

Noise Management Procedure

1 Purpose

To provide practical guidance on how to identify, assess, and control noise exposure at the University of Southern Queensland to protect workers' hearing.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all areas where workers are exposed to noise levels that could potentially harm their hearing. It includes all Employees, Students, Contractors, and Visitors at a University Site or Workplace.

3 Procedure Overview

The procedure outlines how the University protects Employees from the harmful effects of excessive noise exposure in the workplace. It requires regular noise assessments to identify areas where noise levels exceed safe limits and evaluate associated Risks. Based on the hierarchy of controls, appropriate measures will be implemented, such as eliminating the source of noise, applying engineering controls, introducing administrative controls to limit exposure, and providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Supporting documentation such as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Risk Assessments (RAs), and/or Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) will specify safe practices for noise-related tasks and detail specific controls, such as equipment maintenance, isolation of noisy processes, and scheduling work to reduce exposure. Workers receive training to ensure they understand these controls, follow SOPs and SWMS, and correctly use PPE.

Ongoing monitoring activities include routine noise measurements, verification of control effectiveness, and scheduled reviews to maintain compliance and continuous improvement. Records of training, inductions, inspections, and monitoring are maintained. This Procedure aligns with:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)*
- *Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work Code of Practice (2021).*

4 Procedures

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for the implementation of this procedure are outlined below and align with the Work Health and Safety Governance Procedure.

Vice Chancellor and Executive Members

- Provide strategic direction and oversight for the noise safety management program.
- Approve noise safety policies and ensure they align with organisational goals and regulatory requirements.
- Allocate necessary resources, including budget and personnel, to support noise safety initiatives.
- Monitor the overall performance of the noise safety management system and ensure continuous improvement.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant noise safety legislation, regulations and Codes of Practice.

Heads of Business Units

- Oversee the implementation of the Noise Management Procedure and ensure compliance.
- Provide necessary resources for noise assessments, control measures, and training.

Managers and Supervisors

- Perform regular noise assessments and Risk evaluations to ensure the noise levels are within safe limits.
- Ensure workers use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) correctly and consistently.
- Organise and conduct training sessions for Employees on noise safety.
- Monitor the health of Employees exposed to high noise levels and conduct periodic hearing tests as defined in the *Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work Code of Practice (2021)*.

Workers

- Adhere to noise safety procedures and use PPE as instructed.
- Notify supervisors of any concerns or issues related to noise exposure.
- Attend training sessions on noise Risks and the proper use of PPE.
- University Employees who are identified as working in hazardous noise environments must have their responsibilities for managing noise exposure clearly defined in their position descriptions, in alignment with the scope of their employment.

For further details on roles and responsibilities held by University Members, refer to the Workplace Health and Safety Governance Procedure.

Students and Other Persons

- Take reasonable care for their own safety in relation to Noise Hazards.
- Comply with all reasonable directions from supervisors, in accordance with this procedure and other directions from the University.
- Report any noise related Hazards, incidents or unsafe conditions to their supervisors or the appropriate person.
- Use PPE where required and ensure it is maintained in good condition.

4.2 Risk Management

Workers should make every effort to comply with any reasonable instructions, as far as they are reasonably able, and cooperate with any health and safety policies or procedures that they have been notified, to reduce the Risk of noise related accidents or injuries.

The appropriate Supervisor has the duty of care to eliminate Risks arising from hazardous noise environments, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the Risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Supervisor is responsible for managing the Risks associated with noise and its effects by regularly assessing the noise levels in their workplace and documenting findings by undertaking Risk assessment. All noise Risk assessments must be documented and actioned via SafeTrak, in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure. To manage noise Risks effectively, follow the steps below:

1. Identify hazardous noise environments - determine what could cause harm. Complete a noise identification checklist to identify and document sources of hazardous noise, such as machinery, equipment, and processes that generate high noise levels. Consider a

noise assessment if exposure to the noise cannot be immediately controlled.

2. Assess Risks - understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the Hazard, how serious the harm could be, and the likelihood of it happening. This step may not be necessary if you are dealing with a known Risk with known controls.
3. Control Risks - eliminate Risks so far as is reasonably practicable; if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the Risk, implement the most effective control measures that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances in accordance with the hierarchy of control measures, and ensure they remain effective over time.

Implement control measures following the hierarchy of controls:

- a. Elimination: Remove the noise source if possible.
 - b. Substitution: Replace noisy equipment with quieter alternatives.
 - c. Engineering Controls: Use sound barriers, enclosures, and damping materials to reduce noise at the source.
 - d. Administrative Controls: Implement job rotation, scheduling, and maintenance programs to minimize exposure.
 - e. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Provide appropriate hearing protection devices and ensure their proper use.
4. Monitor and review control measures - the regular review of the effectiveness of Noise Control Measures is essential to ensure they are working as intended and providing adequate protection to workers. This involves assessing the current controls, identifying any gaps or areas for improvement, and making necessary adjustments.

Consultation

Consultation must occur throughout the noise Risk management process to ensure that individuals directly affected by Noise Hazards have an opportunity to contribute their views and feedback. This includes workers, Students, and other relevant stakeholders. For further details on consultation refer to the Work Health and Safety Communication and Consultation Procedure.

4.3 Training

The University must ensure that the required level of Information, instruction and training is available to workers. Training in the type of control measures implemented should be provided during induction into a job and as part of an ongoing noise management Risk Control program. For more details refer to the Work Health and Safety Training Procedure.

4.4 Health Monitoring

Health monitoring is an important component of managing Noise Hazards in the workplace. It applies only to workers who are exposed to hazardous noise, as determined through noise assessments conducted as part of the Risk management process. Audiometric Testing is the primary form of health monitoring for noise exposure and is used to detect early signs of hearing loss.

Where applicable, health monitoring should include:

- Early detection of hearing loss through regular Audiometric Testing.
- Evaluation of control measures to ensure they remain effective over time.
- Compliance with health and safety legislation, including the *Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work Code of Practice 2021*.
- Support for continuous improvement, using test results to refine noise management strategies.

All health monitoring records must be kept confidential and managed in accordance with the Health Monitoring Procedure.

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	26/6/2026
Effective Date	26/6/2026
Review Date	26/6/2031
Relevant Legislation	Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work Code of Practice 2021
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	
Related Procedures	Incident Management Procedure Work Health and Safety Assurance and Compliance Procedure Work Health and Safety Communication and Consultation Procedure Work Health and Safety Governance Procedure Work Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure Work Health and Safety Training Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	
Definitions	Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary Employee 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. 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 Members

Persons who include: Employees of the University whose conditions of employment are covered by the UniSQ Enterprise Agreement whether full time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term or casual, including senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University; members of the University Council and University Committees; visiting, honorary and adjunct appointees; volunteers who contribute to University activities or who act on behalf of the University; and individuals who are granted access to University facilities or who are engaged in providing services to the University, such as contractors or consultants, where applicable.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Audiometric Testing

Is a systematic method used to assess an individual's hearing capabilities by measuring their ability to hear sounds of different frequencies and intensities. This testing determines the threshold of hearing for each ear and is crucial in identifying early signs of hearing loss.

Exposure Standard for Noise

The maximum allowable noise level to which workers can be exposed. Refer to the Code of Practice for Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work, 2021, for details of a noise assessment.

Hazard

A situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person.

	Noise Control Measures Strategies implemented to reduce noise exposure, including engineering controls (e.g., soundproofing), administrative controls (e.g., rotating workers), and personal protective equipment (e.g., earplugs). Noise Hazard Any sound that has the potential to cause hearing loss or other health issues. This includes continuous, intermittent, or impulsive noise. In relation to hearing loss, means noise that exceeds the exposure standard for noise in the workplace. Noise Level Assessment The process of measuring and evaluating noise levels in the workplace to identify areas where noise control measures are needed. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Devices worn by workers to protect against hazardous noise levels, such as earplugs or earmuffs. Risk The possibility harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard. Risk Control Taking action to eliminate health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if that is not possible, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard will also eliminate any risks associated with that hazard.
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