



Health and Safety Guideline

HSG 8.1 Health and Safety Inspections and Testing

1. Purpose

This guideline provides guidance in conducting health and safety inspections to ensure hazards are identified and controlled, to ensure that risk controls are effective, and to recognise best practice safety behaviours and activities.

2. Scope

This Guideline applies to all health, safety and wellbeing activities of staff, students, visitors (including volunteers and contractors), Council members, and other persons interacting with the University of Newcastle (workers); the operations of staff of University aligned Research Centres and controlled entities; and all activities conducted by or on behalf of the University of Newcastle on and outside of the University's campuses.

3. Guidelines

3.1. General work area inspections

Work area inspections are initiatives designed to monitor the work environment to ensure all areas are kept free from hazards or potential hazards that may lead to incident, illness, near miss, property damage or adverse environmental impact. They may also be used to confirm if risks are being effectively managed and to recognise best practice safety behaviours.

Each College and Division is required to create a general work area inspection schedule using the [General Work Area Inspection Schedule](#) in collaboration with the relevant Health and Safety Committee and / or College or Division Executive Team. The schedule must cover general administrative and office spaces but exclude high-risk settings such as laboratory, workshop, Makerspace and studio spaces which must be inspected as part of the Laboratory Safety Improvement Initiative (LSII) program. Health and Safety Committee members and workers will be tasked to complete the general work area inspections covering all relevant work areas.

The work area inspection team must:

- include a worker involved in performing a task or working in the area being inspected;
- consider including a worker from another area to introduce a fresh pair of eyes;
- include a worker or College or Divisional Health and Safety team member that hold health and safety responsibilities.

As well as looking at the physical aspects of the work area, inspections will include observation of employee safety behaviours and compliance with health and safety procedures including compliance with Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

The general work area inspections must be conducted every 1-2 years using the relevant template found in the Checklist and Inspections Library of the University's All Incident Management System (AIMS).

3.2. Executive Leader Safety Walk and Talk Program

The Executive Leader Safety Walk and Talk program is a behavioural safety initiative aimed at encouraging best practice safety behaviour by senior leaders and the Executive Committee. The Safety Walk and Talk program also facilitates identification of hazards and consultation with workers on health, safety and wellbeing issues in their work areas.

The program pairs two leaders from different Colleges and/or Divisions with one nominated as the Lead executive and one as Support executive. The Chair or nominee of the Health and Safety Committee of the Lead executive College or Division must be invited to attend the Walk and Talk to encourage awareness of local safety issues and facilitate consultation with workers across all levels of the University.

The Associate Director Health, Safety and Wellbeing will develop a schedule for Senior Leader Safety Walks and Talks annually. The schedule will be communicated to Executive Officers prior to the calendar year commencing, to enable adequate time for coordinating Senior Leader activities.

The outcome of the Safety Walk and Talk must be recorded in the University's All Incident Management System (AIMS) by the Executive Assistant of the Lead executive.

3.3. Laboratory Safety Improvement Initiative (LSII) annual inspections

The University's laboratory, workshop, animal facility, Makerspaces and studio spaces are dynamic places for teaching, research and innovation, but can also be high-risk settings that need to be carefully managed. The Laboratory Safety Improvement Initiative (LSII) program

was developed to ensure ongoing comprehensive reviews of laboratory management, practices and issues.

For the purpose of the laboratory safety improvement program, a laboratory is considered to include any space in which research or teaching activities are undertaken that are restricted due to the nature of risks associated with those activities. The term 'laboratory' includes:

- Workshops
- Animal facilities
- PC1, PC2 and PC3 facilities
- Teaching labs
- Research labs
- Studios
- Makerspaces
- Areas where chemical, gas, biological and/or radiation materials are stored or used.

In order to address risks and achieve consistent safety practices across University activities, mandatory inspections of these spaces must be conducted annually using the LSII Audit Workflow found in the University's All Incident Management System (AIMS).

Each College or Division must develop an annual schedule of inspections for the laboratory, workshop, Makerspace and studio spaces under their authority. The schedule will identify the person responsible for the area, a date range for when the inspection is due, who will be conducting the inspection, and who will approve the final inspection report.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team are allocated responsibility to schedule the inspections into AIMS. Inspections are performed at the lab group level. A lab group is comprised of one or more spaces that have common function and a single person responsible for the space, in accordance with the [Mandatory Laboratory Inspection Framework](#).

3.4. Plant and Equipment Inspection and Testing

Plant and equipment in high risk work areas such as workshops and Makerspaces not already serviced and maintained by Infrastructure and Facility Services (IFS), need to be inspected, tested and maintained at regular intervals.

Each business area needs to develop a **Plant and Equipment Inspection and Testing Schedule (pending)** which identifies what items of equipment need to be tested, the relevant legislation and/or standards that apply to that equipment, and the frequency of testing. The frequency for testing will be determined by:

- The level of risk;
- Relevant legislation, Australian Standards, Codes of Practice; and
- Manufacturers' recommendation (as per operating manual or other material provided by the manufacturer).

Further information on plant and equipment inspection and testing requirements can be found in:

- [KRA 1.4: Plant and Equipment](#)
- [KRA 3.6: Electrical Safety and Isolation](#)
- [KRA 3.7: Testing and Tagging](#)
- [KRA 3.8: Overhead Travelling Cranes](#), and
- [KRA 3.9: Pallet and Steel Storage Racking](#)

3.5. Other Specific Inspections

3.5.1. Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) and Chemical and Radiation Technical Committee (CRTC) Inspections

The IBC and CRTC Committee Members undertake scheduled inspections of relevant spaces and monitor the implementation of corrective actions as determined by the Committee.

The CRTC and IBC member conducting the inspection must consult with the responsible business area leader to ensure areas are kept free from hazards or potential hazards that may lead to incident, illness, near miss, property damage or adverse environmental impact. They may also be used to confirm if risks are being effectively managed and to recognise best practice safety behaviours.

3.5.2. Infrastructure and Facilities Services (IFS) Inspections

Infrastructure and Facilities Services (IFS) define and manage the key inspections required for assets and infrastructure, and the processes surrounding them.

Equipment or instrumentation used to provide measurements for controlling safety risks (e.g. gas detectors, pressure gauges, dust monitors) will be regularly inspected, maintained, serviced and calibrated by IFS, according to the manufacturer's instructions.

IFS will arrange regular inspection and testing of all electrical equipment in accordance with the legislative requirements, including all electrical items that are subject to repeated movement or where it is situated in a "hostile environment" i.e. one where exposure to dirt,

weather, chemicals could cause damage to the equipment. Corrective actions involving IFS maintained equipment should be logged via the University's Maximo system.

3.6. Corrective Actions

The inspection team in consultation with the Supervisor must develop suitable and achievable corrective actions utilising the hierarchy of controls and include an achievable and reasonable completion date. The hazards and corrective actions identified are to be entered in AIMS in accordance with the requirements of Guideline [HSG 5.1: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Event Notification and Investigation](#). Health and safety inspection records must be held in accordance with the Guideline [HSG 7.1: Health and Safety Records and Document Control](#).

3.7. Consultation

Personnel carrying out workplace inspections are required to seek input and involvement from those who work in the area about the hazards in their workplace and the hazards associated with items of plant and equipment.

4. Definitions

In the context of the Health and Safety Management System Framework:

Executive Committee	Consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, the Pro Vice-Chancellors, the Chief Operating Officer, Chief People and Culture Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, the University Secretary and the President of Academic Senate.
Leader / Supervisor	Any member of the University who is responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.
Plant and equipment	Includes any machinery, equipment (including scaffolding), appliance, implement or tool and any component or fitting thereof or accessory thereof.
Worker	Includes an employee, conjoint, student on work experience, contractor, sub-contractor, and volunteer. A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for the University or another person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as: (a) an employee, or (b) a contractor or subcontractor, or (c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or (d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking, or (e) an outworker, or (f) an apprentice or trainee, or (g) a student gaining work experience, or (h) a volunteer, or (i) a person of a prescribed class.

Workplace Inspection	Means a planned, regular self-appraisal of the workplace using a specific checklist for the purpose of ensuring a safe and healthy working environment is maintained by identifying hazards and reviewing established risk controls.
----------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5. Responsibilities

A comprehensive list of health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities is provided in [HSG 1.2: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

Specific responsibilities under this Guideline include:

Executive Committee

- Ensure appropriate processes are in place for regularly inspecting the workplace so hazards are identified, risks assessed and effective risk controls implemented.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team

- Provide advice and support to Leaders and Supervisors with implementing an inspection schedule using specific checklists for the area concerned;
- Provide guidance, and where necessary, training and instruction to relevant workers to ensure they are able to effectively conduct workplace inspections;
- Provide advice with regards to regular inspection and testing of plant and equipment in high risk environments.

Leaders and Supervisors

- Provide support for regular review of the workplace to identify hazards, manage the risks and implement risk controls;
- Ensure time is provided for workers to complete workplace health and safety inspections according to an agreed schedule;
- Ensure resources are allocated to enable corrective actions arising from inspections to be closed out; and
- Review outstanding actions regularly through Health and Safety Committees and other meetings.

Workers

- Participate in inspections according to schedule when requested;
- When appropriate, provide input to determining actions to be undertaken when deficiencies are identified during health and safety workplace inspections.

6. References & Related Documents

The following documentation is referenced in, or applicable to this Guideline:

[HSG 1.2: Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[HSG 5.1: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Event Notification and Investigation](#)

[HSG 7.1: Health and Safety Records and Document Control](#)

[KRA 1.4: Plant and Equipment](#)

[KRA 3.6: Electrical Safety and Isolation](#)

[KRA 3.7: Testing and Tagging](#)

[KRA 3.8: Overhead Travelling Cranes](#)

[KRA 3.9: Pallet and Steel Storage Racking.](#)

[General Work Area Inspection Schedule \(FRM-EL08.01\)](#)

[Plant and Equipment Inspection and Testing Schedule \(FRM-EL08.03\) pending](#)

[Mandatory Laboratory Inspection Framework](#)

7. Amendment History

Version	Date of Issue	Approval	Section(s) Modified	Details of Amendment
1, 2	October 2016	Manager Health and Safety	-	Original versions with latest amendment for HSG 10.1 Health and Safety Inspections and Testing
3	July 2023	CPCO	All	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Renumbered from HSG 10.1 to HSG 8.1 Health and Safety Inspections and Testing2. Updated content in all sections including new section 3.2 for Executive Leader Safety Walk and Talk program and 3.3 Lab Safety Improvement Initiative inspections.3. Added new/renamed Related Documents4. Added Amendment History5. Amended document control header and footer

8. Appendices

Nil