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| C:\Users\susanb\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Word\PRIMARY_A_Vertical_Housed_RGB.PNG | health & safetyWORKING Alone REQUIREMENTS |

# 1 Purpose

To ensure the health and safety of employees, students and others working alone in workplaces under the management or control of The University of Melbourne.

# 2 scope

This requirement applies to all employees, students, contractors and others at workplaces under the management or control of the University of Melbourne.

This requirement does not include field work and/or off campus travel.

# 3 definitions

**Working alone:**

Persons who are working by themselves and are unable to get immediate assistance from colleagues or other people. Examples include, but are not limited to:

* employees or students conducting research in a University building on the weekend
* employees working alone in an office area after hours
* contractors undertaking emergency repairs out of hours
* University councillor interviewing a client out of hours

# 4 REQUIREMENTS

## 4.1 Risk assessments

Employees and students shall not work alone without approval from the relevant manager/supervisor.

The manager/supervisor shall ensure that all working alone activities are subject to a risk assessment, which includes the activity undertaken, the competency and training of employees and/or students, possible emergency situations that may arise and the location. Approval shall only be provided following the risk assessment.

Risk assessments are entered and stored into the Enterprise Risk Management System (ERMS). A University username and password is required to access ERMS via the Staff Hub.

Hard copy risk assessment forms are available where access to ERMS is not available. These can later be transposed to ERMS.

The manager/supervisor shall record/document that all controls have been completed and working alone is approved. This approval can be documented by completing the [Health & Safety: Working alone form](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0018/2010762/health-and-safety-working-alone-form.docx) or other equivalent process.

For more information refer to the [Health & Safety: Working alone guidance](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/2010767/health-and-safety-working-alone-guidance.docx).

For long term projects, where the activity is similar for the term of the project, the risk assessment may be completed for a 12 month period. A review at the end of the 12 months must take place to ensure that the controls implemented are effective and still relevant.

## 4.2 University controlled areas

The Head of School/Division shall ensure that University controlled areas where working alone can occur will include the following:

* scheduled regular workplace inspections (refer to [Health & Safety: Workplace monitoring and inspection requirements](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/2110278/workplace-monitoring-and-inspection-requirements.docx) for more information):
* recorded (such as logbook, white board, electronic applications) name, location, time and date of entry;
* access to a phone at all times;
* emergency procedures that consider working alone;
* procedures for securing access arrangements, such as keeping corridors locked, switching on lights; and
* training and instruction (including local induction) for employees, students and others.

The requirement for duress alarms when working alone, such as animal houses or in plant facilities should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The manager/supervisor shall ensure that:

* activities have a documented risk assessment and that no activities, where the residual risks are assessed as high or extreme, are undertaken alone; and
* control measures shall be adequate to ensure the risk of activities are a medium or low risk.

## 4.3 Unsupervised student areas

For areas open to students working alone and without supervision the following should occur:

* the area assessed for security camera operation;
* the access to the area should be in the form of a swipe/proximity card or controlled key access;
* the provision of a swipe card or key; and
* the students advised of the appropriate safety and security procedures, such as:
* contacting Security;
* initiating emergency procedures;
* reporting conditions that may give rise to dangerous or life-threatening situations to their manager/supervisor; and
* other responsibilities.

## 4.4 High to extreme risk activities

Work cannot occur where the residual risk for the activity is high or extreme. Activities that can be suitably controlled, where the residual risk is medium or below, can be undertaken alone.

The following list of high to extreme risk activities cannot be undertaken in isolation irrespective of the controls and the residual risk:

* operating plant or equipment capable of inflicting serious injury, such as chainsaws, firearms, lathes and power saws;
* handing venomous reptiles, insects, arthropods or fish;
* working with or near, highly toxic or corrosive substances where there is a significant risk of exposure to the substances, considering the volume used;
* using apparatus that could result in explosion, implosion, or the release or high energy fragments or significant amounts of toxic or environmentally damaging hazardous material;
* climbing high towers or high ladders;
* working with exposed energized electrical or electronic systems voltages exceeding 50 V; and
* working in environments not at atmospheric pressure.

# 5 References

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)

[Health & Safety: Workplace monitoring and inspection requirements](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0003/2110278/workplace-monitoring-and-inspection-requirements.docx)

Enterprise Risk Management System (accessed via [Staff Hub](https://staff.unimelb.edu.au/))

# 6 Responsibilities

Head of School/Division

Manager/supervisor

# 7 Associate documentation

## 7.1 Processes

Nil

## 7.2 Forms

[Health & Safety: Working alone](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0018/2010762/health-and-safety-working-alone-form.docx%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

## 7.3 Guidance

[Health & Safety: Working alone guidance](https://safety.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/2010767/health-and-safety-working-alone-guidance.docx)