*This document is under review, if you have any input, please email safety@unsw.edu.au.

Writing Safe Work Procedures Guideline (HS027)

Introduction

This Guideline is to be used when writing Safe Work Procedures (SWP) and is to accompany the HS026 Safe Work Procedures form or SafeSys SWP template. The objective is to ensure that written instructions have been developed for all activities that pose a risk to the health and safety of people undertaking UNSW activities.

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1. Scope

This Guideline applies to all Safe Work Procedures written by staff and students for UNSW activities or processes undertaken. SWPs are written to address complex or detailed processes, products, plant, or projects. SWP should exist where there are activities carrying a health and safety risk (including those stated in legislative requirements), or where an absence of such instruction would adversely affect health and safety performance. A SWP must be written for specific emergency procedures and where certification or authorisation is required for personnel to work on certain equipment or conduct certain processes.

This Guideline also applies to all Safe Work Procedures written as templates and processes common to administrative areas.

2. Development of SWP's

Usually, risk management identifies the need for a SWP as an administration control measure. SWPs should be developed by a staff member(s) and/or student(s) with sound, hands on experience and knowledge of the tasks. Gaining input from a number of staff or students will greatly enhance the usefulness of the procedures. For some processes or tasks, it may be necessary to seek the input of a person with mechanical, electrical, or other

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technical competence. This may be through in-house expertise or an external expert. The legislation, Codes of Practice, manufacturer's user manual and any relevant Safety Data Sheet must be consulted for safety information to include in the SWP.

For complex or unusual situations, it is recommended that the local Health and Safety Consultation Committee or HS Representative be consulted during the development of the SWP before the process or task can begin. The supervisor or responsible person for the task or process must sign off on the SWP after being satisfied that sufficient expertise has been sought in the development of the procedure.

3. SWP's should include

1. The author of the SWP.
2. The title of the SWP and a basic description of the activity (e.g. use of a drill) or process (e.g. decanting a hazardous substance).
3. List the potential hazards and risk controls as identified during risk management including specific precautions required. Include title and location or link to associated risk management document, if applicable.
4. Any resources required to perform the task including plant, chemicals and personal protective equipment and clothing to be worn.
5. Requirements from legislation, standards, codes of practice and manufacturers information used in the development of the SWP.
6. Clear step by step instructions for undertaking the task in a safe manner.
7. Instructions on emergency shutdown for the plant or process.
8. Emergency procedures for how to deal with fires, spills or exposure to hazardous substances while carrying out the process.
9. Normal operating clean up and waste disposal requirements.
10. List competency and training required by those carrying out the task/process. For example, qualifications, certificates, licensing, etc. This can include the demonstrated ability to follow the individual SWP.
11. Person or position that has supervisory responsibility for the activity or process and the person that has responsibility for the review of the SWP.
12. The sign off sheet at the end of the form can be used as a means of demonstrating and witnessing that a person is competent in following the SWP. Alternatively, the Competency Section within SafeSys can be used to capture this information.

4. Use of SWP's

For plant or equipment, the SWP should be displayed prominently close to the location of the plant or equipment where practicable. All SWPs should be readily accessible by persons who undertake the activity or process.

5. Use of Manufacturers Manuals as SWP

As the manufacturers manual may not contain all the local information required in section 3 for it to qualify as a SWP it may not (in all circumstances) alone be used as a SWP.

Manufacturers' manuals or instruction can be listed and used as reference points for any of the sections in 3 above where the step-by-step instructions or information is lengthy or already exists in an easy to use and understandable format in the manual.

6. Training

Workers must be trained in the SWP and be deemed competent in that activity.

Training provision, competency assessment and recordkeeping must comply with the Health and Safety Training and Induction Procedure. Where there have been changes to plant or processes, a review of the SWP and training/competency of users must be undertaken.

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7. Review of SWP's

SWPs should be reviewed when new information becomes available (eg. legislative changes), an incident has occurred, the work environment has changed, equipment has been modified and at a frequency determined in the local area based on risk.

8. Acknowledgements

WorkCover (now SafeWork NSW) Workplace Safety Kit Guide 2001

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (nsw.gov.au)
Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (nsw.gov.au)
List of codes of practice | SafeWork NSW

Appendix A: Definitions

Risk: A risk is the consequence and likelihood of harm occurring when exposed to the hazard.

Safe Work Procedure (SWP): A procedure which describes how work is to be carried out in a safe and standardised process. It identifies the risks associated with a specific work task and incorporates the appropriate risk control measures into a detailed sequence of steps for doing the task safely. The SWP includes a description of the equipment used in the work, the standards or codes to be complied with and the qualifications and training required to do the activity.

Work: Any activity or process undertaken by a worker on behalf of UNSW.

Worker: A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), including work as: an employee, contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or an employee of a labour hire company assigned to work for a PCBU, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, volunteer.

Appendix B: Version control

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.1	Director, Human Resources	26 July 2007	26 July 2007	Minor edits to V1.0
2.0	Director, Human Resources	15 September 2007	15 September 2007	Reformatted document to comply with UNSW Guideline template
3.0	Director, Human Resources	26 April 2010	26 April 2010	Minor edits to 1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3. Include definition in 2. Reformat to new UNSW Guideline template.
4.0	Director, Human Resources	3/03/2011	3/03/2011	Minor edits to 3.2 included sign off sheet information i and order for SWP's
4.1	Director, Human Resources	23/01/2013	23/01/2013	Additional information on when an SWP is required; Change definition of risk and worker; Re-order priority in 3.1. Minor text change in 3.2; New section 3.4 on manufacturer's manuals. Updated Branding Logo in accordance with UNSW Branding Guidelines. Modified the document identifier from OHS to HS in accordance with WHS legislation review
4.2	Director, UNSW Safety and Sustainability	30 April 2014	30 April 2014	Reviewed for administrative updates
4.3	Director, UNSW Safety and Sustainability	8 February 2016	8 February 2016	Removed reference to HS901Lifting and moving SWP. Added reference to SafeSys.

5.0	Director, Risk & Safety Management	8 August 2022	8 August 2022	Removed from Governance Updated template and administrative update.

Updates to this document

Any suggestions, recommendations or updates to this document should be emailed to safety@unsw.edu.au with the email header stating *GUIDELINES UPDATE Writing Safe Work Procedures Guideline (HS027)*