

WHS OP003 -Terms of Reference (Vice-Chancellor approved) - Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee

Section 1 - Overview

Establishment of Committee

- (1) The Committee is established as a Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer's Committee, and the Committee is delegated a number of functions in relation to Work health and Safety (WHS) matters at the University.
- (2) The establishment of this Committee and the delegation of powers to it are actions authorised by the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer.
- (3) This document has been developed in accordance with:
 - a. [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#);
 - b. [Work Health and Safety Consultation Cooperation and Coordination: Code of Practice 2011](#).

Objectives

- (4) The University WHS Committee contributes to the foundation of WHS consultation in our workplace. Along with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), distinguished work groups and the WHS Management Group of Senior Executives, the WHS Committee is the linchpin for collaborative and meaningful consultation of health and safety matters at the University.

Section 2 - Committee Membership

Membership

- (5) At least half of the members of the committee must be workers who are not nominated by the person conducting the business or undertaking (S76, [WHS Act 2011](#)).
- (6) The WHS Committee comprises:
 - a. the elected HSR/Chairperson from each of the University work groups (including the specialist safety groups);
 - b. Facility Management Services (FMS) Director, or delegate;
 - c. WHS Management Group delegate; and
 - d. Human Resource Services (HRS) delegate.
- (7) Members of the WHS Committee are published on Safety Hub.
- (8) Where there is nonattendance at three consecutive WHS Committee meetings by a HSR member, the WHS Committee Chair is entitled to request the HSR to resign from their role as Work Group Chair/WHS Committee

member.

(9) Where there is nonattendance at three consecutive WHS Committee meetings by a Management Representative, the matter is to be referred to the WHS Management Group and may result in a new Management Representative being appointed to the WHS Committee.

In Attendance

Official Attendees

(10) Various University Specialist staff may be invited to attend meetings.

(11) External experts may also be invited to attend meetings as determined by the WHS Committee but will not have voting rights.

(12) Observers are welcome to attend WHS Committee meetings, provided that permission has been sought and approved by the Chair prior to the meeting. Observers may address the WHS Committee and answer questions only on the invitation of the Chair. Observers are not entitled to vote.

(13) If a HSR/Work Group Chair or management representative cannot attend a WHS Committee meeting, their deputy may attend in their place and hold the same voting rights as the absent member.

Chairperson

(14) The Chairperson of the WHS Committee is the Human Resource Services (HRS) delegate. If the Chairperson is unavailable, they may delegate another member of the Committee to act in their place.

Gender Representative Objectives

(15) The University is committed to gender equality and, so far as is practicable, it is an objective that the Committee membership should comprise a balance of genders.

Section 3 - Terms of Reference

Functions

(16) The functions of the WHS Committee as per Section 77 of the [WHS Act 2011](#) are (in summary):

- a. to facilitate cooperation between the University and staff in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure health and safety at the workplace; and
- b. to assist in the system development for ensuring health and safety at the workplace.

(17) Additional to the legislative functions of the WHS Committee, the University charges the WHS Committee with the following duties:

- a. promotion of a positive and proactive health and safety culture based on responsiveness, inclusion and consultation;
- b. review of hazards and risks (Section 79 of the [WHS Act 2011](#)), in particular are those that have been tabled at work group meetings and have not been resolved or require further attention;
- c. identify hazards and risks that cross work groups or relate to common/shared environments of the university and identify risk mitigation measures;
- d. review of injury and near miss reports (not including personal identification information);

- e. strategic review and development of the University WHS Management System and associated initiatives;
- f. consideration of training requirements to ensure health and safety at the University; and
- g. forward of their minutes (including recommendations) to the WHS Management Group for consideration and ensure work group members receive feedback on any issues that have been escalated to the WHS Committee.

(18) Unlike Officers of the University, HSRs (Deputies and Nominees) are not personally liable for anything done or omitted to be done in good faith. HSRs are a representative 'voice' only and responsibility for health and safety at the University cannot be delegated or transferred to them beyond the responsibilities imposed upon them in the capacity for which they are employed.

Reporting

(19) The Chair of the Committee will report to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer on the business conducted by the Committee. Reports will normally be by email and will include minutes of each meeting.

Section 4 - Delegations

Delegation from Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer

(20) This committee has delegated authority from the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer to perform on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer the approval, advice and monitoring functions set out in these terms of reference and all matters ancillary to those functions. The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer retains the discretion to withdraw, modify or override this delegation at any time.

Section 5 - Conduct of Committee Business

Meetings

(21) The WHS Committee is required to meet at least once every three months in accordance with Section 78 of the [WHS Act 2011](#). However, the University WHS Committee will schedule meetings every two months to ensure:

- a. due attention is given to matters tabled with the WHS Committee;
- b. continuity and follow up of action items;
- c. against momentum loss, particularly where there are cases of absenteeism; and
- d. legislated minimum time frames for convening of WHS Committee meetings are achieved, even in the event of meeting postponement.

(22) WHS Committee meetings may be convened more often at the request of at least half of the committee members (Section 78 of the [WHS Act 2011](#)).

Business Papers

(23) An agenda and any accompanying reports will be circulated at least seven working days before each meeting.

Quorum

(24) A quorum is achieved where there are at least half of invited attendees present and where the number of management representatives does not exceed half of that number.

Use of Technology

(25) For its business papers, meetings and otherwise to conduct its business the Committee and its members may use technology including telephone, video-conferencing, telepresence, email and internet as arranged by the Chair and/or Committee Secretary.

Resolutions

(26) The Committee will operate as a consultative Committee, with the appropriate management representatives delegated the decision maker on all items raised after consultation has been duly exercised. If any item raised, falls outside the authority of the management representatives the Committee will make recommendations directly to the WHS Management Group.

(27) Where the Chair deems that a vote is required to resolve an issue (where recommendations cannot be agreed upon via general consensus, a majority of the attendees must be in favour of a motion for it to be passed (assuming a quorum has been achieved).

Records and Reports

(28) WHS Committee meetings are recorded via utilisation of template agenda and minute sheets, provided by the University. These templates include an appendix that specifies the distribution list of the agenda and minutes for each meeting.

(29) Minute records are to be circulated to the following people within seven days of the meeting being held to:

- a. all members of the WHS Committee;
- b. any guests that attended the meeting; and
- c. all members of the WHS Management Group.

(30) The Secretary is responsible for ensuring all WHS Committee agendas, minutes (once confirmed at the following meeting) and reports are recorded in TRIM.

Disclosure of Information

(31) Disclosure of business papers, minutes and other information received by the Committee should be made via the Chair or Secretary to the Committee.

Self-Review

(32) Once every twelve-month period, the Committee shall devote at least one part of one meeting to the review of its policies, practices and procedures over the preceding 12 months.

Secretary to Committee

(33) A Secretary will be appointed by the Chair.

Status and Details

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