

Health and Safety - Accountability and Responsibilities Procedure

Section 1 - Summary

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure all Victoria University staff understand and comply with their health, safety and wellbeing accountabilities and responsibilities as outlined in the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#) and reinforced by the University's [Health and Safety Policy](#).

Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all Victoria University Staff, students, contractors and visitors.

Section 3 - Policy/Regulation

(3) [Health and Safety Policy](#)

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
Vice-Chancellor's Group	Understand their Duty of Care obligations as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) and within this Procedure. Ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff, students, contractors and visitors to VU. Ensure that a systematic approach to safety and wellbeing has been established and is appropriately resourced and monitored.
All Senior Leaders and Heads of Operational Areas (Executive Deans/Directors/Senior Managers)	Understand their Duty of Care obligations as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) and within this Procedure. Implementation of the University's Safety Management System within their organisational unit, e.g. college, school, professional service unit or portfolio.
Managers and Supervisors	Understand their Duty of Care obligations as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) and within this Procedure. Responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the people under their direction, and others who may be impacted by our work.
Staff	Responsible for their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their activities.
Others (Students and Visitors)	Responsible for their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their activities.

(4) Being accountable means accepting our responsibilities and owning the outcomes.

(5) A number of mechanisms may be used to monitor how well we are meeting our safety responsibilities and hold us to account. These include:

- a. Measurement against University performance targets.
- b. Safety Management System Auditing.
- c. Performance management and development processes.
- d. HSW responsibilities must be incorporated into staff position descriptions, and the associated performance criteria utilised in annual performance appraisals to determine staff performance with respect to these HSW responsibilities.

Part B - Procedure

(6) Victoria University (VU) is committed to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment. VU has a duty of care to its Staff, which means taking all steps which are reasonably practicable to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing.

(7) All staff with management or supervisory responsibilities are required to understand their duty of care obligations under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#), and understand and comply with the Universities health, safety and wellbeing Policies and Procedures.

(8) Staff at all levels of the University have specific responsibilities for ensuring health, safety and wellbeing (HSW) in the workplace, which are detailed below. These responsibilities are based on the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#) (The Act).

(9) The specific HSW responsibilities of staff are dependent on their role within the University and are outlined below:

- a. Vice-Chancellor's Group;
- b. Senior Leaders and Heads of Operational Areas (Executive Deans, Directors, Senior Managers);
- c. Managers and Supervisors;
- d. Staff; and,
- e. Others (Coursework Students and Visitors).

Vice-Chancellor's Group

(10) As a member of the Vice-Chancellor's Group you are required to:

- a. Provide safety leadership within your sphere of influence.
- b. Demonstrate due diligence within your area of control.

(11) Providing safety leadership involves:

- a. Including health, safety and wellbeing as the first agenda item on management meetings;
- b. Seeking safety reports from the leaders of organisational units within your area of control;
- c. Chairing Portfolio OHS Consultative Committee meetings;
- d. Regularly walking through work areas to observe work practices and discuss safety and wellbeing issues with staff and students.

(12) Demonstrating due diligence requires:

- a. Staying up-to-date with safety legislation and the University's Safety Management System;

- b. Understanding your accountabilities and responsibility for safety;
- c. Understanding the nature of University operations, the associated hazards and risks to safety, health and wellbeing;
- d. Regularly monitoring and reviewing the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategic Plan;
- e. Ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated to eliminate risks and achieve work health and safety compliance.
- f. Periodically verifying the provision and use of work health and safety resources and processes.

Senior Leader

(13) As a Senior leader who has responsibilities as the head of an operational unit, you are required to (in addition to the responsibilities of the University Executive):

- a. Establish a local safety plan;
- b. Actively monitor implementation of the University's safety management system within your area of responsibility;
- c. Establishing and monitoring emergency procedures within buildings occupied by your staff and students;
- d. Where appropriate, appoint, support and obtain periodic reports from local safety appointees;
- e. Assist in the resolution of safety and wellbeing issues within your areas of responsibility.

Managers/Supervisors

(14) This section applies to you if you supervise other staff, manage a student cohort, engage contractors or supervise volunteers.

(15) As a Manager or Supervisor, you are required to:

- a. Provide safety leadership;
- b. Identify hazards and work health and safety risks associated with the activities under your direction;
- c. Assess and eliminate or control risk in accordance with the University's health, safety and wellbeing procedures;
- d. Provide relevant information, guidance and training.
- e. Investigate work related incidents to identify root causes and take steps to prevent reoccurrence.
- f. Promptly address work health and safety issues raised in consultation with those affected.
- g. Refer work health and safety issues that cannot be managed locally to the relevant director or senior manager.

Staff

(16) This section applies to you if you perform any work for or on behalf of the University, including:

- a. Employees;
- b. Contractors;
- c. Higher degree by research students;
- d. Students undertaking research work during their honours year;
- e. Students participating in work-integrated learning;
- f. Volunteers.

(17) As a Staff member, you are required to:

- a. Take reasonable care for your own safety;

- b. Comply with reasonable instructions;
- c. Adopt and use safe work procedures, including the use of personal protective equipment and clothing when required;
- d. Familiarise yourself with relevant policies, procedures and University safety standards relating to your area of work;
- e. Complete all relevant and mandatory training (e.g. Emergency Management, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Awareness);
- f. Report any hazards, injuries and incidents to your supervisor;
- g. Participate in safety and wellbeing training and discussion;
- h. Cooperate with safety inspections, audits and investigations;
- i. Respond appropriately to emergencies.

Others (Coursework Students and Visitors)

(18) As a coursework student or visitor to the University, you are required to:

- a. Take reasonable care for your own safety, and others who may be impacted by your actions;
- b. Comply with reasonable instructions and signage;
- c. Cooperate with emergency procedures;
- d. Report any hazards, injuries or incidents to the supervisor of your activity or area;
- e. Reach out for assistance if you need help.

Section 5 - HESF/ASQA/ESOS Alignment

(19) HESF: Standard 2.3 Wellbeing and Safety; 7.3 Information Management.

(20) Compliance Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations and FPP Requirements 2025: Standard 20 Compliance with Laws.

Section 6 - Definitions

(21) Nil.

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