Flinders UNIVERSITY
College of Science & Engineering

INSPIRING ACHIEVEMENT

WORKING AFTER HOURS OR IN ISOLATION PROTOCOL

Preamble

Working after hours or in isolation may alter the risk to an individual. Although the work hazards are the same as those associated with working any other time, the consequences of any incident are likely to be more severe. The potential increase in severity may result due to a range of factors including fatigue, security issues, the ability to deal with an incident should something go wrong, (e.g. access to medical help, fire wardens, management of a chemical spill or access to critical advice).
This protocol will provide the structure for the College to manage flexible working hours and the realities of University working requirements, whilst managing the associated work health and safety risks related to working after hours or in isolation.

1.0 Purpose

This protocol defines the steps that must be taken when work is to be undertaken after hours or in isolation.

2.0 Scope

This protocol applies to all work and study conducted on Flinders University campuses by staff, students, volunteers and visitors when working after hours or in isolation.

This protocol **does not** apply to Field Work. Reference should be made to the requirements for field work procedures on the WHS web site (Field work).

The requirements for managing events, including risk assessments and security arrangements are covered under Event Safety guidelines (Event safety guidelines). This includes working on other organisation sites.

The procedures for Contractors are covered by Contractor Policy & Procedures see Contractor Safety for details.

3.0 Definitions

Working After hours	Typically (but not exclusively) working after hours would apply to: • Work conducted outside of normal work hours (Normal work hours being 8 am – 6 pm). • Weekends • Public holidays. • University Holidays

Working in Isolation	Working or studying in isolation may occur at any time when means of normal contact with others is not possible due to the isolated location of the workspace or lack of other individuals in the area.
Hazard	A situation or thing which has the potential to harm the health, safety or welfare of people at work.
Risk	The likelihood that a hazard will cause injury, illness or disease and the severity of that injury, illness or disease that may result.
Risk Assessment	The process of evaluating the likelihood and consequence of injury, illness or disease resulting from exposure to the hazard(s).
Controls	The process of implementing measures to reduce the risk associated with the hazard.
Hierarchy of controls	The priority order for the types of measures to be used to control hazards.
Inherently Low Risk Work	Includes attending group lectures, tutorials, seminars or classes. Desk based work such as computer work, reading, writing or other calculations and other administrative work performed on Flinders campuses.

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 Deans and Supervisors:

The implementation of this protocol is the responsibility of Deans and Supervisors.

All Supervisors who allow staff, students, volunteers or visitors after-hours access to University facilities must ensure that that risks associated with after-hours access are assessed, managed and controlled **prior** to approval for working after hours or in isolation is allowed.

This extends to ensuring:
1. that induction and emergency procedures training has been given (WHS Induction form).
2. that risk(s) have been assessed & controls are implemented.
3. that staff, students, volunteers or visitors are competent in the tasks that are to be performed and have received adequate training in the procedure, plant or area to be accessed.

4.2 Staff, Students, Volunteers, and Visitors

are responsible for:

1. ensuring that they complete induction training and are familiar with University emergency procedures (emergency procedures).

2. have been provided with all relevant contact details including Security and those specified as a control measure as part of this protocol (e.g. supervisor contact).

3. consulting with the line manager/supervisor in relation to developing appropriate measures to control risk associated with working after hours or in isolation.

4. not placing themselves or others at risk when working after hours or in isolation.

5.0 Procedures for Managing Working After-Hours or Working in Isolation.

Prior to allowing staff, students, volunteers or visitors to work after-hours or in isolation, the local area must address 4 main steps as outlined below:

1. ensuring the competency of the person.

2. access to buildings after hours is provided (*once this application form is completed it should be reviewed periodically– see section 5.2)*.

3. risk assessment – includes identifying the risks, assessing and controlling the hazards (including determining the level of supervision required).

4. ensuring the appropriate approval is obtained (*on CSE access approval form).*

5.1 Competency of the person seeking after-hours access.

The Supervisor giving any approval for working after hours or in isolation must determine that the person is competent to undertake the task(s) to be performed. The competency should include:

- Local work area induction & emergency procedures (WHS Induction form & emergency procedures).

- Specific training – on plant, task, hazardous substance etc. that is relevant to the person conducting the work in a safe manner.

This training must be documented and retained by the local area for seven (7) years.

5.2 After Hours Access to Buildings

5.2. Security Access

- Access to any areas in the College after-hours requires the CSE access approval form to be completed. This form only needs to be completed yearly by honours/masters students and every three years by PhD students and staff.

- The form must be signed by the Supervisor and should only be approved once the individual applying for access has completed Induction training (that also covers Emergency Procedures see 5.1).

- The form is then provided to Security via Service One whom will then enable access to nominated areas.

- Persons working after-hours must carry their staff or student identification card with them when accessing buildings after-hours. Security staff may request to see such identification and where this cannot be produced then the person will be requested to leave the area.

- Persons with access to the building after-hours must not provide access to others including other students, unless they are authorised to do so.

5.3 Risk Assessment

5.3.1 When to risk assess

Work or study that is to be undertaken by any staff, student, volunteers or visitors that occurs after hours or in isolation (**other than** those tasks that are considered *inherently low risk* tasks –see below in 5.3.2) **must** have a risk assessment completed prior to approval being granted and work commencing.

5.3.2 Inherently Low Risk Work

Some work, tasks and procedures are considered inherently low risk. By their very nature the risks associated with the work itself presents a very low risk. Because of this, inherently low risk work **DOES NOT** require a risk assessment **BUT DOES** require a *College access approval form* to be completed.

Inherently low risk work includes desk based work such as computer work, reading, writing or other calculations and other administrative work performed in College buildings. Note – if a desk is situated in an area such as a laboratory, workshop or studio, then it is only inherently low risk if no other activities are being conducted at that time.

5.3.3 Additional Risk Factors

For all other work other than that in 5.3.2, the risk assessment process must include assessing all components of the work to be undertaken (i.e. risk posed by plant, chemicals, activity or other) **plus** potential additional factors that may increase the risk when work is conducted after hours or in isolation.

Such **additiona**l risk factors may include:

- the hazards associated with the task when limited support, advice or supervision is available.
- possible consequences of unattended substances, equipment or experiments during after hours.
- the number of people present after hours (if any).
- the ability to obtain first aid or medical help.
- ease of communication.
- security issues.
- the journey to and from where the work is being conducted.
- a person's medical condition.
- fatigue.

The risk assessment will identify a risk rating for each task or process to be performed. Other hazards in the location, but not necessarily related to the task, must also be considered. e.g. working on the computer but in a high-risk laboratory where other work is being conducted.

The risk assessment must:

- identify all reasonably foreseeable hazards
- assess the risk(s)
- control the hazards to a level that is acceptable (reasonably practical) using the hierarchy of controls as described in the Flinders University WHS risk management policy risk management.

5.3.4. Identified Risk Rating.

The identified risk rating (except for work that is inherently low risk) will be low, medium, high or extreme. This rating is then used to determine:

- if after-hours access will be granted
- what additional controls maybe required –e.g. including presence of others or communication
- the level of authorisation required
- if the work/ task(s) can be undertaken after hours or when working in isolation.

❖ **Note** - **additional controls** must be implemented that cover **communication and/or supervision strategies** where identified risks are **medium, or high** for working after-hours or in isolation**.**

❖ Task that are rated **Extreme cannot** be undertaken after hours or when working in isolation. See **Table 1** for guidance.

5.3.5 Risk Assessment Forms.

The risk assessment should be performed and documented using one of the University Risk Assessment Forms. Electronic copies are available on the following link - (Risk Assessment forms).

5.3.6 Existing Risk Assessments

Existing risk assessments that have already been completed for the work that is to be undertaken may be used or referenced. However a risk assessment for the after-hours or working in isolation component must still occur to ensure that no additional or new risks exist.

5.3.7 Regular After Hours Work

For work which is undertaken on a **regular basis** after hours the same risk assessment can be utilised **BUT only if** the conditions as specified in the risk assessment are to remain the same for the period of approval. This includes that the same staff member is performing the task and that they are competent & trained.

5.4. Approval to Work After Hours or in Isolation

5.4.1 Undergraduate Students

- Undergraduate students (with the exception of Honours students) are **not** to be given access to laboratories, workshops, theatres, animal houses or other similar facilities without **direct**

supervision of a Flinders University Staff member. Exceptions may be made if the activity is a low risk processes (e.g. feeding of fish in tanks) and that there are additional controls in place e.g. communication, working in pairs etc. These student activities must seek approval from the Dean, People and Resources before they commence the work.

- Undergraduate Students are able to perform data analysis, computer tasks, reading, writing & other inherently low risk tasks in open computer pools, common study facilities and libraries.

5.4.2 Approval Process

Approval to work after-hours or in isolation must be documented on the *College access approval form*. The level of approval will depend on the risk.

- ❖ Low and medium risk work can be approved by the Supervisor.
- ❖ High risk work must have approval by the Dean, People and Resources.
- ❖ Extreme risk work **cannot** be undertaken after hours.

The approval process must specify**:**

- Duration of the approval.
- Process, equipment, work or areas involved.
- Verification that a risk assessment has been completed.

5.4.3. Record keeping

Once the *College access approval form* has been approved, it should be submitted to Security via Service One. These records (hard copy or electronic) must be maintained for seven years.

5.5 Summary of Forms Required

In summary the forms for approval for working after-hours or in isolation (unless otherwise specified) are:

- ❖ The *College access approval form*
- ❖ Risk Assessment (existing risk assessments can be referenced / used but the working alone or in isolation factors may need to be considered).

5.6 Local Area Protocols

Local areas may have additional restriction or requirements to certain facilities or areas. This is at the discretion of the Area Supervisor who can decide whom, what and when access is granted. Regardless of local area protocols for access, the need to include a risk assessment and the additional controls outlined in Table 1 are the **minimum** requirements.

6.0 Recommended Controls for Identified Risk Categories for After Hours or in Isolation.

Table 1 provides examples of risk categories for working & studying after hours or isolation (except for inherently low risk). This list cannot be exhaustive due to the nature and complexity of University work.

Each task must be assessed on its own particular requirements, local conditions & the persons training and competency. Recommendations on additional controls that need to be implemented are relative to the risk rating and are in addition to controls that would be implemented to manage the hazard, i.e. use of fumehood, wearing PPE etc.

TABLE 1

Risk Category	**Examples of Activity**	**Additional Controls to be implemented & Approval Required**
Low	Routine laboratory/studio functions that are part of a standard operating procedure that has been demonstrated and documented as low risk. Sample measurements provided that it does not involve any significant quantities (<500ml) of hazardous chemicals or equipment under pressure. Sampling and maintenance of tissue cultures or other biological sources (e.g. plants). Microscope examinations Delivery & set up of audio-visual or other computer equipment. Accessing cold rooms (>0 ^{o}C) only to place materials in storage (i.e. not to work in the cold room) Checking and assessment of plant and equipment that does not involve hazardous chemicals, high pressure or electrical hazards. Routine feeding, care or sampling of animals <15kg.	Where the work/study have been assessed as low risk then the work can occur after hours or in isolation. **Approval - Supervisor**

Risk Category	Examples of Activity	Additional Controls to be implemented & Approval Required
Medium	Laboratory / studio work involving the use of >2.5L or kg of chemicals that are moderately hazardous (as classified by Chemwatch Gold FFX). Distillation/ evaporation of flammable solvents (< 2L). Use of electrophoresis equipment with safety interlock functions. Assembling or modifying equipment where chemicals or electrical hazards may be present as long as chemicals are only moderately hazardous (as classified by Chemwatch Gold FFX). The use of naked flames around small amounts (<0.25L) of flammable solvent as in biological/ micro labs. Use of low-level radiation in routine procedures (<1 MBq). Accessing plant under pressure e.g. HPLC, freeze dryer, rotary evaporators. Standard surgical procedures on small animals (< 15kg) this includes post mortem analysis. Accessing cold rooms (>0 ^{o}C) for periods of time (<30min) Working with risk group 2 microorganisms	**Pre-arranged reporting schedule to an authorized person.** Staff & students are able to undertake these activities after hours or in isolation as long as a pre-arranged reporting schedule to an authorized person e.g. Supervisor has been agreed and set in place. This should include reporting arrival time, at appropriate intervals (e.g. approx. hourly) & departure. **Approval - Supervisor**

Risk Category	Examples of Activity	Conditions/ Controls to be implemented
High *(Australian Standards AS 2243.1: 2005 Safety In Laboratories states that where work is risk assessed as high, that these tasks shall not be undertaken by personnel working in isolation)*	Working with or near highly toxic, corrosive or flammable substances (as classed by Chemwatch Gold FFX) where there is significant risk of exposure. Operating equipment or machinery capable of inflicting serious injury e.g. workshop machinery, chain saws, lathes, power saws. Using apparatus that could explode, implode or release high energy fragments or hazardous material. Working with radioactive material (> 1MBq) Working with closed or semi closed X ray systems Using Class 3 laser beams or above. It does not include realignment. Accessing freezer rooms (<0^{O}C). Handling large animals >15kg, including euthanasia & post mortem. Handling any venomous animals (snakes, spiders, insects, arthropods & fish). Working or studying with exposed energised electrical or electronic systems with voltages exceeding 50 V a.c. or 120 V ripple free d.c. Note these limits apply to dry indoor conditions. If other conditions are present then a more conservative approach is needed. Working at heights including climbing ladders. Working environments not at atmospheric pressure where the risk of a low or toxic atmosphere may occur.	At least **two people must be working togethe**r or nearby. i.e. a **Buddy system** Before this type of work is approved then arrangements must be made for another authorised person to be in the workplace for the period of time that the work is occurring. The buddy must understand clearly all emergency provisions & be able to access help. The buddy may also need specific skills to provide advice and supervision of the tasks. These tasks must only be carried by those that have been trained and have extensive experience in the work procedures. **Approval – Dean People and Resources** Security must be notified of entry & departure time

Risk Category	Examples of Activity	Conditions/ Controls to be implemented
Extreme	Working with hydrofluoric acid. Working with scheduled poisons 4, 8 or 9. Accessing bulk liquid nitrogen stores. Use or alignment of open class 3 & 4 lasers. Working with radioactive materials >2MBq or Open X ray sources. As required by AS2243.4 Working with bulk hazardous chemicals (>50L) e.g. in stores, including chemical disposal. Working with microorganisms of Risk group 3 & higher or that require use of a PC3 facility. Working in confined spaces (as defined in AS 2865 is never allowed to occur in isolation & is covered in the OHS Regulations) Working with high powered or fast-moving machinery. Work at heights e.g. on to roof structures. Work involving high voltages.	**This work is too hazardous and must <u>not</u> be undertaken outside of normal working hours.**

7.0 Experiments Left Unattended

Experiments or equipment left overnight or unattended - such as ovens, electrical equipment, reactions on benches etc. should be clearly labelled by a card or log book system in place.

The card or log book is designed to allow Security staff or others who may discover the work to know exactly what it is and who they should contact if there is an issue.

The card or log book must record the following:

- **The words "Experiment in progress. Please leave"**
- **The date**
- **Name & contact details of the person running the experiment**
- **Potential hazards**
- **Any chemical names & warnings**
- **Emergency shut down instructions if applicable.**

8.0 Legal Frame Work & References

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)
Flinders University WHS risk management policy
Flinders University Event Safety procedures
Flinders University Contractor Safety
AS 2243.1 Safety in laboratories Part 1: Planning & Operational aspects.
AS 2243.4 Safety in laboratories –Ionizing radiation
AS 2865 –Confined space

9.0 Review

The protocol should be reviewed every 4 years to ensure it remains effective, relevant and appropriate to the University and current legislation.

Working after hours/isolation flow chart