WORK HEALTH
AND SAFETY
COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTION
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1 Role of the Committee

The Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee is the principal WHS consultation mechanism as outlined in the UOW Consultation Statement.

The purpose of the Committee is to:

- provide a forum that will allow consultation and discussion between management and employees at the University to aid in achieving a safe workplace
- advise the University on effective ways to ensure the health and safety of staff, students, visitors and contractors
- encourage all staff, students and contractors to work together to establish a safe and healthy working environment, and
- enable all persons employed by the University of Wollongong and persons covered by legislation to be able to refer matters to the Committee for advice and assistance.

The Committee shall concern itself with all WHS matters including:

- the review of information related to WHS performance including accidents, hazards and injury and illness data so as to assist the University in reviewing, producing, updating and monitoring WHS policies and programs
- obtaining from the University, prior to implementation, all details of proposed changes to the place of work which could affect the WHS of persons at the University
- the review of risk management activities occurring within the University including scheduled workplace inspections
- recommendations for training and education for particular groups in order to address WHS issues.

2 Membership

The Committee shall consist of employee nominated members, union nominated members and employer nominated members.

2.1 Employee Nominated Members

One employee from each group of Safe@Work Committees (SWC) or Safe@Work Representatives (SWR) listed below shall have a position on the Committee:

- Group 1: Accommodation Services, and Facilities Management
- Group 2: Library, Information Management and Technology Services, and DVC Academic
- Group 3: Faculty of Law Humanities and the Arts, Faculty of Business, and Faculty of Social Sciences
- Group 4: Faculty of Science Medicine and Health, and Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute
- Group 5: Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences, and AIIM
- Group 6: Safe@Work Representatives not represented by a Safe@Work Committee from CFO, CAO, Global Strategy, and Research and Innovation Campus.

Employees, students or other workers that are not represented from the groups listed above can report WHS issues directly to the WHS Committee Chair or Manager WHS to be raised at the WHS Committee.
Appointment of employee nominated members is outlined in section 3.

2.2 Union Nominated Members

One representative from each of the following unions shall be nominated to the Committee:

- Community Public Sector Union
- National Tertiary Education Union.

2.3 Employer Nominated Members

Employer nominated members of the Committee include:

- Vice Chancellor or nominee appointed from the Senior Executive
- Six employer members appointed by the Vice-Chancellor including an Executive Dean on a rotational basis.

2.4 Ex-Officio Members

Ex-Officio nominated members of the Committee include:

- Manager WHS or nominee
- Health and Safety Advisor(s).

The Committee may expand its own membership of Ex-Officio members in cases where the Committee deems a position plays a key role in the management of the University’s WHS System. Ex-Officio members do not have voting rights.

2.5 Other Attendees

Other attendees of the Committee include:

- A WHS Unit Representative who shall act as Committee Secretary.

The following entities have a standing invitation for one representative to attend Committee meetings:

- UOW Enterprises
- UOW Pulse
- Wollongong Undergraduate Student’s Association
- Wollongong Postgraduate Association.

Significant entities associated with the University may be added to the above list should the need arise. Other attendees do not have voting rights.
3 Appointment of Employee Nominated Members

Each group listed in section 2.1 is required to nominate one employee from the Safe@Work Committees or Safe@Work Representatives which form that group. Group representatives are recommended to be elected for a two year period.

Should two or more SWC members be nominated to represent a group on the WHS Committee and rotational representation is not agreed, an election shall be conducted by preferential ballot. The election process consists of each SWC having an equal percentage of the vote. The official members in each SWC within the group are allowed a vote calculated as a percentage of the total number from their SWC. The successful nominee is elected by the highest percentage of votes from the SWC group. Should there be a tie, the nominees will share the term of membership with one of the nominees being the representative and the other acting as the substitute representative for half the term respectively.

If two or more SWRs are nominated to represent Group 6 on the Committee each person will represent the Committee on a rotational basis.

The election process will be coordinated by the WHS Unit.

Line management approval is required for employee nominated members (or their substitute) to attend WHS Committee meetings.

4 Quorum

A quorum for a meeting shall be eight voting members provided there is a majority of employee nominated members. The Chairperson may request an appropriate number of nominated employer members to be observers to allow a meeting to be quorate.

Where a meeting is not quorate a meeting will be rescheduled no more than two weeks after the original meeting date.

5 General

5.1 Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

The Chairperson will be elected by and from the employee nominated members on the Committee for a term of two years. If no employee members nominate for the position of Chairperson, then a nominated employer member may fill the position with the consent of a simple majority of employee members. If a new chairperson needs to be appointed before the end of the elected Chairperson’s term, then the WHS Manager is entitled to ask a current Committee member to act as the Chairperson until an election can be held.

A Deputy Chairperson may be elected. Alternatively, the Chairperson may appoint an acting Chairperson.
5.2 Changes to the WHS Committee Constitution

Any changes to the constitution require consultation with and endorsement by the majority of the members of the WHS Committee.

5.3 Operation

The Committee shall, as far as possible, act as a consultative Committee. In matters where an action proposed by the Committee is beyond the authority of the senior University representative in attendance to implement, then the Committee shall forward its recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor or to the appropriate person.

All voting members shall have equal voting rights on matters considered by the Committee. The Chairperson shall not have a casting vote. As far as possible, the Committee should work by consensus.

The term of membership for any member shall be two years with members allowed to serve multiple consecutive terms.

A representative may appoint a substitute member to attend in their absence. Substitute members have full voting rights if the nominated member they are substituting for is not present at the meeting. Excluding union nominated members, substitute members will be a current member of the respective Safe@Work Committee group. Substitute members shall not attend Committee meetings if their representative is available except in special circumstances (i.e. for continuity purposes) where the Chairperson may approve the attendance of both the representative and substitute in advance.

If a nominated member fails to attend three consecutive meetings, the Committee may call for a replacement.

The Committee shall normally meet every two months. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairperson as required. Members shall normally receive at least one week’s notification of any meeting. Minutes shall normally be distributed within two weeks of any meeting. The minutes shall also be made available electronically on the WHS website.

In certain circumstances non-members may be permitted to attend with prior agreement of the Chairperson. For example, if there is a requirement for specialist expertise.

All members shall be allowed reasonable time during working hours to discuss WHS issues with persons whom they represent and also for the purpose of carrying out other tasks or functions associated with their role on the Committee.

Committee members shall have access to adequate and appropriate resources to enable and support their consultation duties. Resources may include:

- meeting room or other venue
- stationery
- computer including network access
- electronic media
- telephone
- printer/photocopier, or
- other required facilities.
Committee members are required to complete the following WHS training courses:
- Addressing Hazards and Risks in the Workplace
- WHS Principles for Safe@Work Committee Members.

5.4 Issue Resolution Procedure

WHS issues which arise should be resolved by following the process outlined in Appendix 1 of the WHS Consultation Statement.

Types of issues which could arise include reported WHS hazards or ineffective risk control measures. The resolution to any WHS issue will be documented in WHS Committee meeting minutes.

6 Delegation

The Committee may delegate some of its activities to other committees (such as local workgroup or section committees), groups (such as the WHS Unit) or persons (such as the Radiation Safety Officer) provided that appropriate reporting mechanisms exist such that the WHS Committee is fully aware of the progress of the delegated activities.

Where an activity is delegated the Committee will outline the monitoring and review mechanism at the time.

7 Related Documents

- NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011
- WHS Consultation Statement
- Terms of Reference Safe@Work Committees
- Terms of Reference Safe@Work Representatives
- Terms of Reference School/Unit Committees
## 8 Version Control Table

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Date Released</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>November 1996</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>New document created</td>
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<td>Document updated to reflect current requirements</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>March 2009</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Align with the National Audit Tool</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Addition of link to Resolving an WHS Hazard Or Issue Guideline.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>July 2010</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Document updated to incorporate the Personnel name change to Human Resources Division. Groups updated to include IHMRI and Shoalhaven campus and remove Law &amp; Education as now covered by WHS Representatives.</td>
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<td>Document updated to reflect changes to UOW WHS consultation structure.</td>
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