

UON Key Risk Area: KRA 3.4

Excavation and Demolition

1. Purpose

To ensure that excavation and demolition work is carried out safely and that hazards affecting staff, students, conjoints, contractors and visitors are identified and risk controls implemented.

2. Scope

This document applies to all Faculties, Divisions, and organisational units of the University of Newcastle and its controlled entities.

3. Definitions

In the context of this document, the following definitions apply:

- **Excavation:** A hole in the earth, or a face of earth, formed after rock, sand, soil or other material is removed (such as a trench, ditch, shaft, well, tunnel or a hole drilled in the earth).
- **Demolition:** The complete or partial dismantling of a building or structure, by pre-planned and controlled methods or procedures.
- **Competent Person:** A person who has, through a combination of training, education and experience, acquired knowledge and skills enabling that person to correctly perform a specified task.
- **Leaders/Supervisors:** Any member of the University who is responsible for supervising staff and/or undergraduate or postgraduate students and/or for leading research projects.
- **Workers:** As defined in the NSW Work Health & Safety Act 2011, workers include employees, conjoints, students on work experience, contractors, sub-contractors and their employees. Staff, conjoints, students on work experience, and contractors may be referred to collectively as workers, or separately as staff, conjoints, students, or contractors.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Infrastructure and Facilities Services (IFS)

- Ensure excavation and demolition work is conducted in accordance with this procedure;
- Ensure that contractors who are engaged to conduct excavation and demolition work have the appropriate procedures and equipment to undertake the work;
- Ensure that the contractor's workers are trained and competent to undertake the work e.g. operation of front end loaders and excavators;
- Ensure that any excavation or demolition work is conducted under a Permit to Work issued by IFS or a nominated representative;
- Provide information to affected locations where excavation or demolition work is to take place to ensure the necessary actions are taken to protect staff and students who work in the area.

4.2 Leaders/Supervisors

- Ensure that risk controls are followed when they are implemented to protect staff and students when excavation or demolition work is to be conducted.

4.4 Health and Safety Team

- Provide professional input to excavation or demolition work when required.

5. Procedure

5.1 Identification

IFS or the nominated representative will work with the relevant contractor to identify the hazards and risks of work involving excavation or demolition.

This includes the work which:

- Disturbs the ground beyond a depth of 0.5m; or
- Involves penetration of walls, floors, ceilings or other sealed surfaces which could conceal services or provide structural support; or
- Involves driving stakes, spikes, piles or any other objects into the ground.

5.2 Risk Assessment

Prior to work commencing the contractor will prepare a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or Job Safety Analysis (JSA) for the work that identified all the hazards, an assessment of the risks and appropriate risk controls.

5.3 Permit to Work

All excavation and demolition work will be conducted under a Permit to Work issued by IFS or the nominated representative. The Permit will be signed by the contractor and all the workers involved in the job to confirm that they understand the risk controls that will be applied. See the IFS Permit to Work Procedure.

5.4 Detection of Concealed Services

- When planning an excavation, identification of the location of services underground and in walls will be undertaken before work commences;
- Both the location and depth of services will be identified, including gas, water, sewers, electricity, telecommunication, drainage pipes and soak wells, fuel lines, storage tanks and others;
- The local utilities suppliers will be contracted prior to any excavation to assist with identifying concealed services i.e. **“Dial Before You Dig”**;
- IFS will maintain maps and records showing the location of underground services which will be made available to contractors when required;
- If unsuspected underground services are identified during preliminary excavation, work shall cease until the service provider has been contacted and the service isolated and made safe.

5.5 Other Risk Controls

- Contractors will provide support systems and retaining structures to protect their workers against cave-ins;
- Safe access will be provided for the area in and around the excavation or demolition so that the contractor’s workers can move freely and without risk;
- Barriers and warning signs will be erected if excavation work has the potential to place any staff member, student or other contractor at risk of injury if working in proximity to the excavation or demolition activity. Safe access will be provided for vehicle and pedestrian movement around the work site;
- Where dust emissions could be a hazard to staff, students, the contractor’s workers and other contractors who may be present in the area where work is being conducted, emissions will be minimised by extracting the dust at point of generation or using water for dust suppression;
- The risk assessment conducted at the start of the work will identify possible emergency situations that might arise as a result of the excavation or demolition and arrangements for managing such a situation will be included in the contractor’s SWMS or JSA and also in the Permit to Work.

5.5 Completion of the Work

- At the completion of the work, the contractor will clear the work site of all rocks, soil and other debris and return it, as far as is practicable, to its original condition;
- IFS will update drawings and other documentation to reflect any changes due to the work just completed;
- IFS or the nominated representative will confirm the contractor in charge of the excavation or demolition has completed the work and the Permit to Work has been satisfactorily signed off before closing the Permit.

6. References

[NSW Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011.](#)

[NSW WorkCover Demolition Work Code of Practice](#)

[NSW WorkCover Excavation Work Code of Practice](#)

[UON Health and Safety Framework](#)

[UON HSP 4.1 Health and Safety Risk Management](#)

[IFS Permit to Work Procedure](#)

7. Attachments

Nil

Document Control Table

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