

Health and Safety - Permit to Work Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) To detail the operational requirements of the VU permit to work system.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(2) This procedure applies across the Victoria University.

Exemptions:

(3) Works undertaken by contractors who are engaged by Cushman & Wakefield who provide VU with Facilities Management Services. These contractors are required to comply with the requirements of Cushman & Wakefield's Permit to Work procedure.

(4) High risk activities such as asbestos removal and confined space entry are not covered in this procedure. These activities require permits in accordance with the 'Confined Space Procedure' Victoria University Policy Library - [Health and Safety - Confined Spaces Procedure](#) , and/or 'Asbestos Procedure' Victoria University Policy Library - [Health and Safety - Asbestos Management Procedure](#) .

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) Permit to Work - A formal process that authorises work considered hazardous and/or high risk. Permits to work are written documents which authorise certain people to undertake specific work, at the stated times and dates.

The permit to work system requires the intended work methods and risk control measures to be established, documented and agreed to prior to the high risk activity commencing.

The permit to work system also establishes communication and understanding between the VU personnel and those who are undertaking the high risk work.

(6) Authorised Person - A person(s) with appropriate competency, technical skill and authority to issue permits to work. Must be appointed by the Program Manager OHS & Wellbeing or their delegate.

(7) Job Safety Analysis (JSA) - A method of evaluating the health and safety aspects of a job or activity. The job/activity is broken down into its steps or tasks and the health and safety hazards/risks are identified and assessed and control measures are determined.

(8) A JSA provides a written record of the process that is going to be used to proceed on a job. JSAs compliment and inform the permit to work system.

JSAs may also be called a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS), Work Safety Plan or Job Safety Assessment.

(9) General Contractor Tier 1 - Services provided by contractors who work with or on the university's services (e.g. electricity, gas, plumbing etc.), processes, equipment or buildings and/or they complete work involving the use of chemicals or machinery. Examples include but are not limited to:

- a. servicing/maintenance/installation of equipment,
- b. minor construction work;
- c. monitoring of equipment;
- d. cleaners and gardeners;
- e. technicians servicing equipment;
- f. delivery activities which are consistent with the above definition;
- g. catering services when their work is consistent with the above definition.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(10) Nil

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - When a permit to work is required:

(11) A permit to work is required to protect the health & safety of employees, contractors and others who are required to undertake work in the following hazardous work/environments:

Height work

(12) All work performed at heights greater than 2 metres above ground level or when somebody may fall more than 2 metres (e.g. open penetrations). Examples include when work:

- a. Requires a safety harness to be used.
- b. Is on a roof work and a safety railing is not provided.
- c. Involves contractor/maintenance repair work.
- d. Is done from an attached forklift cage or scissor lift.
- e. Where any employee or contractor is required to access heights to complete any specific task e.g. painting, erecting banners, replacing light fittings, hanging decorations or conducting inspections etc.

Exemption:

(13) Construction work activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for height work.

Hot work

(14) Any activity where there is a risk of fire or smoke e.g. the use or produces flames, sparks or heat. Examples include: welding, grinding, use of heat guns.

Exemptions:

(15) Hot work undertaken in recognised welding bays.

(16) Construction work activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for hot work.

Dangerous goods vessel and/or store, pressure vessels

(17) Any works on any dangerous goods storage area or on any vessel that contains dangerous goods.

Fire system isolation

(18) Work that requires the isolation of Fire Mains, Sprinklers, Hydrants and Fire alarms e.g. special effects — smoke generators typically used in events / films / arts etc.

Exemption:

(19) Any testing done as part of an approved maintenance schedule.

Trenching and excavation

(20) When the depth of the trenching or excavation works are going to exceed 450mm.

Exemptions:

(21) Trenching Shoring Training at Victoria University Polytechnic.

(22) Construction work activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for trenching and excavation work.

Electrical

(23) Any electrical work completed onsite.

Exemptions:

(24) Replacement of globes in office environments (if height is less than 2 metres).

(25) Construction work/activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for electrical work.

Amusement Structures

(26) Any activity (i.e. set up, operation, dismantling) of an amusement structure e.g. jumping castle.

Working near power lines, electricity or gas lines

Exemption:

(27) Construction work activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for work near power lines, electrical or gas lines.

Powered mobile plant

(28) Forklifts, cranes, scissor lifts entering pedestrian only areas.

Drilling or Cutting

(29) If work involves drilling or cutting into buildings or facilities. In the case of this type of work, the [asbestos registers](#) need to be checked and the Permit to Work must be issued by an authorised person from the VU Facilities Department.

Contractor works

(30) Tier 1 General Contractors must be issued with a permit to work when their work involves any of the hazardous work/environments detailed above - see '[Contractor Management Procedure - General Contractors](#)'.

Exemption:

(31) Construction work activities where the construction company responsible for the works is deemed the 'principal contractor' (as defined by the [OH&S Regulations 2007](#) and the [OH&S Amendment Regulations 2014](#)) and the construction companies health and safety coordination plan includes adequate controls for works to be completed.

When directed to by the person responsible for the work area or job

(32) Examples may include non-routine lifting/moving of heavy awkward objects where specific lifting equipment is not provided, working in high traffic areas e.g. painting new lines on a road surface or working in hazardous laboratories.

Part B - Issuing Permits to Work

(33) A permit can only be issued by an authorised person.

(34) The Program Manager Health Safety & Wellbeing is responsible for approving the authorised persons.

(35) Authorised persons must have the appropriate level of competency and authority so that they can safely issue permits. They must also undertake training in the permit to work procedure. This will be recorded The VU Learning Management System.

(36) A JSA / SWMS (or similar documentation) must be completed by either the contractor or the employee who is undertaking the work prior to a permit to work being issued (see 'HR 69 Job Safety Analysis').

(37) The completion of the JSA / SWMS may also be done in consultation with the person who is engaging the contractor and the contractor.

(38) The authorised person must review the JSA / SWMS with the person(s) undertaking the work so as to ensure that hazards are identified and adequate controls measures are determined. This will require both parties to inspect the site.

(39) The authorised person and the person(s) undertaking the work will both sign the permit. Where relevant the supervisor / manager responsible for the area where the works are being conducted may also be required to sign the permit. This is required in order to ensure there is adequate communication of the planned high risk activity and associated risk controls.

(40) The permit must be carried by the person(s) undertaking the high risk works at all times.

(41) The authorised person may check that work is performed according to the permit.

(42) The authorised person and the person(s) completing the works will inspect the work area when works are completed to ensure that the work area is left in a safe manner.

(43) The permit must be signed off (i.e. date/time) and retained by the authorised person at the completion of works.

(44) The authorised person then needs to retain the permit for a period of 2 years for the purpose of auditing operation of the system. If an injury or dangerous occurrence is experienced during the completion of the work then a copy of the permit is to be included in the incident report on the VU incident reporting system.

Part C - Permit to Work Form

Validity of permit

(45) When the authorised person and person(s) completing the high risk activity have both signed the permit, it becomes valid and authorises the commencement of work within the period and time specified on the permit.

(46) Permits are valid for a maximum of a twelve-hour period i.e. working day or shift but may be extended by the authorised person.

(47) If the permit is required for longer than twelve hours, the authorised person must re-inspect the area where the high risk activity is being undertaken and re-approve the permit at the commencement of each shift or working day. The authorised person must endorse the extensions on the permit form.

Possible Exemption for a Permit to be issued:

(48) If a contractor is engaged to complete the same task on a regular ongoing basis, a permit may not be required if:

- a. an agreed documented Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) is developed by the contractor and the manager of the area where the task is performed; and
- b. this SOP is followed. This must be jointly approved by:
 - i. an Authorised Person from the area where the task is being undertaken; and
 - ii. the Program Manager of VU Health, Safety and Wellbeing or delegate.

(49) The SOP must be submitted in order support this exemption and appropriate conditions will be identified and implemented to ensure that there is ongoing compliance with the provisions of the SOP.

(50) The contractor must agree to perform the work in accordance with the SOP and compliance must be monitored by the manager of the area.

(51) If the conditions or situation to which the SOP alter, then a Permit to Work will need to be issued.

Cancelling a work permit

(52) If a permit is cancelled and further work is required, a new permit will need to be issued to cover the remaining work.

Lost permit

(53) Work in progress must cease until a replacement permit has been authorised.

(54) The authorised person shall, in conjunction with the permit holder and supervisor (where relevant):

- a. Identify all Tag(s) associated with the lost permit.

- b. Thoroughly inspect the isolated plant/area.
- c. Issue a new permit.
- d. Arrange where possible, to have all of the personnel who had previously signed the lost permit, sign the new permit. A notation must be recorded on the new permit to indicate that the above steps have been undertaken.

Part D - Roles & Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
The Program Manager Health Safety & Wellbeing	<p>Management of the permit to work system at VU. Is an authorised person. Appointment of authorised persons who have with appropriate level competency, skill and authority to issue permits. Ensure all nominated authorised persons have been trained in this procedure.</p>
Authorised Person(s)	<p>Be familiar with the intended task(s). Assess the JSA/SWMS or equivalent to ensure it has been completed and is based on the actual work/task that is to be done and that it is specific to the VU environment. Inspect the work area as required to ensure the appropriate details are recorded on the JSA/SWMS and the Permit to Work Form. Ensure that the person(s) undertaking the work are appropriately qualified or competent to do the work. Ensure the area and equipment is safe before work commences. Ensure the permit to work is provided to the person undertaking the work. The authorised person retains the permit when the work has been completed. Sign the permit to work before work commences and when work has been completed and the area has been inspected. Periodically check that the work is being undertaken in accordance with the specifications on the permit to work and JSA/SWMS. Ensure that the completed permit to work records (including associated JSAs/SWMS) are retained for 2 years.</p>
Manager /Supervisor of the area where high risk activity is being conducted	<p>Countersign the permit to work in order to confirm that you have been informed about the work taking place within your area of responsibility. Ensure appropriate persons are informed of the work being undertaken within their areas prior to the work commencing and when the work is completed.</p>
Person(s) completing high risk activity	<p>Complete a JSA/SWMS for the intended high risk task so that identifying hazards are identified and appropriate controls are determined. Have current licenses (where applicable) and be skilled, qualified, trained and competent to perform the work required. This includes the use of any PPE or rescue equipment that may be necessary. Ensure that the requirements on the Permit to Work Form are understood. Sign the permit to work before work commences. Carry the permit on their person at all times when undertaking the work covered by the permit. Ensure all necessary locks, tags and signs are prominently displayed so that personnel are aware that the equipment etc. is isolated/not in operation. Adhere to the JSA/SWMS and permit to work requirements. Ensure the work area is safe prior to commencing work; seek advice if in doubt or if the circumstances change. Ensure equipment and the area is safe when the task/activity is completed. Ensure the area manager / supervisor is advised when the work is completed.</p>
OHS Team	<p>Provide health and safety advice as required. Audit compliance to procedure as part of audit plan.</p>

Section 6 - Guidelines

(55) Template: [Permit to Work Form](#)

Section 7 - References

(56) This procedure is required to support the following:

- a. [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- b. Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- c. [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017](#)
- d. [Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Regulations 2014](#)

(57) The following documents have been referenced in this procedure:

- a. [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- b. [Health and Safety - Contractor Classification Procedure](#)
- c. [Health and Safety - Contractor Management Procedure - General Contractors](#)
- d. [Health and Safety - Lock-Out and Tag-Out Procedure](#)
- e. 'HR 69 Job Safety Analysis'
- f. [HSW - Example of Permit to Work Form](#)

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