Health, Safety and Wellness Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The University of Queensland (UQ), regards the health, safety and wellness of staff and students as integral to the pursuit of knowledge and excellence and as an ethical, moral and legal responsibility. It is unacceptable for people to be harmed in the course of their endeavours at UQ – effective management of safety and compliance risks are non-negotiable under the Senate approved Risk Appetite Statement.

(2) UQ encourages innovation and prudent investment in strategies to protect the health, safety and wellness of UQ workers and students with a focus on the prevention of high risk. UQ is dedicated to continuous improvement in the prevention of incidents which may cause injuries and illness through an effective health and safety management system and a proactive health, safety and wellness culture. Health and safety management at UQ is an enabling management function overseen by the University Senior Executive Team and the Chief Operating Officer. It is undertaken by UQ workers at all levels of UQ through all aspects of its operations.

(3) The purpose of this Policy is to establish UQ's overall health, safety and wellness objectives and demonstrate the Senate's and the Vice-Chancellor and President's commitment to continual improvement of UQ's health and safety performance and safety culture.

(4) This Policy applies to all staff, students, visitors, controlled entities, contractors and volunteers across all University operations and sites. For the purposes of this Policy, higher degree by research (HDR) students hold equivalent responsibilities to those of workers under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Legislative Context

(5) UQ is legally obliged under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 to comply with duties to provide, as far as reasonably practicable, a healthy and safe workplace. It is self-insured for workers compensation under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 and is subject to strict licensing conditions, including work health and safety.

Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

Health, Safety and Wellness Principles

(6) UQ's health, safety and wellness principles are:

a. Health, safety and wellness is an ethical, moral and legal responsibility.
b. Management is accountable for driving and demonstrating health, safety and wellness in the workplace.
c. It is unacceptable for people to be harmed in the course of their endeavours at UQ.
d. Leadership commitment on the health, safety and wellness of UQ workers and students is expected and essential.

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Health, Safety and Wellness Objectives

(7) UQ's Health, Safety and Wellness objectives are to provide for, and support, the continual improvement of a safe working, research, teaching and learning environment for UQ workers, students and others, and to strive for the prevention of injury and illness in these endeavours. To demonstrate its commitment to these objectives, UQ will:

a. Establish and implement a UQ Health, Safety and Wellness Strategy to guide the delivery of the objectives.
b. Establish UQ's Health, Safety and Wellness Goals to support continual improvement aimed at the prevention of injury and illness and the promotion of well-being at UQ.
c. Maintain a health and safety management system in accordance with relevant legislative and self-insurance licence conditions, and provide adequate resources as determined by the nature and scale of UQ's activities.
d. Maintain work health and safety risk management processes that are proportionate, evidence informed and aligned with the Risk Appetite Statement approved by the Senate.
e. Emphasise that leaders at all levels will demonstrate, through their actions, their accountability and commitment to the health, safety and wellness of our staff and students.
f. Ensure people are trained and competent, and empower them to take personal responsibility for their own wellbeing and the safety of others.
g. Encourage open consultation, collaboration and dissemination of safety information, including the communication of this Policy and its supporting procedures and guidelines to all UQ workers, students and contractors.
h. Encourage and support staff and students to continually challenge the environment in which they work and participate in the safe planning of their work, research, teaching and learning activities.
i. Engage with suppliers and contractors who have robust health, safety and wellness principles and goals.
j. Effectively communicate our health, safety and wellness standards and expectations to all visitors, partners, contractors, volunteers and other relevant parties.
k. Review incidents in a constructive and proportionate way to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.
l. Recognise positive health, safety and wellness outcomes and innovation as strong indicators of proactive performance and safety culture.
m. Provide meaningful, useful information and assurance to senior management on health, safety and wellness performance.
n. Periodically review this Policy and the work health and safety management system to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to the organisation.

Section 3 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

Officer Due Diligence Duties

(8) Members of the senior governance and management teams may be Officers according to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, depending on the nature of their role, and will have the associated work health and safety due diligence duties.

Senate

(9) The Senate is UQ's governing body and is accountable for the effective and efficient governance of UQ. Senate is the approval authority for UQ's Health, Safety and Wellness Policy.

Vice-Chancellor and President

(10) The Vice-Chancellor and President is the Chief Executive Officer, and will usually be classified as an Officer under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Senate Risk and Audit Committee (SRAC)

(11) The Senate Risk and Audit Committee exercises oversight of UQ's governance, risk and compliance frameworks including policies, procedures, information systems and systems of internal control surrounding key HSW and operational processes.

University Senior Executive Team (USET)

(12) The University Senior Executive Team provides assurance to the Vice-Chancellor and President and SRAC on the effectiveness of UQ's risk management, compliance frameworks and practices and on significant risk and compliance issues. USET provides management oversight of work health, safety and wellness at UQ.

Heads of Organisational Units

(13) Heads of Organisational Units are responsible for ensuring that UQ complies with its health and safety legislative obligations. They are also responsible for championing the adoption of health, safety and wellness practices across all areas of UQ. Specific health, safety and wellness responsibilities of Senior Managers are detailed in the Health and Safety Responsibilities Procedure.

Health, Safety and Wellness Division (HSW Division)

(14) The Health, Safety and Wellness Division provides overall direction, co-ordination and advice to UQ on health, safety and wellness matters, to effectively manage HSW Division risk and minimise injury and illness of our people during their teaching, learning research and related activities.

Local Managers and Supervisors

(15) Local managers and supervisors who report to heads of organisational units have a responsibility to ensure the implementation, maintenance and monitoring of an effective system for managing work health, safety and wellness within their local areas of responsibility. Specific HSW Division responsibilities of local managers and supervisors are detailed in the Health and Safety Responsibilities Procedure. For the purposes of this Policy, the Principal Advisor is considered to be the supervisor of higher degree by research (HDR) students as outlined in the Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Procedure.

UQ Workers

(16) All UQ workers have specific responsibilities for ensuring health and safety, based on the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, related regulations and legislation, (and UQ policies and procedures relevant to the activities undertaken). Specific HSW Division responsibilities of workers are dependent on their role within UQ – refer to the Health and Safety Responsibilities Procedure. For the purposes of this Policy, the responsibilities and duties of HDR students are equivalent to those of workers as defined under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. All UQ workers have a responsibility to promote health, safety and wellness in the workplace.

Others

(17) 'Others' include course work students and visitors who have obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. These include complying with this Policy and any other reasonable instruction of UQ, taking reasonable care for their own, and of other persons, health and safety.

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Section 4 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(18) UQ will undertake monitoring and review activities to appropriate levels to assess and ensure effective and efficient health, safety and wellness management.

Organisational Unit Line Management

(19) Managers and supervisors will monitor and review their operational activities, risks and controls to ensure effective health and safety management, and to improve compliance and performance. Monitoring and reviews performed at this level will be facilitated by local HSW Division staff and is generally embedded in the routine processes, procedures and activities of front-line operating management.

Health, Safety and Wellness Division (HSW Division)

(20) The Health, Safety and Wellness Division will monitor and review the compliance practices and health and safety management performance across UQ to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the related controls including policies and procedures.

(21) The Health, Safety and Wellness Division will provide ongoing communication and consultation among the Faculties, Institutes and central support services divisions to ensure effective and efficient monitoring and reviews at each level.

Section 5 - Recording and Reporting

(22) Reporting and recording of incidents is recognised as an important component in effectively preventing harm. UQ encourages all people to challenge the environment in which they work through open communication and reporting. Incident reporting is captured through UQSafe. All incidents are reviewed and followed up at the local level to ensure the welfare of the injured/ill person is considered and that the risk of further harm is mitigated.

(23) The Health, Safety and Wellness Division provides the resources to record the transactions, activities and results associated with this Policy. The Health, Safety and Wellness Division will also provide the relevant information and reports to Senior Management and to USET to demonstrate and provide assurance that the objectives and outcomes outlined in this Policy are being achieved.

(24) Significant matters will be reported in a timely manner to UQ Senior Management, and in turn to the UQ Senate if appropriate.

Section 6 - Appendix

Definitions

Term	Definition
Heads of Organisational Units	For the purposes of this Policy, these roles provide leadership and direction of their portfolios (faculties, schools, institutes, divisions, companies [controlled entities], corporate functions etc).
Local managers and supervisors	For the purposes of this Policy, these roles report to the heads of organisational units and are intended to include all roles that manage groups of people or functional teams across UQ.
Principal Advisors	Approved UQ staff members who take primary academic responsibility for the HDR candidate during their candidature. The Eligibility and Role of Higher Degree by Research Advisors Policy details the academic role, accountabilities and eligibility for Principal Advisors.

Term	Definition
Wellness	This is a dynamic and holistic concept that is facilitated by an individual becoming aware of and actively working towards and maintaining, a healthy and fulfilling life. Wellness encompasses, but is not limited to, physical health, psychological, social and emotional wellbeing, as well as positive lifestyle and environmental factors. The UQ Wellness program supports and promotes the health and wellbeing of the UQ community and is underpinned by the four key focus areas of physical health, psychological wellbeing, lifestyle factors and organisational engagement.

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