪ Monitor WHS performance of faculty/division and direct reports including internal WHS verification reports and performance indicators ▪ Other responsibilities as outlined in WHS system documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management within their area of responsibility and as described in the Delegations of Authority Policy and applicable WHS Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WHS performance indicators ▪ Faculty/Division strategic plans ▪ Hazard and incident reports ▪ WHS verification audits ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.
Head of School or Department/ Research Institute Directors/Unit Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure activities of the school/research centre/unit comply with workplace health & safety legislation and UOW WHS management system. This include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implement WHS risk management activities e.g. inspections, report of incidents and any local specific measures required to eliminate or reduce risk in their area that are identified, documented and implemented - provide safe equipment and processes for staff, students and others - provide staff and students with the necessary instruction, information, induction, training and supervision to enable work to be carried out safely - implement corrective actions as a result of hazard/incident reports or incident investigations; - monitor the WHS performance of unit and direct reports via internal WHS verification audits and performance indicators ▪ Implement responsibilities as identified in UOW Injury Management Program and WHS system documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management within their area of responsibility and as described in the University's Delegations of Authority Policy and applicable WHS Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WHS performance indicators ▪ Unit plans ▪ WHS verification audits ▪ Hazard and incident reporting ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
Academic & Professional Services staff with responsibility for the management or supervision of staff, students or facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that work areas and equipment under their control is safe and without risk to health and safety ▪ Ensure all hazards and incidents are identified, assessed, controlled and reported via the SafetyNet reporting process ▪ Provide appropriate instruction, information, training and supervision to staff, students and others to enable work to be carried out safely ▪ Implement responsibilities as identified in UOW Injury Management Program ▪ Other responsibilities as outlined in WHS system documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management within their area of responsibility as described in the University's Delegations of Authority Policy and applicable WHS Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance reviews ▪ Hazard and incident reporting ▪ WHS inspections ▪ WHS verification audits ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.
All Staff, Students and Visitors (including honorary and visiting fellows)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take reasonable care for their own health and safety ▪ Take reasonable care for the health and safety of others including the implementation of risk control measures within their control to prevent injuries or illnesses ▪ Comply with any reasonable instruction by the University ▪ Cooperate with any reasonable policies and procedures of the University including reporting of hazards or incidents via the University reporting process ▪ Other responsibilities as outlined in WHS system documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The authority to make decisions and act on any matter of WHS management within their area of responsibility as described in the University's Delegations of Authority Policy and applicable WHS Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Performance reviews ▪ Hazard and incident reporting guidelines ▪ Local area supervision ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.
WHS Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with the University on strategic WHS issues including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor the WHS performance of the University; - recommend improvements to WHS policy and procedures - oversee activities of any subcommittee (including WACs) or working parties reporting to the Committee - improve the communication and awareness of WHS requirements with campus community - assist with the investigation of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise WHS issues to University management or WorkCover NSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Periodic consultation arrangement review ▪ Attendance reports to Council.

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
Workplace Advisory Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with management on the implementation of WHS requirements for the area of representation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor the WHS performance - recommend improvements recommending to improvements to WHS policy and procedures - oversee activities of any subcommittee or working parties reporting to it - improve communication and awareness of WHS requirements - assist with the investigation of incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise WHS issues to the WHS Committee, University management or WorkCover NSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biannual WAC Committee Survey ▪ WHS Committee attendance ▪ Periodic consultation arrangement review.
Workplace Advisory Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with management on the implementation of WHS requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide advice on the implementation of WHS policy and procedures - raise WHS issues to management on behalf of employees and students - improve communication and awareness of WHS requirements - assist with the investigation of WHS issues or incidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise WHS issues to the WHS Committee, University management or WorkCover NSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biannual Survey.
School Safety Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assist and support area management in the implementation of WHS requirements including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitor the overall safety performance of the area represented - raise WHS issues to area management and the WAC - improve communication and awareness of WHS for the area of representation ▪ Recommend initiatives to improve WHS performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise WHS issues to the WAC, WHS Committee, University management or WorkCover NSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil.

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
WHS Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and communicate WHS policies, procedures and programs to the University community ▪ Support the WHS responsibilities of all Units by assisting in the identification of hazards and the implementation of risk controls ▪ Evaluate and report on the status of the implementation of WHS requirements via the completion of regular audits ▪ Provision of technical WHS advice where appropriate, and recommendation of required remedial actions for compliance ▪ Record, analyse and report WHS performance metrics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise WHS issues with management where appropriate and provide recommendations to ensure safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WHS performance reporting - internal and external; ▪ WHS system audits; ▪ WHS Unit and Human Resources division's strategic plan ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.
Facilities Management Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the University's facilities and grounds are safe for use and that they comply with all relevant building regulations and codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issue instructions to prevent access to an unsafe area until removal of the hazard occurs or rectification works have been completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contractor management processes ▪ Hazard and incident reporting guidelines.
Nominated First Aid Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure their first aid qualifications and training are up to date; ▪ Check first aid kits and equipment are appropriately stocked after use ▪ Ensure injuries and administered first aid treatment is recorded via University procedures ▪ Assist with emergency coordination ▪ Assist with the promotion of University procedures in relation to reporting and recording incidents ▪ Notify Staff Services and the WHS Unit of changes in their position or contact details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These positions have the authority to provide first aid treatment within their skills and competency and arrange for further treatment if required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hazard and incident reporting; ▪ CareerNet performance reviews.
Building Wardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate the emergency evacuation of staff, students and visitors from buildings ▪ Other responsibilities as outlined in the Building Warden Guidelines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These positions have the authority to conduct sweeps of buildings to notify staff, students and visitors to exit the building in case of an emergency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency management processes ▪ CareerNet.

Position	WHS Responsibilities	WHS Authority	Accountability Mechanisms
Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow University policies and procedures including the University's Contractor Safety Guidelines ▪ Comply with all relevant WHS legislation, standards and codes of practice applicable to their scope of work ▪ Must not, through their acts or omissions, do anything that could put at risk their own health or safety or that of University staff, students or visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These positions have the authority to make decisions and act on WHS matters within the contractor's area of responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly WHS Contractor performance report ▪ Hazard and incident reporting guidelines; ▪ Contractor/University project meetings; ▪ Contractor monitoring processes.
Other PCBUs which the University may come in contact with, including tenants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other PCBUs which interact with the University must meet their obligations in accordance with the <i>WHS Act 2011 NSW</i> and <i>WHS Regulation 2011 NSW</i> or other applicable work health and safety legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other PCBUs have the authority to make decisions and act with the limits of their control to make the workplace safe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduled meetings ▪ Hazard and Incident reporting process ▪ Contract review points.