

# Work Health and Safety (WHS) Report

## Quarter 4, 2019

This report provides an overview of Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing with a focus on:

1. Notifiable Incidents
2. WHS Action Plan 2020-2021
  - 2a. Bi-Annual WHSMS Planning Analysis
  - 2b. WHSMS Policy Suite
  - 2c. Support for Organisational Units to Align with the WHS Action Plan 2020-2021
3. WHS Report for Quarter 4, 2019
4. WHS Report for 2019
5. Work Health and Safety Management System Document Review

### **1. Notifiable Incidents**

There were no notifiable incidents reported to WHS regulators in Quarter 4, 2019.

### **2. WHS Action Plan 2020-2021**

The WHS Action Plan 2020-2021 will be launched in March 2020. The plan details the University's objectives and targets that focus on reducing musculoskeletal injuries, improving the wellbeing of staff and students and ensuring that organisational units integrate the University's WHSMS with their working and learning activities.

The WHS Action Plan 2020-2021 will contribute to continuous improvements in WHS and wellbeing performance, and the University's WHSMS.

#### **2a. Bi-Annual WHSMS Planning Analysis**

The WHS Action Plan 2020-2021 was informed by the Bi-Annual Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) Planning Analysis, which was reviewed and endorsed by the WHS Management Committee in Quarters 3 and 4, 2019. This analysis should be considered when organisational units review their risks, including WHS risks, during Quarters 1 and 2, 2020. Organisational units are required to place at least their Top Five WHS risks, which are treated, on their risk registers from 2020.

Organisational units will also receive support from Human Resources to engage with this analysis and review their Incident and Hazard Registers within riskware. This will inform their annual reviews of the physical and psychological risks that impact upon their staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors – impacted by working and learning activities which the University manages and/or influences within Australia and overseas.

## 2b. WHSMS Policy Suite

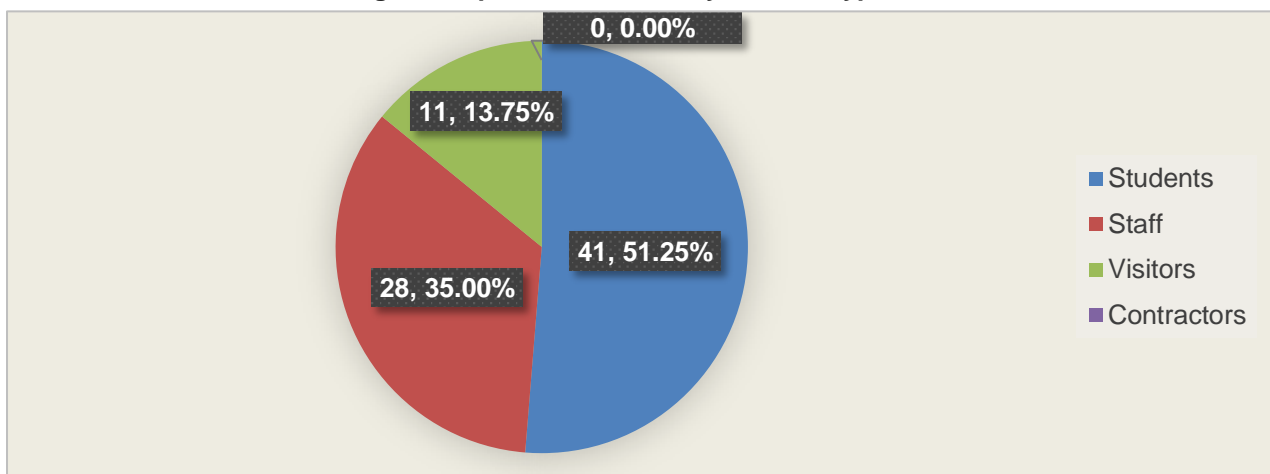
The suite of new and revised WHS policies and procedures that will be released via the Staff Bulletin, on 12 February 2020, will support organisational units to contribute to the success of the WHS Action Plan 2020-2021. These new and revised documents inform ongoing improvements to the WHSMS and will assist organisational units to reduce musculoskeletal injuries – typically resulting from falls and manual handling – improve the wellbeing of our campuses and apply the WHSMS to working and learning activities.

## 2c. Support for Organisational Units to Align with the WHS Action Plan 2020-2021

The University successfully recruited to a WHS Consultant position, commencing in January 2020. The two staff members, job-sharing this position, will engage and influence organisational units about their review of their WHS risks, during the annual review of risk registers and throughout the year. The WHS Consultants will also engage with relevant Members of the Executive and their nominees about aligning their working and learning activities with the University's WHSMS. For example, organisational units conduct regular WHS inspections, discuss WHS issues during regular meetings, grow the WHS competencies of their staff members, develop and refine safe systems of work, ensure incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards are reported and managed within riskware; ensure that risks and associated treatments are regularly reviewed and continuously improved, and continue to focus on the wellbeing of their people.

## 3. WHS Report for Quarter 4, 2019

### 3.1 Number and Percentage of Reports Submitted by Person Type



\*80 riskware Reports were submitted in Quarter 4, 2019. Five of these reports were about hazards.

A small majority of reports logged, 51.25% (41 of 80), impacted students during Quarter 4, 2019. In addition, 6 of the 11 visitor reports were about students.

#### Action item

During Quarter 2, 2020, Human Resources will review and broaden the categories of students that are imported into riskware which will help improve the accuracy of person type reports.

Thirty five percent (28) of the reports were about staff members, and visitors accounted for 13.75% (11) of the reports submitted during the quarter. No contractor incidents were reported in Quarter 4, 2019.

**Action Item**

Monthly contractor reports will be reviewed in 2020, to increase the reporting and visibility of contractor incidents.

The significant number of visitor reports logged is reflective of the diverse range of activities that the University manages and influences. Five of these reports impacted upon clients that were either visiting health or exercise clinics.

**Action Item**

Organisational units will be reminded about the need to consider visitors whenever they are reviewing and assessing risks.

**3.2 Lost Time Injury (LTI) Rate Per Million Hours**

The staff LTI Injury (new injuries), rate per million hours worked was 4.75, during Quarter 4, 2019, in comparison with 6.49 during the previous quarter. Three new workers compensation claims, involving LTI, were approved by insurers in Quarter 4. However, one of these claims resulted from a motor vehicle accident during the staff member's regular commute. These types of accidents and commuter injuries are only reported in Queensland because they are excluded from workers compensation coverage in other jurisdictions.

### 3.3 Reports Managed for Risk, Quarter 4, 2019

No. of Student Reports	No. of Student Reports Managed	% of Students Reports Managed	No. of Staff Reports	No. of Staff Reports Managed	% of Staff Reports Managed	No. of Visitor Reports	No. of Visitor Reports Managed	% of Visitor Reports Managed	Total No. of Reports	Total No. of Reports Managed	% of Reports Managed
41	25	60.98%	28	19	67.86%	11	8	72.73%	80	52	65.00%

Sixty five percent, 52, of the 80 riskware reports logged during Quarter 4, 2019, have been assessed for risk and managed via riskware Action Plans. Human Resources staff have also reviewed the open reports for risk. The reports submitted, on each campus, are also reviewed each quarter by Campus WHS Committees and any concerns about incidents and hazards are escalated to responsible staff.

To increase the number of the reports that are assessed and managed for risk, changes to riskware notifications were scheduled and actioned in late January 2020. Email notifications about incomplete riskware Action Plans are triggered after 5 and 20 working days. These automatic notifications are sent to staff members who are responsible for reviewing riskware reports, for risk, and completing a riskware Action Plan. From late January, an additional notification is now activated after 12 working days and an email is sent to the Nominated Supervisor of staff members, who have been assigned responsibility for managing riskware reports, whenever riskware Action Plans have not been completed within 20 working days.

#### Action Item

Nominated Supervisors should reinforce to those staff, normally a Nominated Supervisor of an impacted staff member or someone who manages specific student activities, who are responsible for managing riskware reports that the review of these reports is an important priority - as assessing these reports for risk supports ACU to maintain its safe working and learning spaces.

### 3.4 Report Types Submitted by Person Types

Report Type	Qtr. 4, 2018					Qtr. 4, 2019					% Change
	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Total	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Total	
Hazard	1	10	0	0	11	0	5	0	0	5	-54.55%
Lost Time	4	2	0	0	6	7	5	0	0	5	-16.67%
Near Miss	21	5	1	0	27	12	7	4	0	11	-59.26%
No Lost Time	29	7	10	1	47	22	11	7	0	18	-61.70%
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>-12.09%</b>

There was a 12.09% decrease, 80 versus 91, in the number of the riskware reports that were submitted in Quarter 4, 2019, versus Quarter 4, 2018. Although there was a significant reduction in the number of reports of hazards submitted (5 in Quarter 4, 2019, versus 11 during Quarter 4, 2018) a significant number of reports were raised through direct channels rather than through riskware which detailed staff concerns about construction noise and dust on the Melbourne Campus.

Conversely there was a significant increase in the number of Lost Time Injuries (LTI) that were reported in Quarter 4, 2019 versus Quarter 4, 2018. Four of these reports related to students on placements. One student experienced whiplash, as a result of a motor vehicle incident, on the way to a placement. In these types of circumstances, students are eligible to make a claim against the University's relevant insurance policy, Personal Accident Policy for students.

## 4. WHS Report for 2019

### 4.1 Mechanism of Injury Report by Person Type

Mechanism of Injury	01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2018						01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2019					
	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Sub-total	% of Total	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Sub-total	% of Total
Falls on the same level (incl. trips and slips)	19	24	12	0	55	14.59%	20	36	7	0	63	16.76%
Illness (excl. psychological) incl. fainting, pains in chest, heart palpitations	44	11	15	0	70	18.57%	42	18	2	1	63	16.76%
Sporting Injury (incl. gym/cardio and recreational activities)	23	1	5	1	30	7.96%	29	0	1	0	30	7.98%
Sharps (needle stick injury)	23	4	1	0	28	7.43%	23	1	1	0	25	6.65%
Unspecified mechanisms of injury or other	16	16	5	1	38	10.08%	12	8	4	0	24	6.38%
Hitting objects with a part of the body	9	9	2	1	21	5.57%	9	8	2	0	19	5.05%
Being hit by moving objects	11	8	1	1	21	5.57%	10	6	1	0	17	4.52%
Exposure to mental stress factors	11	5	1	0	17	4.51%	14	3	0	0	17	4.52%
Falls from a height	3	5	1	0	9	2.39%	5	11	1	0	17	4.52%
Other Muscular Stress (incl. manual handling)	5	5	0	0	10	2.65%	8	9	0	0	17	4.52%
Contact with, or exposure to, biological factors	8	6	0	0	14	3.71%	9	6	0	0	15	3.99%
Other and multiple mechanisms of injury	10	9	0	0	19	5.04%	4	7	2	0	13	3.46%
Vehicle accident	2	2	1	0	5	1.33%	6	5	0	0	11	2.93%

Mechanism of Injury	01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2018						01 Jan – 31 Dec, 2019					
	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Sub-total	% of Total	Student	Staff	Visitor	Contractor	Sub-total	% of Total
Other contact with chemical or substance (incl. insect and spider bites and stings)	2	4	0	0	6	1.59%	2	4	1	0	7	1.86%
Single contact with chemical or substance (excl. insect and spider bites and stings)	2	0	0	0	2	0.53%	1	5	1	0	7	1.86%
Contact or exposure to heat and cold	5	8	0	0	13	3.45%	1	5	0	0	6	1.60%
Ampule Injury	9	0	0	0	9	2.39%	5	0	0	0	5	1.33%
Repetitive movement with low muscle loading (often resulting in RSI)	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	1	4	0	0	5	1.33%
Contact with electricity	2	2	0	0	4	1.06%	0	3	0	0	3	0.80%
Exposure to sharp, sudden sound	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	1	0	0	0	3	0.80%
Long term exposure to sounds	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	3	0	0	3	0.80%
Utility failure (power, gas, water)	0	2	0	0	2	0.53%	1	1	0	0	2	0.53%
Building Evacuation	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	1	0	0	1	0.27%
Exposure to mechanical vibration	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	1	0	0	1	0.27%
Exposure to radiation	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	1	0	0	1	0.27%
Long term contact with chemical or substance	0	4	0	0	4	1.06%	1	0	0	0	1	0.27%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 4.1 outlines that a similar number of reports were submitted in 2018 (377), in comparison to 2019 (376). There were no significant variations in the types of mechanisms of injuries that were reported in 2019, in comparison to 2018. Illnesses accounted for 70 of the reports logged in 2018 and 63 in 2019. However, a significant component of these reports may not have been caused by working and learning activities. Reports of students feeling faint or fainting accounted for 17 of the 63 reports of illness that were reported in 2019. Some of these reports included commentary about students not eating prior to morning learning activities and another student reacted to the sight of blood. The learning journey at ACU involves students developing their self-awareness; it is expected that management and prevention of fainting will improve as students' progress through their studies.

Falls on the same level accounted for between 14.59% to 16.76% of the reports that were logged in 2018 and 2019, respectively. A significant focus of ACU's WHS Action Plan 2020-2021 is on reducing musculoskeletal injuries that typically result from slips, trips and falls and manual handling. The plan details actions that should be implemented by organisational units to investigate the contributing factors of slips, trips and falls and to improve manual handling techniques.

In 2018 and 2019, 30 sporting injuries were reported each year. A significant majority of these reports occurred as a result of sporting competitions, including cheerleading, in which students participate. Some of these sporting incidents occurred during placements and as a result of learning activities. There was only a small reduction (28 in 2018 and 25 in 2019) in the number of sharps injuries that were reported. Five of these reports occurred during placements. The School of Nursing, Paramedicine and Midwifery, will be supported in 2020 to review their WHS risk assessments and associated treatments which support the school to manage the risks of sharps and ampoules.

Seventeen reports of staff and students being exposed to mental stress factors were reported in both 2018 and 2019. Nine of these reports, which provide details about client behaviour, were reported by students on placements in 2019. First Aid Officers and other staff will be offered Mental First Aid training again in 2020, to provide support to staff, students and others who are impacted by wellbeing issues. Counselling support is available to staff and students that are impacted by stress and wellbeing issues.

Wellbeing is a priority of the ACU WHS Action Plan 2020-2021. One of the rationales for this is that mental stress factors can result in significant long-term injuries to staff members.

#### **Action items**

Organisational units are encouraged to assess and manage wellbeing risks during their annual review of their risk registers and throughout the year.

Manual handling training, risk management and incident investigation training will also be centrally provided, during 2020, which will increase the capabilities of responsible staff to resolve incidents and hazards and reduce the risks of these injuries occurring.

The University will also continue to support organisational units to provide counselling support to students that are exposed to significant stress and traumatic events, while participating in activities such as placements and community engagement activities.

Awareness will also be raised, by the University during 2020-2021, about the need to provide early notification of mental health injuries and other resources will be published in 2020 to support organisational units to invest in the wellbeing of their people, including publishing examples of WHS risk assessments which address wellbeing issues.

There were 23 reports submitted about visitors in 2019. A significant portion of these reports, 9, were related to slips, trips and falls. Seven reports were related to student placements and were submitted by students reporting on incidents involving clients or community members at clinics, sport facilities or hospitals. Most of these reports were reflective of students' roles and responsibilities, within these placement sites, and demonstrate good reporting practice, rather than potential over-reporting.



#### 4.2 Student Reports Submitted During 2019

Type of Activity	No.	% of Total	No. Reports (FHS)	% of Sub-total	No. Reports (FEA)	% of Sub-total	No. Reports (FLB)	% of Sub-total	No. Reports (FTL)	% of Sub-total	Other Students	% of Sub-total	Unidentified Organisational Unit	% of Sub-total
Working and Learning Activity	89	43.63%	63	70.79%	15	16.85%	2	2.25%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	9	10.11%
Placement, Incl. Sporting and commuting Incidents	76	37.25%	72	94.74%	4	5.26%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Sporting Activity, Incl. Cheerleading	23	11.27%	11	47.83%	4	17.39%	0	0.00%	2	8.70%	0	0.00%	6	26.09%
Hazard	2	0.98%	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Other	14	6.86%	5	35.71%	3	21.43%	1	7.14%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	14.29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>75.00%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13.24%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.47%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.98%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9.31%</b>
Student Headcount 2019				16,460		10,701		3,462		1,189		1,374		
<b>% of Headcount</b>				<b>49.60%</b>		<b>32.25%</b>		<b>10.43%</b>		<b>3.58%</b>		<b>4.14%</b>		

*\*The other students cohort include those students studying within Research Services, combined schools, Tertiary Pathway and Student Abroad.*

There are significant variations in the number of student reports that are submitted by organisational unit. 47.23% (153) of the reports submitted in 2019 were about Faculty of Health Sciences students. The Faculty of Health Sciences comprises 49.60% of the student population. 13.24% (27) were reported about Faculty of Education and Arts students who account for 32.25% of the student population. 1.47% (3) and 0.98% (2) of the reports were about Faculty of Law and Business, and Faculty of Theology and Philosophy students, respectively. Faculty of Law and Business, and Faculty of Theology and Philosophy students account for 10.43% and 3.58% of the student population respectively.

Seventy-two (43.63%) of the 204 student reports, submitted in 2019, occurred during placements. A large majority of these reports, 94.74% or 72, were about Faculty of Health Sciences students. In comparison, there is scope to increase the number of reports which are logged about the Faculty of Education and Arts students who are participating in placements as only 4 reports, relating to these activities, were submitted by the Faculty in 2019.

Placement staff, within the faculty, will be supported to improve the reporting of placement incidents during 2020.

**Action Item**

Raise awareness about the need for staff and students to submit reports about on and off-campus incidents and injuries, involving students, including reports which occur during community engagement activities, consistent with the WHSMS Communications and Engagement Plan 2020.

**4.3 Reports of Hazards Managed During 2019**

No. of Hazards	No. Closed	% Closed
33	20	60.71%

60.71%, 20, of the 33 reports of hazards logged within riskware in 2019 were closed. Many of the reports that remain open typically require significant capital expenditure and/or expertise to resolve. For example, one report relates to trip hazards which is associated with a damaged surface of a running track. Six of the reports relate to trip hazards and two reports highlight manual handling hazards.

**Action items**

Encourage organisational units to engage Health and Safety Representatives about the resolution of reports of hazards (these reports will continue to be tabled at quarterly Campus WHS Committee meetings).

Promote greater awareness of the University's pathway for resolving WHS issues at ACU and provide guidance about how to escalate WHS issues if they are not resolved to the satisfaction of staff members, consistent with the WHSMS Communications and Engagement Plan 2020.

Engage the vendor of riskware during the Quarter 1, 2020, about the potential to automatically prompt responsible staff, by email, about the review of treatments (controls) which have been entered into relevant riskware Action Plans (associated with managing incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards).

**5. Work Health and Safety Management System Document Review**

The University is continuing to implement the recommendations of the audit of the University's Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or framework). The framework was audited against *AS/NZS 4801:2001* and *Model WHS Legislation 2011*, however the University is also progressing actions and concurrently aligning its WHSMS with both this standard as well as International Standard ISO 45001: *Occupational health and management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*. The following table provides a list of key documents currently being reviewed and their status.

Document Requirements	Status	Priority
Work Health and Safety Management (WHSMS) Implementation Procedure <i>(Describes how the University maintains, implements and continuously improves its WHSMS, and provides guidance to staff about how they should apply the framework)</i>	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
WHSMS Planning Procedure and associate WHS Action Plan 2020 – 2021	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
WHSMS Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Reporting Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
WHS Training and Competency Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	High
Contractor Safety Management Procedure	Being Reviewed	Medium
WHS Health and Air Monitoring Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
WHS Hazard Identification Procedure for Project Design and Purchasing	Being Reviewed	Low
WHS Procurement Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Low
WHSMS Roles and Responsibilities Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Low
WHSMS High Risks Procedure, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Isolating plant and equipment, Permits to Work, managing confined spaces, working at heights, roof access, asbestos removal, remote or isolation procedure.</li> </ul>	Being Reviewed	Medium
Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical incident and Management Policy</li> <li>Critical Incident Management Procedure</li> </ul>	Completed To be Actioned	Medium
Plant and Equipment Procedure	In Progress	Medium
Managing Electrical Risks and Safety Procedure	In Progress	Medium
WHSMS Documents and Record Management Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Low
WHSMS Auditing Procedure	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
Job Safety Analysis (JSA) Form	Due for release in February 2020	Medium
Safe Work Method Statement (template)	Due for release in February 2020	Medium

Submitted for Information.  
Human Resources  
January 2020