Work Off-Campus and Fieldwork Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure outlines The University of Queensland's (UQ) requirements for work off-campus and fieldwork (WOC/FW) being undertaken by UQ workers and students across all UQ operations, including controlled entities (as appropriate). WOC/FW are activities relating to research, teaching, learning, instruction or other activities, which takes place at locations that are not registered as UQ sites. UQ frequently engages in WOC/FW which is diverse in nature and may take place in unfamiliar surroundings or uncontrolled environments. The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure the health, safety and well-being of WOC/FW participants, and compliance with relevant legislative requirements.

(2) The objective of this Procedure is to:

a. ensure adequate planning and health and safety risk management of WOC/FW;
b. ensure a communication and emergency plan is developed and implemented;
c. ensure a communication plan is developed and disseminated to relevant stakeholders.

(3) This Procedure applies to all UQ workers and students participating in WOC/FW/FW activities, including supervisors and senior officers who have responsibilities to ensure health and safety.

(4) UQ's legislative obligations for managing workers safety are provided under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act). UQ must manage the risks to health and safety of a worker associated with remote or isolated work in accordance requirements of the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.

Scope

(5) The scope of this Procedure relates to WOC/FW (as defined in section 7 'Appendix') which is reasonably considered at a medium or high health and safety risk level. The scope of this Procedure does not apply to WOC/FW considered a low risk to health and safety.

(6) To assist in considering whether this Procedure is applicable, refer to examples which are detailed on the 'Work off-campus and fieldwork' webpage.

Out of Scope

(7) UQ travel is an approved journey that includes either a flight or overnight accommodation away from a UQ traveller's normal place of work.

(8) For UQ work activities which satisfy this condition, UQ travellers, arrangers and approvers must familiarise themselves with the University's Travel Policy and the content on the Travel website, and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

(9) Some WOC/FW activities may have an increased risk of acquisition or transmission of vaccine preventable diseases (VPD), UQ requires all persons classified as UQ workers to be immunised and/or screened prior to commencing UQ work tasks that involve increased risk of exposure to VPDs. For more information refer to Vaccinations and Immunisation Procedure.

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(10) This Procedure relates to UQ led WOC/FW activities. Any UQ participant involved in non-UQ-led WOC/FW activities, must ensure that appropriate risk management is undertaken in accordance with Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure and Travel Policy, including emergency preparedness.

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(11) The following requirements apply to all UQ staff and students including controlled entities. Engaging or participating in WOC/FW at UQ requires:

a. completion of UQ Field Work Safety Training module (module for staff and HDR students; module for undergraduate students, affiliates, controlled entities, volunteers and other UQ workers);
b. development of a risk assessment in UQSafe. Staff of UQ's controlled entities are also required to access and use UQSafe (as appropriate);
c. development of a WOC/FW plan in UQSafe if you are conducting work at a location that is not a UQ campus or recognised site;
d. development of a Communication and Emergency Plan; and
e. following any other requirements for UQ approved travel as outlined in Travel Policy.

Section 3 - Key Requirements

Training

(12) UQ Field work safety training module has been developed to provide UQ workers with an overview of fieldwork safety at UQ. This is required training for all UQ workers participating in field work activities as part of their role.

Risk Assessment

(13) Risk assessment is the documented process that forms part of the University's Risk Management procedure. Risk assessment is the approach which is used in the prevention of harm by identifying hazards, assessing and controlling the risks and monitoring the control measures. Where the current risk level requires attention or immediate action, proposed controls are required to be implemented to reduce the risk as low as reasonably practicable.

(14) In accordance with Health and Safety Risk Management Procedure, a Health and Safety Risk Assessment must be completed and approved for WOC/FW within the scope of this Procedure. The risk assessment must include all activities that constitute the WOC/FW, including basic activities and specific activities which are detailed in safe work procedures. Risk assessments are to be completed in UQSafe.

(15) Where the specific activities that constitute the WOC/FW are complex, or have no safe work procedures documented, a risk assessment is required for that specific activity. This should be identified during the consultation process when establishing the context of the WOC/FW and detailed in the risk assessment descriptive fields.

(16) The following details the risk management process in relation to WOC/FW considerations when conducting a risk assessment:

Context and Consultation

(17) The first step in the risk management process is to define the context of the WOC/FW. Consultation should occur between supervisors, WOC/FW leaders/participants, and if required Health and Safety Representatives, Work Health and Safety Coordinator, HSW Division, Senior officers and other relevant experts, giving due consideration to:

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a. the work processes, practices, activities, tasks that will be carried out;
b. the plant, equipment and materials that will be utilised during the work;
c. how hazards/risks may interact with one another, e.g., one activity may affect the risks in another;
d. the people involved in carrying out the proposed work processes, and in what capacity;
e. whether the WOC/FW participants involved are sufficiently competent, skilled, and experienced;
f. the location and environmental considerations; and
g. emergency response and rescue.

(18) Consultation may also extend to suppliers or manufacturers of plant, equipment or materials to be used during WOC/FW.

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

(19) Once the context of the work has been defined and consultation has occurred, the next process is to complete the risk assessment following these basic steps:

a. Identify the hazards associated with work being conducted off-campus and the location.
b. Assess the risks associated with the identified hazards – who might be harmed, and how?
c. Identify, determine and document appropriate control measures to minimise the risk and prevent harm.
d. Ensure adequate resourcing, procedures, supervision and training are in place to effectively implement the control measures.

Risk Controls

(20) During WOC/FW, all participants must ensure that controls measures are implemented and monitored. WOC/FW leaders and participants should limit work to the approved, specified activities detailed in the WOC/FW plan and risk assessment. In the event the nature of the work changes, new risks are introduced, or a WOC/FW plan proves inappropriate, the WOC/FW leader and participants should consult with the supervisor.

(21) In consultation with the supervisor, the WOC/FW leader and participants should update WOC/FW plan and risk assessment (by suitable means) and ensure emergency procedures, communication plans and equipment in place remain relevant and effective for the changes to the work.

Work Off-campus and Fieldwork Plan (WOC/FW Plan)

(22) When planning work-off campus, a WOC/FW plan must be completed and approved in UQSafe. The WOC/FW plan must include all relevant information relating to the WOC/FW including travel, location/s (including GPS coordinates for all locations where field work will be conducted), participants, communication and emergency plan, safe work procedures and health, safety and wellness (HSW) risk assessment. The extent of the planning and detail in the WOC/FW plan should be proportionate to the complexity and potentially hazardous nature of the work. Expert advice should be sought when considering appropriate risk controls.

(23) The supervisor of the WOC/FW leader must review and approve the WOC/FW plan prior to the commencement of work. Peer review within UQSafe should be utilised, as required, to ensure review by a competent field worker or participants if the supervisor requires additional feedback.

(24) Once approved, the WOC/FW leader must ensure the distribution of the approved WOC/FW plan to all WOC/FW participants and the nominated WOC/FW communications person, where applicable. The WOC/FW leader is responsible to communicate any changes affecting the health and safety of participants in instances where changes are made to the WOC/FW plan.

(25) The WOC/FW plan must be completed in UQSafe.

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Development of a Communication and Emergency Plan

(26) Depending on the nature of the work, the WOC/FW leader must ensure adequate information is provided to all stakeholders for review, emergency preparedness and response. This must include but is not limited to clients, location contacts, local police, park rangers, security or permit issuers.

(27) The communication section details the agreed schedule of contact that the WOC/FW leader will have with the designated WOC/FW communications person while the WOC/FW is in progress. This acts as a proactive system for monitoring the location of participants.

(28) The emergency section details local emergency services and contact information. Sufficient information must be provided so that emergency services can be directed to the location of participants.

(29) Clear and effective communications is an essential part for the prevention, monitoring and response to emergencies.

(30) The communication and emergency plan is to be completed either in the UQSafe WOC/FW plan or an approved template and attached separately to the WOC/FW plan. The plan should clearly state the escalating nature of contact with defined timeframes in the event of a failure to check in or an overdue response with the WOC/FW leader.

Emergency plan activation

(31) In the event that the WOC/FW leader fails to make contact with the designated WOC/FW Communications person within a reasonable and agreed to timeframe, the emergency plan should be activated.

(32) The conditions for which the emergency plan will be activated should be discussed by the WOC/FW leader and the WOC/FW Communications person prior to departure. The detail is to be recorded in the communication and emergency plan.

(33) See the Incident Management Procedure for additional information.

Health Conditions Affecting Work Off-campus or Field Work Participation

(34) Work off-campus or field work participants with a health condition that may impact on the health, safety or wellness of themselves or others, must advise their WOC/FW leader of the relevant medical management plan after discussion with a medical practitioner.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

(35) Staff at all levels at UQ have specific responsibilities for ensuring health and safety. Senior officers, managers, and supervisors have duties under relevant legislation to exercise due diligence to ensure the health and safety of participants engaged in work-off campus. WOC/FW participants have duties relating to workers under relevant legislation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and for the health and safety of other persons.

(36) Specific health and safety responsibilities for work off-campus at UQ are detailed below.

Senior Management

(37) Acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters in relation to proposed WOC/FW.

(38) Ensure adequate resources have been allocated for carrying out the work in accordance with approved WOC/FW plans and risk assessments.

(39) Ensure appropriate processes are in place for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards and risks and responding in a timely manner to that information.

(40) Review the performance of supervisors, staff and students with regard to their health and safety responsibilities for work off-campus.

(41) Ensure that appropriate approvals have been granted, and records maintained, relating to work off-campus.

Supervisors

(42) Supervise the development of WOC/FW plans and risk assessment for the WOC/FW.

(43) The person with the overall authority to approve WOC/FW plans. This person would typically be the supervisor of the WOC/FW leader.

(44) Ensure adequate information is provided to all stakeholders for review and emergency preparedness and response.

(45) Approve WOC/FW plans and risk assessment.

(46) Ensure that appropriate emergency procedures and equipment are in place for WOC/FW.

(47) Ensure that WOC/FW plans and risk assessments are updated if the nature of the work changes and new health and safety risks are introduced or a WOC/FW plan proves insufficient.

(48) Provide appropriate induction and training for WOC/FW participants.

(49) Ensure the provision, maintenance and proper use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) associated with WOC/FW.

(50) Provide appropriate supervision (appoint WOC/FW leader) to ensure that all WOC/FW participants comply with the requirements of the WOC/FW plan and risk assessment.

(51) Ensure that timely reporting and appropriate corrective action is taken for all incidents involving WOC/FW participants.

WOC/FW Leader

(52) This person must be physically present during WOC/FW for the duration of the trip.

(53) The person authorised to lead the WOC/FW plan. This person would be directing the activities of WOC/FW participants.

(54) This person must be assigned prior to the work commencing.

(55) The person at the WOC/FW location who is appointed by the supervisor to be responsible for day to day supervision of WOC/FW participants.

(56) Has the required authority off campus to decide on whether activities are safe to proceed based on risk assessments.

(57) The WOC/FW leader reports to the supervisor or senior officer where relevant.

(58) Determines the required number of first aid personnel required for the trip. The WOC/FW leader would typically not fulfill this role in emergencies to ensure they maintain control of the situation/s.

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WOC/FW Participants

(59) Participate in the development of WOC/FW plans, risk assessment and obtain approval from the supervisor prior to the commencement of work.

(60) Participate in WOC/FW induction and training programs, as instructed by the supervisor.

(61) Comply with legislative requirements and the University's policies and procedures.

(62) Implement risk control measures as described in the risk assessment.

(63) Limit WOC/FW to the approved, specified activities detailed in the WOC/FW plan and risk assessment.

(64) Consult with the supervisor if the nature of the work changes and new risks are introduced or a WOC/FW plan proves inadequate.

(65) Update WOC/FW plans and risk assessment if the nature of the work off-campus changes.

(66) Ensure that emergency procedures, communication plans and equipment are in place for work off-campus.

(67) Report any injury, illness or near-miss event to the supervisor and UQSafe.

(68) Advise their supervisor of any relevant medical management plan required to support a health condition.

(69) Follows reasonable safety instructions from WOC/FW leader.

(70) Complies with risk assessment and WOC/FW requirements.

WOC/FW Communications Person

(71) Nominated UQ representative who does not participate in the WOC/FW activities.

(72) The nominated emergency contact at the University (within the relevant Faculty/Institute/Division) should be available at all times, and have access to the WOC/FW plan, including the names, locations and contact details of all participants.

(73) Activate the emergency plan if required.

(74) The WOC/FW communication person must agree to take on this role as part of consultation with the supervisor and WOC/FW leader.

WOC/FW First Aider/s

(75) Administer first aid wherever it may be required.

(76) Monitor the adequacy of first aid kit for the duration of the WOC/FW

(77) Ensuring the location of first aid kits

(78) Record use of its item.

(79) Replenish items as required.

(80) Arrange for additional security, ambulance or medical assistance where required;

(81) Maintain records of all injuries and treatments under health records legislation (e.g. name, address and contact

details, nature of the problem, treatment and possible diagnosis, family history) and ensuring an incident report on UQSafe has been completed.

(82) Complete the injury report in UQSafe if the injured party/parties are unable to complete the report themselves.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(83) Local Health, Safety and Wellness Managers and Work Health and Safety Coordinators may review and provide feedback on WOC/FW plans and associated health and safety risk assessments.

(84) The HSW Division will review this Procedure as required to ensure that it remains accurate and relevant to the safety management of contractors UQ.

(85) Compliance with this Procedure may be subject to internal and external audits.

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

(86) Health and Safety Incident and Hazard Reporting Procedure outlines the requirement for notifying health and safety incidents and hazards. Reporting and recording incidents are an important component in hazard control, risk management and incident prevention. All health and safety incidents that occur where work is undertaken must be reported via UQSafe.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions

Term	Definition
Communication and Emergency Plan	The agreed schedule of contact the WOC/FW leader has with the designated communications person, while the WOC/FW is in progress and the agreed response in the event the emergency plan is activated.
HSW Division	Health, Safety and Wellness Division of The University of Queensland.
PPE	Personal protective equipment (PPE) is anything a worker uses or wears to keep them healthy and safe.
Reasonably considered	A sound and sensible judgment that a reasonable person would consider in the circumstance, taking all factors into account.
Risk	The possibility that harm (injury, illness or death) might occur when exposed to a hazard.
Risk Assessment	May refer to one or multiple health and safety risk assessments.
UQ Senior Management	Executive Deans, Heads of Schools and Directors of Institutes and major centres and the Directors of central services and administrative divisions.
UQ Workers	For the purposes of this Procedure includes: 1. Staff – continuing, fixed-term, research (contingent funded) and casual staff; 2. Contractors, subcontractors and consultants; 3. Visiting academics and researchers; 4. Affiliates – academic title holders, visiting academics, emeritus professors, adjunct and honorary titleholders, industry fellows and conjoint appointments; and 5. Higher degree by research students.

Term	Definition
Work off-campus and fieldwork (WOC/FW)	Activities relating to research, teaching, learning, instruction or other activities, which takes place at locations that are not registered as UQ sites. While the location of WOC/FW may not be a registered UQ site, it is legally a workplace. UQ frequently engages in WOC/FW which is diverse in nature and may take place in unfamiliar surroundings or uncontrolled environments.
WOC/FW participants	UQ workers, students and volunteers participating in work off-campus or fieldwork.
Workplace	The WOC/FW location where work is being conducted is recognised as a workplace under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) or relevant legislation.

Status and Details

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