

# Working After Hours or in Isolation Safety Procedures

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## 1. Governing Policy

[Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Management System](#)

## 2. Purpose

The procedures set out the responsibilities and actions required to manage the risks to health and safety associated with working after hours or in isolation.

## 3. Scope

- a. These procedures apply to all work, study and research activities undertaken for the University by its workers, students, and volunteers when working after hours or in isolation.
- b. If applicable, this procedure should be read in **conjunction with**:
  - i. field work – the requirements for field trips and field work is covered under the [Field Trip Procedures](#)
  - ii. events – the requirements for managing events, including risk assessments and security arrangements are covered under [Event Safety Procedures](#)
  - iii. [Working from Home Agreement](#)
  - iv. Contractors – must meet the requirements of the [Contractor Safety Management Procedures](#) including the need to check in/ out and manage risk via the Contractor approval process and the Permit / Permission to Proceed system, which must include assessing the risks when work occurs out of hours.

## 4. Definitions

<b>Low Risk Administrative Work</b>	<p>Low risk administrative work includes:</p> <p>Desk based work such as computer work, reading, writing or other calculations and other administrative work performed in areas such as – offices, study areas, libraries and computer pools/ spaces.</p>
<b>Buddy system</b>	A cooperative arrangement whereby individuals are paired or teamed up and assume responsibility for one another's safety.
<b>Controls</b>	The process of implementing measures to reduce the risk associated with the hazard.
<b>Hazard</b>	A situation or thing which has the potential to harm the health, safety or welfare of people at work.
<b>PCBU</b>	Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking as defined in the Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation.
<b>Risk</b>	The likelihood that a hazard will cause injury, illness or disease and the severity of that injury, illness or disease that may result.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	The process of evaluating the likelihood and consequence of injury, illness or disease resulting from exposure to the hazard(s).
<b>Worker</b>	A person who carries out work in any capacity for the University including all academic and professional staff, labour hire company employees, trainees, persons gaining work experience and volunteers.
<b>Working After Hours</b>	Working After hours will generally apply to times outside of core hours of <b>7.30am-6pm</b> weekdays, or on weekends or Public Holidays.
<b>Working in isolation</b>	<p>Working in isolation refers to situations where normal means of contact with and immediate assistance from other people is not available either visually or verbally. This may be due to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature of the work</li> <li>• time, or</li> <li>• location of the work.</li> </ul>

## 5. General Safety and Security

When working after hours or in isolation, everyone, regardless of the tasks they are undertaking, needs to be mindful of their general safety and security and ensure they:

- a. carry a mobile phone
- b. understand emergency procedures
- c. know how to access [Security](#) for the site they are working on
- d. report all [safety](#) incidents
- e. carry their University identification card on them at all times
- f. do not provide access to others unless they are authorised to do so
- g. consider personal security measures e.g. parking and walking in well-lit areas, making sure building doors are closed.

## 6. Low risk administrative work

- a. Low risk administrative work includes desk-based work such as computer work, reading, writing or other calculations and other administrative tasks in areas such as offices, libraries, study or computer pools and general student study areas.
- b. If low risk administrative work is to occur in an area such as a laboratory, workshop or studio, it can only be considered low risk if no higher risk activities are being conducted in the space at that time and all risks in the area are controlled appropriately.
- c. Low risk administrative work does not require a risk assessment or any additional approval other than building access where required - please see building access information. However, managers should be mindful that access to buildings to work after hours should not be automatically approved.

## 7. Managing Risk of Working After Hours or in Isolation

The Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 requires all organisations (PCBU's) manage risks to all persons when they work or study, including after hours or in isolation.

### 7.1. Risk Factors

Risks to safety may increase when work is undertaken after hours or alone due to:

- a. lack of other people present to provide immediate medical or emergency assistance.
- b. lack of supervision or immediate advice if anything unexpected occurs.
- c. the risk level of the task / activity (i.e. higher risk tasks often require more than one person to undertake the activity).
- d. fatigue or working unusual hours in isolation (i.e. time of day or length of shift).
- e. the risk to psychosocial health.
- f. availability of communication methods.
- g. the location of the work.
- h. the worker's skills and capabilities.

## 7.2. Risk Assessment

- a. Tasks to be undertaken when working alone or after hours (other than low risk administrative work - see section 6) must have a risk assessment conducted where controls are identified and put in place to eliminate the risk, or minimise the risk as far as reasonably practicable as required by the [WHS Risk Management Procedures](#).
- b. When conducting a risk assessment the following factors must be considered where relevant:
  - i. communication plan and check-in requirements
  - ii. training and competency to undertake the work without supervision or support
  - iii. the nature of the task (see section 7.3 for high risk tasks)
  - iv. possible consequences of leaving substances, equipment or experiments temporarily unattended
  - v. time of day or work duration impacting on concentration and fatigue including rest breaks and minimising work duration as far as is reasonably practicable.
  - vi. personal security.
- c. The risk assessment must be documented on a [University risk assessment template](#).
- d. The risk assessment must be approved by the person's manager / supervisor or topic coordinator.
- e. Regular after-hours work may use the same risk assessment if the risk conditions remain the same for each instance of the same work and the after hours component is taken into account.

## 7.3. High Risk Tasks

- a. The Australian Standard AS2243.1 identifies a number of tasks as high risk and therefore must not occur when working alone or in isolation. This work should be scheduled for normal working hours when appropriate supervision and assistance is available.
- b. If the task must occur after hours then:
  - i. more than one person must be present, and
  - ii. the approval process must be followed (see section 9.2).
- c. The list of high-risk hazards can be found in [Appendix A](#).

## 8. Training requirements for working after hours or in isolation

The Manager / Supervisor or Topic Coordinator giving approval for working after hours or in isolation must ensure that the person has received the following:

- a. a local Work Health & Safety area [induction](#), which includes [Emergency Response Procedures](#).
- b. information about specific emergency responses (where applicable) such as the use of spill kits, first aid, eye wash and safety showers
- c. specific training on relevant plant, hazardous substances or tasks for the work that will be undertaken. This includes familiarity with risk assessments, safe work procedures, manuals or other relevant information/material.

## 9. Approval Process

### 9.1. General Requirements

- a. Undergraduate students should not be given approval to work after hours or alone
  - i. unless it is for low-risk administrative work, and

- ii. it is **not** located in laboratories, workshops, animal houses or other similar facilities.
- b. Staff and Higher Degree Students (Honours year and above) must seek approval and meet the requirements specified in Table 1 (see section 9.2).
- c. Volunteers should not be given approval to work alone or in isolation.

## 9.2. Approval Process Requirements

- a. The level of approval and the types of controls for working after hours or alone will depend on the risk level as determined by the risk assessment.
- b. Managers/ Supervisors or Topic Coordinators must approve on the condition that the controls are in place prior to undertaking the activity and if required, building access granted.

After Hours or Isolation Risk level	Approval Required	Who Can Approve	Controls Required
Low risk administrative type work (common / public areas)	Access automatic with student / staff card.	N/A	N/A
Low risk administrative type work (other admin areas)	Building Access (e.g. via ServiceOne or relevant local procedure)	Manager or supervisor	Induction
Low Risk (that is not low risk administrative work)	Building Access (e.g. via ServiceOne or relevant local procedure)	Manager and/ or Laboratory Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Induction</li> </ul>
Medium Risk	Building Access (e.g. via ServiceOne or relevant local procedure)	Manager and/ or Laboratory Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Training for task</li> <li>• Communication Plan</li> </ul>
High Risk (only for <b>unavoidable time critical</b> tasks)	Building Access (e.g. via ServiceOne or relevant local procedure)	College Dean or Portfolio Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk Assessment</li> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Training for task.</li> <li>• Buddy system <b>MUST</b> be in place.</li> <li>• Communication Plan</li> </ul>
Extreme Risk ( <b>Must not</b> be undertaken)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 1

## 10. Communication Plan

- a. The Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA) require effective communication to be maintained with people who work alone or in isolation for the purposes of ensuring their health and safety.
- b. People undertaking after hours or isolated work must:
  - i. consider the communication methods and frequency required to maintain reasonable and effective communication commensurate with the risk
  - ii. document a communication plan within the risk assessment for medium and high-risk work
  - iii. nominate a contact person and contact arrangements (i.e. number to call/ text must be agreed)
  - iv. check-in as per the agreed schedule
  - v. communicate and obtain agreement with the contact person on any amendments to the contact arrangements including frequency and contact method.

### 10.1. Overdue or failure to check-in process

If the person(s) undertaking the working alone/isolated work has not checked in at the designated time, the University nominated contact person must enact the following overdue or failure to check-in process:

- a. attempt to contact the person
- b. if the person cannot be contacted, contact Security or equivalent site contact person
- c. if Security cannot contact the person, they will then attempt to locate the person in the location they are approved to be working in
- d. if Security cannot locate the person, then they will escalate as per the [Critical Incident Management Procedure](#).

## 11. Reporting of accidents and incidents

Anyone working alone or in isolation must, where safe to do so:

- a. take appropriate immediate action to ensure there is no danger to themselves or others and to minimise the risk of further injury or damage
- b. determine if emergency services are required, and if so, call 000.
- c. provide or seek first aid treatment or other emergency assistance and call Security to provide assistance
- d. report any incidents or accidents as soon as practicable to their supervisor/ manager by phone
- e. report the incident/accident on the University's [online FlinSafe system](#) as per the [Accident/Incident Reporting Procedures](#).
- f. [Notifiable incidents](#) must be reported immediately to University Security or the Associate Director, Work Health and Safety. See the [WHS Accident/Incident website](#) for details.

## 12. Record Keeping

Any working after hours or in isolation records (including risk assessment and any related training) must be maintained by the local College/ Portfolio and kept as per [WHS records management](#).

### 13. Responsibilities

<b>Vice-President and Executive Deans of College, Portfolio Heads</b>	<p>a. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. these procedures are implemented in their College/Portfolio</li> <li>ii. adequate resources are available to support safe working after hours or in isolation activities.</li> </ul>
<b>College Deans/Portfolio Directors</b>	<p>b. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. these procedures are implemented in their College/Portfolio</li> <li>ii. approval for working after hours/ in isolation is on basis of requirements being met including risk assessment, training and where relevant buddy system and communication plan is in place prior to commencement of the activity.</li> </ul>
<b>Managers and supervisors</b>	<p>c. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. these procedures are implemented in their area of responsibility</li> <li>ii. approval for working after hours/ in isolation is on basis of requirements being met including risk assessment, training and where relevant buddy system and communication plan is in place prior to commencement of the activity and risks have been reduced as far as reasonably practicable</li> <li>iii. consultation with workers occurs in relation to the identification and assessment of risks and ensure implementation of all control measures has been undertaken before work commences.</li> </ul>
<b>University Contact Person</b>	<p>d. Be available to receive the contact at the nominated frequency and contact method.</p> <p>e. Be aware of the location and time details of the working after hours/ isolated work.</p> <p>f. In the event of a missed check in, initiate the overdue or failure to check-in process.</p>
<b>Staff / Honours and Higher Degree Students</b>	<p>g. Ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. local area WHS induction and training is completed, including being familiar with University emergency response procedures</li> <li>ii. consultation with the manager/supervisor in relation to the identification and assessment of risks and implementation of all control measures and approvals has been undertaken before work commences</li> <li>iii. where relevant, as per communication plan, ensure the University nominated contact is available for when the working after hours / isolation activity is to occur</li> <li>iv. responsibility is taken for their own safety and the safety of those around them</li> <li>v. they do not perform tasks outside those approved and agreed in the approval form.</li> </ul>

<b>Volunteers</b>	<p>h. Volunteers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Complete a volunteer engagement form before attending the after-hours work.</li> <li>ii. Complete local area WHS induction training, including being familiar with University emergency response procedures.</li> <li>iii. Where relevant, consult with the manager/supervisor in relation to the identification and assessment of risks and ensure implementation of all control measures has been undertaken before work commences.</li> <li>iv. take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of those around them.</li> <li>v. do not perform tasks outside those approved and agreed in the approval form.</li> </ul>
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## 14. Related documents

[WHS Risk Management Procedures](#)

[Volunteer Safety Procedures](#)

[Critical Incident Management Procedures](#)

[Plant and Equipment Safety Procedures](#)

[Hazardous Chemical Safety Procedures](#)

Work Health and Safety Act 2012

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012

Code of Practice - Managing the work environment and facilities

Code of Practice – Managing psychosocial hazards at work

Australian Standard - AS 2243:1 Safety in Laboratories series

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\* Unless otherwise indicated, this policy or procedures still apply beyond the review date.

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## Appendix A

### High Risk Tasks

#### From AS 2243.1

High risk hazards which may be encountered by persons working which **must not** be undertaken when working alone or in isolation.

#### High risk hazards

High risk hazards which may be encountered include the following:

- a. Operating equipment or machinery, including workshop machinery, capable of inflicting serious injury, such as chainsaws, firearms, lathes and power saws.
- b. Handling venomous reptiles, insects, arthropods or fish.
- c. Working with large animals other than for the purpose of feeding or observation.
- d. Working with, or near, toxic, corrosive substances or nanomaterials where there is a significant risk of exposure to the substance, taking into account the volume used.
- e. Using apparatus that could result in explosion, implosion, or the release of high energy fragments or significant amounts of toxic or environmentally damaging hazardous material, including pressure vessels.
- f. Working at heights or in confined spaces
- g. Working with exposed energized electrical or electronic systems with nominal voltages exceeding 50 V a.c. or 120 V ripple-free d.c.
- h. NOTE These limits are for dry, indoor conditions and a more conservative approach should be taken in other conditions.
- i. Working with radionuclides requiring a high-level laboratory in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.4.
- j. Working with microorganisms of Risk Group 3 and higher, or which require the use of a Containment Level 3 facility or higher containment level in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.3.
- k. Operating lasers of Class 3B and above.
- l. Working in environments not at atmospheric pressure.