Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) Australian Catholic University (ACU) operates under harmonised work health and safety laws in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic).

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Policy articulates ACU's commitment to implementing, maintaining and continuously improving its Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or Framework), providing a safe working and learning environment, and enhancing the wellbeing of the University community.

Section 3 - Application

(3) This Policy applies to all staff members, staff representatives, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors within the workplace or participating in University related activities within Australia and overseas, and applies to all activities managed or influenced by the University.

Section 4 - Definitions

(4) Within this Policy, the following terms are used as defined:

Definition	Explanation
Officer	People who can make decisions or participate in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking. It is a requirement of Health and Safety legislation that any officer of an organisation must exercise due diligence to ensure the organisation complies with its health and safety duties. This means they must ensure the organisation has appropriate systems of work in place and should actively monitor and evaluate health and safety management within the organisation.
Work group	A group of workers represented by Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) on each campus, who in many cases share similar work conditions (for example, all the professional and academic staff members on the Strathfield Campus).

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(5) The University is committed to:

a. providing its people with a welcoming, safe and healthy working and learning environment;
b. continuously improving its health and safety performance and WHSMS - with the aim of eliminating work related injury and illness;

c. developing a minimum of three measurable WHS objectives and three targets, from 2019, which will be reviewed every two years, to facilitate continuous improvements in its WHSMS;
d. supporting and promoting wellbeing;
e. complying with Commonwealth and State / Territory work and health and safety legislation and regulations, National Codes of Practice, standards, guidelines, and ACU WHSMS policies and procedures;
f. initiating two-way consultations and effectively engaging staff members, their representatives, ACU's contractors, students and others, about its WHSMS and wellbeing issues to improve their understanding of their role and commitment to contributing to the framework and improvement opportunities;
g. regularly reporting and applying learnings from workplace incidents, injuries, hazards and near misses;
h. identifying and managing significant WHS risks, in collaboration with staff and contractors, and opportunities for improving the WHSMS;
i. providing supportive return to work programs that are sustainable and timely for injured or ill staff members;
j. ensuring the WHSMS achieves its intended outcomes and the framework is integrated into University processes and frameworks, and the framework is reviewed at least every two years to ensure that it is suitable, adequate and effective; and
k. allocating appropriate resources, including training and instruction, to facilitate continuous improvements in the WHSMS and a welcoming, safe and healthy working and learning environment where everyone knows how to confidently apply safe systems of work and contribute to the WHSMS.

Section 6 - Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff and Students

(6) Staff and students are responsible for each other's safety and wellbeing, including their own, and are able to do this by:

a. understanding how they contribute to the WHSMS;
b. actively participating in WHS and Wellbeing consultations;
c. engaging with risk assessment and management processes;
d. confidently apply safe work instructions or procedures;
e. identifying and reporting hazards, incidents and 'near misses' within Riskware; and
f. participating in WHSMS improvement opportunities, such as participating in WHS inspections and completing ergonomic checklists.

Senior Executive and Executive Staff

(7) Members of the Senior Executive are classified as Officers under WHS legislation and the University has also assigned Officer responsibilities, associated with these legal obligations, to Executive Staff. Members of the Senior Executive and Executive Staff must ensure they maintain current WHS knowledge, that ACU manages its WHS risks and allocates sufficient resources to ensure the Work Health and Safety Management System is implemented, maintained and continuously improved and aligned with other business processes and University frameworks.

(8) Senior Executive and Executive Staff also:

a. demonstrate leadership by ensuring this Policy and WHS objectives and targets are established, aligned with the strategic direction of the University and are achievable;
b. are accountable for ensuring all significant WHS risks are identified and managed, and appropriate safe systems of work are regularly reviewed and maintained;

c. actively monitoring and evaluating health and safety management;
d. continuously learn about WHS matters, including compliance obligations, and respond to information about incidents, hazards, WHS risks and opportunities, and implement processes to manage these risks and continuously improve the WHSMS;
e. engage in two-way consultations with staff and others, including contractors, about WHS risk and initiate reviews of the WHSMS, every two years, to ensure that it is suitable, adequate and effective.

Campus Work Health and Safety Committees

(9) Campus WHS Committees represent staff and students and help to improve the University's WHSMS and the management of WHS risks and opportunities. They review incidents, injuries, near misses and hazards, and make recommendations about corrective actions to apply learnings from these events. Committee Members review WHS risk registers, conduct WHS inspections and actively participate in WHS consultations. Members are updated about the work the Work Health and Safety Management Committee is undertaking to improve health and safety outcomes.

Work Health and Safety Management Committee

(10) The Work Health and Safety Management Committee (WHSMC) ensures the WHSMS supports the University to continuously improve its health and safety performance. It also sets WHS direction, objectives and targets, and reviews the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the framework. The WHSMC ensures that other consultative forums support the University by engaging in two-way consultations about its WHSMS and risks. Members of the WHSMC facilitate a cooperative and collaborative approach to monitoring, reviewing and treating (controls) WHS risk, and continuously improving the WHSMS. Members also demonstrate leadership by ensuring that the framework is applied to those working and learning activities that they manage or influence.

Health and Safety Representatives

(11) Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) represent staff members within work groups and monitor ACU's WHSMS. They advocate for their workgroup and respond to WHS concerns and risks that may be faced by their work group.

Contractors

(12) Contractors engage in two-way consultations with ACU about hazards and associated risks and its WHSMS and apply safe systems of work. They familiarise themselves and comply with legislative requirements and formally assess and manage WHS risks.

Section 7 - Revisions made to this Policy

(13) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the current policy platform. Any later changes will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description
12 December 2017	Major	The Policy has been significantly simplified and articulates ACU's commitment to provide staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors with a welcoming, safe, healthy working and learning environment whenever they participate in University business within Australia or overseas.
20 January 2020	Minor	The policy has been aligned with International Standard ISO 45001. The scope of staff that are classified have also been reduced to reflect recent legal precedents.

(14) The University may make changes to this Policy from time to time to improve its effectiveness. If any staff member wishes to make any comments about this Policy, they should forward their suggestions to People and Capability.

Section 8 - Further Assistance

(15) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their nominated supervisor, who is responsible for the implementation and operation of the WHSMS within their work area. Should further information or advice be required, staff should visit Service Central.

Section 9 - Associated Information

(16) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources, please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	23rd February 2024
Review Date	30th April 2024
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	23rd February 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Responsible Manager	Angelle Laurence Chief People Officer
Enquiries Contact	Bernardine Lynch ER and Safety Committees and Policy Officer People and Capability