



Health and Safety Policy

Purpose

A statement of the commitment, scope, responsibilities and objectives of UNSW with respect to the management of work, health, and safety.

Scope

The Health and Safety Policy applies to all UNSW campuses, workers, students, visitors, volunteers, and contractors. Also applies to UNSW workers and students who engage in university activities in locations outside UNSW's campuses and facilities.

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Principles and objectives

1. Policy Statement

The health and safety of all staff, contractors, students and visitors is considered of utmost importance. Workers and students are provided with a safe and healthy place in which to work or study, and our work practices must not compromise the health or safety of others present on our campuses or when attending another workplace. This commitment to health and safety allows UNSW to teach, conduct research and promote scholarship at the highest international level through the attraction and retention of high-quality staff, students and other partners.

The following principles inform UNSW's health and safety policy objectives:

- 1.1. Workers and students will be provided with a safe and healthy place in which to work or study.
- 1.2. Our work practices must not compromise the health or safety of others present on our campuses or when attending another workplace.
- 1.3. Health and safety considerations are included in organisational plans, procedures, programs, courses, and job instructions.
- 1.4. Health and safety is both an individual and shared responsibility.
- 1.5. Promote a positive and proactive culture of Health and Safety across all aspects of UNSW operations.
- 1.6. We make every effort, where reasonably practicable, to eliminate or control risks from hazards, including psychosocial hazards associated with the workplace and the work performed by workers.
- 1.7. UNSW has an integrated suite of procedures, plans, resources, and online systems, to form a comprehensive Safety Management System (SMS).

1.8. Communication and consultation are central to working together for a safer workplace.

2. Legal and Policy Framework

- 2.1. UNSW will comply with the NSW and ACT Work Health and Safety Act (WHS Act) (NSW and ACT) and other relevant legislation and industry standards. UNSW will also meet its license conditions as a self-insurer for workers' compensation.
- 2.2. Failure to follow safe systems of work, misuse of health and safety equipment, bypassing of a risk control measure or interfering with another person's efforts to work safely, may lead to prosecution under the WHS Act and will be dealt with under the University's appropriate Code of Conduct or relevant Enterprise Agreement.

3. Implementation

The strategies to implement this policy include:

- 3.1. the implementation, maintenance and review of UNSW's Safety Management System across all campuses and workplaces.
- 3.2. the implementation of a risk management approach to managing health and safety to make every effort, where reasonably practicable, to eliminate or control risks from hazards, including psychosocial hazards associated with the workplace and the work performed by workers.
- 3.3. the establishment of measurable objectives and targets to facilitate continual improvement of health and safety in the workplace, with the aim of reducing work-related illness and injury.
- 3.4. the provision of appropriate health and safety training and the dissemination of health and safety information to all UNSW workers, students, contractors, volunteers, and visitors to the workplace.
- 3.5. consulting with workers and students about decisions that may affect their health and safety.
- 3.6. the provision of adequate human and financial resources to ensure effective implementation of the Safety Management System.
- 3.7. the documentation and communication of health and safety responsibilities for all workers.
- 3.8. the communication of this policy throughout UNSW via public display, inductions and training.

4. Support and Advice

- 4.1. For support and advice regarding this policy, contact the UNSW Safety Unit: <https://safety.unsw.edu.au/contacts> or send an email to safety@unsw.edu.au.

5. Communication

- 5.1. This policy will be accessible on the UNSW Governance website and an accompanying Safety Policy Statement will be accessible on the UNSW Safety website. UNSW's Safety Policy Statement will be displayed in all workplaces and communicated through the organisational Work Health and Safety Committees.

Effective: 10 March 2025

Responsible: Vice-Chancellor

Lead: Director, Safety

Appendix 1

Responsibilities

- The **University Council** has the duties of an Officer under the WHS Act and has ultimate responsibility for providing a safe and healthy working environment for UNSW workers, students, contractors, visitors and volunteers.
- The **Vice-Chancellor** has the duties of an Officer under the WHS Act. In addition, they will consult with the senior leadership team to set strategic objectives and targets for UNSW's performance with respect to health and safety consistent with this policy and will ensure these targets are met.
- **Deans and Divisional Heads** have the duties of an Officer under the WHS Act. In addition, they are responsible for meeting the health and safety objectives and targets set by the Vice-Chancellor and reporting regularly on their progress.
- **Heads of Schools, Divisional Unit Managers, Research Centres and Administrative Units** are responsible for implementing activities and programs to meet the health and safety objectives within their area of control and reporting regularly on the progress of implementation.
- **Supervisors** are responsible for implementing the health and safety objectives and Safety Management System within their area of responsibility and taking steps to ensure that identified hazards are eliminated as far as reasonably practicable or controlled using the hierarchy of risk controls.
- **Workers and Students** are responsible for following UNSW policies, procedures and guides, the Safety Management System and other reasonable instructions by their supervisor. They must also ensure that their conduct or lack of action does not endanger themselves, others or the environment.
- **Work Health and Safety Committees** are responsible for ensuring effective consultation and issue resolution takes place within their responsible workgroup, providing Health and Safety advice and may assist with the implementation of the Safety Management System.
- **UNSW Safety Unit** is responsible for the review and maintenance of the Safety Management System, assisting senior management with the coordination and implementation of the Health and Safety objectives and target, and provide health and safety support and advice to Deans Divisional Heads, Managers and Work Health and Safety Committees.
- Any of the staff members authorised under **Schedule 8 of [UNSW Delegations](#)** can request that any work or activity stop if there are risks to health and safety or the environment. They must communicate this decision to the manager(s) who is responsible for that work or to the management responsible for the contractor performing the work.

Legislative compliance

This Policy supports the University's compliance with the following legislation:

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#) (NSW)
- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#) (ACT)

Supporting documents

- Health and Safety Policy Statement (for display purposes)
- Safety Management System, [Procedures](#) and Guidelines

Related documents

- [Code of Conduct and Values](#)
- [Enterprise Agreements](#)
- UNSW Strategic Plan
- WorkSafe ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/Home> SafeWork NSW: www.safework.nsw.gov.au
- State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) <https://www.sira.nsw.gov.au/>
- [UNSW Register of Delegations](#)

Definitions and acronyms	
Consultation	Work health and safety consultation involves the sharing of relevant information between the employer and the employee. Consultation includes giving workers the opportunity to express their views, valuing these views and allowing them to contribute to the resolution of health and safety issues.
Hazard	A hazard is a source of potential harm or a situation with the potential to cause harm to people, property or the environment.
Safety Management System	A set of plans, actions and procedures to systematically manage work health and safety in the workplace that is actively endorsed by a committed employer.
Risk Assessment	The overall process of estimating the magnitude of risk and deciding whether the risk is acceptable.
Risk Management Program	Describes the requirements and procedures used to facilitate the early identification of foreseeable physical and psychosocial hazards, to assess the risk associated with these hazards, and implement appropriate control mechanisms.

Version history

- **Version 1.0** approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 5 April 2001 and effective on 5 April 2001 following a full review.
- **Version 2.0** approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 1 January 2007 and effective on 1 January 2007 following a full review.
- **Version 3.0** approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 5 May 2010 and effective on 5 May 2010 following a full review.
- **Version 4.0** approved by the President and Vice-Chancellor on 29 April 2013 and effective on 29 April 2013. The Policy was updated to reflect 2011 WHS Act amendments and UNSW Branding Guidelines.
- **Version 5.0** approved by the President and Vice-Chancellor on 30 March 2016 and effective on 30 March 2016 following a full review.
- **Version 5.1** approved by the Director of Governance on 10 July 2018 and effective on 10 July 2018 following an administrative update.
- **Version 6.0** approved by the Vice-Chancellor on 21 June 2022 and effective on 21 June 2022 following a full review.
- **Version 6.1** approved by the Vice-Chancellor and President on 17 February 2023 and effective on 17 February 2023. Section 1; 3(b) and Definitions and Acronyms were changed to include psychosocial hazards as required by WHS regulation.
- **Version 6.2** approved by the Director of Governance on 29 November 2024 and effective on 29 November 2024 following an administrative update to current template and updated links.
- **Version 6.3** approved by the Director of Governance on 10 March 2025 and effective on 10 March 2025 following an administrative update to reflect UNSW Delegations.