Injury Management and Rehabilitation Policy

Section 1 - Scope

(1) This Policy is an integral component of the University's Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS or framework) and applies to all staff that are directly or indirectly employed by Australian Catholic University.

(2) The Policy commitments outlined in this Policy apply to both work-related and non-work-related injuries.

Section 2 - Policy Commitments

(3) Australian Catholic University (ACU) is committed to providing its staff, students, volunteers, visitors and contractors with safe working and learning spaces, and Zero Harm.

(4) The University is also committed to supporting injured staff members to return to work in a timely and sustainable way, irrespective of whether the injury is work-related.

(5) Whenever any member of the ACU community sustains an injury or illness, ACU aims to identify the contributing factors to these workplace incidents, and develop treatments (controls) to reduce the risk of a similar incident occurring.

(6) ACU is also committed to ensuring that:

a. staff and their Nominated Supervisors are engaged in early intervention in work related injury and illness, and fully consulted about return to work and workers' compensation processes, and take ownership of the recovery from injuries and illnesses;
b. individual workplace-based rehabilitation plans, also known as 'Return to Work Plans and Injury Management Plans', are developed directly after work-related injuries or illnesses are reported which involve absences from work or intensive treatments;
c. Recovery at Work Plans/Return to Work Plans are developed, by Nominated Supervisors, whenever staff require support to sustainably return to work whenever they have sustained a personal illness, or injury, or other events have impacted upon their ability to work;
d. all Suitable Duties are provided, for injured staff, which are informed by the injured staff member's fitness and the availability of these duties, and the recommendations of relevant medical practitioners;
e. staff members and their Nominated Supervisors are consulted and engaged in Return to Work/Injury Management Plans;
f. staff are treated with the same level of respect whenever they participate in workplace rehabilitation and workers compensation processes;
g. Registers of Injuries (impacting upon staff) for each campus are maintained and downloaded from Riskware every quarter and published within the WHS SharePoint site;
h. Lost Time Injury (LTI) and workers compensation performance is measured, evaluated, reported benchmarked within the tertiary sector;

i. staff are made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the injury management and rehabilitation processes; and
j. the University's injury and rehabilitation management processes are integrated with its WHSMS and other processes, legislative and other requirements, and ACU's mission.

Non-Work-Related Illnesses and Injuries

(7) The University will be guided by the recommendations of treating practitioners whenever staff members require support to return to work in a sustainable and timely manner after sustaining an injury or illness that is not work related. These recommendations will be enablers of Return to Work Plans/Injury Management Plans, which are developed by Nominated Supervisors in collaboration with the impacted staff member.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

(8) Table 1: An Overview of Roles and Responsibilities for Injury Management and Rehabilitation.

Who	Roles and Responsibilities
Nominated Supervisors and Managers	Managers and Nominated Supervisors ensure that: • They are engaged in early intervention return to work processes and are committed to supporting staff members to remain at work, or return to work in a timely and sustainable way; • Familarise themselves with early intervention principles and return to work processes in the relevant home states of their staff members; • Ensure that People and Capability is promptly notified about injuries or illnesses, and these reports are logged and managed within riskware; • They are engaged in rehabilitation processes and lead the investigation and identification of contributing factors to incidents – documented within Riskware Action Plans; • Seriously consider alternative duties for injured staff members to facilitate timely return to work outcomes; • Ensure that medical clearances are obtained prior to injured staff members returning to work; • Actively engage staff members whenever they sustain non-work-related injuries and illnesses that may result in an extended absence from work; • Support staff members with resources such as RealTime Health Resources and EAP information; • Are informed by medical advice whenever they develop a Return to Work Plan to facilitate an injured staff members' remaining at, or returning to work, following an injury or illness that is not work related.
Injured Staff	• Promptly report work-related injuries and illnesses within Riskware and prioritise contacting Return to Work Coordinators, within People and Capability, about their workers compensation options; • Will request a workers compensation medical certificate during an initial consultation with their Nominated Treating Practitioner, whenever they sustain a work-related injury or illness and plan to lodge a workers compensation claim; • Participate and engage in the development and implementation of a Return to Work/Injury Management Plan; • Nominate a treating doctor who is authorised to participate in the development of the Injury Management Plan, including providing relevant information to the Insurer or Rehabilitation Coordinator; • Remain engaged in agreed return to work processes to facilitate a timely and sustainable return to work; and • Obtain medical clearance prior to returning to following a significant injury or illness.

Return to Work Coordinator(s), People and Capability	WHS Officers, within People and Capability, are responsible for Return to Work Coordination. They ensure that: • Injury management and rehabilitation processes are aligned with the WHSMS, compliance obligations and University processes; • Contribute to educating staff, Nominated Supervisors and others about return to work processes and the importance of timely notification and management of injuries and illnesses; • An appropriate Rehabilitation Provider or Consultant is appointed whenever they are required to facilitate a timely and sustainable return to work; • Workplace rehabilitation plans are developed in consultation with impacted staff members, their Nominated Supervisor;relevant rehabilitation providers, Nominated Treating Doctors and the workers compensation insurer to facilitate a collaborative and sustainable return to work; • The progress of individual rehabilitation plans is documented; and • The confidentiality of staff rehabilitation information and records.
Executive Staff and Members of the Senior Executive	• Ensure the contributing factors to injuries and illnesses are identified and that treatments are developed to reduce the risk that these incidents will reoccur; • Support People and Capability staff to educate and engage their Managers about gaining timely access to treatment and other services to facilitate better return to work outcomes; • Ensure that Managers and Nominated Supervisors identify staff, who have sustained non-work-related injuries and illnesses, are provided with support to facilitate good return to work,outcomes; • Will consider whether significant WHS risks, which are associated with injuries, should be placed on Organisational Unit Risk Registers; and • Ensure that injured staff are supported to return to work in a timely and sustainable way.
Vice-Chancellor and President	• Ensures the University supports staff members' early intervention and return to work, following an injury, in a sustainable and timely way; and • Ensures the contributing factors to injuries and illnesses are identified and learnings are applied to reduce the risk of injuries and contribute to continuous improvements to the University's WHSMS.

Section 4 - Definitions

Term	Explanation
Early Intervention	Early intervention involves starting to plan the worker's return to work as early as possible after a staff member has sustained an injury. Commencing return to work planning and offering support immediately, significantly improves their ability to recover quickly and return to their job safely.
Injury Management	The processes that support a timely, safe and durable return to work for staff members, following workplace injuries/illnesses.
Rehabilitation	A managed process involving early intervention with appropriate, adequate and timely services based on assessed needs and which is aimed at maintaining injured or ill employees in, or returning them to, suitable employment.
Rehabilitation/Return to Work/Injury Management Plan	The individual plan or program developed to the specific needs of the staff member in consultation with managers/supervisors, the University Rehabilitation/Return to Work Coordinator, the University Insurer, Rehabilitation Provider (where appointed), staff member and treating medical practitioner.
Suitable Duties	Duties for which the injured worker is medically suited whilst recovering. They will vary according to factors such as the type of injury sustained, medical restrictions, level of education or skills, pre-injury duties and hours of work. Suitable duties are meant to be a short term graduated arrangement that may include: • parts of the job the injured worker was doing before the injury; • the same job, but on reduced hours; and/or • different duties in the same or another section altogether.
Workplace Injury or Illness	Any injury or illness that arises in the course of, or in connection with, a staff member's work, and to which work is a substantial contributing factor.

Section 5 - Revisions made to this Policy

(9) The revision table includes revisions up until this document was migrated into the new policy system. Any later revisions will show in the Status and Details tab.

Date	Major, Minor or Editorial	Description
20 January 2020	Major	Broadened the policy's focus to include medium to long term non-workers compensation injuries and illnesses. The policy has also been more tightly aligned with other University processes and frameworks, including the WHSMS and risk management framework

(10) The University may make changes to this Policy from time to time. In this regard, staff members who wish to make any comments about this Policy may forward their suggestions to People and Capability.

Section 6 - Further Assistance

(11) Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their Nominated Supervisor who applies the WHSMS within their work area. Should further advice be required staff should contact Service Central.

Section 7 - Associated Information

(12) 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	19th December 2023
Review Date	30th April 2024
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor and President
Approval Date	19th December 2023
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