

Working after hours or in isolation (Students)

1. Overview

1.1. Introduction and Scope of this Guideline

The University recognises that on some occasions, it is necessary for students to work on campus outside of normal operating/working hours. This policy should be adopted to ensure adequate controls are in place during these situations. It also identifies tasks that should not be undertaken by students working outside normal operating/working hours or in isolation.

1.2. Who should read and use this Guideline

- Students undertaking research projects in laboratories that involve practices, procedures or the use of substances that could harm the health and safety of students or staff involved in the projects;
- Academic supervisors of students who have a responsibility for safeguarding the occupational health and safety of students in their charge;
- Heads of Schools and Centres who have a responsibility for implementing and maintaining occupational health and safety standards and practices in laboratories and teaching facilities under their control.

1.3. Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors: all supervisors who allow students after hours access to designated laboratories, workshops or other locations where designated high risk procedures are performed, are responsible for the implementation of this policy for that student. This role extends to:

- determining whether the work to be completed after hours is (or should be) a designated high risk procedure;
- taking all practicable measures to ensure that no designated high risk procedure is undertaken by anyone working alone after hours;
- maintaining a record of all occasions (and people) for which (and whom) they authorise the performance of designated high risk procedures after hours;
- determining whether the work to be completed after hours requires special safety precautions, such as having 2 people in the room when a particular procedure is carried out, or having supervision by a member of staff;
- determining the types of work task which are not permitted at all after hours.

Students: are responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure their own safety and security when working after hours and shall follow the working after hours procedure. Students working after hours in a high risk procedure:

- must have completed appropriate induction training, including emergency evacuation and other necessary emergency procedures;

- must obtain their supervisor's authorisation to perform any designated high risk procedures (not applicable to people intending to work alone);
- must not perform any designated high risk procedures if working alone;
- must inform security staff of their presence in that location, and the expected duration of their work there;
- must establish their identity when requested by security staff by showing their student card;
- must lodge their arrival into a building where high risk activities are to be performed.

2. Description

2.1. Managing after hours work

When working after hours, the risks of some hazards may be increased due to the reduction in immediate assistance in the event of an accident or incident. There may be a reduced presence of trained emergency personnel during these hours; these include: first aid officers, floor wardens, staff of the OH&S Unit or the University Health Service.

Australian Standard AS2243.1:2005 Safety in Laboratories – Planning and Operational Aspects states that where the risk assessment identifies high risk, these tasks shall not be undertaken by personnel working in isolation. Examples of high risk activities include:

- Operating equipment or machinery, including workshop machinery, capable of inflicting serious injury, such as chainsaws, firearms, lathes and power saws.
- Handling venomous reptiles, insects, arthropods or fish.
- Working with large animals other than for the purpose of feeding or observation.
- Working with, or near, toxic or corrosive substances where there is a significant risk of exposure to the substance, taking into account the volume used.
- Using apparatus that could result in explosion, implosion, or the release of high energy fragments or significant amounts of toxic or environmentally damaging hazardous material.
- Climbing towers or high ladders.
- Working with exposed energized electrical or electronic systems with nominal voltages exceeding 50 V a.c. or 120 V ripple-free d.c. (NOTE: These limits are for dry, indoor conditions and a more conservative approach should be taken in other conditions.)
- Working with radionuclides requiring a high level laboratory in accordance with AS 2243.4 for Australia and the National Radiation Laboratory Code of safe practice for the use of unsealed radioactive materials.
- Working with microorganisms of Risk Group 3 and higher, or which require the use of a Containment Level 3 facility or higher containment level in accordance with AS 2243.3.
- Operating lasers of Class 3 and above [except where fully enclosed and approved by the UQ Radiation Safety Adviser].
- Working in environments not at atmospheric pressure where there is a risk of low oxygen or a toxic atmosphere.

If any of these **designated high risk activities** are conducted outside of normal working hours, the steps listed below **MUST** be followed:

2.1.1. Risk assessment.

A risk assessment must be conducted for all after hours work involving high risk activities (see list above) and this must be done BEFORE the work can commence. Risk assessments should be conducted on the OH&S risk assessment database at www.risk.admin.uq.edu.au. The risk assessment should accompany the form entitled '*Working After Hours Form – Students*' (*Appendix A*) and be submitted to the supervisor and approved prior to any work commencing.

2.1.2. Competency of student assessed

The supervisor is responsible for determining that the student undertaking after hours work is competent to undertake that work. The supervisor should recognise this via authorisation on the '*Working After Hours Form – Students*' (Appendix A).

2.1.3. Approval by academic supervisor

Students are required to obtain **written** approval to undertake after hours work from their supervisor prior to commencing work. Copies of the '*Working After Hours Form – Students*' (Appendix A) should be kept by the student and the supervisor.

2.1.4. Notification to Security of accessing a building after hours

For all high risk activities which have been approved by the supervisor, the student should notify UQ Security of their name, student number, arrival time and anticipated departure time. Please call the UQ Security non-emergency phone number - 336 51234

2.1.5. Definitions

After hours: Any time between the hours of 6pm and 8am Monday to Friday, all hours of public holidays and all hours Saturday and Sunday.

Isolation: In locations remote from others.

Designated laboratory or workshop: A laboratory, workshop or other such area in which there are chemical, biological, radioactive, electrical, mechanical or other hazards which present substantially greater risk than is normally present on campus. These areas could also be determined by the hazard identification and risk assessment procedure, or designated as such by the supervisor.

Designated high risk procedures: work procedures presenting a substantially greater than normal risk. This is determined in accordance with the hazard identification and risk assessment process and/or is listed in Section 2.1 of this policy.

Supervisor: The staff member responsible for directing, monitoring, and supervising the student's conduct in the laboratory or workshop. This person may also be a member of the advisory team (for research higher degree candidates) or the supervisor of a student's research project (for undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework students).



Appendix A

Working After Hours Form – Students

STUDENT NAME:
 STUDENT NUMBER:
 SCHOOL/INSTITUTE:
 CONTACT # (home): (mobile):

WHO TO CONTACT IN EMERGENCY:
 NAME: CONTACT #:

To be completed by student (Please circle appropriate response where necessary)

ACCESS DATE/S:
 AREA REQUIRED AND ROOM NUMBERS:
 HAZARDS LIKELY TO BE ENCOUNTERED:

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THIS AREA & EQUIPMENT AND HAZARDS PRESENT IN THE AREA?
 Yes No

HAS THE RISK ASSESSMENT BEEN COMPLETED & ATTACHED?
www.risk.admin.uq.edu.au
 Yes No

DO YOU HAVE ANY MEDICAL CONDITIONS WHICH MIGHT PUT YOU AT ADDITIONAL RISK?
 Yes No

ARE YOU TRAINED IN AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY PROCEDURES?
 Yes No

WILL YOU HAVE ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION MEANS e.g. mobile phone or land line?
 Yes No

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE DATE:

To be completed by supervisor (Please circle appropriate response where necessary)

DOES THIS STUDENT HAVE A DEMONSTRATED LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY TO WORK IN THE AREA(S) NOMINATED AND WITH THE EQUIPMENT LISTED ABOVE UNSUPERVISED?
 Yes No

HAVE THE HAZARDS IDENTIFIED IN THE RISK ASSESSMENT BEEN CONTROLLED?
 Yes No

DO YOU APPROVE THIS WORK TO PROCEED AFTER HOURS?
 Yes No

SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND SIGNATURE: DATE: