

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE POLICY

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Related Documents: Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act and Regulations
Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986
Disability Discrimination Act 1992
WorkCover Performance Standards (Rehabilitation) for Self Insured Employers

Implementation & Review: Human Resources

Superseded Documents: Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2001

Any person who requires assistance in understanding any aspect of this document should contact Human Resources on 83035666.

1 OVERVIEW

1.1 The University of Adelaide is committed to maintaining the highest possible standard of health, safety and well-being for all employees and students (and others) while they are at work at the University. The University recognises the importance of integrating the continuous improvement of health and safety into all organisational activities, ranking this equal with all other operational considerations.

1.2 This policy and supporting guidelines describe the framework and responsibilities for the management of occupational health & safety at the University, Faculty/Division and School/Branch/Centre levels of the University.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all management, staff, students, visiting academics, contractors and volunteers of the University and where appropriate to all other visitors.

3 DEFINITIONS

The OHS&W Act: The Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act (1986).

The WR&C Act: The Workers Rehabilitation & Compensation Act (1986).

Occupational Health & Safety Management System (OHSMS) is defined as the OHS system which describes the following elements:

- organisational structures,
- reporting arrangements,
- policies, processes and guidelines

and which ensures the systematic management of hazards and risks and prompt and effective response to mitigate the effects of accidents and injuries. A comprehensive OHSMS will incorporate all the elements considered to represent current best practice to ensure that the system is pro-active, self-sustaining and transparent and is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains effective.

Pro-active refers to the need for the OHSMS to focus on early identification, assessment and control of hazards (and potential hazards) *before* they result in accidents or injuries (rather than merely respond to accidents after the event).

Self-sustaining refers to the need for the OHSMS to be sufficiently robust such that it will be maintained and continuously refined, irrespective of staff changes, competing priorities (etc).

Transparent refers to the need for the OHSMS to be open to scrutiny by staff, their representatives and by the relevant authorities (eg Workplace Services/SafeWork SA and WorkCover) and to maintain adequate records to demonstrate its effective operation.

4 OBJECTIVES

4.1 The objectives of this policy are to:-

- i) Prevent injuries and illnesses of University staff, students and visitors and provide effective rehabilitation and support to those whose health has been affected by their work or study activities;
- ii) Ensure prompt, fair and equitable management and resolution of workers compensation claims;
- iii) Minimise property damage due to accidents in the workplace;
- iv) Fully integrate health and safety with all other operational responsibilities of the University; and, ultimately,
- v) Ensure students and staff leaving this University take with them an attitude which accepts that good health and safety practices should be followed in all workplaces.

4.2 In order to achieve this, the University will implement and maintain a comprehensive OH&S management system (OHSM) in all areas, which will ensure the following:-

- i) Ongoing identification and evaluation of existing hazards and implementation of suitable control measures to prevent injury or illness;
- ii) where possible, the prevention of the introduction of new hazards;
- iii) staff, students and visitors are adequately informed about the hazards remaining and are instructed in ways of working with them safely;
- iv) procedures are in place to minimise the severity of injuries, illnesses and property damage when accidents do occur;
- v) Staff (and where appropriate, students) are consulted on any matters (and actively participate in resolving issues) which are likely to affect their health, safety and welfare whilst at the University;
- vi) the University, its Faculties/Divisions and Schools/Branches/Centres:-
 - monitor OH&S activities and management systems, using inspections, audits, incident statistics, accident investigations (etc) to identify any nonconformances and opportunities for improvement;
 - develop detailed OH&S Action Plans to ensure continuous improvement in the management of OH&S responsibilities across the University; and
 - maintain adequate records to demonstrate that the system is operating effectively and to permit review and improvement where necessary.

5 POLICY PRINCIPLES

5.1 The University requires all management personnel to implement and maintain a comprehensive Occupational Health & Safety management system (OHSMS) in all areas under their control. They should regularly monitor the system, in order to protect staff, students and visitors from risks to their health, safety and welfare, whilst engaged in education, research or other work-related activities of the University.

5.2 The University will ensure that injured workers receive prompt, effective rehabilitation and that any Workers Compensation claims are managed effectively, consistent with legislative requirements and Workcover standards.

5.3 This will be achieved in consultation with employees and student representatives, using systematic hazard management processes. Appropriate hazard identification, risk assessment, inspection and audit systems will be used, to identify measureable objectives and targets for improvement of OH&S across the University. These will be detailed in formal OH&S Action Plans, at the University, Faculty/Division and, where appropriate, School/Branch/Centre level.

5.4 The University will comply with all OH&S-related legislative requirements and Australian Standards (etc) and will endeavour to attain best practice in OH&S as represented by the SA Workcover Performance Standards.

5.5 The University (through the OH&S Unit and the UHSC) will from time to time develop guidelines for the implementation of this policy and will also develop supporting policies and procedures, addressing key risks, issues and programs related to occupational health, safety, welfare, rehabilitation and workers compensation in the university.

5.6 All of these supporting policies (and where appropriate, the supporting guidelines and procedures) should be developed in consultation and should be suitably endorsed by the UHSC.

5.7 In addition, areas may develop (in consultation) and implement *local* policies and procedures, consistent with the overall university ohs-related policies, which should be appropriately authorised at the Faculty/Division and School/Branch/Centre level.

6. THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (OHSMS)

6.1 Framework

- i) The University will maintain an Occupational Health & Safety Unit to provide a consultancy service to the University community, to assist areas to maintain of the highest possible standards of health, safety and well being for all staff and students. It manages the University OH&S Audit program to ensure compliance with reasonable OH&S standards and continuous improvement by the effective implementation of OH&S plans. The Unit also provides rehabilitation support, managers Worker's Compensation claims (through Unisure) and other direct OH&S services.
- ii) In addition, a University Health & Safety Committee (comprising representatives of all areas of the University) will monitor the management of OH&S across the University, resolve major OH&S issues and make recommendations on improvements to the OHSMS.
- iii) Faculties, Schools and administrative areas will establish occupational health and safety committees to monitor and address issues at the local levels.
- iv) Faculties, Schools and administrative areas will also designate Health & Safety Officers (HSO's) (etc), to assist managers to implement and maintain the OHSMS within their areas.

HSO's will be provided with sufficient training and other resources to permit them to carry out their roles effectively.

- v) Health & Safety Representatives (HSR's), elected by staff in local areas, will be consulted and, where possible, actively involved in identification, assessment and control of hazards, investigation of accidents and issues and resolution of disputes concerning any matter which may affect the health, safety or welfare of staff in their areas. HSR's will be provided sufficient training (in accordance with the OHS&W Act) to carry out their roles effectively.

6.2 Reporting Arrangements

- i) The University Health & Safety Committee reports directly to its convenor, the Executive Director Student & Staff Services and (indirectly) to the Audit, Compliance & Risk Management Committee (AC&RMC).
- ii) OH&S Unit will provide regular reports to UHSC, AC&RMC, VCC and Council on the University's OH&S performance (including implementation of the University OH&S Plan, accident and compensation performance statistics and the results of workplace OH&S Audits).
- iii) Faculty/Area OHS Committees report directly to their Executive Dean/Director and provide regular reports to the UHSC, on implementation of their OHS Plans, accidents, issues (etc).
- iv) School (and other local) OHS Committees report directly to their Head and provide regular reports to their Faculty/Area OHS Committee, on implementation of their OHS Plans, accidents, issues (etc).

6.3 Policies

- i) This policy describes the overall OHSMS of the University and is supported by such additional policies and guidelines (etc) to provide clear information about management of OH&S across the University. Additional Policies and guidelines will describe the University's Rehabilitation program, the Workers Compensation system and other health and welfare programs. Where appropriate, Faculties/Divisions and Schools/Branches/Centres (or campuses) may need to develop and implement local policies and specific safe operating procedures (SOP's) in areas under their control.
- ii) All University OH&S policies (new and revised) are to be developed in consultation with OHS Committees and relevant staff and are endorsed by the UHSC, before being formally approved by the EDSSS (or VC or Council, as appropriate). Supporting guidelines (etc) are developed by OH&S Unit (in consultation) and usually be forwarded through UHSC for endorsement, before being issued.

6.4 Processes & Procedures

- i) Committees: All OH&S Committees have terms of reference requiring them to meet (at least quarterly) in order to monitor and discuss OH&S issues in their areas.
- ii) Consultation: Notwithstanding a), Managers and Supervisors should consult with staff on any matter of concern about existing health & safety issues or any proposed changes which might affect health & safety.
- iii) OH&S Induction & Training: All new staff and students must receive appropriate induction into their OH&S rights and responsibilities within the University. In addition, they must be provided with relevant hazard-specific training to enable them to carry out their work or study safely. Such induction and training should be of at least equivalent standard as is expected in industry in general. (Refer to the Induction & Training Guidelines for more information.) All staff, students and contractors, casuals or other

personnel working on University premises must be adequately trained so they can carry out their duties in a safe manner.

- iii) Inspection Program: All areas must maintain regular workplace inspections, recording hazards and issues identified, assessing their relative risk (priority) and recording short-term and long-term control measures to be put in place. (Refer to the Inspection Guidelines for more information.)
- iv) Accident/Incident Reporting & Investigation: All accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported (by the staff or students involved) on the “Yellow Card” report form, and forwarded to the local supervisor to investigate, before implementing remedial action and forwarding the report through the School/Branch/Centre Head, to OH&S Unit. The local HSR and any other relevant staff (including OH&S Unit, in potentially major incidents) should be involved in the investigation and consulted on appropriate remedial action. OH&S Unit will record all reports and provide statistical feedback on any trends identified. (Refer to the Accident/Incident reporting & Investigation Guidelines for more information.)
- v) Documentation: Adequate documentation must be kept at all levels in order to demonstrate that the OHSMS is being implemented and to assist identification of areas for improvement. Documentation shall include the following:-
 - Induction records (including general OH&S induction, local induction);
 - Training needs analysis and resultant training plans, records of training provided (including where appropriate, course content, feedback from participants (etc);
 - Policies, guidelines, local safe operating procedures (SOP’s), any other OH&S-related instructions;
 - Register(s) of hazards and hazardous work (including Plant and Chemical Registers, research proposals, fieldwork procedures etc), risk assessments and proposed control measures;
 - Records of inspections, dates, risk assessments and remedial action implemented;
 - Accident/incident reports, any risk assessments and remedial action, statistical reports;
 - University, Faculty/Division and School/Branch/Centre OHS plans (monitored quarterly and updated annually);
 - Emergency management plans and local evacuation plans, records of evacuation drills (etc);
 - Agenda’s and minutes of all OH&S meetings (or meetings where OH&S is discussed), including any monitoring or amendments to the OH&S plan);
- vi) OH&S Planning: The University, its Faculties and Divisions and Schools/Branches/Centres will develop and implement OH&S Plans (which may be integrated into business or strategic plans, as appropriate). These plans will be monitored regularly, updated where necessary and revised annually, to ensure that they reflect the current priorities for improving health, safety and welfare of staff and students. (Refer to OH&S Planning Guidelines for more information.)
- vii) OH&S Auditing: OH&S Unit will maintain an annual OH&S Audit Program, which will provide a comprehensive review of the effectiveness of the OHSMS in Schools and areas, each year. The Audit Program will endeavour to permit all areas of the University to undergo scrutiny over a 5-year period, with higher-risk areas being audited more frequently. The Audit will provide valuable feedback to Heads on opportunities for improvement in their areas and will provide an overview of the status of the OHSMS across the University. (Refer to the OH&S Auditing Policy & Guidelines for more information.)

Role	Responsibility
Employer	Members of Council, the Vice-Chancellor, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Executive Directors and Executive Deans) have ultimate responsibility for meeting the aims and objectives of this policy as well as compliance with the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act, 1986 and the Workers' Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, 1986 (and associated Regulations) and their subsequent amendments.
Responsible Officer	The Vice Chancellor, as Chief Executive Officer of the University, is the 'Responsible Officer' under the OH&S legislation and is therefore held legally accountable for the health, safety and welfare of the University's employees and students whilst at work.
Executive Director, Student & Staff Services	The Vice Chancellor has delegated to the Executive Director, Student & Staff Services , the task of <i>developing and monitoring</i> the overall OH&S management system (to be implemented by managers across the University), to enable effective monitoring of OHS&W performance, participation in the resolution of issues of concern and determination of priority allocation of resources.
Vice Chancellor's Committee and Audit, Compliance and Risk Committee	The Vice Chancellor's Committee and Audit, Compliance and Risk Committee will monitor the implementation of the University's OHS&W Management plan and regularly review its progress, through the University Health & Safety Committee.
OHS Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the University Occupational Health & Safety Management System (OHSMS) and consultative framework; • Development, implementation and review of OH&S Policies & Guidelines and the University's OH&S Plans, ensuring continuous improvement of OH&S across the University; • Provision of OH&S training programs; • Investigation of major incidents and implementation of improved hazard control measures; • Management programs for major hazards (radiation, hazardous chemicals etc); and • Management of the University OH&S Audit program
Head of School or Manager, Administrative Unit	<p>Senior Management must ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all supervisory personnel under their control can effectively implement and maintain the OHSMS; • there are adequate resources are available for health & safety programs, OHS-related training (including Health & Safety Representative training), maintenance and, where necessary, upgrading of the work equipment (to ensure adequate safety standards are maintained) in Schools, Branches and Centres under their control. • In particular, they must:-

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all employees and students are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the relevant legislation; • consult with employees/students and/or their representatives on any issues that affect the health, safety and welfare of staff and students while they are at work • comply with the University standards and appropriate legislation, giving consideration to government, industry and community expectations and resource implications; • allocate sufficient resources, according to priorities, to enable these standards to be achieved; and • promote OH&S and rehabilitation as priority issues for integration into all Faculty/Division and School/Branch/Centre activities.
Supervisor or delegate	<p><i>NOTE: For the purposes of this policy, a supervisor is any person, academic or non-academic, who provides guidance and/or instruction regarding the activities of another person at work/study/volunteer activities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors have primary responsibility for management at the operational level, they must also assume responsibility for the health and safety of staff and students working under their supervision, or in areas under their control. • The supervisor is responsible for implementing and maintaining the OH&S program at the worksite level. This includes ensuring that all personnel are:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) fully informed about the hazards associated with work/studies activities; b) adequately trained and instructed in safe working procedures; and c) appropriately supervised. • In consultation with elected Health and Safety Representatives (HSR's) and Health and Safety Officers (HSO's), supervisors will:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ensure regular workplace inspections (of facilities, tools and electrical equipment) are carried out; b) identify hazards; c) evaluate risks; d) develop and implement appropriate control measures; e) investigating accidents and incidents; and f) develop controls to prevent their recurrence. <p>(The OH&S Unit is available to provide advice and assistance to supervisors to achieve this).</p>
Staff Member (including Students, Contractors,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, Students, Contractors, Volunteers and other visitors to the University must comply with OH&S legislative requirements and with OH&S-related University policies,

Volunteers and other visitors to the University)	<p>guidelines, rules and instructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In particular, in this context, they must:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) obey all reasonable OH&S instructions and safe working procedures; b) identify and report to their Supervisor, any hazards, risks or unsafe situations or practices (both verbally and using the approved Incident Report Forms (or “yellow cards”); c) participate in drills, training and instruction as deemed necessary by management; and d) participate in evaluation and development of controls or other preventive measures, in relation to hazards within their workplaces.
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8 COMMUNICATION

8.1 This policy and its supporting policies and guidelines will be published in the Human Resources and OH&S Unit websites on the University intranet, to be accessible to all staff and students.

8.2 In addition, they will be distributed, via e-mail, to all Faculty and School Heads, to be made available in electronic or hardcopy format, as required, to all staff (particularly those without intranet access) and new staff, visiting academics and contractors (etc).