SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OVERVIEW

CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

A Safety Management System (SMS) is a part of an organisation's overall management system used to manage health and safety. A SMS includes a range of components including policy, planning activities, procedures, resources and activities.

The University of Sydney has established a SMS for the overall benefit of the University community. Implementation of the SMS ensures a systematic approach to the management of health and safety risks associated with University activities.

2   PURPOSE

This document provides an overview of the University SMS, describing how the various components work together to provide a systematic approach to the management of health and safety.

Compliance with the University SMS assists us to meet legislative compliance requirements and achieve sustained improvements in safety performance.

3   SCOPE

The requirements of the University SMS apply to all staff, students, affiliates and volunteers; all faculties, schools, research institutes and professional service units; and all activities conducted by and on behalf of the University.

4   RESPONSIBILITIES

All organisational units are accountable for the safety of their people and implementation of the University SMS within their area of control. Some specific responsibilities are listed below.

4.1   SENATE SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Senate Safety & Risk Management Committee (Senate SRM Committee) monitors and advises Senate on matters relating to work health and safety including compliance with work health & safety legislation. Safety Health & Wellbeing report to the Senate Safety & Risk Management Committee quarterly.

4.2   UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE WORK HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

The University Executive Work Health & Safety Committee (UE WHS Committee) monitors implementation of the University SMS. The Safety Health & Wellbeing unit reports to the UE WHS Committee quarterly.

4.3   DIRECTOR, SAFETY HEALTH & WELLBEING

The Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing is accountable for the development of the University SMS and regular reporting to the UE WHS Committee and the Senate Safety & Risk Management Committee regarding the status of implementation.

4.4 SAFETY HEALTH & WELLBEING

Safety Health & Wellbeing is accountable to the University for the provision of an effective SMS, and the associated tools and support services to facilitate effective implementation of the SMS at all levels of the organisation.

4.5 CAMPUS INFRASTRUCTURE & SERVICES

Campus Infrastructure & Services is accountable for the safety of the built environment, including design, maintenance and associated services.

4.6 DEANS, DIRECTORS, HEADS OF SCHOOL (AND EQUIVALENT)

Deans, Directors and Heads of School (and equivalent) are accountable for the implementation of the University's SMS within their area of control.

5 SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MODEL

The University Safety Management System (SMS) has multiple layers including policy, management standards, common processes and procedures, performance standards for specific operational risk, and local processes and procedures implemented by faculties, schools, professional service units (PSU) and other centralised departments to facilitate implementation.

Our SMS is based on *AS/NZS 4801: Occupational health and safety management systems – Specifications with guidance for use*. It acknowledges that a genuine commitment to safety, quality safety planning, implementation at all levels of the organisation, regular monitoring of performance, and periodic system reviews are all required to ensure a cycle of continuous improvement (Figure 1).

Implementation of management standards applicable to all organisational units
- *Active & visible safety leadership*
- *Safety planning*
- *Consultation and participation*
- *Risk management*
- *Training and instruction*
- *Emergency management*
- *Incident reporting & management*
- *Suppliers, contractors & purchasing*

Common processes and procedures used to manage safety e.g. WHS issue resolution procedures, consultation arrangements, incident/hazard reporting via RiskWare, Injury Management Procedures

Minimum performance standards for the management of key areas of operational risk, e.g. working with chemicals, biosafety, fieldwork, international travel
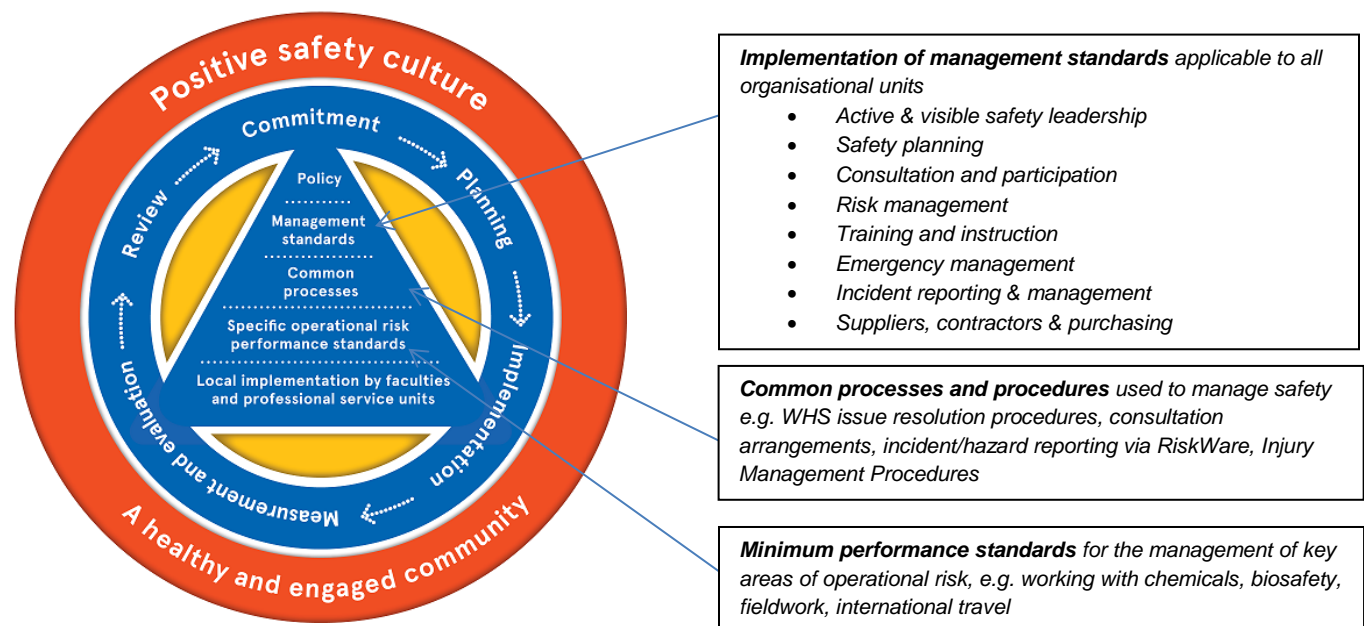
Figure 1: University Safety Management System Model – Cycle of continuous improvement

6 COMMITMENT & POLICY

6.1 COMMITMENT

The University's commitment to safety is stated in the Work Health & Safety Policy (see below) and demonstrated by the resourcing of the centralised Safety Health & Wellbeing unit.

The commitment to safety has also been demonstrated by the appointment of specific University Executive and Senate sub-committees responsible for the overall management and governance of work health & safety associated with university activities.

6.2 POLICY

6.2.1 WORK HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY 2016

The University Work Health & Safety Policy 2016 states the University's commitment to ensuring the health and safety of workers, students and others who are involved in or may be affected by University activities. The policy also details the arrangements for work health & safety governance and management including accountability and responsibility for work health & safety at all levels of the organisation.

6.2.2 INJURY MANAGEMENT POLICY 2015

The University Injury Management Policy 2015 states the University's commitment to providing a safe and timely return to work for all injured or ill staff. The policy also sets out the principles for managing non-work related illness and injury that has an impact on work.

6.3 SAFETY GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT
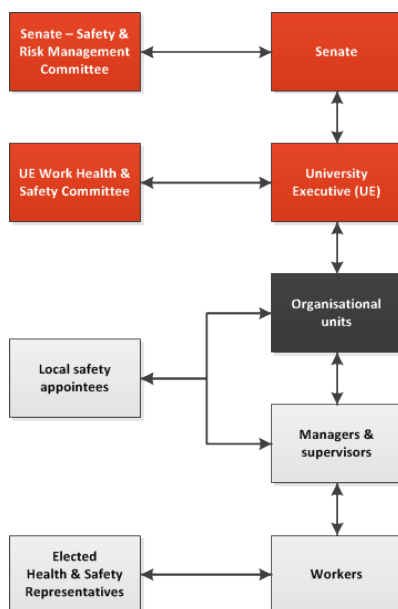
Senate sets the strategic direction for safety, health and wellbeing, and provide governance.

Senate SRM Committee actively monitors safety performance and legislative compliance.

UE monitors implementation on the Safety Management System (SMS).

UE WHS Committee monitors safety performance and ensures a co-ordinated approach by acting as the decision making body for University wide safety issues.

Organisational units set safety goals for the faculty, school or professional service unit, monitor safety performance and obtain regular reports from subordinate units.

Managers and supervisors implement the SMS within their workgroup and refer issues that are beyond their control to the appropriate head of school or administrative unit.

Workers take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others, and actively participate in safety management activities.

Local safety appointees support the implementation of the SMS within organisational units.

Health & Safety Representatives (where elected by workers) represent the health and safety interests of their workgroup in consultation with the relevant managers and supervisors.

Figure 2: Safety governance and management at the University of Sydney

7   SAFETY PLANNING

The University has established a [Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan](#) with the objective of creating a positive safety culture and ensuring a healthy and engaged University community. The strategic plan identifies guiding principles, strategic objectives and a range of current key focus areas. The strategic plan is supported by an action plan that details the work being carried out at a University level to achieve the University's safety, health and wellbeing objectives.

8   IMPLEMENTATION

Successful implementation of the University SMS requires active engagement at all levels of the organisation. Safety Health & Wellbeing are responsible for engaging with each of the faculties, schools, professional service units and other centralised departments to build safety capability so that the management of safety is embedded within standard management practices and implemented using local resources.

8.1   MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

The University has established eight (8) management standards that must be implemented at all levels of the organisation and within each organisational unit. Implementation of each management standard is supported by associated guidance material and common University processes.

The requirements of each management standard are specified in the [Work Health & Safety Procedures](#).

8.1.1   ACTIVE AND VISIBLE SAFETY LEADERSHIP

Effective safety leadership and commitment is vital to the success of the SMS. In order to meet our safety objectives, staff at all levels of the organisation, but particularly senior and middle managers, must demonstrate their commitment to safety by being active and visible safety leaders. The leadership shown by management provides the foundation upon which the Safety Management System is built.

To demonstrate the importance of safety, work health & safety must be the first item on the agenda of all management and team [meetings](#).

8.1.2   SAFETY PLANNING

Local safety plans must be established and implemented at all levels of the organisation, e.g. faculty, school, research group. Each organisational unit is required to identify priority work health and safety issues and plan actions to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury or illness. The [WHS Action Plan](#) is a simple tool that can be used to document a local safety plan.

When developing and reviewing a safety plan, the executive of an organisational unit must refer to the local safety plans of any subordinate organisational units and to the University's [Safety Health & Wellbeing Strategic Plan](#).

8.1.3   CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION

The management of WHS risks requires regular consultation with the people affected by a particular WHS risk and those involved in managing the risk. Within the University, the primary medium for consultation on health and safety

matters is direct dialogue between supervisors and workers acting under their instruction. Consultation at this level is fundamental to the successful management of work health and safety risks.

All organisational units must be able to demonstrate evidence of meaningful and effective WHS consultation. The consultation process is intended to improve the quality of decision making and increases the likelihood of worker engagement and support for agreed risk controls.

8.1.4 RISK MANAGEMENT

The University applies a risk based approach to the management of health and safety. Attention must be given to high risk activities and high risk groups of people within the University community.

All organisational units are required to apply the risk management to identify WHS hazards and hazardous activities, prioritise and assess risks and eliminate or control risk in consultation with those involved in the work.

Where the initial assessment of an activity indicates that the inherent or current risk is 'high' or 'very high', a documented risk assessment is required. If after a documented risk assessment has been carried out the residual risk is assessed as 'high' or 'very high', senior management approval is required. Refer to Section 7 of the Work Health & Safety Procedures for further information about the risk based workflows and approvals.

Safe work procedures must be developed and documented for all hazardous tasks that require the application of administrative or procedural risk controls.

Regular workplace inspections must be carried out as a systematic mechanism for identifying WHS hazards.

8.1.5 TRAINING & INSTRUCTION

The provision of relevant safety information, training and instruction are essential to the success of the SMS. All staff, higher degree research students and affiliated workers must complete the online WHS induction and be provided with a relevant local WHS induction. The need for other specific WHS training should be assessed by completing a training needs analysis.

Additional training might include:

- WHS for managers and supervisors
- University training for specific areas of operational risk, e.g. biosafety, working with chemicals
- University training for specific safety functions, e.g. health & safety representative, departmental safety officer, emergency warden
- External training and mandatory certification for specific high risk activities, e.g. scuba diving
- Local training and assessment in safe work procedures.

8.1.6 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

All staff must know how to report an emergency and respond to common emergency situations, including but not limited to fire, medical emergencies, chemical spills, violent threats and protests. To facilitate this, emergency management must be monitored and planned for as a part of the WHS Action Plan.

Building emergency procedures must be kept current and regularly practiced. To support this, heads of faculties, schools, PSUs and administrative units must appoint staff to fill local emergency roles, e.g. chief warden,

emergency wardens and first aid officers. Appointed staff must be appropriately trained and allocated time to fulfil their emergency duties.

8.1.7 INCIDENT/HAZARD REPORTING & MANAGEMENT

All incidents, near misses and hazards must be promptly and accurately reported to the relevant manager or supervisor and formally recorded in RiskWare **within 24 hours of the incident occurring or a hazard being identified**.

Managers and supervisors are required to investigate incidents and plan action to prevent the reoccurrence of similar incidents in the future. Supervisors are required to submit corrective action plans in RiskWare **within 7 days of an incident or hazard being reported**. Specific actions are assigned to individuals with target completion dates.

8.1.8 SUPPLIERS, CONTRACTORS AND PURCHASING CONTROLS

The safety risks associated with purchased goods and services must be considered. Within reason, attempts must always be made to purchase the safest possible products and services. Safety is a mandatory selection criterion in all quote and tender review processes. Service contracts must include safety performance requirements and performance indicators.

8.2 COMMON UNIVERSITY PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

The management standards are supported by a number of common University processes and procedures.

8.2.1 WHS CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The University has established agreed WHS consultation procedures designed to maximise worker participation in decisions impacting their safety health or wellbeing. The primary mechanism for consultation is direct dialog between supervisors and the workers acting under their direction.

A network of Health & Safety Representatives (HSRs) provides a secondary mechanism for WHS consultation for the workgroups that have elected a HSR. Where elected, HSRs can represent the WHS interests of their workgroup and must be invited to management meetings to monitor work health & safety management and compliance. Two (2) representative HSRs (one from the academic faculties and another from the professional service units) represent all HSRs at UE WHS Committee meetings.

8.2.2 INCIDENT/HAZARD REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT

All incidents, near misses and hazards are recorded and managed within RiskWare. RiskWare is an online reporting and risk management system, accessible to all staff via the staff intranet. Individual access rights within RiskWare are linked to the University's organisational structure, ensuring that supervisors and senior managers have access to data and standard reporting for their relevant team, department or portfolio.

The pre-defined workflows ensure that a risk based process is applied to the management of incidents and hazards, and that relevant supervisors are prompted to investigate and take action to eliminate hazards and prevent the re-occurrence of incidents.

WHS Advisers monitor incident/hazard reporting, facilitate the investigation of incidents with serious actual or potential consequences and monitor the quality of corrective action plans.

8.2.3 RESOLVING WHS ISSUES

Section 13 of the University Work Health & Safety Procedures details the procedures for resolving WHS issues. Attempts should always be made to resolve WHS issues at the local level. In the first instance a WHS issue must always be referred to the relevant manager or supervisor responsible for the person or activity.

8.2.4 WORK HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICES

Work Health & Safety (WHS) Advisers work directly with faculties and professional service units to advise on safety management and build capability. WHS Specialists advise the University in relation to specific high-risk areas such as radiation, biological, laboratory and chemical safety.

8.2.5 INJURY MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Injury management coordinators provide professional support to injured employees and their supervisors. Effective return-to-work solutions are designed in accordance with the University Injury and Illness Management Procedures.

Injury Management Services also provide support to staff suffering from personal ill health or injury that is affecting their ability to work.

8.3 MANAGING OPERATIONAL WHS RISK

The University carries out a broad range of activities with associated operational risks. University procedures, guidelines and associated tools have been developed to assist the University community to manage the health and safety risks associated with a number of the higher risk operational activities.

8.3.1 UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Minimum performance standards have been established for a number of areas of operational WHS risk. Compliance with these minimum performance standards is compulsory for the organisational units engaged in those activities.

8.3.2 AREAS OF OPERATIONAL WHS RISK

Biosafety

Chemical safety

Driver safety

Office Ergonomics

Hazardous manual tasks

Health & wellbeing

Laboratory safety

Bullying prevention

Contractor management (building and maintenance)

Electrical safety

Fieldwork safety

Hazardous waste disposal

Indoor air quality

Machinery safety

[Noise management](#)   [Outdoor work](#)

[Psychological wellbeing](#)   [Radiation safety](#)

[Reproductive hazards](#)   [Restricted areas](#)

[Student safety awareness](#)   [Working alone or after-hours](#)

8.4   LOCAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Faculties, schools, professional service units and other centralised departments are required to establish local processes and procedures to enable compliance with the University's management standards (Section 8.1), within the context of the organisational unit and associated activities.

9   MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION

Compliance with the University's management standards and the minimum performance standards for specific operational risk are measured via regular inspection programs and SMS implementation auditing.

9.1   SMS IMPLEMENTATION AUDITING

[Safety Health & Wellbeing](#) arrange for organisational units to be audited against the University's *Management Standards* at least once every three (3) years. Audits are conducted by an independent auditor, with the objective of measuring local implementation of the SMS. Audit results and recommendations are provided to University managers and committees to support the continuous improvement cycle.

Compliance with the University's performance standards for specific areas of operational risk are also regularly monitored by Safety Health & Wellbeing.

10   MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The University regularly reviews the Safety Management System to ensure compliance with legislation, alignment with community expectations and continuous improvement. The UE WHS Committee will formally review the Safety Management System at least once every two years to identify and implement opportunities for improvement.

11   DOCUMENT CONTROL

Acknowledgements					
Related Documents					
Version Control	**Date released**	**Author/s**	**Custodian**	**Approved by**	**Amendments**
1.0	14/08/2014	Matthew Mitchell	Manager, WHS Services	Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing	Original
1.1	17/02/2017	Review by: Maria Nicolaou Matthew Mitchell	Manager, WHS Services	Director, Safety Health & Wellbeing	Minor updates to align with the Work Health & Safety Policy 2016 Updated Figure 2 – Safety governance and management