



THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

# SAFETY AND HEALTH HANDBOOK

This Handbook is to be read in conjunction with the UWA Safety & Health Office guidelines as published at <http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au>, and with such additional guidelines as may be provided to staff and users of the Child Study Centre and Robin Winkler Clinic.

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## 1. General Policy Statement on Safety and Health Management

The School of Psychology is committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all staff, students, and visitors to the School and, as far as reasonably practicable, for any other person who may be affected by School operations. The School undertakes to provide information, instruction, training and supervision as necessary to achieve these ends.

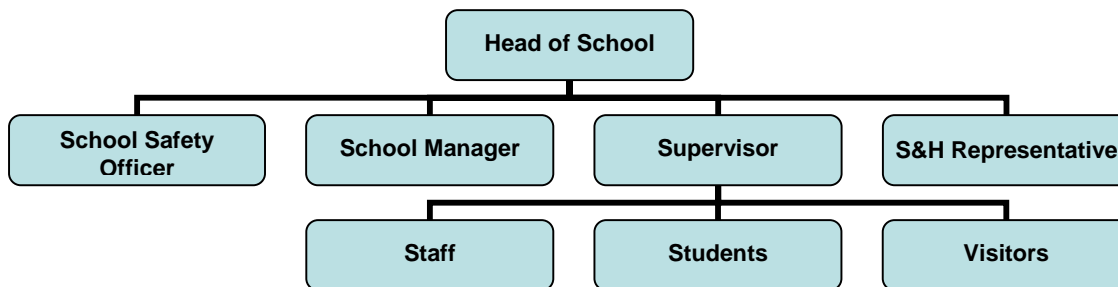
The School is further committed to reviewing the operation of its OSH policy as necessary, and to the dissemination of current policy via the School's website at [http://www.psychology.uwa.edu.au/about/safety\\_and\\_health](http://www.psychology.uwa.edu.au/about/safety_and_health), and through the UWA Safety & Health Office (SHO).

The School fully endorses the main UWA Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Policy published at <http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies>. This handbook outlines and expands on key elements of that policy as they apply to general operations of this School and details the allocation of safety-related duties and particular arrangements made to implement and monitor that policy. Additional information specific to the operations of the Child Study Centre and Robin Winkler Clinic is made available to staff, students and visitors at those locations.

**A/Prof Mike Anderson**  
**Head of School of Psychology**  
**November 2005**

## 2. Responsibility for Implementing Safety & Health Policy

Ultimate responsibility for safety and health in the School lies with the Head of School. Successful management of safety and health can only be effectively achieved when the participation of staff at all levels in the school is built into all its processes for identifying and controlling risk. For routine safety and health matters the line of responsibility follows the normal managerial lines in the School.



All members of the school have a responsibility to co-operate with their colleagues to achieve a safe and healthy workplace, and to take reasonable care of themselves and others. They are required to work in accordance with this policy and associated procedures. Responsibilities extend beyond minimum compliance with statutory obligations; there is a responsibility to encourage good practice and due concern.

Whenever a member of this School notices a safety or health problem that he or she is not able to put right, it must immediately be reported to a person in authority. To assist the Head of School in managing safety and health, there are key roles with specific duties as described below. Incumbents are listed as at March 2009.

ROLE	PERSON	PHONE	EMAIL
School Safety Officer	Craig Clark	2282	craig@psy.uwa.edu.au
S&H Representative	Herb Jurkiewicz	2654	herb@psy.uwa.edu.au
Building Warden	John Love	3270	johnl@psy.uwa.edu.au
Chem Alert System Administrator	Brian Pepler	2623	bpepler@psy.uwa.edu.au
First Aid Officer (School)	Erica Campbell	3246	erica@psy.uwa.edu.au
Standby First Aid Officer (School)	Ann Deveson-Kelly	3572	ann@psy.uwa.edu.au
First Aid Officer (Clinic)	Margaret Yull	2644	clinic@psy.uwa.edu.au

Responsibilities associated with these roles are detailed at [http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/responsibility\\_and\\_accountability](http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/responsibility_and_accountability)

### **Duty of Care**

For any event for which you have responsibility for the safety and health of others, you should familiarise yourself and those within your care with basic domestic safety arrangements, for instance, location of fire extinguishers and emergency exits.

### **3. The Arrangements for Safety and Health**

#### **3.1 Reporting & Investigating Safety or Health Issues**

Any member of the School who notices a safety or health problem that they are not able to put right themselves should immediately advise someone in authority, in accordance with the University's "[Resolving Safety Issues](#)" policy. Employees should notify their immediate supervisors. If no resolution can be achieved at that level then the supervisor should consult with the School's Health & Safety Representative, who will make recommendations to the School Manager or Head of School. The School Manager or Head of School will act to resolve the matter, consulting with the School's Risk Health and Safety Committee as appropriate or, in the event that it cannot be resolved at the School level, refer the matter to the Safety and Health Office.

#### **3.2 Consultation for Safety and Health**

All members of the School are encouraged to raise concerns about safety and health with appropriate managers or supervisors. Additional formal consultation will take place through the School Risk, Health and Safety Committee (RHSC) or in School staff meetings under the standing S&H agenda item.

The membership of the RHSC consists of the Head of School, School Manager, School Safety Officer, and the Directors of the Child Study Centre and Robin Winkler Clinic acting in consultation with the School's Safety and Health and Student Representative(s). The Committee is chaired by the Head of School, or nominee, and meets at least four times each year. Minutes of meetings are available on the School web site. Responsibilities of the Committee are detailed at [http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/responsibility\\_and\\_accountability](http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/policies/responsibility_and_accountability).

The primary role of the RHSC is to advise the Head of School on the implementation of matters relating to safety and health in the School. This will be achieved by:

- (i) Consideration of reports on such matters as accidents and other incidents, safety inspections and consequent remedial actions, and reports from those with delegated safety duties;
- (ii) Assisting in the development of safety rules and safe systems of work;
- (iii) Advising on the safety content of information and training for staff and students;
- (iv) Review of emergency response procedures;
- (v) Monitoring of this policy.

#### **3.3 Safety and Health Training**

The immediate manager or supervisor of a new staff member will ensure that the new staff member is inducted for safety and health as soon as practicable, taking the [UWA Induction Guidelines](#), the [Safety and Health Office Checklist](#), and the School checklist as a framework. Records of induction should be kept.

New students will be informed about the same points as part of their introduction to the School. Students should also be made aware of the [student guide to safety and health](#) produced by the SHO.

The need for specialist training should be identified by managers and supervisors, and all requests for such training should be directed to either the School H&S Representative or to the UWA Safety & Health Office. The University provides training for persons with safety responsibilities (e.g. Managers and Supervisors, Safety and Health Representatives, Chem Alert Officers, Fire/Building Wardens), and for all staff and students in areas such as Safe Manual Handling. Information is available at <http://www.safety.uwa.edu.au/courses>.

Members of the School will not be expected to undertake any procedure for which they have not been adequately trained.

### 3.4 [Fire and Emergency Procedures](#)

Fire and emergency procedures for the Main Psychology and Sanders Buildings are as per the [University's Main Procedure](#). Persons working in the Child Study Centre or Robin Winkler Clinic are referred to administration in those areas for additional procedures specific to those areas of operation. In particular, clinicians in the Robin Winkler Clinic should familiarise themselves with procedures for handling potentially violent clients as detailed in the Clinic's Policies and Procedures Manual.

#### **Fire and Emergency Evacuation assembly points are;**

<b>Main Psychology Building:</b>	South-East Corner of the James Oval
<b>Sanders Building:</b>	Corner of Myer St and Parkway outside MCS building.
<b>Robin Winkler Clinic:</b>	Grassed area to North of Main Clinic Building
<b>Child Study Centre:</b>	Assembly points as advised by Director of the CSC (graduate students and Research/Clinic staff are asked to make themselves available to assist with children from the Kindergarten, Pre-primary and Special Needs Unit).

### 3.5 [Action in the Event of an Incident - First Aid Procedures](#)

Actions to be taken in the event of an incident are as per [the University's procedural guidelines](#). Persons working in the Child Study Centre or Robin Winkler Clinic are referred to administration in those areas for additional information specific to those areas.

#### **First Aid Box locations are;**

<b>Main Psychology Building:</b>	Office of School Admin Officer opposite main reception on the ground floor.
<b>Robin Winkler Clinic:</b>	Common room (Rm 8)
<b>Child Study Centre:</b>	CSC Office (Rm G12)

### 3.6 [Risk Assessments](#)

There is a legal requirement to assess risks. Where these are found to be significant, the assessment must be written. It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors to satisfy themselves (while not necessarily examining every assessment) that risk assessments:

- are conducted;
- are completed to a consistent and reasonable standard;
- relate to the actual work being undertaken;
- are reviewed; and
- are supported by adequate and appropriately maintained records

It is the responsibility of persons in control of areas or activities to ensure risk assessments are carried out. A general risk assessment form is available from the [SHO website](#).

There are five principal steps in the process of carrying out a risk assessment. These are to:

1. Look for the hazards, ignoring the trivial and concentrating only on significant hazards, which could result in serious, harm or effect several people.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how, thinking about people who may not be in the workplace all the time, e.g. cleaners, visitors and contractors.
3. Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.
4. Record your findings.
5. Review your assessment on a regular basis. For example:

If a laboratory procedure is carried out frequently the risk assessment only needs to be undertaken once. A single risk assessment will cover the procedure being repeated over and over again. However, sooner or later you will need to review your assessment in the light of changes in substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards.

In an office environment, changes may be made to the layout and/or introduction of new electrical equipment i.e. kettle, heaters.

You will want to consider these sorts of changes in their own right and do whatever you need to reduce the level of risk.

Current documentation on the School's Safety & Health Risk Management Plan is available on the School's website at [http://www.psychology.uwa.edu.au/about/safety\\_and\\_health](http://www.psychology.uwa.edu.au/about/safety_and_health).

### **3.7 Smoking Policy**

The University is committed to ensuring that its staff, students, contractors and visitors are not exposed to tobacco smoke in its workplaces including its building and vehicles. In the interest of having a healthy workforce, staff who smoke are provided with assistance to quit smoking. Accordingly, managers and supervisors shall promote and ensure compliance with the Smoking Policy.

The School follows the University's [smoking policy](#).

### **3.8 Electrical Safety**

The following arrangements for electrical safety apply to all electrical equipment in use in the School, including personal items.

Only electrical equipment that is properly installed and maintained should be used in the School. The indication that equipment has been properly maintained is that a label is attached to each item bearing a date after which it should no longer be used. This also applies to personal equipment held by staff, for example, a lamp, coffee percolator, overhead projector, etc. Items not bearing such a label, or where the date on the label has been passed, should be withdrawn from use and given to the appropriate manager or supervisor.

All portable appliances will be regularly inspected, tested and tagged. All members of the School should routinely check that their electrical appliances are not damaged and that there are no obvious signs of misuse such as damaged or discoloured plug tops and worn cables.

Any item that becomes faulty should be taken out of service and labelled and either discarded or sent for repair.

Equipment and furniture should be sited so as to avoid the need for leads to trail across floors. Where these cannot be avoided, proprietary rubber strips should be used to reduce the risk of tripping. The use of socket adaptors should be avoided wherever possible. Only powerboards are permitted. Extension leads are seen as temporary measures to be used only until additional socket outlets have been provided.

School equipment held off-site will be included in periodic inspections with the holder being responsible for bringing it into the University.

### **3.9 Purchasing Policy**

All materials and equipment acquired by the School or by individuals for use at work must comply with the standards codes and regulations prescribed by law and University requirements. Only those that can be safely accommodated and used within the School may be obtained. The individual wishing to acquire the material or equipment should obtain all necessary information to enable the risk assessment to be undertaken in order to demonstrate compliance with the foregoing.

To monitor that the requirements of the purchasing policy are being followed, all acquisitions of potentially hazardous equipment or materials (e.g. significant quantities of toxic or flammable liquids for laboratory use) must be approved by the School Manager, and the responsible safety officer advised (e.g. the Chem Alert System Administrator).

### **3.10 Children**

Children brought onto university premises must at all times be under immediate and close supervision of a parent, guardian or other adult acting in loco parentis. Children are not permitted in any workshop or laboratory where experimental or other work is being undertaken, or in any other environment considered by the person in charge to be inappropriate.

### **3.11 Visitors and Contractors**

The University policy on [visitor safety](#) requires that visitors to the School first report to the relevant reception counter and are escorted from that counter or given directions to their final destination.

### **3.12 Services and Facilities**

The planning and undertaking of building, alteration and repair work, and the installation and maintenance of plant and equipment by persons from outside the University needs to be adequately controlled to ensure the safety and health of members of the School. The University has a [safety and health policy for contractors](#).

### **3.13 General Office Safety**

For routine office activities with low risk of injury no formal assessment of the work is necessary. Non-routine office activities should be assessed and where any significant hazards are identified the results of the assessment should be recorded.

A copy of the [office safety checklist](#) is available from the SHO and individuals should use this to check the safety of their own office accommodation. Problems identified should be reported in the normal way.

Falls are the most common cause of injury in offices, accounting for almost half of all office injuries. Next come the handling and lifting of goods, materials and equipment, followed by stepping on, or striking against things; falling objects; machinery; transport; and the use of hand tools. Training in safe handling and lifting is available for any staff likely to lift equipment with any regularity. The maintenance of high standards of general housekeeping in offices goes a long way to preventing injuries. Care should be given to the general layout and storage of items to

minimise the possible hazards. Particular attention should be given to: the condition of floors and floor coverings; trailing leads; storage of items, particularly heavy ones, on shelves above shoulder height; safe methods of reaching up.

### 3.14 [Safety in Activities Taking Place Away from University Premises](#)

Many School-related activities take place in placement environments external to the University, or in private homes and other non-secure locations off-campus. Staff and students have a responsibility to identify foreseeable risks and take appropriate action. Relevant aspects might include:

Student Placement: adequate competent supervision including appropriate OSH induction for the placement environment. Members of staff responsible for the placement of students should familiarise themselves with the University guidelines on [management of student placement](#).

Testing in Non-secure Locations: establishment and induction by relevant Supervisor with respect to protocols for notification of activities at non-secure locations; emergency communications arrangements; personal responsibility to ensure sufficient familiarity with environment and circumstances to make a reasonable assessment of risk.

### 3.15 [Manual Handling](#)

Manual handling is one of the most common and costly of workplace injuries. Manual handling involves the use of human effort to push, pull, carry, hold or restrain any object or animal. It does not just relate to the lifting of heavy objects.

UWA has a policy on manual handling which requires areas to undertake risk assessment of all manual handling hazards and implement strategies to reduce the level of risk. This includes but is not limited to the provision of training and ongoing supervision of staff and students involved in manual handling activities.

- No one should undertake any manual handling task that they feel that they are unable to manage, if in doubt, do not do the task, seek assistance. A safety first mentality should be adopted.
- Be aware of the risk factors – the safety of the general environment e.g. is it cluttered, is lighting adequate, are there any slip or trip hazards? The characteristics of the load e.g. heavy, awkward, difficult to grasp. Be mindful of your own ability e.g. fatigue, state of health, lack of coordination.
- Where possible use assistive equipment, such as trolleys and lifting devices. A number of such devices are available for loan in the Technical Support (“workshop”) area on the ground floor of the Main Psychology building.
- Always use correct manual handling technique – keep the spine neutral, bend with the knees using semi squat and avoid twisting, flexing forward with the spine, or sideways leaning of the spine.

Assistance with manual handling risk assessment and training in manual handling technique is provided by the Safety and Health Office, phone ext 2784. Staff are encouraged to phone if they have concerns.

Relying on training of staff is not as effective in reducing manual handling injuries as proper workplace design and provision of equipment– please keep this in mind!

### **3.16 Safety in the Use of Computer Workstations**

Please refer to the UWA brochure “Working Comfortably with Computers” and note that the same principles of adopting correct posture at the computer applies to lap tops as well as desk based computer monitors. Be aware that if you are working from home, you should also apply the same principles.

Most people have difficulty checking whether they have correct posture when working at a computer. If you need assistance or start to develop symptoms that you believe may be associated with incorrect posture then please contact the Occupational Therapist in the Safety and Health Office. The UWA Safety and Health office provides free trials of a number of the “ergonomic” computer accessories that are currently on the market.

### **3.17 Working Alone**

Where colleagues work after normal hours, they should adhere to [UWA policy on working in isolation](#).

### **3.18 Working from Home on UWA Business**

Staff wishing to work from home must obtain written approval from the Head of School. A record of that approval is to be held on file by the School Admin Officer.

Where staff have approval to work from home on a regular and ongoing basis, their manager or supervisor should ensure that they have received all information concerning safety and health and the management of sensitive University information.

The same duty of care applies to staff who work at home on University business, as when they work on-site. This arrangement can have significant repercussions on provision of equipment, at the very least the School/Area is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the home based workplace is safe.

Staff who work from home on a regular basis should undertake a self- assessment of their working environment in accordance with the UWA working from home policy.

It is the managers and supervisors responsibility to ensure that a formal written agreement is in place to delineate who has responsibility for costs and equipment required to support the working from home arrangement. Please refer to the Working From Home policy.

The Senior Occupational Therapist in the UWA Safety and Health Office is available to provide assessment of home based workplace environments in the event that there are any concerns.

### **3.19 Safety in Workshops and Laboratories**

It is the duty of supervisory academic and technical staff to familiarise themselves with the safety and health legislation and Codes of Practice which are relevant to the work being undertaken in their area of responsibility and to ensure that other members of staff and students comply with these requirements.

As part of their day-to-day responsibilities they will ensure that:

- safe methods of working exist and are implemented;
- staff, students and others under their supervision are instructed in safe working practices;

- new employees working within their School are given instruction in safe working practices;
- regular safety inspections are made;
- positive, corrective action is taken where necessary to ensure the safety and health of all staff, students and others;
- all plant, machinery and equipment in the area in which they work is adequately guarded, regularly maintained and in safe working order;
- all reasonable practicable steps are taken to prevent the unauthorised or improper use of all plant, machinery and equipment in the area in which they work;
- appropriate protective clothing and equipment, first aid and fire appliances are provided and readily available in the School in which they work;
- toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled;
- they monitor the standard of safety and health throughout the unit in which they work, encourage staff, students and others to achieve the highest possible standards of safety and health and discipline those who consistently fail to consider their own well-being or the safety and health of others;
- all signs used meet the statutory requirements;
- they report, as appropriate, any safety and health concerns to the appropriate person in authority.

All work will be conducted in accordance with the University's Occupational Safety and Health Policy and any specific Codes of Practice relating to particular activities and industry specific standards.

### **3.20 Safety of Equipment**

Where equipment related to safety and health, particularly personal protective equipment is provided by the School, there is a duty to ensure the equipment is appropriate for the intended use, clean, properly maintained and properly stored. The University guidance on [personal protective equipment](#) should be followed.

## **4. Monitoring of the Policy**

Day to day monitoring of compliance is the responsibility of all those with managerial responsibility. Managers should also use reports of injury, near misses and sickness linked to work to determine whether existing arrangements require modification in order to prevent a recurrence.

Monitoring of the effectiveness of the policy will be carried out in quarterly reviews by the School Risk Health & Safety Committee and by way of annual inspections by the School Manager and S&H Representative, in accordance with University policy on [inspecting the workplace](#).