



UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

**UOW SAFE@WORK**

# SAFE USE OF MOBILE PHONES GUIDELINES

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# 1. Introduction

The University of Wollongong (UOW) is committed to the provision of a safe and healthy workplace for all workers, students and visitors. The following guideline has been developed to assist with the management of risk associated with using mobile phones when at work.

## 2. Scope

This document aims to address the risk to health safety that can occur as a result of using mobile phones when at work. Using mobile phones at work may include the use of any university issued mobile phone or a personal mobile phones. The risk of using a mobile phone can be greatly increased when it is done in conjunction with other tasks such as driving.

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1. Workers, Contractors, Students and Visitors

All UOW workers including employees, contractors, students and visitors are required to adopt the requirements set out in this guideline.

### 3.2. Supervisors

Supervisors should ensure that any workers or students they supervise are aware and understand the provisions set out by this guideline.

### 3.3. Managers

Managers are responsible for the overall implementation of this guideline in their respective work area.

## 4. Purchase of Mobile Phones

Any mobile phone purchased is required to comply with Australian Communication and Media Authority standards which limit the amount of power the phone can emit. (It is now compulsory for details of radio wave output to accompany every mobile phone sold).

Ear pieces will be purchased with each phone to assist with exposure minimisation.

## 5. Risk Management

There are various hazards associated with the use of mobile phones that may have an adverse effect to health and safety. The requirements set out in the University's Risk Management Guidelines should be adopted to eliminate or control hazards associated with mobile phone use. This includes the implementation of the hierarchy of controls when determining control measures to eliminate or control risks to health and safety.

The following are some examples of control measures that can be implemented to help reduce the risks associated with mobile phone usage.

## 5.1. Reducing Exposure to Radio Waves

Exposure to radio waves from mobile phones can be reduced by the following methods:

- use landline phones where practicable, especially for long calls
- make fewer mobile phone calls
- spend minimal time on mobile phone calls
- retrieve voicemail messages on landline phones
- use “hands-free” mobile phone kits in vehicle and earpieces for other calls.

## 5.2. Mobile Phone Use While Driving

All employees and students while driving for University business must ensure they comply with the NSW road rules. This includes the rules for safe mobile phone use as outlined by the Roads and Maritime Service (RMS) below:

*While your vehicle is moving or stationary (but not parked), as a driver you may only use a mobile phone to make or receive a call or use the audio playing function if:*

- *the mobile phone is secured in a fixed mounting; or*
- *the mobile phone does not require you to touch or manipulate the phone in any way.*

*All other functions including texting, video messaging, online chatting, reading preview messages and emailing are prohibited.*

*While your vehicle is moving or stationary (but not parked), as a driver you must not hold your mobile phone in your hand other than to pass the phone to a passenger.*

*A mobile phone’s GPS (or other driver’s aid) function may only be used if:*

- *the phone is secured in a commercially designed and manufactured fixed mounting, and*
- *the mounting is fixed in a location that will not distract or obscure your view in any way, and*
- *the use of the driver’s aid does not distract you from driving or from being in proper control of your vehicle.*

In addition:

*Learner and P1 drivers and riders are not permitted to use a mobile phone at all while driving or riding.*

*These laws were brought in on 1 July 2007 because learner and P1 drivers and provisional riders are developing their vehicle control and hazard perception skills. Mobile phone use can distract novice drivers and riders from the driving task. Studies have found that using a mobile phone while driving is dangerous as it slows reaction times and interferes with a driver’s perception skills and increases the chance of having a crash.*

## 5.3. Other Important Safety Issues

Hand held mobile phones should not be used in a workplace where they may pose a safety risk.

Mobile phones must not be used where they may interfere with equipment in hospitals and aircraft, or areas within the University environment that are sensitive to mobile telephones.

Mobile phones should not be used in potentially explosive atmospheres, including blasting operations and fuelling areas such as petrol stations. This also includes sites at the University, such as flammable goods stores, decanting volatile substances in laboratories, bulk materials handling areas.

All the manufacturers safety directions must be followed.

To reach emergency services in the first instance, dial 000. If unsuccessful due to lack of service, dial 112 which may reach emergency services via an alternative service provider if one is available. Provided there is GSM coverage, 112 can be dialled anywhere in the world and is automatically translated to the emergency number for that country.

## 6. Review

In order to ensure that these guidelines continue to be effective and applicable to the University, the program will be reviewed regularly by the WHS Unit in consultation with the WHS Committee. Conditions which might warrant a review of the guidelines on a more frequent basis would include:

- an injury or near miss resulting from a use of a mobile phone
- changes to legislation
- employee concern.

Following completion of any review, the program will be revised/updated in order to correct any deficiencies.

## 7. Related Documents

- [Telephone and Mobile Use Policy](#)
- [Risk Management Guidelines](#)
- [Australian Road Rules \(National Road Transport Commission\)](#)
- [Mobile Phones and Health Fact Sheet \(Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency \(ARPANSA\)\)](#)

## 8. Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1	August 2004	WHS Manager	Document created
2	October 2006	WHS Manager	Responsibilities added. Additional information related to driving whilst using mobiles phones included. Separate heading added for mobile use whilst driving
3	October 2009	WHS Manager	Programmed periodic review.
4	August 2010	WHS Manager	Document updated to incorporate the Personnel name change to Human resources Division.
5	March 2012	WHS Manager	Re-brand
6	November 2012	WHS Manger	Scheduled Review. Addition of new rules for safe use of mobile phones.
7	November 2015	WHS Manager	Scheduled review. No significant changes.
8	January 2019	WHS Manager	Scheduled review. Rebrand. No significant changes.