



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA

UOW SAFE@WORK

WORKING ALONE AND AFTER HOURS GUIDELINES

Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Scope.....	3
3	Responsibilities.....	3
4	Definitions	3
5	Risk Management	4
6	Related Documents	4
7	Version Control Table	4
	Appendix 1: Isolated work checklist	6
	Appendix 2: After Hours Log Sheet.....	8

1 Introduction

The University of Wollongong (UOW) is committed to managing health and safety risks through the effective implementation of the WHS Management System (WHSMS). The level of risk associated with activities and tasks will increase when they are undertaken by personnel who work alone or after hours. Working alone or after hours increases risk because of a reduced ability for the provision of services and resources that can assist with the control of risk

2 Scope

This document covers any person at the University required to work alone at any period of time and where a situation arises that they may have to work after hours.

NOTE: Field trips or work in remote locations away from the University should form part of the Fieldwork Guidelines.

3 Responsibilities

Deans, Directors and Heads of Units

Deans, Directors and Heads of Units are responsible for ensuring processes and resources are in place to ensure that any work that is required to be undertaken by a person working alone or out of hours can be completed safely and in accordance with this guideline.

Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that any work undertaken by a person working alone or out of hours is in accordance with this guideline. Supervisors can do this by ensuring that, as a minimum, risk management activities are undertaken, and that personnel who are working alone or after hours are provided with suitable levels of training, supervision and instruction.

Workers, Students

Workers and students who undertake work alone or out of hours are responsible for completing a risk assessment on the work they are undertaking.

4 Definitions

After hours	A period of time when normal weekday operations cease. As this varies from area to area, anything after 10pm is classed as after hours. Exceptions to this include computer labs where normal operations cease at 12:00 midnight.
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Working alone Work carried out by a person where there are no means of visual or verbal contact with another person.

Remote or isolated work Work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of the location, time or the nature of the work.

5 Risk Management

When work is required to be carried out alone or after hours a risk assessment must be completed so that hazards can be identified and risks can be controlled in accordance with the UOW [WHS Risk Management Guidelines](#). Permission from the supervisor to undertake this work should only be granted when controls can be implemented to bring risk scores to a low level. Persons required to work alone should be provided with sufficient information, instruction and training. The checklist in appendix 1 provides useful points that should be considered when undertaking a risk assessment for a task that requires working alone or out of core business hours.

6 Related Documents

- [WHS Risk Management](#)
- [Fieldwork Guidelines](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](#)
- [Working Alone Guidance Note, 1991, Worksafe WA Commission](#)

7 Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1	November 2003	Manager WHS	Document created.
2	October 2006	Manager WHS	Incorporated two guidelines, Working Alone and Working after hours.
3	January 2010	Manager WHS	Scheduled review, minor changes only.
4	August 2010	Manager WHS	Document updated to incorporate the Personnel name change to

			Human Resources Division.
5	March 2012	Manager WHS	Scheduled review, minor changes only.
6	June 2013	Manager WHS	WHS name update
7	April 2015	Manager WHS	Scheduled review – document simplified to minimise content.
8	July 2016	Manager WHS	Minor amendment to Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Isolated work checklist

This checklist may assist in the identification of risk of a person working alone

Length of time the person may be working alone	Yes/No
How long would the person need to be alone to finish this job?	
What is a reasonable time for the person to be alone?	
Is it reasonable for the person to be alone at all?	
Is it lawful for the person to be alone? For example confined spaces.	
The time of day when a person may be working alone	
Is there increased risk at certain times of day?	
Communication	
What forms of communication does the person have access to?	
Is voice communication essential for the safety of the person?	
Will the emergency communication system work properly in all situations?	
If communication systems are vehicle-based, what arrangements are there to cover the person when he or she is away from the vehicle?	
The worker has the SafeZone check in capability available?	
The location of the work	
Is the work in a remote location?	
What is the form of transport? Bikes (two, three or four wheels) or other forms of transport.	
Is the vehicle fitted with emergency supplies, such as adequate drinking water?	
What is likely to happen if there is a vehicle breakdown?	
Will the person be required to leave his or her vehicle for long periods of time?	
What first aid equipment is available for immediate treatment? For example, a first aid kit in the vehicle.	
If first aid equipment is vehicle-based, what arrangements are there to cover the person when he or she is away from the vehicle?	
What level of first aid training is required for the person to be able to use the first aid equipment?	
The nature of the work	
Is there adequate information and instruction for the person to be able to work alone safely?	
What machinery, tools and equipment may be used?	
Is equipment and machinery maintained so that it is safe to use?	
Is there high risk activity? For example heights, electricity, hazardous chemicals or equipment.	
Is there likely to be work in a confined space (refer to UOW Working in Confined Spaces Guideline)	
Is fatigue likely to increase risk (for example, with long hours driving a vehicle or operating machinery)?	
Is there an increased risk of violence or aggression when workers are alone?	
Can environmental factors affect the safety of the worker? For example, is the person likely to be exposed to extremes of temperature?	
Is there risk of attack by an animal, including reptiles, insects and sea creatures?	

Is there an effective system for checking that all protective clothing and equipment and emergency equipment is packed and in good working order?	
Are there procedures for regular contact with the person who works alone?	
If the person is working inside a locked building, how will emergency services gain access if the person is unable to let them in? For example, night cleaners who work alone.	
The competencies and characteristics of the person who is to work alone	
Are you aware of anything in the person's ethnic, cultural or religious background that is likely to increase risk if he or she works alone. For example, long periods of fasting where the lack of food and water intake may increase the risk of ill health in very hot weather.	
Is there anything that would interfere with the person's ability to contact someone in an emergency?	
Are there factors relating to the person's age that are likely to increase risk?	
What is the person's general behaviour and level of psychological maturity?	
Is the person physically capable of completing all work activity alone?	
Are you aware of a pre-existing medical condition that may increase risk?	
Is the person likely to make sound judgements about his or her own safety?	
Is the person likely to cope in unexpected and stressful situations?	
What is the person's level of work experience and training?	
Has the person had training to prepare them for working alone and, where applicable, in remote locations? For example, training for first aid, relevant administrative procedures, vehicle breakdowns, communications systems and bush survival.	
If a road vehicle is used, is the person competent to drive in off-road situations?	
Is there anything else that applies to your situation that is likely to increase risk for the person who works alone?	

Appendix 2: After Hours Log Sheet

Location/Building	
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Date	Name	Department	Phone Number	Time In	Time Expect Out	Time Out