

Work Health and Safety Governance Procedure



1 Purpose

To define roles and responsibilities across all levels of the University, establish a Governance framework for managing health, safety, and wellbeing.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all Employees, Students, Contractors, and Visitors engaged in university-related activities. It covers all University Sites and Workplaces, including campuses, remote workspaces, fieldwork, and virtual environments, both within Australia and overseas. It applies to all activities managed or influenced by the University.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure defines the roles and responsibilities required to support the University's commitment to health, safety, and wellbeing. It establishes a Governance framework that promotes Accountability, consistency, and proactive Risk management across all levels of the University.

It aligns to compliance requirements set out in the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*, the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)*, and other relevant legislation.

4 Procedures

4.1 Governance Framework

The Governance framework establishes clear roles and responsibilities across all levels of the University to support effective management of health, safety, and wellbeing. It fosters Accountability, consistent practices, and encourages open communication, enabling proactive identification, management, and monitoring of Risks.

This procedure supports a positive safety culture and by providing structured processes for Risk management, incident reporting, and continuous improvement. It is underpinned by the University Safety Management System Framework, which includes the policies, procedures, and tools required to meet health and safety obligations and comply with legislative requirements.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The University requires all individuals responsible for activities conducted on University campuses or other locations to actively consider health and safety as part of their daily work. They are expected to understand and fulfil their obligations, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure a safe and healthy environment for themselves and others.

Vice-Chancellor and Executive Members

The Vice-Chancellor and Executive Members report to the University Council and must exercise due diligence to ensure the University complies with its legal obligations. This includes:

- Acquiring and maintaining up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters
- Understanding the nature of the University's operations and associated hazards and Risks
- Ensuring appropriate resources and processes are available and used to eliminate or minimise Risks
- Establishing systems to receive, review, and respond to Information about incidents, hazards, and Risks
- Implementing processes to ensure compliance with duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*
- Verifying the effectiveness of health and safety resources and processes, and communicating implementation action plans effectively to relevant stakeholders.

Heads of Organisational Units and Directors

Heads of Organisational Units and Directors are responsible for ensuring that work in their areas is conducted as safely as reasonably practicable. Their responsibilities include:

- Maintaining current knowledge of health and safety issues
- Setting the standard for safety Leadership and culture within their area
- Leading strategic oversight of operational hazards and Risks
- Ensuring appropriate resources and controls are in place and regularly reviewed
- Reviewing and approving Risk assessments as per procedure
- Providing and recording induction, training, and supervision
- Establishing systems to receive and respond to safety Information

- Monitoring safety performance and identifying areas for improvement
- Escalating significant Risks to senior Leadership or Governance committees
- Maintaining compliance and assurance processes.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors must lead by example and actively manage health and safety in their areas. Key responsibilities include:

- Communicating and implementing safety procedures; ensuring Employees are trained to perform tasks safely
- Understanding local operations, hazards, and Risks
- Leading or overseeing hazard identification, Risk assessment, and control implementation
- Ensuring Risk assessments are completed and recorded (e.g., in SafeTrak)
- Providing and maintaining safety equipment, systems, and PPE
- Reporting and investigating incidents, hazards, and near misses; implementing corrective actions
- Monitoring control effectiveness and reporting issues to senior Leadership
- Supporting ongoing safety training and Employee development
- Assisting Employees with return-to-work and rehabilitation processes.

Workers

All workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others. They must:

- Follow health and safety instructions, policies and procedures
- Use personal protective equipment correctly and maintain it
- Participate in incident investigations and corrective actions

- Attend required training and education sessions
- Report hazards, incidents, and near misses promptly.

Students and Other Persons

Students, visitors, contractors, and other persons engaging in university-related activities share Responsibility for maintaining a safe and healthy environment. They must ensure their actions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others. They are expected to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others
- Follow any reasonable health and safety instructions provided by the University or a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU)
- Comply with University policies and procedures related to health and safety
- Report hazards, incidents, unsafe conditions, feedback, or injuries to the appropriate supervisor or responsible person
- Use personal protective equipment correctly where required and ensure it is maintained in good condition.

Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)

HSRs are elected to represent the health and safety interests of their work group. Their functions include:

- Representing workers in Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) matters
- Attending approved training
- Participating in consultations with the University (PCBU)
- Conducting workplace inspections
- Assisting in resolving health and safety issues
- Issuing Provisional Improvement Notices (PINs) when necessary
- Issue a Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) if all other resolution attempts have been exhausted and they reasonably believe there has been a breach of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team (HSW Team)

The HSW Team provides expert advice, support, and coordination across the University. Their responsibilities include:

- Developing, reviewing and implementing health and safety policies and procedures
- Facilitating consultation with Employees, HSRs, and management
- Supporting and reviewing Risk assessments and recommending control measures
- Supporting and conducting incident reporting and investigation
- Providing health and wellbeing advice and resources
- Issuing safety alerts and updates
- Auditing and monitoring compliance
- Advising on legislative changes
- Maintaining the University Safety Management System (SMS)
- Liaising with regulators in the event of notifiable incidents
- Promoting continuous improvement and feedback
- Preparing safety reports for committees and Leadership.

Student Senate

The Student Senate is the peak Student representative body at the University, advocating for Student interests and wellbeing across the University. Its key responsibilities include:

- Representing the Student voice in University Governance and decision-making
- Providing feedback on WHS policies, procedures, and performance from a Student perspective
- Promoting Student engagement in health, safety, and wellbeing initiatives
- Escalating Student safety concerns to relevant University forums and Leadership
- Participating in consultative processes and contributing to a positive safety culture on campus.

Portfolio Safety Consultative forums (SCF)

Portfolio Safety Consultative Forums (SCF) support the implementation of the University's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy and contribute to its ongoing review and enhancement. Their key responsibilities include:

- Providing strategic support for safety initiatives within their portfolios
- Providing resources such as Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), tools, and training
- Delivering value through local engagement and continuous improvement in safety and wellbeing
- Undertaking Risk management by identifying and addressing safety Risks and evaluating control measures
- Monitoring performance through KPIs, audits, and inspections, with reporting to the University Safety Consultative Forum.

University Safety Consultative Forum

The University Safety Consultative Forum (USCF) includes representatives from various departments and levels of the University, as outlined in the USCF Terms of Reference. The Forum meets bimonthly to review WHS performance, policies, and procedures. Portfolio Safety Consultative Forums convene quarterly, or as needed, to address specific WHS matters within their areas. Critical issues are escalated to the USCF for appropriate action. The key responsibilities of the University Safety Consultative Forum include:

- Providing strategic oversight of safety policies and promotion of a positive safety culture
- Resource reviewing to support safety initiatives, tools, and training
- Value delivery through continuous improvement and enhancement of wellbeing across the University Community
- Undertaking Risk management by identifying and mitigating safety Risks and monitoring control effectiveness
- Performance monitoring through KPIs, audits, and inspections, with reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee via Vice Chancellor's Executive (VCE).

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) plays a critical oversight role in ensuring the effectiveness of the University's WHS Governance. Its key responsibilities include:

- Providing independent oversight of the University's WHS Governance framework.
- Ensuring WHS Risks are integrated into the broader enterprise Risk management system.
- Reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls related to WHS.
- Monitoring trends in incident data and ensure timely corrective actions.
- Receiving and reviewing WHS audit findings and ensure implementation of recommendations.
- Advise the Council on systemic WHS Risks and emerging issues.

University Council

As the University's governing body, the University Council holds ultimate Accountability for health, safety, and wellbeing outcomes. Its key responsibilities include:

- Exercising due diligence under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)* as an “officer” of the University.
- Endorsing and monitoring the implementation of the University's Health Safety and Wellbeing strategy and Governance framework.
- Ensuring the University has adequate resources, systems, and processes to manage WHS Risks.
- Receiving regular, high-level WHS performance reports from the Vice-Chancellor and Audit and Risk Committee.
- Promoting a culture of Accountability, safety Leadership, and continuous improvement.
- Ensuring WHS is embedded in strategic decision-making and institutional planning.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Chief People Officer
Responsible Officer	Director (Health, Safety and Wellbeing)
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Work Health and Safety Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	16/2/2026
Effective Date	16/2/2026
Review Date	16/2/2031
Relevant Legislation	Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Enterprise Risk Management Policy
Related Procedures	
Related forms, publications and websites	
Definitions	<p>Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary</p> <p>Council</p> <p>Council means the governing body, the University of Southern Queensland Council.</p> <p>Employee</p> <p>A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University.</p>

Information

Any collection of data that is processed, analysed, interpreted, organised, classified or communicated in order to serve a useful purpose, present facts or represent knowledge in any medium or form. This includes presentation in electronic (digital), print, audio, video, image, graphical, cartographic, physical sample, textual or numerical form.

Student

A person who is enrolled in a UniSQ Upskill Course or who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

University

The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

University Community

Means all Students and Employees of the University, persons officially associated with the University, former Students and alumni at the University, as well as invitees, visitors and guests.

Vice-Chancellor

The person bearing the title of Vice-Chancellor and President, or as otherwise defined in the University of Southern Queensland Act 1998 , including a person acting in that position.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Accountability

An aspect of governance where there is an expectation of answerability.

Duty holders

Duty holders who have a role in managing the risks of hazardous manual tasks include:

- persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs)

- designers, manufacturers, importers, suppliers and installers of plant, substances or structures
- officers.

Workers and other persons at the workplace also have duties under the WHS Act, such as the duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety at the workplace.

Governance

The process of establishing, implementing and monitoring a range of policies and procedures by members of the governing body of an organisation.

Health and safety representative (HSR)

A worker who has been elected by their work group under the WHS Act to represent them on health and safety matters.

Leadership

The actions of leading a group of people or organisation in a direction or the ability to do so.

Responsibility

The duty to deal with something within defined management control.

Risk

The likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing harm.

Keywords

Governance, safety committee, WHS Policy

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