

WHSMP13: Responsibility and Accountability Statement

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure that all employees at Southern Cross University (SCU) have clearly defined workplace health and safety (WHS) responsibilities and to ensure appropriate and competent resources are available to manage WHS risks and deliver WHS objectives, targets, and programs.

(2) All employees, students and others including both independent contractors and contractors under SCU control are to be made aware of and follow this procedure.

(3) This Procedure applies to all SCU Work Units and sites. The procedure aligns with WHS legislation in the relevant jurisdictions SCU operates in.

Section 2 - Definitions

RiskWare	Electronic database for the reporting of all incidents and near misses. RiskWare includes the investigation of incidents against systemic causes, the assignment of corrective actions, and regulatory and performance reporting.
Competent Person	A competent person is a person who has acquired, through training, qualification, or experience, the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.
WHS	Workplace Health & Safety
Hierarchy of Controls	The hierarchy of controls is a set of ranked risk control measures ranging from most to least effective. These include elimination (most effective), substitution, isolation, engineering, administrative, and the use of personal protective equipment (least effective).
KPI	Key Performance Indicator.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
Standard	Any reference to an Australian Standard means the most recently published version of the Standard.

Section 3 - General Principles

(4) The SCU Executive at SCU has overall accountability for the effectiveness of the WHS Management System and the provision of resources as required to implement it. The accountabilities and responsibilities for the implementation of specific aspects of the WHS management are described below.

(5) Within each Work Unit, levels of responsibility shall be assigned to all employees with management responsibility. Each level of management shall have levels of responsibilities cascaded and assigned as appropriate.

(6) Responsibilities are considered from two perspectives:

- a. Individual responsibilities – relating to specific roles of individuals at different levels at SCU, and

- b. Governance structure – through boards, committees, and decision-making groups responsible for the management and oversight of WHS.

Individual Responsibilities

(7) SCU has nominated several individual roles that have responsibilities with the management, oversight, and delivery of WHS across the University.

Governance Structures

(8) SCU has nominated several boards, committees, and management teams that have responsibilities regarding the management and oversight of WHS.

(9) These have been extracted from the SCU Enterprise Risk Management Framework.

Training

(10) SCU will ensure that all levels of responsibility understand their roles and responsibilities via:

- a. Individual position or role descriptions
- b. Induction training, and
- c. Discussion of the performance of allocated health, safety, and wellbeing responsibilities during performance reviews.
- d. Records of evidence of training shall be maintained by the relevant level of the organisation as per [WHSMP06: Training and Competency](#) procedure.

Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

Refer to [WHSMP13: Responsibility and Accountability Statement](#).

University Council

The SCU Council has the following WHS responsibilities:

Demonstrate commitment to WHS and set examples for employees. Ensure regulatory compliance with standards and procedures. Maintain WHS management systems meeting policy, legal, and regulatory requirements. Review WHS risks periodically and consider implications in decisions. Oversight of the development and alignment of WHS strategy with university objectives. Agree on and monitor WHS objectives, targets, and performance. Provide adequate WHS training and resources for roles. Review and learn from WHS incidents and trends and ensure corrective actions. Ensure crisis management processes for incidents are implemented. Cooperate with regulators and WHS Manager on legislative requirements. Monitor and report WHS performance, maintain relevant records, and track progress against objectives.

Operational Responsibilities

(11) The SCU Vice Chancellor has the following WHS responsibilities:

- a. Allocate resources for WHS systems and training for direct reports.
- b. Appoint competent resources for WHS roles based on risk profile, including an advisor for WHS duties.
- c. Comply with WHS legislative requirements and collaborate with authorities.
- d. Ensure compliance with WHS policy and legal requirements is monitored through plans and reviews.
- e. Foster a positive WHS culture with continuous improvement and leading by example.

- f. Implement disciplinary measures for WHS breaches as needed.
- g. Manage key stakeholder and regulatory relationships.
- h. Take actions to achieve WHS objectives and address deficiencies.

Vice Presidents/Pro/Deputy Vice-Chancellor

(12) Vice Presidents/Pro/Deputy Vice Chancellors have the following WHS responsibilities:

- a. Appoint and allocate appropriate WHS resources for risk management and training.
- b. Be aware of, monitor and control critical hazards and controls applicable to their work unit.
- c. Cooperate with Regulators/Authorities and WHS to meet legislative requirements.
- d. Ensure compliance with WHS policies, procedures by persons involved in their work unit's undertaking.
- e. Foster a positive WHS culture, promote continuous improvement, and lead by example.
- f. Incorporate WHS risks in the Enterprise risk register and apply controls.
- g. Provide oversight of Work Unit WHS performance, reporting, and sharing lessons from incidents.
- h. Review safety performance, discuss with management, and take corrective actions as needed, including disciplinary measures for WHS breaches.
- i. Take actions to achieve WHS objectives and address deficiencies.

Head of Work Unit

(13) The Head of the Work Unit has the following WHS responsibilities:

- a. Conduct audit and assurance activities and ensure action on findings.
- b. Coordinate with regulators and WHS teams.
- c. Enforce disciplinary measures for WHS breaches.
- d. Engage with stakeholders on WHS matters.
- e. Ensure compliance with WHS policies, procedures, and controls.
- f. Ensure WHS compliance, communication, and risk management.
- g. Manage WHS incidents and reporting.
- h. Obtain and follow WHS professional advice.
- i. Promote a positive WHS culture and competency.
- j. Provide oversight for Work Unit WHS performance.
- k. Report accidents and incidents promptly.

Managers and Supervisors

(14) Managers and Supervisors have the following WHS responsibilities:

- a. Conduct assurance activities.
- b. Cooperate with regulators, WHS Manager, and Partners.
- c. Enforce disciplinary measures for WHS breaches.
- d. Engage stakeholders on safety matters as needed.
- e. Ensure access to competent WHS advice and training.
- f. Ensure compliance with WHS policies, procedures, and controls.
- g. Monitor and act on regulatory visits and incidents.
- h. Provide resources and approval for safe activities.
- i. Report and record all WHS incidents promptly.

- j. Review Work Unit WHS performance regularly

Employees

(15) All employees have the following WHS responsibilities:

- a. Cease work if there is a reasonable concern of a serious risk or an immediate or imminent hazard poses serious risk to health and safety.
- b. Complete required WHS training and stay updated.
- c. Cooperate with SCU on WHS matters.
- d. Ensure compliance with WHS policies, procedures, and control.
- e. Follow instructions from authorities and supervisors.
- f. Inform supervisor if work is ceased.
- g. Notify relevant management of unsafe conditions or practices.
- h. Participate in audits and reviews as required.
- i. Prioritise health and safety for oneself and others.
- j. Report accidents, defects, or hazards promptly.
- k. Report WHS concerns promptly to relevant personnel.
- l. Request additional WHS training if needed.
- m. Support WHS objectives and targets.
- n. Understand and adhere to WHS procedures and risk assessments.
- o. Use equipment only with proper training.
- p. Wear issued PPE correctly.
- q. Work within established safety controls and systems.

WHS Team

WHS Manager

(16) The WHS Manager has the following responsibilities:

- a. Assess and manage WHS risks effectively.
- b. Communicate progress against WHS plans and objectives.
- c. Develop and lead the University's health and safety strategy.
- d. Develop and maintain WHS management systems.
- e. Develop and monitor a WHS compliance assurance program.
- f. Ensure adequate WHS resources and training.
- g. Ensure compliance with legal and regulatory WHS requirements.
- h. Implement and maintain WHS policies, procedures, and controls.
- i. Investigate and report accidents/incidents, sharing lessons learned.
- j. Maintain accurate WHS data and reporting.
- k. Promote visible leadership in WHS.
- l. Provide oversight and reporting on WHS performance.
- m. Provide WHS advice to management and maintain relationships with regulators.
- n. Regularly review and address WHS incidents and performance.
- o. Support SCU in new research, sites, and acquisitions.

WHS Business Partners

(17) WHS Business Partners have the following responsibilities:

- a. Actively promote WHS culture and plans.
- b. Advise on WHS training needs.
- c. Assist in WHS risk assessments and controls implementation.
- d. Assist work units with the application of procedures.
- e. Cooperate with regulators and WHS Manager on legal requirements.
- f. Ensure accurate WHS data in RiskWare and meet reporting requirements.
- g. Maintain skills and stay updated on legal requirements.
- h. Report incidents and support investigations.
- i. Support understanding and compliance with SCU standards and regulations.
- j. Support WHS inspections, audits, and corrective actions.
- k. Support SCU in new research, sites, and acquisitions.

Section 5 - Records of Documentation

(18) All relevant documentation will be recorded and kept in accordance with WHS Legislation and other legislative obligations including:

- a. Documentation of WHS training provided to employees relating to their roles and responsibilities, including the date, type of training, and participants.
- b. This procedure will be reviewed as per nominated review dates or because of other events, such as:
- c. Internal and external audit outcomes.
- d. Legislative changes.
- e. Outcomes from management reviews.
- f. Incidents.

Section 6 - References

Work Health and Safety Act (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)
Work Health and Safety Regulation (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)

Section 7 - Related Documents

WHSMP06: Training and Competency
WHSMP08: Document Control and Records Management
WHSMP15: Audit and Assurance
WHSMP17: Incident Management, Reporting and Investigation

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Responsible Executive	Kim Franks Vice President (People and Culture)
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