

# Safety Alert – Appropriate Footwear

Number 15-13

## 1 BACKGROUND

---

Slips, trips and falls are an ever increasing risk at the University, particularly in our outdoor campus environments. While there are a number of factors that can increase that risk, wearing the correct footwear can help reduce the chances of a fall and injury.

This alert is to bring to the attention of staff, the need to consider the footwear they are wearing and so the right selection can be made for the situation.

This alert should be read as an addition to, and does not replace, any safety requirements for your working space such as laboratories, workshops or the outdoor environment.

## 2 ACTION REQUIRED

---

Staff are required to assess the type of footwear they are wearing, the activities that are planned to be undertaken, and the conditions they are likely to be exposed to, and to choose footwear appropriate to those situations.

While it is recognised that there a range of conditions people may be exposed to, there are also a variety of footwear available to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls. In general, footwear should provide support and comfort to the wearer, be firm enough for the foot to be held in the footwear and not move or slip within the shoe, have a sole that has a “tread” i.e. not a solid flat surface as this does not allow water and other liquids to be removed from under the shoe. This can be compared to the principle of a tyre tread on a car which is designed to provide optimum cohesion with the road surface.

While nothing in this alert is intended to define the type of footwear to be worn, an assessment of the conditions staff are potentially exposed to, taking into account the amount of time spent walking, the distance, and the terrain, should be considered.

## 3 ASSISTANCE

---

It is generally accepted that an office environment is of a lower risk than other areas of the University. As a bushland campus however, traversing from building to building introduces a greater risk of slip, trip or fall injury and the use of dress shoes such as high heels or flat leather soled shoes have a higher risk factor and consideration should be made to changing from this type of shoe while crossing the campus.

Consideration should be made to having more than one pair of shoes if dress shoes are a part of the dress code for your particular role.

Further information is available from appended table.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact the Health and Safety Team on 49218847 (x18847).

## Appendix 1. Footwear guide.

Dress shoe with flat leather sole. Not appropriate for walking in wet conditions.



High heel dress shoe. Not appropriate for walking across the campus.



Flat rubber soled shoes with tread. Appropriate for walking across the campus.



Flat ladies shoe with tread. Appropriate for walking across the campus.



Shoes that likely do not hold the feet firmly. Inappropriate to be worn traversing the campus.

