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1 Introduction

Effective consultation is critical in the effective management of Work Health and Safety (WHS). The University’s WHS Management System (WHSMS) incorporates a systematic approach to WHS consultation to ensure that:

- relevant WHS information is shared with workers
- workers are given a reasonable opportunity to express their views and to raise health or safety issues
- workers are given a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process relating to the WHS matter
- the views of workers are taken into account, and workers are advised of the outcome of any consultation in a timely manner.

2 Background

The University WHS Committee, campus community and union-appointed representatives were originally consulted in 2003 on this proposed consultation arrangement via meetings and information sessions. Agreement was established in February 2004 on an otherwise agreed arrangement under the WHS Act 2000. The arrangement was periodically reviewed with changes as required.

The consultation agreement was agreed upon again by the WHS Committee in 2012 following changes to the WHS Act 2011. The consultation arrangement was further reviewed and agreed upon by the WHS Committee in {insert date of meeting} to ensure appropriate mechanisms of consultation of all portfolios of the University.

3 Legislative Requirements

The University must consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who carry out work for the University and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health and safety matter. In instances where a duty in relation to a safety matter is shared, the University must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with all other persons who have a duty in relation to the same matter.

3.1 When Consultation is Required

Consultation is required when:

a) identifying hazards and assessing risks arising from the work carried out or to be carried out
b) making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimize those risks
c) making decisions on the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers
d) proposing changes that may affect the health and safety of workers. This may include any changes to the workplace such as building renovations maintenance work, or minor works.
e) making decisions about procedures for consulting with workers; resolving health or safety issues; monitoring health of your workers; monitoring the conditions at the workplace and providing information and training for your workers
f) changing workgroups or consultation arrangements.

4 Consulting with UOW Workers

The University and its workers have agreed to the established consultation procedures as outlined in this Consultation Statement and related documents listed in section 10. The University will, in consultation with workers, determine the number of worker representatives required to effectively represent all work groups and make arrangements to allow workers to select those who will represent them on health and safety matters. Consultation arrangements are communicated to workers through a variety of methods including the Universe and other available communication channels eg induction, team meetings, WHS website.
4.1 Informal Consultation

Informal consultation is the process whereby consultation on WHS matters occurs through local line management outside of the formal consultation arrangement outlined in section 4.2. This includes instances where the University and workers are required to consult on WHS matters including but not limited to:

- health and safety hazards
- risk assessments and the determination or implementation of risk controls
- training requirements, and
- incident reporting.

The worker’s supervisor should be the first contact person for reporting any health and safety incidents, hazards or issues. In addition, all workers are encouraged to report any health and safety incidents, hazards or concerns in the workplace using UOW’s online reporting system.

The supervisor will communicate with the workers, and ensure that appropriate corrective actions are put in place to resolve the health and safety concern.

The worker or supervisor may choose to escalate a health or safety issue or concern using the formal consultation mechanisms outlined in subsequent sections.

Supervisors should also use informal consultation to communicate WHS messages. This includes having WHS as a standing item for operational meetings to ensure both workers and managers have an opportunity to discuss health and safety matters.

4.2 Formal Consultation

The University’s WHS formal consultation arrangement consists of:

- University WHS Committee
- Safe@Work Committees
- School/Unit Safety Committee where the need is identified
- Safe@Work Representatives.

4.2.1 University WHS Committee

The University WHS Committee is the peak committee for consultation on WHS matters. Membership consists of representation from Safe@Work Committees (SWC), Safe@Work Representatives (SWR), union representatives and management representatives. Details regarding the composition of the University WHS Committee are outlined in the WHS Committee Constitution.

Chairs of SWCs are encouraged to provide an annual report as well as complete an annual survey so that the University WHS Committee can monitor how SWCs are performing.

4.2.2 Safe@Work Committees

Safe@Work Committees (SWC) are established for faculties and divisions and act as the local vehicle for consultation on WHS matters as well as monitoring the implementation of the WHS system in their area of responsibility.

SWCs currently established at the University are:

- Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts
- Faculty of Business
- Faculty of Engineering and Information Science
- Faculty of Science Medicine and Health
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
- Accommodation Services Division
- Facilities Management Division
- Information Management and Technology Services
These are supported by School/Unit Safety Committees where the need identified. More information on the role, function and responsibility of SWCs are located in the Terms of Reference for Safe@Work Committees.

4.2.3 School/Unit Safety Committees

These committees operate at a school or unit level and are made up of different workgroups which comprise the school or unit. At least half of the members of the committee must be workers who are not nominated by management.

The committee membership should also include the Head of School or Unit, or a senior manager who has been delegated to attend on behalf of the Head of School or Unit. This person must have the appropriate authority to make decisions about health and safety matters.

The purpose of a school or unit safety committee is to discuss health and safety issues/concerns raised in the local area (e.g. school/unit level). This would include discussion of any proposed changes to the workplace. Any concerns that cannot be resolved by a staff member’s direct supervisor can be raised at Safe@Work Committee.

4.3 Safe@Work Representatives

Safe@Work representatives are to consult with management on the implementation of the following WHS requirements:

- raise WHS issues to management on behalf of employees and students
- improve communication and awareness of WHS requirements
- assist with the investigation of WHS issues or incidents.

The following divisions may have at least one nominated Safe@Work Representative that will be a contact person for escalating WHS issues that cannot be resolved at a local level or where an employee is unable to resolve a WHS issue with their supervisor.

- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor Global Strategy (DVCGS)
- Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation (DVCR).

Refer to the Terms of Reference Safe@Work Representatives for further information about appointment, duties and other information.

4.4 Consulting With Others

The University is required to consult, coordinate and co-operate with other Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) and their workers on shared WHS matters. The method(s) of consultation used by the University with others on WHS matters vary depending on the circumstances and are to be agreed to by the parties. Options to consult in these situations include but are not limited to:

- raising the issue with the relevant University or other PCBU contact
- induction or orientation meetings
- periodic performance review meetings which include WHS as an agenda item
- toolbox talks or similar
- focus or steering groups.

Where a method of consultation has not been determined, any WHS issue or concern may be raised with the University’s Manager Workplace Health & Safety who will review the matter and assist to resolve the issue with the most appropriate unit.
5 Training and Resources

Safe@Work Committee members and Safe@Work Representatives are to undertake the following training within 6 months of appointment:

- WHS Principles and
- Addressing Hazards and Risk in the Workplace.

In addition anyone representing UOW workers on health and safety matters must be provided with adequate time and resources to effectively undertake their role.

Consultation structures need to be organised in such a way that enable worker representatives to meet regularly with management about health and safety issues and the minutes of their meetings are available to all workers.

6 Resolving a WHS Issue

Refer to the flow chart at Appendix 1 that outlines the process to resolve a WHS issue.

7 Review

The Consultation Statement will be reviewed every three years by the WHS Unit in consultation with the WHS Committee. Conditions which might warrant a review of the consultation statement on a more frequent basis would include:

- legislative change
- restructure of units, or
- WHS Committee or worker concern.

Following the completion of any review, the statement will be revised and updated in order to correct any deficiencies. These changes will be communicated to the University community via the WHS Committee meeting minutes, Universe and the WHS Document Review web page.

8 Related Documents

- WHS Committee Constitution
- Terms of Reference for Workplace Advisory Committees
- Terms of Reference for Safe@Work Representatives
- Terms of Reference for School/Unit Safety Committees
- WHS Act 2011
- WHS Regulation 2011
- WHS Consultation Code of Practice
## Version Control Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version Control</th>
<th>Date Released</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>February 2004</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Document created</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>January 2006</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Document revised for format and content</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>January 2009</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Alignment with OHSMS and National Audit Tool</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Minor review no scheduled changes</td>
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<td>August 2010</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Document updated to incorporate the Personnel Services name change to Human Resources Division</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>January 2011</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Inclusion of further information regarding Workplace Advisory Representatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Inclusion of further information regarding the Workplace Advisory Representatives appointment and selection</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>March 2012</td>
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<td>Rebrand and document updated to incorporate the changes to legislation through the introduction of the WHS Act 2011</td>
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<td>July 2012</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Update reflecting WHS Unit name change</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Consultation arrangement reviewed and continues as per previous arrangement. Updated document to incorporate revised faculty structure.</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>Updated to incorporate legislative changes documented in the WHS Act 2011 NSW including shared duties arrangements. In addition relevant changes to the National Audit Tool Version 3 have been implemented into this guideline.</td>
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<td>August 2017</td>
<td>Manager WHS</td>
<td>Review to include all University portfolios in consultation arrangement. Inclusion of Safe@Work Representatives. Name change of Workplace Advisory Committee to Safe@Work Committee. Inclusion of resolving a WHS issue procedure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Appendix 1: Resolving a WHS Issue

A workplace hazard or safety issue is reported and recorded in SafetyNet for the supervisor to review. Urgent issues should be raised with the supervisor, WHS Unit and/or UOW Security immediately.

- Issue not resolved
  - Refer the issue to Safe@Work representative or Safe@Work committee who will refer the issue to the responsible manager(s)
  - Issue not resolved
    - Refer the issue to the area Dean/Director for review and implementation of corrective actions
    - Issue not resolved
      - Refer the issue to the UOW WHS Committee
      - Issue not resolved
        - Refer the issue to SafeWork NSW

Issue resolved