



School Roles & Responsibilities for Occupational Health & Safety

1. Introduction

The School of Chemistry at the University of Wollongong is committed to implementing the requirements of the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act (2000) and supporting the OH&S Management System of the University of Wollongong. In recognising its obligations under the Act and other related legislation, the School of Chemistry aims to facilitate a safe, healthy and secure learning and working environment for all students, staff, contractors and visitors.

2. School Safety Policy

In accordance with University OH&S policy the School of Chemistry will:

- Promote and provide consultation for safety related issues through ongoing activities of the School Safety Committee, so that members of the School can contribute to decisions affecting their health, safety and welfare.
- Undertake risk management by ensuring risk assessments are carried out on all new experimental work, work systems or new equipment.
- Provide training and supervision to ensure work is carried out safely.
- Ensure that there are guidelines and procedures in place for obtaining advice on safety and health matters.
- Continue to develop, implement and review procedures and codes of safe working practice.
- Monitor and assess the workplace environment.

3. Responsibilities of Members of the School

The Act places obligations on both employer and those working at the University in meeting these safety objectives by ensuring that both groups contribute to safety in the workplace. The laboratory worker, for example, must ensure reasonable care for the health and safety of fellow workers and must cooperate with the employer as regards to any reasonable requirements imposed in the interests of health and safety. The employer should strive to provide a working environment that is without risk to health.

The School of Chemistry expects all persons working within its precincts to recognise they have a duty to exercise self-discipline and accept responsibility to do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves and others, and loss to the School. Certain roles and responsibilities of individual members of the School have been illustrated in the responsibility Matrix, Figure 1.

3.1. Head of School

The Head of the School is responsible for ensuring, as far as it is reasonably practicable, that the operations in the School do not constitute a known hazard to safety and health. In particular the Head of School should ensure that any policies made by the University and School are implemented, understood and observed by all persons working in the School.

The Head of School is responsible for arranging consultation concerning the review of safety practices and, in particular, the introduction of new safety measures with members of the staff and other representatives from the School.

3.2. Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- Demonstrating their personal commitment for health and safety at work to promote responsible attitudes in their staff and students with regards to OH&S.
- Providing information, training and supervision to their staff and students on:
 - the potential health and safety risks associated with their tasks.
 - their responsibilities to follow safe work practices.
 - controls that may be necessary to ensure safe work practice.
- Ensuring safe working practices for all persons under their supervision are understood and followed.
- Checking that necessary safety equipment required by regulation or recognised code of practice is available and used.
- Reporting and investigating all accidents and taking all reasonable steps to rectify identified hazards.

Supervisors are defined as University staff members responsible for the supervision of staff or students.

3.3. All staff and students

All staff and students of the University have a responsibility to themselves and others to:

- Adhere to the University and School safety policies.
- Follow their supervisor's instructions on safe work practices.
- Carry out their work in a safe manner and with due regard to health.
- Inform themselves of the safety and health hazards of the equipment and materials with which they are concerned, in so far as these hazards may reasonably be foreseen.
- Bring to the notice of Supervisors and/or Workplace Advisory Committee members any potential hazard to safety and health of which they know or learn.

3.4. Contractors and Visitors

Contractors and Visitors must comply with University OHS policies and procedures and the School OHS policies and procedures. No unauthorised entry to laboratories is permitted. A School Contractor checklist should be completed before entry. These are available from the OHS Facilitator Sandra Chapman.

3.5. School Safety Committee

The School Safety Committee has an advisory and consultative function. The Safety Committee meets regularly to keep under review the measures taken to ensure health and safety at work and to promote the effective cooperation of all members of the School. The Committee aims to review all OHS policies and practices and consultative arrangements in the School. Regular review ensures that all safety issues are being addressed and that consultative arrangements are effective.

The composition of the School Safety Committee aims to represent all members of the School, both staff and students. It comprises members from various sections of the workplace and/or members nominated from the high risk areas such as laboratories. Undergraduate and postgraduate student representatives are also elected from those bodies.

The Chairperson for School Safety Committee is elected by the committee. The Chairperson shall have a term of two years and is eligible for re-election. The Head of School may also nominate a School Safety Advisor and an OH&S Documentation Control Officer.

APPENDIX A : OH&S Documentation

Information relating to University policy can be found at

OHS039	University of Wollongong Occupational Health and Safety Policy	http://staff.uow.edu.au/ohs/commitment/index.html
OHS058	Terms of Reference Workplace Advisory Committees	http://staff.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@ohs/documents/doc/uow016904.pdf
OHS087	Occupational Health and Safety Policy	http://staff.uow.edu.au/ohs/commitment/index.html
	School of Chemistry Contractor induction Checklist	http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@sci/@chem/documents/doc/uow027037.pdf
	Gaining authorisation to enter a School of Chemistry workplace	http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@sci/@chem/documents/doc/uow016886.pdf

Figure 1: School of Chemistry Responsibility Matrix

