

# Health and Safety Guidelines: HSG 4.5

## Standard Operating Procedures



### 1. Purpose

To provide guidance for preparation of a document that describes a method for performing a specific job or task with the appropriate application of risk controls to prevent injury or illness to a person.

### 2. Scope

This document applies to the Leaders, Supervisors, staff members and Infrastructure and Facilities Services.

### 3. Definitions

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

- (a) **Hazard** means a situation in the workplace that has the potential to harm the health and safety of Workers or to damage buildings, plant or equipment.
- (b) **Risk** means the likelihood that a hazard will cause harm and the consequence of the harm.
- (c) **Leaders/Supervisors** means any member of the University who is responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.
- (d) **Regulatory requirements** means the legal obligations imposed upon the University, its officers and employees, and other Workers under:
  - (i) the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#); and
  - (ii) the [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 \(NSW\)](#).
- (e) **Worker** includes an employee, conjoint, student on work experience, contractor, sub-contractor, and volunteer.

## 4. Responsibilities

### 4.1 Managers, Leaders and Supervisors

- (a) Ensure that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are developed for routine tasks or jobs.
- (b) Provide instruction and training to workers and students to ensure they understand how to develop and follow the SOPs relevant to their work.
- (c) Ensure SOPs are documented and are readily available in the workplace close to where they apply. SOPs can be available in hard or soft copy.
- (d) Monitor compliance with SOPs and where non-compliance is noted, identify the cause and arrange corrective actions which may include making amendments to the SOP when indicated.

### 4.2 Health and Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team can provide advice to managers, supervisors and leaders where required. For example:

- (a) Arrange instruction and training in risk assessment and preparation of SOPs.
- (b) Assist with the development of SOPs for routine tasks where advice is needed.

### 4.3 Workers

- (a) Participate in conducting risk assessments and preparation of SOPs where required.
- (b) Comply with the requirements of all SOPs applicable to their work.
- (c) Report problems with compliance with current SOPs and make recommendations for amendments where indicated.
- (d) Report changes to work situations that indicate where additional SOPs may be required.

## 5. Guidelines

### 5.1 Overview

An SOP is a document outlining the steps required to carry out a particular task

safely and without harm to health. It identifies the work/tasks in a logical sequence and the relevant health and safety risk controls required to eliminate or minimise the risks of the identified hazards. The training and experience required to carry out the work/task in accordance with the SOP are also included.

In addition to managing safety, the use of SOP's leads to tasks being undertaken in a uniform manner enhancing quality assurance, ensuring compliance and providing reproducible outcomes which are extremely important in a teaching and research setting.

See Attachment 1 of this Guideline for an example of a basic SOP template.

## **5.2 Developing an SOP**

- (a) Development of a new SOP starts by completing a risk assessment for the task following the procedures in HSG 4.1, Risk Management. Workers who are familiar with the work/task should be involved with the activity.
- (b) All the hazards of each step of the work/task should be considered during the risk assessment including those that may be less obvious e.g. exposure to dust, noise, heat, chemicals and awkward or repetitive movements that could result in injury.
- (c) When considering the risk controls for each hazard refer to the hierarchy of controls. In some circumstances a combination of control measures may need to be used. Refer to HSG 4.1, Risk Management for more information on the hierarchy of controls. The controls selected are incorporated into the SOP with photographs where visual references will help understanding.
- (d) If equipment used for the task requires calibration and/or maintenance these activities should be included in the SOP.
- (e) Regulatory requirements and other relevant documents such as Australian Standards should be considered when drafting the SOP.
- (f) SOP's to be used in a research or industry setting may include a batch record (a form, which can be filled out during the procedure to document the outcomes).
- (g) The SOP should include these other details:
  - (i) the School/Division Unit name and location;

- (ii) the work/task that the SOP refers to;
- (iii) the title of the SOP;
- (iv) the name of the supervisor in charge;
- (v) the date of preparation;
- (vi) due date for review;
- (vii) version number;
- (viii) names of the authors of the SOP; and
- (ix) sign off by a responsible person to verify that the SOP is fit for purpose e.g. supervisor, laboratory or workshop manager, research academic. Sign off can be by personal signature, electronic signature or typed name.

### **5.3 Consultation and Communication**

- (a) When an SOP has been drafted it should be circulated to the workers who will be required to follow its requirements to seek their feedback and to request suggestions for improvements which will ensure their engagement in the process.
- (b) Once completed the SOP will be readily available in the work location for workers to follow when undertaking the task described and can be used to train all workers and students to ensure they understand the risk controls that must be followed when carrying out the task. The signature of the participants will provide a record that they have undertaken the training.

## **6. References**

[UON HSG 4.1 H&S Risk Management](#)

## **7. Attachments**

1. Example of SOP Template

## Attachment 1. Example of an SOP Template

**Title of SOP:**

**School/Division Unit:**

**Location:** *e.g. Building, Room number*

**Supervisor/Person in Charge of the Work:**

**Prepared by:** *Names of workers involved in drafting the SOP*

**In consultation with:** *Names of workers who were consulted during drafting*

**Approved by and date:** *Name and signature of person approving the SOP and date of approval*

**Review date:** *Approximately every 2 years or more frequently if the task has changed*

**Document Number:**

**Version Number:**

**Description of the task covered by the SOP:**

<b>What and When:</b> brief description of each step of the task	<b>How:</b> describe the method for completing each step of the task, incorporating the risk controls with reference to the risk assessment that was completed for the task	<b>Images:</b> Where relevant insert photos e.g. to illustrate items of equipment, specific risk controls, PPE