

Name of Procedure	Work Health and Safety Communication and Consultation Procedure
Description of Procedure	This procedure describes the University's arrangements for effectively communicating and consulting with staff, students, visitors, volunteers, contractors and other stakeholders about work health and safety (WHS) risk and its WHS Management System.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Guideline	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision
Description of Revision	The Resolving a WHS Issue at ACU has been updated to include an option for Protected Disclosures. The WHS Advisory Committee has also been renamed the WHS Management Committee.

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References	WHS&W Policy WHS Committee Procedure Health and Safety Representative Listings WHS Committee Listings WHS Risk Management Procedure WHS SharePoint Site riskware Model Code of Practice: Work health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination. Safework Australia Participation of Staff in University ER Committees ACU Staff Consultative Committee WHS Risk Assessment Procedure WHS Risk Assessment Form

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1 Background

ACU consults with staff, students, visitors, volunteers, contractors and significant stakeholders on the identification and management of WHS risk. ACU is committed to maintaining an effective WHS Management System which enables informal and formal communications and consultations about WHS risks, policies, procedures and priorities so that the University can maintain high standards of safety for all participants in its community.

ACU's approach to consultations aligns with its legal obligation to consult with staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors and other stakeholders about matters which are likely to affect their health, safety and wellbeing within its working and learning environments.

2 Overview of Communications and Consultations

The University utilises a number of informal channels and forums to consult, either locally or more broadly, about its WHS Management System and WHS risk.

Table 1: Informal Channels and Forums for Consultation

Area of Consultation	Informal Channel or Forum	Consultation Responsibilities
Local informal	Staff and Nominated Supervisor/managers	<p>Staff members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly collaborate with their Nominated Supervisors to identify and resolve hazards; • Participate in WHS Inspections, WHS risk assessments and the development of treatments (controls); • Communicate with stakeholders, including students, about safe work procedures; and • Log reports of incidents and hazards within riskware which are automatically assigned to Nominated Supervisors to manage in consultation with staff and others.
Workgroups ¹	Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSRs communicate and consult with their workgroup, WHS Committees and University about WHS risk and issues, including concerns which have been raised by their workgroup.
Campuses	Campus WHS Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus WHS Committees (comprised of management, staff, including HSRs; student representatives) consult with the University about the effectiveness of the WHS Management System in managing campus WHS risks; and • Committee Members also engage with staff and students by conducting WHS inspections and investigations, <i>when required</i>.
Teaching and, research staff and students (dealing with biological and radioactive materials)	Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) communicates and consults with the WHS Advisory Committee; research and teaching applicants, and their Nominated Supervisors about the management of WHS risk that is associated with biohazards, medical procedures and radioactive materials.

¹ Workgroups represent staff within specific organisational units or geographical areas on each campus

Area of Consultation	Informal Channel or Forum	Consultation Responsibilities
University-wide	The ACU Staff Consultative Committee (ACUSCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly updated on new and updated WHS Management System policies and procedures; and • Receives twice yearly reports on the effectiveness of the WHS Management System in managing risk.
University-wide	Work Health and Safety Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides oversight of the WHS Management System and considers feedback from WHS Committees about the effectiveness of the System in managing WHS risk.

3 Communication and Consultation Triggers

ACU initiates communication and consultation whenever:

- Hazard identification processes and WHS risk assessments are initiated, and decisions are being made about the treatments (controls) which are selected to manage these risks;
- The University proposes changes to the working and learning environment, such as a work processes, policies or procedures; which may affect the health and safety of staff, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors;
- ACU or one of its contractors is aware of hazards and associated risks which may impact upon contractors or campus communities and consultation is initiated about the management of these risks.

Organisational and functional units should have a standing WHS agenda item for staff and/or team meetings to ensure that WHS risk is effectively addressed or managed.

4 External Communication and Consultation

From time to time, WHS information is communicated to external parties such as government authorities, health services, legal agencies, and workers' compensation insurers. Whenever these communications are required, Nominated Supervisors and other relevant staff should contact relevant staff, such as Human Resources WHS staff, for support in engaging in these consultations, including any mandatory requirements to notify government authorities.

Whenever ACU collaborates with regulators or other organisations to manage a health and safety issue, relevant University Officers² are required to consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with any organisation or authority to ensure that these consultations are effective.

5 Resolving WHS issues

Whenever staff members are concerned about a WHS issue they should first consult their Nominated Supervisor. Staff members should log a report of an incident or hazard within [riskware](#). A staff member can consult with their Health and Safety Representative (workgroup) or a local Campus WHS

² Officers: Make decisions that impact upon a substantial part or the whole University

Committee Member if they believe their Nominated Supervisors' response did not address all their concerns about an incident or hazard.

If an issue is not resolved through consultations, staff members should refer to Appendix 1: Resolving a WHS Issue to progress the issue through the resolution pathway.

6 Consultative Forums and Representation

6.1 Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)

6.1.1 Area of Consultation

HSRs represent the work health, safety and wellbeing of defined workgroups on campus and are elected by their relevant workgroup. Relevant Nominated Supervisors and managers, including Human Resources WHS staff, should consult HSRs about WHS hazards and risks, and treatments (controls) that specifically impact upon their workgroup.

Staff members can escalate issues to their HSR whenever they would like a WHS issue addressed that impacts upon their workgroup. This would normally occur where the staff member believes the Nominated Supervisor or manager may not have adequately addressed the WHS risk.

HSRs also normally attend WHS Committee meetings and are asked to review WHS Management System (WHSMS) policies and procedures, from the perspective of the workgroup which they represent.

6.2.2 HSRs Consultation Responsibilities

HSRs escalate WHS issues, which may be raised by a staff member within their workgroup, to a relevant management representative for their review.

6.2 Campus WHS Committees

6.2.1 Area of Consultation

Campus WHS Committees are a forum for Management and Staff and student communication and consultation. These committees consider the effectiveness of the WHSMS on their campus, identify WHS risks and address WHS issues brought to the committee on behalf of either management, staff members or students.

Staff and students can escalate issues to WHS Committee Members where there is concern about WHS issues that affect their campus community (HSRs should be contacted about workgroup WHS issues).

Campus WHS Committees normally meet quarterly and the minutes of meetings are circulated on local noticeboards and made available on the [WHS SharePoint site](#), to inform all staff and students on matters discussed, actioned or resolved by the Committee.

6.2.2 Members Consultation Responsibilities

The Management Representatives, on each campus WHS Committee, should either resolve, take account of, or escalate concerns to a relevant Executive Member for review. Staff representatives of campus WHS Committees, actively participate in tabling WHS concerns of

staff and advising relevant staff of the outcomes from the Committee meeting and or other actions. More information is provided in the WHS Committee Procedure.

6.3 ACU Staff Consultative Committee (ACUSCC)

6.3.1 Area of Consultation

The ACUSCC is a peak consultation forum that meets on a bi-monthly basis to facilitate formal consultation on workplaces issues including WHS. The Committee is comprised of management representatives, professional and academic staff, and union representatives. Consultation occurs on matters related to the WHSMS, including new or revised policy, procedures, guidelines and programs, prior to their approval. The Committee receives and considers bi-annual reports on the effectiveness of the WHSMS and new initiatives and programs.

6.3.2 Members Consultation Responsibilities

Members of ACUSCC provide feedback about any changes to the University's WHSMS, including policies, procedures, guidelines and the management of WHS risk.

6.4 Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

6.4.1 Area of Consultation

The Institutional Biosafety Committee meets at least four times a year and manages risk associated with research and teaching activities involving biohazards, medical procedures and radioactive materials. The Committee is comprised of representatives from management, relevant Schools, relevant Research Institutes, and subject matter experts. As part of its role the Committee provides oversight to ensure processes and controls are in place to meet government legislation and other compliance requirements, including funding body requirements. It also provides oversight for the monitoring of laboratory practices, facilities and safety. In performing its duties, the committee oversees training, communicates and provides advice to staff, students and visitors to inform proper practice and the use of materials.

6.4.2 Members Consultation Responsibilities

In undertaking their duties in reviewing, commenting, initiating treatments (controls) on teaching and research applications, involving the use of biological, medical materials or radiative materials; Members need to be appropriately informed and consult with relevant subject matter experts in their decision making.

6.5 ACU Work Health and Safety Management Committee (WHSAC)

6.5.1 Consultation Focus

The WHS Management Committee is a management forum, comprised of members of the Senior Executive and Executive, managers and subject matter experts; which ensures that the WHSMS is aligned with University processes and achieves its WHS goals and objectives. The Committee also sets WHS direction, objectives and continuous improvement targets which pertain to the work health, safety and wellbeing of staff, students, visitors, volunteers, contractors and other stakeholders.

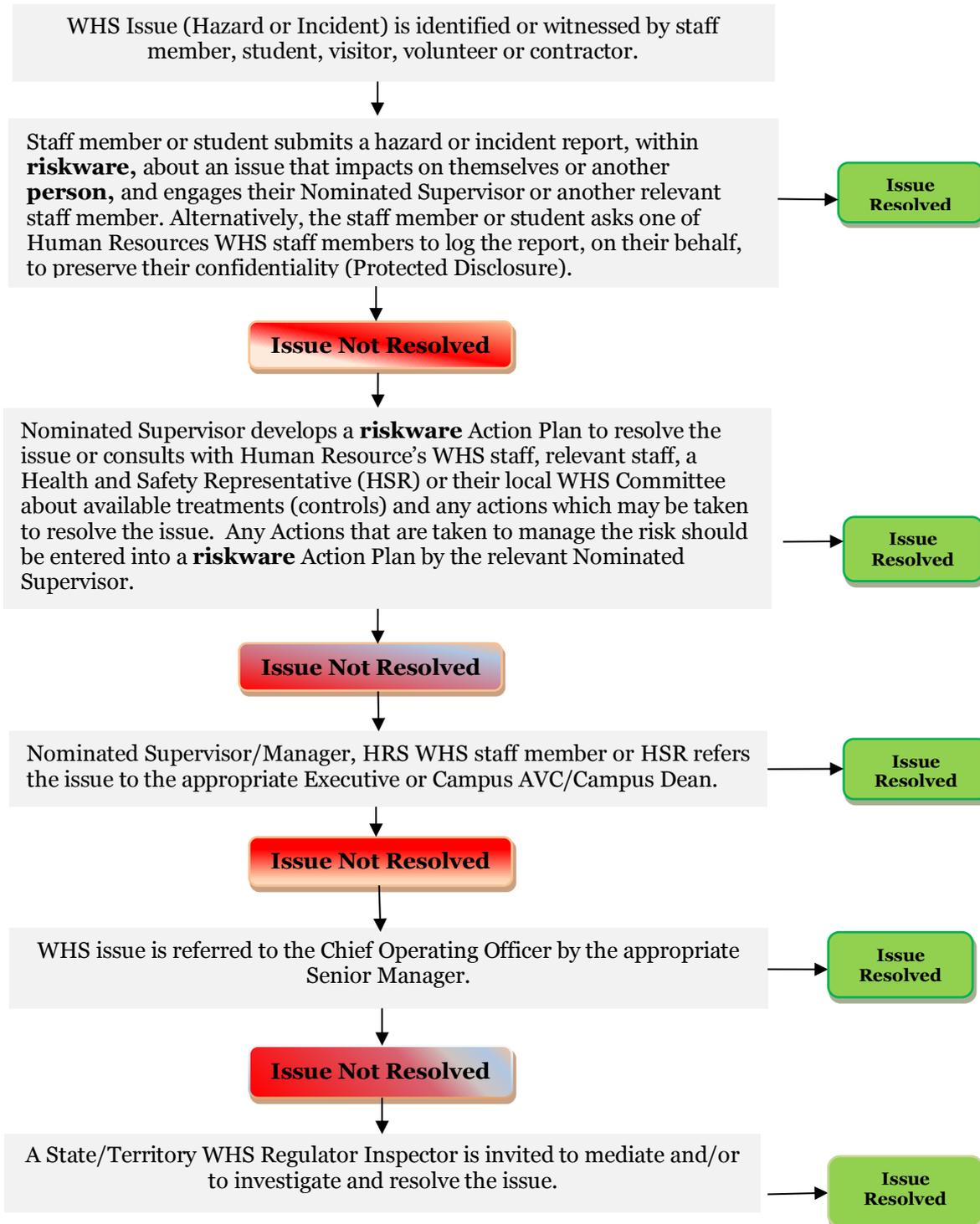
The WHS Management Committee ensures that campus WHS Committees, Health and Safety Representatives, the Institutional Biosafety Committee and other consultative forums support the University to engage staff in two-way consultations about the WHSMS and improvements.

6.5.2 Members Consultation Responsibilities

The committee members facilitate a cooperative and collaborative approach to monitoring, reviewing and treating WHS risks to support the University to continuously improve its WHSMS. In addition members promote WHS awareness, initiatives and consultation throughout the University. The committee supports and engages with the Chairs of the campus WHS Committees, reviewing their feedback and issues that have been escalated to the ACU WHS Management Committee.

7 Appendix 1: Resolving a WHS Issue

Staff, students and others should reference this resolution pathway to progress issues which they report for resolution:



In the event of a life-threatening situation, call Triple Zero (000) and also report the situation to the National Security Centre on 1300 729 452 or 8888 (from internal ACU phone).