

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2016

The Senate of the University of Sydney adopts the following policy.

Dated: 2 May 2016

Last amended: 27 April 2018 (administrative amendments only)

21 February 2024 (administrative amendments only)

23 April 2024 (administrative amendments)

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1 Name of policy

This is the Work Health and Safety Policy 2016.

2 Commencement

This policy commences on 2 May 2016.

3 Policy is binding

Except to the extent that a contrary intention is expressed, this policy binds the University, Fellows, members of Senate committees, staff, students and affiliates (including volunteers and contractors).

4 Statement of intent

- (1) The University is committed to the health and safety of everyone involved in or affected by University activities.
- (2) This policy supports the implementation of a safety management system which provides:
 - (a) a safe and healthy work environment;
 - (b) safe systems of work;
 - (c) appropriate information, training, instruction, supervision;
 - (d) arrangements for meaningful consultation on health and safety matters at work; and
 - (e) a positive safety culture.

5 Application

This policy applies to:

- (a) Fellows, members of Senate committees, staff, students, affiliates (including volunteers and contractors), visitors; and
- (b) all activities conducted by or on behalf of the University.

6 Definitions

affiliate	has the meaning given in the Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct At the date of this policy this is: means a person appointed or engaged by the University to perform duties or functions on its behalf, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an honorary title holder engaged under the Honorary Titles Policy ;• a consultant or contractor to the University; and• an office holder in a University entity, a member of any University committee, board or foundation. An affiliate is not an employee of the University.
collaborative research hub	means a building or operational area where researchers from different faculties work collaboratively, e.g. Charles Perkins Centre Hub, Brain and Mind Centre.
contractor	means a party engaged by the University pursuant to a contract for services, and includes any sub-contractor to a contractor and any individual engaged by a contractor or sub-contractor.
common processes	means standard practices and processes in operation across the University.

Dean	means: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in relation to a faculty, the Dean of the relevant faculty;• in relation to a University school, the Head of school and Dean of the relevant University school. See: University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule
director	means, for the purposes of this policy, any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic Director, Australian Institute for Nanoscale Science and Technology;• Academic Director, Brain and Mind Centre;• Academic Director, Charles Perkins Centre;• Chief Financial Officer;• Chief Human Resources Officer;• Chief Information Officer;• Director, Audit and Risk Management;• Director, Campus Infrastructure Services;• Director, Marketing and Communications;• Director, Museums and Cultural Engagement;• Director, Student Centre;• Director, Student Recruitment and Admissions; and• Director, Student Support Services.
executive	means those individuals including the dean or director and other appointed members of an organisational unit responsible for its management.
Faculty	means a faculty, University school or board of studies as established in each case by its constitution. See: University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule
Fellow	means a member of the Senate of the University.
hazard	means a source of potential harm, or a situation with potential for harm, to human health or wellbeing.

head of administrative area (HOA)	<p>has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p>means a senior staff member outside a faculty whose position is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• approved as such in writing by the VP (Operations); and• recorded as an HOA in relevant human resources recordkeeping systems. <p>Where appropriate, this includes the Director, Law Extension Committee.</p>
head of school (HOS)	<p>has the meaning provided in the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule, which at the date of this policy is:</p> <p>means a Head of School within a faculty. Where appropriate, this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a Head of School and Dean within a faculty; and• the Director, Law Extension Committee..
incident	<p>means an occurrence that has an adverse impact on people, including events that result in injury, illness, equipment failure, or “near misses” when there is potential for injury.</p>
local safety appointees	<p>means workers appointed to any of the positions referred to in clause 15 of this policy.</p>
local safety plan	<p>means a document that identifies work health and safety risks for a local area, monitors compliance with the Safety Management Standards and details the actions planned in response. The WHS Action Plan is a tool that can be used for this purpose.</p> <p>Note: See subclauses 11(2) and 11(3) in this policy, and clause 5 in the procedures.</p>
organisational unit	<p>means, as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• faculty;• University school;• school;• professional services unit or other equivalent administrative unit; or• collaborative research grouping (e.g. Charles Perkins Centre, Brain and Mind Centre); <p>of the University.</p>
procedures	<p>means the Work Health and Safety Procedures.</p>

risk	means, in relation to any potential injury or harm, a measure of the likelihood and consequence of injury or harm occurring, determined according to the University WHS Risk Matrix set out in Schedule 1 of the procedures.
Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan	means the current Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan, as determined from time to time by Senate in accordance with clause 8 of this policy.
safety management standards	means the minimum safety requirements referred to in clause 9 of this policy.
school	means an organisational unit or equivalent budget unit established by the Vice-Chancellor on recommendation of the Provost and reporting through a faculty.
senior manager	means any of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a Fellow;• a Principal Officer;• a Dean;• a Head of School and Dean (University school);• a Director;• a head of school; or• a head of administrative area.
student	means a person who is currently admitted to candidature in an award course of the University or who is enrolled at the University: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• as a non-award student; or• as a cross-institutional student.
volunteer	means a person who acts on a voluntary basis (irrespective of whether the person is reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses).
worker	means a person who performs work for or on behalf of the University. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an employee;• a contractor;• a higher degree research student conducting work on behalf of the University;• a student participating in work-integrated learning;• an undergraduate student undertaking research for the purposes of their honours year;• a volunteer. An affiliate may, in some circumstances, also be a worker.

workplace means any place where work is carried out for the University and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

7 Safety management system

- (1) The University's safety management system is multi-layered and includes:
 - (a) the Safety, Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan;
 - (b) this policy and the procedures;
 - (c) the safety management standards;
 - (d) common processes;
 - (e) performance standards for specific operational risks; and
 - (f) local practices and processes of organisational units.
- (2) Implementation of the safety management system provides a systematic approach to achieving continuous improvements in safety.

Note: Refer to Schedule 1 for the University Safety Management System Model and to the safety health and wellbeing website for an overview of the [Safety Management System](#).

8 Safety Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan

- (1) The [Safety Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan](#) sets out the strategic objectives and key focus areas for the University in relation to safety health and wellbeing.
- (2) Senate will determine the Safety Health and Wellbeing Strategic Plan.
- (3) The Plan is reviewed every four years to coincide with the University's strategic planning cycle.

9 Safety management standards

- (1) The University's safety health and well-being activities must be conducted in accordance with the following requirements, known as the safety management standards.
 - (a) Senior managers must demonstrate active and visible leadership.

Note: See **clause 4** of the procedures.
 - (b) Each organisational unit must plan and monitor implementation of the safety management system.

Note: See **clause 5** of the procedures.
 - (c) The primary mechanism for consultation on health and safety matters must be direct dialogue between supervisors and workers under their supervision.

Note: See **clause 6** of the procedures



- (d) Each organisational unit must identify work health and safety risks, record these in their local safety plan and work to control them appropriately.

Note: See **clause 7** of the procedures.

- (e) All workers must be provided with appropriate training and instruction.

Note: See **clause 8** of the procedures.

- (f) Emergencies must be immediately reported and managed in accordance with the University's standard emergency response procedures.

Note: See **clause 9** of the procedures and the University's [emergency response procedures](#) on the University website.

- (g) All incidents and hazards must be reported and managed appropriately.

Note: See **clause 10** of the procedures.

- (h) Senior managers and supervisors must make, or direct others making purchasing decisions to make, reasonable attempts to purchase the safest available products and services.

Note: See **clause 11** of the procedures.

10 Work health and safety governance and management

- (1) Work health and safety must be managed in accordance with the safety management system.

- (2) Responsibility for safety in collaborative work areas is shared equally by all participants, consistent with this policy and its associated procedures.

- (3) Work health and safety must be a standing first agenda item for all relevant management and team meetings.

- (4) **The Senate:**

- (a) determines and reviews the strategic direction and plan for safety, health and wellbeing;
- (b) monitors safety performance and compliance with work health and safety legislation through its Safety and Risk Management Committee; and
- (c) receives reports from the Senate Safety and Risk Management Committee.

- (5) **The Senate Safety and Risk Management Committee** monitors and advises Senate on:

- (a) matters relating to work health and safety performance; and
- (b) compliance with work health and safety legislation, and University policy.

Note: Terms of reference for the Senate Safety and Risk Management Committee can be found on the [Senate website](#).

- (6) **The University Executive:**

- (a) monitors implementation of the safety management system and the Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan through its Work Health and Safety Committee;
- (b) receives reports from its Work Health and Safety Committee;

- (c) endorses decisions about work health and safety that affect the whole or a substantial part of the University community; and
 - (d) receives work health and safety reports from members of the University Executive.
- (7) **The University Executive Work Health and Safety Committee:**
- (a) monitors implementation of the safety management system;
 - (b) regularly reviews the safety management system for compliance with legislation and identifies opportunities for continuous improvement;
 - (c) sets work health and safety performance targets for the University;
 - (d) considers and advises on University wide work health and safety issues;
 - (e) provides a mechanism for a co-ordinated and consistent approach to managing work health and safety risks across the University.
- Note:** Terms of Reference for the University Executive Work Health and Safety Committee can be found [here](#).
- (8) **The Safety Health & Wellbeing unit:**
- (a) develops, reviews and monitors the safety management system;
 - (b) provides professional health and safety advice;
 - (c) engages with the University community to build capability to effectively manage work health and safety; and
 - (d) works collaboratively with the Campus Infrastructure and Services unit, who are responsible for the design and maintenance of the University's built environment.
- (9) **Campus Infrastructure and Services unit:**
- (a) manages the University's built environment including design and facility maintenance;
 - (b) works collaboratively with the Safety Health & Wellbeing unit when planning:
 - (i) the design of new facilities;
 - (ii) the implementation of corrective action for any hazards associated with the built environment; and
 - (c) completes any corrective action within reasonable timeframes.
- Note:** See the procedures, **subclause 10(3)**.
- (10) **Organisational units:**
- (a) implement the safety management system within their area of control;
 - (b) identify priority work health and safety issues and plan action to address these in consultation with workers, and with reference to:
 - (i) operational context;
 - (ii) risk profile; and
 - (iii) the Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan;
 - (c) obtain periodic reports from relevant staff on progress of actions planned to address priority work health and safety issues;
 - (d) monitor work health and safety performance and coordinate a consistent approach to managing health and safety risks across the organisational unit;



- (e) review and respond to reports about work health and safety;
- (f) consider work health and safety aspects of new projects, purchases and refurbishments;
- (g) manage safety in partnership with other organisational units and external organisations; and
- (h) in the case of collaborative research hubs, engage with occupants of these hubs, their organisational units where relevant, and Campus Infrastructure and Services to implement the safety management system.

Note: Refer also to the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Privacy Procedures](#)

11 Work health and safety responsibilities - senior managers

- (1) Senior managers must, within their areas of responsibility:

- (a) demonstrate active and visible leadership in work health and safety;

Note: See **clause 4** of the procedures.

- (b) include work health and safety as the first agenda item of all general management meetings;
- (c) acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters;
- (d) understand the nature of University operations and the associated hazards and risks;
- (e) ensure there are appropriate resources and processes to identify hazards, eliminate or minimise risks and achieve work health and safety compliance; and
- (f) verify the provision and use of work health and safety resources and processes.

- (2) In addition to the requirements of **subclause 11(1), deans and directors** must:

- (a) establish local safety plans and monitor progress towards completing the actions specified in them;

Note: See **clause 5** of the procedures.

- (b) monitor compliance with the safety management system; and
- (c) assist in the resolution of work health and safety issues.

- (3) In addition to the requirements of **subclause 11(1), heads of schools and heads of administrative areas** must:

- (a) establish local safety plans for their areas of responsibility and monitor progress towards completing the actions specified in them;

Note: See **clause 5** of the procedures.

- (b) within the scope of their delegated authority, choose and establish suitable risk controls;

Note: See **clause 7** of the procedures.

- (c) assist in the resolution of work health and safety issues;

Note: See **clause 13** of the procedures.

- (d) implement building emergency procedures within occupied buildings; and
 - (e) where appropriate, appoint, support and obtain periodic reports from local safety appointees.
- (4) Nothing in this clause or in the definition of senior manager constitutes an admission that all senior managers are 'officers' for the purpose of work health and safety legislation

Note: See [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#).

12 Work health and safety responsibilities - supervisors

- (1) Workers who supervise others at work must, within their area of responsibility:
- (a) demonstrate active and visible leadership in work health and safety;
Note: See **clause 4** of the procedures.
 - (b) identify hazards and work health and safety risks from activities under their supervision;
Note: See **clause 7** of the procedures.
 - (c) assess and control identified risks in consultation with those involved or affected, and with reference to University work health and safety procedures, standards and guidelines;
Note: See **clause 7** of the procedures.
 - (d) inform workers and others whom they supervise, and as appropriate students and visitors, about work health and safety requirements and expectations, and provide relevant guidance, information and training;
Note: See **clause 8** of the procedures.
 - (e) investigate work related incidents, seeking to identify the root causes and take steps to prevent recurrence;
Note: See **clause 10** of the procedures.
 - (f) promptly address work health and safety issues raised with them, in consultation with those involved or affected; and
Note: See **clause 6** of the procedures.
 - (g) refer work health and safety issues which they are unable to resolve to their supervisor, the relevant head of school or head of administrative area, Campus Infrastructure and Services or other organisational unit, as appropriate.
Note: See **clause 13** of the procedures.

13 Work health and safety responsibilities - workers

- (1) In addition to any more specific obligations specified in this policy or its associated procedures, all workers at the University have a general, personal responsibility for work health and safety.
- (2) In particular, workers must:

- (a) take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of others;
- (b) comply with instructions in relation to work health and safety;
- (c) adopt and use safe work practices, including the use of personal protective equipment and clothing;
- (d) familiarise themselves with, and comply with, any relevant policy, procedure or University standard relating to work health and safety;
- (e) promptly report work related hazards, injuries and incidents, including near misses to their supervisor;

Note: See **clause 10** of the procedures.

- (f) participate in work health and safety training and discussion;
- (g) co-operate with work health and safety inspections, audits and investigations; and
- (h) respond appropriately to emergencies.

Note: Refer to the [University's standard emergency response procedures](#).

14 Work health and safety responsibilities - students and others

- (1) Any other person at a workplace, including students and visitors, must:
 - (a) take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and that of others;
 - (b) comply with instructions about work health and safety;
 - (c) use personal protective equipment and clothing as instructed;
 - (d) promptly report work related hazards, injuries and incidents, including near misses; and
 - (e) co-operate with emergency procedures.

Note: Refer to the [University's standard emergency response procedures](#).

15 Local safety appointees

- (1) A head of school or head of administrative area may appoint workers to fill such local safety roles as are specified in the procedures.
- (2) Such appointments should be made in agreement with the appointed workers and, where appropriate, formalised within the individual's position description.
- (3) Consideration should be given to embedding local safety roles within the position descriptions of new positions.

Note: See **clause 12** of the procedures.

16 Monitoring work health and safety performance

- (1) The University's performance planning and development program must be used annually to set health and safety targets and review individual work health and safety performance.

Note: For further information see the [performance planning and development intranet pages](#).

- (2) Local work health and safety performance should be regularly reviewed at relevant management and team meetings.
- (3) Senior managers must periodically review their and their units' compliance with their responsibilities under this policy and the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#). These reviews must be completed as requested by, and in the manner prescribed by, the Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing.
- (4) The Safety Health & Wellbeing unit will periodically audit each organisational unit to verify implementation of the University's safety management system.
 - (a) Safety management system audits will be conducted by an independent auditor, external to the University.
 - (b) The auditor will provide results and recommendations which will be made available to relevant senior managers and University committees.

17 Performance standards for specific operational risk

The Director, Safety Health and Wellbeing, may determine minimum safety performance standards for specific operational activities that are inherently high risk.

18 Rescissions and replacements

This document replaces the *Work Health and Safety Policy 2012* which commenced on 19 December 2012 and which is rescinded as from the date of commencement of this document.

NOTES

Work Health and Safety Policy 2016

Date adopted:	2 May 2016
Date registered:	5 May 2016
Date commenced:	2 May 2016
Date amended:	27 October 2016
	6 June 2017 (administrative amendments)
	29 August 2017 (administrative amendments)
	27 April 2018 (administrative amendments)
	21 February 2024 (administrative amendments)
	23 April 2024 (administrative amendments)
Original Administrator:	Chief Human Resources Officer
Current Policy Owner:	Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Review date: 2 May 2021

Related documents: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#)

[Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 \(NSW\)](#)

[The University of Sydney Enterprise Agreement 2023-2026](#)

[University of Sydney \(Delegations of Authority \) Rule](#)

[Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct](#)

[Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy](#)

[Injury and Illness Management Policy](#)

[Procurement Policy](#)

[Smoke-Free Environment Policy](#)

[Workforce Engagements and Payments Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Procedures](#)

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
10(6); 10(7)	Changed references to Senior Executive Group (SEG) and SEG Work Health and Safety Committee to University Executive (UE) and UE Work Health and Safety Committee (UE WHS)	27 October 2016
10(7)(e) note	Amended hyperlink to UE WHS committee	27 October 2016
6; related documents	Updating references to the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016	6 June 2017
6; 11(2); 11(3); 12(g); 15(1)	Amendments relating to organisational design changes	6 June 2017
6; Notes	Amended Director, Human Resources title to Chief Human Resources Officer	29 August 2017
11(4) note; Related Documents	Amended link to Work Health and Safety Act 2011	29 August 2017

Provision	Amendment	Commencing
Related Documents	Administrative amendment to reference with Enterprise Agreement 2018-2021	27 April 2018
6	Updated definition of 'affiliate'	21 February 2024
6; related documents	Replaced 'Code of Conduct – Staff and Affiliates' with 'Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct 2021'	21 February 2024
6; related documents	Replaced 'University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Administrative Functions) Rule 2016' with 'University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2020	21 February 2024
10(10)(h)	Replaced 'Privacy Policy 2013' with 'Privacy Policy 2017' and 'Privacy Management Plan' with 'Privacy Procedures 2023' and corrected hyperlink	21 February 2024
Related documents	Replaced 'Injury and Illness Management Policy 2015' with 'Injury and Illness Management Policy 2024'	21 February 2024
	Replaced 'Procurement Policy' with 'Procurement Policy 2019'	
	Replaced 'Smoke-free Environment Policy' with 'Smoke-free Environment Policy 2019'	
	Replaced Enterprise Agreement 2018 – 2021' with 'Enterprise Agreement 2023 – 2026'	
6	amended definitions for 'Head of Administrative Area (HOA)' and 'Head of School (HOS)' to align with <i>University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority) Rule 2024</i>	23 April 2024
Throughout	Administrative amendments to remove the year in policy references.	23 April 2024

Schedule 1

University Safety Management System Model

