



UNIVERSITY  
OF WOLLONGONG  
AUSTRALIA

**UOW WHS UNIT**

# WHS DESIGN AND MODIFICATION GUIDELINES

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## **1 Introduction**

The University of Wollongong is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all staff, visitors, contractors and students. To meet this commitment, the University shall endeavour to control any risk to workplace health and safety through the implementation of an effective risk management system. This includes risks that are introduced to the workplace as a result of design or modification of plant, products, buildings or processes.

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that hazards introduced to the workplace as a result of design and modification activities can be systematically identified and the risk associated with those hazards controlled. This is applicable for any design and modification process that is undertaken at the University including plant, products, buildings or processes.

## **2 Scope**

This document has been developed to provide guidance on WHS requirements surrounding the design and modifications of plant, products, buildings or processes.

## **3 Responsibility**

Certain WHS responsibilities apply to University personnel regarding design and modification activities as can be seen below.

### **3.1 Employees**

Employees involved in the design or modification activities must be suitably qualified or competent and must apply the University's WHS risk management processes to ensure workplace safety risks are eliminated or suitable managed.

### **3.2 Supervisors and Managers**

Supervisors and Managers are to ensure that where applicable these guidelines are implemented throughout the design and modification of plant, products, buildings or processes.

### **3.3 WHS Unit**

The WHS Unit is responsible for the development of these guidelines in line with WHS legislative requirements. The Unit can also provide technical advice and support on the implementation of these guidelines during design and modification of plant, products, buildings or processes.

## **4 Design Requirements**

The NSW WHS Act 2011 sets out the duties of a person conducting businesses or undertakings that design plant, products, buildings or processes. A designer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that these items are designed without risk to the health and safety of persons who use, store or are in the vicinity of them. To achieve this, a designer of plant, products, buildings or processes must ensure that risk is managed in the design phase where practicable.

The UOW WHS Risk Management Guidelines are to be applied to design processes undertaken at the University of Wollongong. Staff or students responsible for designing plant or substances must complete a Risk Assessment prior to development. The risk assessment must be approved or certified by a competent person to ensure that all risks from identified hazards are controlled in accordance with the UOW WHS Risk Management Guidelines. Any person responsible for designing building or structures needs to refer to UOW WHS Risk Management for the Design of Buildings and Structures Guidelines.

Legislative or additional requirements pertaining to WHS requirements including national standards and Codes of Practice shall be identified in writing within the risk assessment. For example any design of electrical equipment needs to be completed by a qualified electrician and meet specifications set out in AS3000. For more information on the design or modification work with electrical equipment visit the UOW Electrical Safety Guidelines.

## 5 Modification Requirements

When plant, substances or structures are modified the person responsible for the modification must ensure, so far as id reasonably practicable, that the modification does not introduce risks to work health and safety risks. The principles applied to the design requirement are to be adopted to the modification process.

## 6 Related Documentation

- [Work Health and Safety Act, 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- [WHS Risk Management for the Design of Buildings and Structures Guidelines](#)
- [UOW WHS Risk Management Guidelines](#)
- [UOW Electrical Safety Guidelines](#)
- [Project Management Guidelines](#) [Facilities Management Division]
- Design Standard & Procedures Manual [Facilities Management Division].

## 7 Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Approved By	Amendment
1	August 1999	Manager WHS	Document created.
2	May 2003	Manager WHS	Scheduled review no major changes.
3	May 2007	Manager WHS	Scheduled review no major changes.
4	March 2010	Manager WHS	Scheduled review no major changes. Addition of links to revised B&G documentation. Review of National Audit Tool requirements.
5	August 2010	Manager WHS	Document updated to incorporate the Personnel name change to Human Resources Division.
6	March 2012	Manager WHS	Rebrand
7	March 2013	Manager WHS	Update in light of name changes, updated legislation and inclusion of modification.
8	July 2014	Manager WHS	Updated.
9	April 2015	Manager WHS	Updated to meet requirements of the National Audit Tool Version 3.
10	Dec 2023	Manger WHS	Scheduled review, rebrand, update links