Work Health and Safety Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy establishes the University's commitment to the principles and practices of Work Health and Safety (WHS) in order to protect the health and safety of the University community.

Background

(2) The University is committed to providing a safe and healthy Workplace that supports the proactive identification and management of WHS Risks in all activities of Macquarie University and its controlled entities (the University Group). This commitment enables the University to achieve its strategic priorities detailed in Our University: A Framing of Dynamic Futures and in alignment with relevant legal obligations.

Scope

(3) This Policy applies to all Staff, Students, and Other Persons associated with the operations of the University Group on and outside the University's campus. It is acknowledged that controlled entities may require additional policies and procedures for their own needs to reflect the culture, structure and purpose of their organisation. Any such documents will operate in alignment with this Policy.

Section 2 - Policy

(4) The University is committed to maintaining the work health and safety of the University community.

(5) To enable the University Group to provide a healthy and safe Workplace, the University will:

a. ensure effective governance and oversight of the University's Group's performance in WHS;
b. develop and enhance a proactive WHS culture and necessary WHS capability;
c. provide support and guidance through the implementation of a WHS Management System that complies with WHS and other relevant legislation and adopts the principle of continual improvement;
d. establish and monitor measurable objectives for WHS, targeting continual improvement for identifying and eliminating or minimising physical and psychosocial injury and illness as far as reasonably practicable;
e. allocate suitable financial and physical resources to enable the University community to perform safely and in accordance with legislation and the values of the University Group;
f. establish consultation and communication channels enabling the University Group to discuss and resolve WHS matters;
g. provide safe and suitable equipment and infrastructure for University Group activities; and
h. implement an injury management and return-to-work program to support employees who have been harmed or injured to return to work in a safe and timely manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

(6) The University Officers, per the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW), are responsible for:

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a. maintaining their knowledge of WHS matters;
b. ensuring there are appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise WHS Risks;
c. ensuring there are processes in place to receive, consider and respond to information about WHS incidents (including near misses), Hazards and WHS Risks in a timely manner;
d. ensuring processes are in place to comply with a duty within the WHS legislation and associated regulations as they relate to the delivery of academic and professional endorsed activities; and
e. verifying the provision and use of resources and processes for the above.

(7) The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for overseeing the performance of the University Group regarding WHS and undertaking activities to address due diligence obligations.

(8) Faculty Executive Directors, Heads of Departments, and managers within academic and professional units are responsible for the following within their area of management:

a. promoting WHS as central to the area's culture and a key consideration in daily operational activities;
b. ensuring that the WHS Management System of the University Group is actively implemented;
c. ensuring that WHS consultation arrangements are established and effective;
d. ensuring appropriate resourcing for WHS;
e. ensuring that Staff and Student's skills and knowledge are current and adequate given the specific WHS Risks and competency needs of their work area; and
f. consulting with University Community members so that WHS issues are raised, addressed, and resolved in a timely manner.

(9) Supervisors (including academic supervisors) within academic and professional units are responsible for the following within their area of management:

a. promoting a safe Workplace where WHS matters are resolved in consultation with stakeholders;
b. encouraging WHS incident reporting, leading incident investigations and implementing WHS Risk control measures;
c. ensuring that activities, operations, and equipment are safely managed using the University WHS Risk management process and that applicable safe working instructions and procedures for hazardous activities are in place;
d. engaging in the injury and illness management process when a University community member sustains a work-related injury or illness diagnosis;
e. educating and informing the Workplace through the distribution of WHS information and training to ensure WHS competency; and
f. monitoring the Workplace to ensure Hazards are controlled to eliminate and/or minimise WHS Risks.

(10) A Specialised Safety Risk or Infrastructure (SSRI) manager, in addition to the responsibilities in clause 8, is responsible for:

a. ensuring that operations and equipment are safely managed using University WHS Risk management processes;
b. consulting with University community members to raise and address WHS issues;
c. providing information and suitable training to University community members about WHS Risks and control measures;
d. contributing to ensure effective development and adoption of relevant policies and procedures in conjunction with the WHS Department; and
e. participating and contributing to WHS incident investigations and assisting with the implementation of

corrective actions.

(11) Staff and Students are responsible for:

a. taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and not adversely impacting the WHS of others;
b. following reasonable safety instructions and directions from University Managers or Supervisors; and
c. reporting WHS Hazards and incidents (injuries and illnesses including Near Miss Events) via the University Group's Risk and safety reporting (RASR) system.

(12) The Work Health and Safety (WHS) Department is responsible for:

a. creating an informed and educated Workplace by distributing technical advice regarding WHS matters;
b. ensuring strategic focus through the facilitation of WHS goals determined by the University Council, University Executive Group, and academic and professional units;
c. developing efficient WHS processes and systems by facilitating training and tools which are embedded into the diverse operations of the University Group; and
d. addressing emerging and upcoming changes by disseminating up to date information regarding changes in WHS laws, and the WHS Management System.

(13) The University Group Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committees are responsible for:

a. discussing, setting, and monitoring WHS goals;
b. implementing WHS initiatives to control WHS Risks within their area of control;
c. resolving systemic WHS issues within their area of control (note: individual injuries are not discussed by these committees); and
d. providing feedback to managers of the relevant Faculty, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Office, or controlled entity on matters relating to WHS processes and systems.

(14) Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) have the following functions within their Work Group:

a. participating in effective communication strategies between Staff in a Work Group and with management;
b. investigating and consulting the University Community regarding WHS complaints and issues raised in the Work Group; and
c. initiating WHS issue resolution procedures and escalating WHS issues to managers of the relevant Faculty, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Office, controlled entity or WHS Committee. A HSR may engage the WHS Team for additional action or support where necessary.

Section 3 - Procedures

(15) Nil.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(16) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(17) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Hazard means something, including a person's behaviour, that has the potential to cause death, injury or illness.
b. Health and Safety Representative means Staff elected by members of a Work Group to represent other Staff in matters relating to WHS as defined Part 5 in the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW);
c. Near Miss Event means a WHS incident that occurred where a person could have been injured however, no injury was sustained.
d. Officer means a director or executive officer of the organisation; or a person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part of the organisation; or a person who has the capacity to significantly affect the organisation's financial standing, as defined in section 4 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW).
e. Other Persons means conference or event attendees, patrons, patients, members of the public on campus, research participants, guests, delegates, and visiting colleagues from other organisations.
f. Specialised Safety Risk or Infrastructure (SSRI) means a WHS Risk that includes specialist or scientific principles, for example, but not limited to: chemical, laser, electrical, radiation, biological, diving, fieldwork, etc.
g. Specialised Safety Risk or Infrastructure (SSRI) Manager means an employee in a managerial position who is responsible for a specialised WHS Risk (e.g use of lasers, diving, fieldwork) or infrastructure such as a laboratory or other technical facility.
h. Student means a person enrolled in a program or unit of study provided by the University including a person in a pathway program, an undergraduate or postgraduate program, a cotutelle program, or a visiting student.
i. Supervisor means Staff appointed in an academic or professional unit to oversee endorsed activities, work performance, and duties undertaken by Staff and/or Students to ensure they are performed according to the standards and values of the University Group.
j. Staff has the same meaning as Worker in the WHS Act and means a person associated with the Macquarie University Group as an employee, officer, trainee, volunteer, honorary fellow, appointee to conjoint, adjunct, emeritus, honorary, clinical and visiting academic position, contractor, sub-contractor, apprentice, or in work experience.
k. Work Group means a group of University Community members that have similar hazards and safety risks within an academic or professional unit.
l. Workplace means a place where work is carried out for the University Group, including a place connected to the University Group's endorsed activities where a Staff or Student goes or is likely to be during those activities.
m. Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committees means Committees of the University Group that represent and/or consult with members of the University community. These committees identify WHS related matters within their Work Group, devise initiatives, and implement solutions to improve the WHS of their area.
n. Work Health and Safety (WHS) Management System means the comprehensive management system that includes organisational structure, planning activities, responsibilities, procedures, processes, tools and resources to manage WHS Risk for the University Group.
o. Work Health and Safety (WHS) Risk means the possibility that death, injury or illness might occur when exposed to a Hazard. It refers to the likelihood and potential severity of harm arising from exposure to Hazards.

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