

Guideline Title: Workplace Inspection Guideline

Guideline Owner: Chief Safety Officer, People and Culture

Keywords: Workplace, Inspection, Checklist

This guideline supports the University to operationalise the Health and Safety Policy and must be complied with.

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1. INTENT

The purpose of this guideline is to outline the University's process for conducting Workplace Inspections.

Workplace Inspections within the University are an important part of an effective health and safety system and assist in identifying and reporting Hazards that are not controlled.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This guideline applies to all Workers.

3. DEFINITIONS

The [University Glossary](#), the [WHS Definitions Register](#) and the following definitions apply to this guideline:

Term:	Definition:
Inspection	A workplace inspection is an event in which the workplace is inspected to identify potential hazards.
Manager and Supervisor	Managers and Supervisors are those who have responsibility for the direct control of other persons within an organisational unit.
Workplace	A place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking, including any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. This includes: a. A vehicle, vessel, aircraft or other mobile

	structure; and b. Any waters or installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters.
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4. GUIDELINE CONTENT

Workplace Inspection Planning

- 4.1. The Local Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee Chair should consult with their committee members and implement a regular Workplace Inspection program in their area of responsibility. This should be documented and communicated at their Local WHS Committee meeting.
- 4.2. Executive Deans/Directors and Managers, in consultation with Health and Safety (HS) Representatives and Local WHS Committee Chairs, are accountable for implementing a regular Workplace Inspection program in their area of responsibility.

Workplace Inspection Frequency

4.3. Formal Workplace Inspections are to be scheduled and conducted every six months as a minimum or more frequently as dictated by the Hazards and Risks associated with the Workplace.

4.4. Ad hoc Workplace Inspections may also need to be carried out for a specific reason such as in response to an Incident or Hazard, or following a major change to the workplace such as a renovation or new work area set up. A HS representative may also request to inspect a specific area either on an ad hoc basis with reasonable notice or following an incident or identification of a serious risk.

4.5. Before commencing the Workplace Inspection, the following should be considered and agreed upon:

- The boundaries of the area to be inspected,
- Which inspection forms are to be utilised for the inspection. ECU has a general Workplace Inspection Checklist template (refer to 4.4) that may be used for the inspection, but other forms may be developed or utilised depending on the nature of the area,
- What specific equipment is to be included/excluded,
- Allocation of Inspection areas between team members, where relevant.

4.6. For the common areas around the University, Digital and Campus Services are responsible for conducting Workplace Inspections on an annual basis as a minimum. Work environments that are continually changing need to be inspected more frequently. Workplace Inspections are also required when new processes, procedures or equipment are introduced into the workplace.

Managers / Supervisors Informal Inspections

4.7. In addition to formal Workplace Inspections, Managers and Supervisors should monitor workplaces on a regular basis. Hazards may arise after changed environmental conditions (e.g. wet weather) and housekeeping may be needed after work is conducted in a certain area. For example, machine guarding.

4.8. Any Hazards should always be closely monitored, particularly while awaiting the implementation of effective control measures. If there is a hazardous situation the Manager or Supervisor needs to consider using tape or cones as a barrier, or other access controls to prevent people going through the area. The Hazard should be communicated to those who work in the area and the hazard recorded and reported in line with the [Hazard Resolution Procedure](#)

Workplace Inspection Template / Checklist

4.9. A Workplace Inspection template/checklist provides a standard format for use by all members of the inspection team and outlines the inspection requirements. The ECU Workplace Inspection Template, available from the Audit and Inspection module of [Riskware](#), provides a checklist that can be utilised for local areas.

4.10. The checklist takes into consideration, but is not limited to:

- the status of previous inspections and actions already identified,
- emergency management and fire prevention requirements
- lighting, ventilation, electrical items, hazardous substances, ladders, machinery etc, and
- housekeeping and workplace building hazards.

4.11. A hardcopy version of the template is also available from the [People and Culture WHS website](#). The template includes instructions to upload the hardcopy on to Riskware once completed. Alternatively, a suitable template for an area can be developed in consultation with the People and Culture WHS team.

4.12. Inspection outcomes may be entered:

- directly into the Riskware Audit and Inspection module; or
- via the [pocketAudit app](#); or
- by uploading a hard copy of the inspection checklist into Riskware; or
- into Content Manager as per the [ECU Records Management Procedures](#).

Workplace Inspection Team

4.13. It is the responsibility of the person who has control of the workplace to establish a Workplace Inspection team. Not all team members may be required to complete the walk arounds but could have responsibilities for the reviewing and actioning the Inspection findings. The size and makeup of the team will be influenced by the size of the workplace and number of Workers, types and complexity of activities undertaken and the types of hazards and risks.

- 4.14. As a guide, the inspection team may comprise of:
- A HS Representative, preferably a representative that has completed the Health and Safety Representative training,
 - The Manager/Supervisor who is responsible for that area or has equipment in that work area; (this person may just review the inspection findings on completion) and/or
 - A University Worker familiar with the work activities in the area being inspected, where required.
- 4.15. A single person may conduct an inspection if they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the area they are inspecting. However the first time someone conducts an inspection, where possible it is recommended to do this with a second person with prior experience conducting inspections of the area
- 4.16. The inspection team should review any previous Inspection reports and identified actions prior to commencing the Workplace Inspection. A review the of Incident and Hazard reports for the area being inspected may also be of benefit.
- 4.17. It is imperative that Inspection team members are inducted to the work area being inspected or are escorted by someone who is qualified to act as a guide. Inspection teams must wear any Personal Protective Equipment required for the work areas being inspected.
- 4.18. Work areas that cover more than one Workplace or campus may establish several inspection teams.
- 4.19. Any WHS issues identified that are beyond the authority, experience and/or resource of the inspection team should be referred to the Executive Dean/Director for action and resolution and recorded in [Riskware](#).

Conducting the Inspection

- 4.20. It is preferable to conduct inspections at the time when the Workplace is fully operational.
- 4.21. The inspection team should view all areas within the workplace including the office and storage locations, maintenance areas, meeting rooms, toilets and kitchen areas.
- 4.22. The inspection team should review each of the items on the checklist for compliance with requirements and record any deviations and Hazards identified on the inspection checklist. Refer to the [Complete a new Audit or Inspection information sheet](#) for information on completing the inspection in Riskware.
- 4.23. If the area owner is not involved in the inspection, any Hazards identified during the inspection should be directly communicated to them in addition to recording them in Riskware.

Corrective Actions

4.24. To eliminate or control Hazards identified through completion of the inspections, corrective actions shall be developed and recorded in Riskware and must:

- Follow the Hierarchy of Controls, as outlined in Appendix A.
- Be assigned to an individual for action.
- Have a timeframe and priority for completion established.
- Be agreed by members of the Inspection team.
- Schedule in a review or follow-up of the Hazard post implementation to ensure its effectiveness.

4.25. It is the responsibility of the area's Manager to ensure that the recommended actions are implemented and the person responsible for the actions has closed the actions in Riskware. The Inspection Approver will have visibility of these actions in Riskware. The Local WHS Committee Chair can provide a register of outstanding actions for the area.

4.26. The Manager/Supervisor responsible for the area must [approve the inspection in Riskware](#) once it has been completed.

4.27. Executive Deans, Deans and Directors are responsible for allocating resources and funding for the implementation of controls to address the identified Hazards.

4.28. Where hazards are unable to be resolved, the University's [Hazard Resolution Procedure](#) should be followed

Reporting and Documenting

4.29. The outcome of the Workplace Inspection, including identified Hazards and corrective actions should be recorded within Riskware.

Hardcopy records can be uploaded to Riskware using the process outlined in this [information sheet](#)

4.30. Delegated Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- Records of Workplace Inspections are kept in Riskware or Content Manager,
- Hazards and corrective actions identified through the Workplace Inspection process are entered into the School/Centre Hazard Risk Register within Riskware,
- The outcomes of completed Workplace Inspections are communicated to the Executive Dean/Dean/Director,
- The status of completion of the planned Workplace Inspections for each area, along with a summary of any identified Hazards and associated corrective actions, are communicated to the School/Service Centre Local WHS Committee on a quarterly basis.

4.31. Hazards identified from Workplace Inspections need to be tracked to ensure the Hazard is addressed and the controls are sustainable and remain effective. Hazards can be tracked through to completion in Riskware, and maintenance hazards

are tracked via the ECU Maintenance system (QFM).

4.32. Once an action from a Workplace Inspection is completed, the new controls should be reviewed at the next scheduled Inspection for the area to ensure they are still effective. The Workplace Inspection template will prompt the inspector to undertake this review.

WHS Regulator Workplace Inspection

4.33. If a WorkSafe Inspector or other WHS regulatory body inspector arrives to inspect an ECU owned or leased workplace, please contact the People and Culture WHS Team as soon as possible and, where possible, a member of the team will be present for the Inspection. Legal Services must also be made aware that the Inspection is taking place.

4.34. Where areas have been inspected by a WorkSafe Inspector or other WHS regulatory inspector, and a member of the People and Culture WHS team has not been present, the following information must be provided to the People and Culture WHS team to ensure any actions can be completed and appropriate reporting to the Quality Audit Risk Committee and Council can occur:

- The date of the inspection,
- Location inspected,
- Purpose of inspection and
- Outcome of inspection including any verbal or written recommendations or directives

5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Guideline Owner is the Chief Safety Office (People and Culture) and has overall responsibility for the content of these guidelines and their operation.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Operational documents and resources

The Guideline is supported by the following and is available on the WHS and Wellbeing pages of the People and Culture website:

- [Riskware Audit and Inspection Module information sheets](#)
- [Hazard Resolution Procedure.](#)

7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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8. APPROVAL HISTORY

Guideline approved by:	Chief Safety Officer
Date guideline first approved:	December 2014
Date last modified:	January 2024
Revision history:	<p>14 December 2001: Original policy approved</p> <p>June 2009: Policy amended to comply with University Guidelines re Drafting of Policy Documents</p> <p>November 2013: Policy amended to align with new policy template</p> <p>September 2014: Downgraded to a guideline and combined with the existing Workplace Inspection Procedure following consultative review</p> <p>June 2021: Update for Riskware Audit and Inspection module implementation and new WHS Act 2020.</p> <p>December 2023: Update to prompt to review actions, when ad hoc inspections may be conducted i.e related to change or HS Rep request. Other minor edits.</p>
Next revision due:	January 2027
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Appendix A: Hierarchy of Controls

