

WHS **Action Plan**

01 July 2020 - 30 June 2022

Safety First

1. Introduction

The inaugural WHS Action Plan 2020 – 2021 will enable ACU to improve the safety of its working and learning spaces. The plan aims to reduce injuries which may disrupt the lives of staff, students, contractors and others, and to reduce Lost Time Injury days or absences from the university.

The plan will also facilitate improvements to the university's Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or framework). The plan is informed by WHS objectives and targets that will enable the university to monitor its progress toward achieving these goals and apply the WHSMS to the working and learning spaces that it manages.

The university is also committed to fully implementing its WHSMS during 2020 and complying with the more prescriptive requirements of International Standard Organisation (ISO) 45001, for frameworks, by 2021. These improvements will support staff and students to make a greater contribution to the safety of our working and learning spaces and the university's WHS goals. The engagement and enthusiasm of our campus communities is pivotal to the success of the WHS Action Plan 2020 – 2021.

The action plan and associated improvements to the WHSMS will also support members of the senior executive and executive staff to continuously improve the way in which the university's significant risks are identified and managed. These improvements in WHS performance will be measured via Traffic Light Reporting processes.



2. | Focus areas

Three focus areas have been identified for the WHS Action Plan 2020 – 2021, which are reflected in the WHS objectives and targets.

The focus areas and rationale for prioritisation

FOCUS AREA	WHY IS THIS A FOCUS?
<p>Reducing musculoskeletal injuries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The university has some great opportunities to strengthen the manual handling techniques of its people and reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls. • A high percentage of workers compensation, student personal injury and public liability, insurance claims are attributed to musculoskeletal injuries which result in absences from working and learning activities, ongoing medical treatments and an inability to participate in activities while they recover from an injury.
<p>Investing in the wellbeing and psychological health of the university community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students and staff can be exposed to trauma during placements, community engagement activities and campus activities and may require specialist counselling support to manage this trauma. • Students and staff can be exposed to range of stressors, including workload pressures and a lack of control over work processes, which are associated with their working and learning activities which can cause significant stress and can result in injuries. • Some university staff have sustained psychological injuries which have resulted in long-term absences from work. Mental health injuries, in comparison to physical injuries, take three times longer to recover from.¹
<p>Ensuring that the WHSMS is applied to the activities that the university manages and influences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The university's ability to achieve its intended goals for the WHSMS is dependent on the WHSMS being fully applied within its working and learning spaces, and activities which it influences. • A need to support staff, students, and others to contribute the continuous improvements to the university's WHSMS and the safety of the university's working and learning spaces and the activities which it influences. • Provide support to the university's officers to fulfill their legal obligations that are associated with keeping up to date with WHS issues, ensuring that significant risks are managed, and adequate resources are allocating to providing safe systems of work.

¹ Source: Safe Work Australia

3. | WHS objectives and targets

OBJECTIVE	TARGET
Reduce the risk of staff and students sustaining musculoskeletal injuries from manual handling activities and slips, trips and falls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce the number of staff musculoskeletal workers compensation claims by 15 per cent from 0.50 per 100 full-time equivalent staff (FTE) between 2017 and 2018, to 0.425 per 100 FTE during 2021 and 2022.
Improve the capabilities of ACU to manage the wellbeing and psychological health and safety of its staff and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 50 per cent of organisational units will confirm in 2020 and 2021 they have assessed and are managing the risks which are associated with work-related stress and heavy workloads.
Strengthen the capabilities of the university to apply the Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or framework) to its activities, including ensuring its significant risks are managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 90 per cent of organisational units will confirm in 2020 and 2021 they have implemented the requirements of the WHSMS within their working and learning areas.



4. University-wide actions to realise these WHS objectives and targets

The following actions will be implemented by work areas and/or the university to inform improvements to our Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or framework), including achieving the intended goals for the framework. Our staff have a significant role to play in implementing these actions to ensure that the university strengthens its capabilities to improve the safety of working and learning spaces.

Organisational units are also being supported to apply the WHSMS to the activities, which they manage and influence. A wide range of actions have been listed, outlined Section 5.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE	ORGANISATIONAL UNITS CONTRIBUTION	
			MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE/ EXECUTIVE STAFF	STAFF MEMBERS
REDUCING MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES				
Staff watch the <i>safe manual handling video</i> published on the ACU website.	Executive staff All staff	Ongoing	Influence senior managers, nominated supervisors and staff to improve their manual handling techniques.	Engage with this and safety video.
Students participate in manual handling training provided by relevant placement hosts.	HR	Ongoing		
Review musculoskeletal injuries and associated riskware action plans to ensure that learnings have been identified and applied.	Nominated supervisors/ managers Executive staff HR	Ongoing	Help ensure that injury and incident learnings are applied globally.	Report hazards, near misses, incidents and injuries in riskware and contribute to incident investigations and apply learnings.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE	ORGANISATIONAL UNITS CONTRIBUTION	
			MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE/ EXECUTIVE STAFF	STAFF MEMBERS
Offer centrally funded incident investigation training in 2020 and 2021, which will support staff to identify the contributing factors to musculoskeletal injuries.	HR	2020 and 2021	Ensure relevant staff participate in this training and apply incident investigation methodologies.	Relevant staff participate in this training and identify contributing factors to incidents and apply learnings.
Schedules of WHS inspections are published and inspections are actioned at least every six months, which contribute to the identification and resolving of hazards, such as fall hazards.	Executive staff	Ongoing	Ensure that inspections are scheduled, published and actioned.	Participate in inspections and help resolve hazards and escalate any issues which are not easily resolved.
WHS risk assessment template for assessing manual handling risks will be developed.	HR	29 Feb 2020	Ensure that manual handling risks are identified and managed.	Apply good manual handling techniques and contribute to risk assessments and the application of treatments.
Centrally funded WHS risk management training will be provided which will support staff to assess and manage risk.	HR	2020 – 2021	Ensure relevant staff participate in this training and apply incident investigation methodologies.	Engage in training and apply WHS risk management.
Provide centrally funded manual handling training in 2021 and 2022.	HR	2020 – 2021	Identifying staff, in consultation with nominated supervisors, who could benefit from this training.	Participate in this training, if relevant to this role.
Ongoing actioning of recommendations made by AESC during annual property and grounds inspections.	Properties and Facilities	Ongoing	Director of Properties and Facilities ensures adequate resources are available for these inspections.	Facilities management staff action these recommendations.
STRENGTHENING WELLBEING				
Continue to raise awareness of EAP services, Real Time Health resources, RUOK and other resources.	HR	2020 – 2021	Help raise awareness of these resources.	Engage in initiatives that support them to stay healthy.
Ensure the psychological hazards and associated risks which are associated with placements and community engagement activities are identified and managed, including the provision of trauma counselling.	Placement teams Community Engagement	Ongoing	Ensure that these risks are managed, and staff, students and others impacted by trauma are appropriately supported.	Refer staff and students to relevant counselling services when required.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE	ORGANISATIONAL UNITS CONTRIBUTION	
			MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE/ EXECUTIVE STAFF	STAFF MEMBERS
Disseminate communications about the mental health resources that are available on Safe Work Australia's website, including Safe Work Australia's work-related psychological health and safety.	HR	Jan 2021	Engage in materials such as work-related health and safety and engage significant psychosocial hazards are identified and managed.	Contribute to WHS risk assessments and consultations about workloads and work-related stresses.
Recovery at Work Plan templates, for mental health injuries, will be centrally published to support organisational units to support staff to return to work in a sustainable way.	HR	30 Aug 2020	Ensure that psychological injuries are identified early and ensure that their organisational units contribute to Recovery at Work plans and implement these treatments to manage these risks.	Participate in relevant Recovery at Work plans and seek support when it is needed.
Raise awareness of the need to provide early notification of mental health injuries, to facilitate early intervention and the management of these risks.	HR	30 Aug 2020	Ensure that psychological injuries are identified early and ensure that their organisational units contribute to Recovery at Work plans and implement these treatments to manage these risks.	Participate in relevant Recovery at Work plans and seek support when it is needed.
Increase the number of first aid officers that are trained to respond to mental health first aid, incidents.	HR	Ongoing	Contribute to raising awareness about first aid processes.	Familiarise themselves with first aid processes.
Ensure that first aiders refer staff and students to relevant counselling services, when they are required.	HR	Ongoing	Contribute to raising awareness about first aid processes.	Familiarise themselves with first aid processes.
Ensure that learnings from change programs, including consultation gaps, are captured and shared with relevant organisational units.	HR	Ongoing	Apply learnings from change programs.	Actively participate in consultations about any relevant change programs.
Sample WHS risk assessment and management plan developed to support organisational units to manage work-related stress and high levels of workloads.	HR	15 Nov 2019	Ensure that psychosocial risks are identified and managed.	Seek support when required and participate in relevant risk assessments.
Develop a health promotion program, in collaboration with an external partner.	HR	26 Feb 2021	Help ensure that staff engage in this program.	Engage in relevant health promotion programs.
Staff will continue to be provided with educational and wellbeing support as they work remotely and return to work on campus.	HR	1 Jul 2020 – 31 Dec 2020		Engage with educational materials that are published about wellbeing.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE	ORGANISATIONAL UNITS CONTRIBUTION	
			MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE/ EXECUTIVE STAFF	STAFF MEMBERS
Develop Return to Work Program for the major states which ACU operates within, which is informed by early intervention principles.	HR	15 Sep 2020	Engage in Return to Work Programs and early intervention principles.	Participate in Return to Work Programs if they are ever injured.
STRENGTHENING THE UNIVERSITY'S WHSMS, INCLUDING WHS RISK MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES				
Organisational units ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to identify and manage significant WHS risks.	Members of the Senior Executive Executive Staff	Ongoing		
Organisational units will apply the WHSMS to the activities that they manage and influence.	HR	Ongoing	Complete WHSMS self-assessment checklist. Implement key actions (see Section 5) that support organisational units to apply the WHSMS to their working and learning activities.	Contribute to the assessment and management of risk and WHSMS improvement opportunities .
Identify and action opportunities for improving consultations with contractors about hazards and risks.	Properties and Facilities Work areas	Ongoing	Ensure that all stakeholders are engaged about WHS issues.	Contribute to two-way consultations with stakeholders.
Continue the analysis of the scope of the university's activities, commenced during the bi-annual planning analysis (September 2019) and strengthen the capabilities of ACU to manage any significant risks identified.	Human Resources (HR) in collaboration with the WHS Management Committee	2020 – 2021	Engage in this analysis and help ensure the identified WHS risks are managed.	Contribute to the assessment and management of WHS risks and confidently apply safe work processes.
A minimum of three safety alerts will be distributed each year, which will raise awareness about significant injuries and the treatments that can be applied to reduce the risk of a similar injury occurring.	HR	2020 – 2021	Engaging in these alerts and improve risk management practices.	Engage with these alerts.
Targeted communications and training support provided to organisational units to support them to generate reports and apply learnings on a broader scale to those incidents and hazards which impact upon their people.	HR	Ongoing	Allocating a staff member to regularly generate these reports and help ensure that learnings are applied on a broader scale.	Engage with riskware reporting processes.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBILITY	DEADLINE	ORGANISATIONAL UNITS CONTRIBUTION	
			MEMBERS OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE/ EXECUTIVE STAFF	STAFF MEMBERS
Implement the remaining recommendations of the 2014 audit against the university's WHSMS and legislative compliance, to ensure the framework is fully implemented.	HR Properties and Facilities	21 Aug 2020	Engage in changes to WHSMS policies, procedures and operational controls and ensure these changes are applied within the working and learning areas they influence.	Confidently apply safe work processes.
Continue to align the WHSMS with the requirements of ISO 45001 to facilitate improvements in consultations, the assessment and management of risks, governance and other enhancements.	HR Properties and Facilities	Quarter 4, 2020	Engage in changes to WHSMS policies, procedures and operational controls and ensure these changes are applied within the working and learning areas they influence.	Confidently apply safe work processes.
WHS Inspection checklist for grounds and properties is revised and centrally published.	HR	30 Oct 2019	Ensure that WHS inspection schedules are developed, published and inspections are actioned.	Contribute to WHSMS improvement opportunities , including participating in WHS inspections.



5. | Actions that work areas should take to improve their risk management practices and apply our WHSMS

Organisational units will be supported to implement the minimum requirements, listed below, to increase staff members' contribution to the safety and wellbeing of our working and learning spaces. These actions will help ensure that the WHSMS is applied to the activities that organisational units manage and influence and contribute to reducing injuries and improving wellbeing.

ACTIONS	WHEN
IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING RISK MANAGING RISK	
Conduct a minimum of an annual review of the hazards associated WHS risks and treatments that are relevant to the working and learning spaces that each organisational unit manages or influences.	Quarter one, each year.
Assess hazards and associated WHS risks , including psychosocial and manual handling. Select appropriate treatments (referencing the Hierarchy of Controls) to manage the risks that are associated with new equipment, chemicals equipment or other changes to working and learning areas or riskware reports that expose gaps in risk management.	Whenever changes are proposed within working and learning areas.
A minimum of the top five WHS risks impacting upon each organisational unit should be placed on their risk registers (uploaded to CARM).	Quarter one, each year.
Log within riskware all incidents, injuries and near misses that impact upon staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors. These reports are reviewed for learnings/investigated and riskware action plans are completed by nominated supervisors within five working days.	Within one working day. Within five working days.

ACTIONS	WHEN
A minimum of six monthly WHS inspections of working and learning spaces are conducted and these annual schedules are submitted to WHS and wellbeing staff, via Service Central requests, for publication on the internet.	Low to Medium risk areas: Prior to 30 June/Prior to 20 December.
Annual self-assessment form is completed by the relevant member of the executive, which verifies that the WHSMS has been implemented by each organisational unit.	Prior to 20 December each year.
Identify other improvement opportunities e.g. safety job analysis , completion of workstation ergonomic checklist etc.	Throughout the year.
Work areas collaborate with Properties and Facilities to minimise the hazards that are associated with renovations and new facilities.	During the design of new or renovated facilities.
Internal audit recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.	Whenever internal audits are conducted.
TRAINING AND COMPETENCY	
Staff, students and others receive face-to-face WHS inductions and refreshers .	New starters, including sessional staff, to receive these inductions within a week of commencement. Students receive inductions at the start of semesters.
Staff are encouraged to identify WHS development opportunities during annual performance reviews and planning processes.	Throughout the year and during these reviews.
Staff, students and others are engaged about the ACU Critical Incident Management Policy (CIMP) , including the In Case of an Emergency poster , and associated procedures/protocols within working and learning spaces. They also know how to access first aid and are encouraged to download SafeZone (to notify security whenever they are working alone on a campus and to access security and after hours first aid).	As required. Ongoing.
Records of WHS training are submitted via a Service Central request (so that they are uploaded on to staff records).	Whenever staff participate in training.
CONSULTING AND ENGAGING	
WHS is a standard agenda item during team meetings.	Whenever regular meetings are held.
WHS competencies are listed in new position descriptions and staff understand their roles and responsibilities .	Prior to recruiting new staff.
Return to Work (RTW) plans are developed in collaboration with WHS staff for staff that are injured while performing working and learning activities. RTW plans are also developed for staff who are absent from work for an extended period, who have sustained injuries (away from work) or been impacted by personal events.	As required.
RECORDS AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT	
Staff are engaged about the WHSMS naming convention , and the benefits of maintaining comprehensive WHSMS records and documents, which are saved within authorised business systems. WHSMS Records Registers are also maintained and staff members access current WHSMS records and documents.	Ongoing.

ADELAIDE

MELBOURNE

BALLARAT

NORTH SYDNEY

BLACKTOWN

STRATHFIELD

BRISBANE

ROME

CANBERRA



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