

Faculty of Science and Health

Working After Hours or Alone Procedure

Section 1 –Purpose

- (1) This procedure outlines processes in place within the Faculty of Science and Health to reduce risk involved with working after hours or alone.

Scope

- (2) This procedure applies to:
- a. all after hours work in the laboratories, specialist teaching spaces clinics and fieldwork.
 - b. the use of hazardous chemical, plant, equipment and substances where the individual is in an isolated location during any work hours.
 - c. work conducted during the annual university closure period.
- (3) This procedure does not cover working in confined spaces.

Section 2 – Policy

- (4) Refer to relevant policies
- a. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
 - b. Risk Management Policy
 - c. FOSH Research WHS Requirements Policy and Procedure

Section 3 – Procedures

- (5) Working after hours or alone is subject to evaluation of risks associated with the work proposed.
- (6) Approval to work outside regular hours or working alone should be considered as part of the risk assessment process for low and medium level risk activities.
- (7) Approval to complete high risk activities outside regular hours or alone must be obtained by completing appropriate risk assessment and a Working after hours or alone authorisation form (authorisation form required for high-risk activities only).

Part A: Roles and Responsibility

- (8) Facility Managers are responsible for:
- Implementing the working after hours or alone procedure
 - Defining 'normal working hours' for FOSH Facilities
 - Identifying high risk facilities (recorded in risk rating document)
 - Assessing applications for working after hours or alone through the risk assessment process (for low and medium risk) and Working after hours or alone authorisation form (for high-risk activities).
 - Approving the Working after hours or alone authorisation (high risk activities)
 - Assessing and approving after hours work during university close down period.
- (9) Heads of School/Associate Heads of School/Centre Directors are responsible for:
- Ensuring the working after hours or alone procedure is implemented.
 - Final approval for staff and higher degree students to work after hours or alone when undertaking work in medium and high-risk areas, or where the risk involved is assessed as being medium to high (see FOSH Risk Assessment Procedure)
 - Signing the Working after hours or alone authorisation (high risk activities)
- (10) Staff, higher degree students and authorised persons are responsible for:
- Ensuring they understand their duty of care responsibilities.
 - Ensuring all after hours and working alone procedures are followed.
 - Completing a risk assessment, in consultation with their supervisor, that details control measures for working after hours or alone.

Part B: Managing After Hours and Alone Work

Pre-approval process

- (11) Before seeking to work after hours or alone the individual requesting approval, in consultation with their supervisor and the Facility Manager, must:
- Complete a project/task risk assessment (see FOSH Risk Assessment Procedure) including why work needs to be done outside normal working hours or alone.
 - Have proficiencies assessed by Supervisor, Facility Manager or appropriate delegate.
 - Have project risk assessment approved in accordance with the Risk Assessment procedure.
 - Obtain approval through completion of Working after hours or alone authorisation form (for high-risk activities – see [table 1](#)).

Risk Assessment

- (12) Working after hours or alone is an identified risk and shall be assessed through the project risk assessment (see FOSH Risk Assessment Procedure) and in line with [Table 1 Risk rating and acceptable activities for after hours or alone work](#)
- (13) Additional risk management strategies for work undertaken after hours or alone should be included in the project risk assessment as the level of risk under these conditions may be higher than under normal working conditions.

- (14) Where an existing risk assessment does not provide details of working after hours or alone activities, an additional risk assessment is required to be completed and approved prior to commencement of work.
- (15) Where applicable, safe work procedures for equipment use and processes should be included in risk assessment documentation.
- (16) Field work that is completed after hours or alone must adhere to AS 2243.1:2021. Appropriate risk assessments, field maps and field trip summaries must be completed as per Research WHS Requirements Procedure.
- (17) If a risk assessment identifies that a task is high/very high risk, these tasks cannot be undertaken by a person working in isolation in accordance with AS 2243.1:2021.

Proficiency

- (18) Only workers who are deemed proficient may work after hours or alone. Proficiency is assessed by the Supervisor, Line Manager or Facility Manager. Records are filed by the Facility Manager as per the FOSH Research WHS Requirements Policy and Procedure.
- (19) Where activities and equipment usage require specialist training, individuals must provide evidence of proficiency through individual training records for approval by Facility Manager.

Evaluating level of risk for after hours or alone work

- (20) All proposed activities that will occur outside normal work hours or alone should be assessed using [Table 1](#) to determine the appropriate level of approval required.
- (21) Where an activity involves very high-risk activities ([Table 1](#)), no work is allowed to be conducted after hours or by individuals working alone.
- (22) If unplanned after hours or working alone activities are required (e.g. tending to injured animal after hours), the facility manager should be contacted/approve of the work before work can proceed. The following conditions apply
 - a. No very high- or high-risk work to be undertaken alone as per Table 1.
 - b. Risk assessments and SWPs should be developed in advance where possible to ensure that appropriate risk management strategies are in place. If unexpected events arise requiring after hours or alone work without appropriate risk assessment, facility manager should be consulted for risk management strategies and approval.
- (23) Work being carried out during the annual university closure.
 - a. Should be evaluated using [Table 1](#) for approval.
 - b. May require additional levels of risk management and additional procedures to be implemented due to the extended time after hours or alone work. This is to be determined through consultation with the Facility Managers.

Table 1 Risk rating and acceptable activities for working after hours or alone

Risk Rating	How to apply	Approval	Justification	Explanation and examples
Very High	NO work to be done at this risk level	WORKING ALONE: NO work to be done at this risk level WORKING AFTER HOURS: NO work to be done at this risk level	Although these activities may be approved in a project risk assessment as acceptable during normal working hours, activities identified in this category are not approved for work after hours or by individuals working alone as per AS 2243.1:2021.	Activities that carry a very high risk to individuals working after hours or alone. Examples include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using naked flames and flammable solvents • Working in cool rooms • Using power tools/equipment capable of inflicting serious injury • Working with radioisotopes • Working with microorganisms Risk group 3
High Risk	Risk assessment* <u>and</u> Working after hours or alone application form *RA must outline work to be complete alone or after hours and specific safety controls to reduce after hours risk	WORKING ALONE: NO work to be done at this risk level for anyone working on their own WORKING AFTER HOURS: Working after hours or alone application form approved by Facility Manager and HOS (with recommendation from supervisor as appropriate) Risk assessment approved by Facility Manager and HOS as per Risk assessment procedure	No work at this level of risk should be completed ALONE as per AS 2243.1:2021 High risk work may be completed after hours where the work is not carried out by an individual who will be alone (i.e. supervision or support is available after hours, for example using a buddy system) The proposed activity can only proceed for competent workers if all controls are in place and the task cannot be undertaken during normal working hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities that are assessed in a risk assessment as high (with the exception of activities listed as very high above) • Use of large volumes of hazardous chemicals • Dispensing liquid nitrogen • Working in a high-risk facility as per facility risk rating (e.g., a facility with unrestricted access to high-risk hazardous chemicals, radiation sources, risk category 3 microorganisms, large high-risk machinery) • Large animal handling (not including feeding or observation) • Working in remote locations including zones prone to storm events and earthquakes. • See also High-Risk Activities AS 2243.1:2021 for examples.
Medium risk	Risk assessment* *RA must outline work to be complete alone or after hours	WORKING ALONE: Facility Manager and Supervisor WORKING AFTER HOURS: Facility Manager and Supervisor	The proposed activity can proceed for a competent worker with appropriate controls and an approved risk assessment. The competency/proficiency of the individual conducting the work should be considered when approving a risk assessment with working after hours or alone activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking medium risk laboratory work as identified in project risk assessment in medium/low-risk facility. • Working with small volumes of hazardous substances where the risk assessment identifies the risk as moderate/medium
Low Risk	Risk assessment* *RA must outline work to be complete alone or after hours	WORKING ALONE: Facility Manager and Supervisor WORKING AFTER HOURS: Facility Manager and Supervisor	The proposed activity can proceed for a competent worker with appropriate controls and an approved risk assessment. The competency/proficiency of the individual conducting the work should be considered when approving a risk assessment with a working after hours or alone component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking laboratory low risk work as identified in project risk assessment. • Generally defined as staff and students undertaking office-based work where the areas being accessed are clearly defined. • Low risk work may also include accessing a laboratory space to store items only (e.g., samples to be stored in refrigerator) and no other work is being conducted.

Conditions for after hours or alone work

- (24) The conditions for working after hours or alone are as follows. Individuals must have:
- approval as per Table 1
 - signed Annual University close down form (for work occurring during university close down only)
 - a subscription to CSU Campus Alerts for emergency notifications
 - access to mobile phone or other means of reliable communication in the facility where the work is being conducted.
 - CSU identification card carried at all times.
 - personal security measures undertaken e.g., lock external doors, walk in well-lit areas, request security escort if required.
 - notified Campus security of the work after hours, details of individuals undertaking the work, the nature of the work being completed, and potential risks associated. Security staff must be notified of expected arrival and departure times.
 - a review completed, at a nominated time, ensuring the effectiveness of the work procedures.

Review

- (25) Approval to work after hours or alone should be reviewed when there are any changes to the work, equipment, or locations.
- (26) Approval to complete high risk activities outside of regular hours or alone should be reviewed every 12 months.

Part C: Disputes

- (27) If a dispute cannot be resolved it shall be referred to the Manager, Work Health, and Safety for assessment. Work cannot commence until resolution is reached by all parties.

Part D: Failure to comply and disciplinary actions.

- (28) Staff, students, or researchers failing to follow this procedure will be subject to the University's CSU Code of Conduct
- (29) Actions to be taken where non-compliance with working after hours or alone procedure have not been followed by an individual:
- First non-compliance incident
 - A non-compliance email will be sent to the individual (staff/student/visitor) by the Facility manager detailing the nature of the non-compliance. If individual is a student, a copy of the non-compliance email must be sent to the supervisor.
 - A copy of the relevant procedures should be attached to non-compliance email.
 - Second non-compliance incident
 - Second non-compliance email will be sent to the individual by the Facility manager detailing the nature of the non-compliance.
 - Warnings should be issued stating that if non-compliance continues, access to facility will be removed.
 - The supervisor and Associate Head of School/Centre Director should be copied into second non-compliance email.
 - Third non-compliance incident
 - Third non-compliance email sent to individual, supervisor and Associate Head of School/Centre Director detailing advice of third non-compliance and the removal of after-hours access to facility.

Part E: References and Related University Documents

- (30) AS 2243.1:2021 Safety in Laboratories Planning and operational aspects.
- (31) After Hours or Working Alone Authorisation form
- (32) Risk Assessment Procedure
- (33) WHS Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- (34) [FOSH Research WHS Requirements Policy and Procedure](#)
- (35) Model Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities

Section 4 - Guidelines

- (36) Nil

Section 5 - Glossary

- (37) For the purpose of this policy, the following terms have the definitions stated:
 - a. Work after hours – work completed outside the hours of 7 am – 7 pm or hours specified by individual Facility Managers where appropriate.
 - b. Work alone – work that is undertaken by an individual in isolation when they cannot be seen or heard by another person and when they do not expect a visit from another person for some time.
 - c. Non-compliance- any action taken by an individual that does not adhere to the Working after hours or alone procedure. For example, completing very high- or high-risk activities without approval, not subscribing to CSU alerts, not having access to a phone during the work or failing to notify security of presence on campus after hours.
 - d. Very high/high risk activities- are based on high-risk hazards outlined in AS 2243.1:2021 Safety in Laboratories Planning and operational aspects.
 - e. Proficient – a competent person who has acquired through training, qualifications or experience, or a combination of these, the knowledge and skills enabling that person to perform a specified task

Appendix A

AS 2243.1:2021

High risk hazards

B.1 Scope

This Appendix lists high risk hazards which may be encountered by persons working in laboratories or in the field.

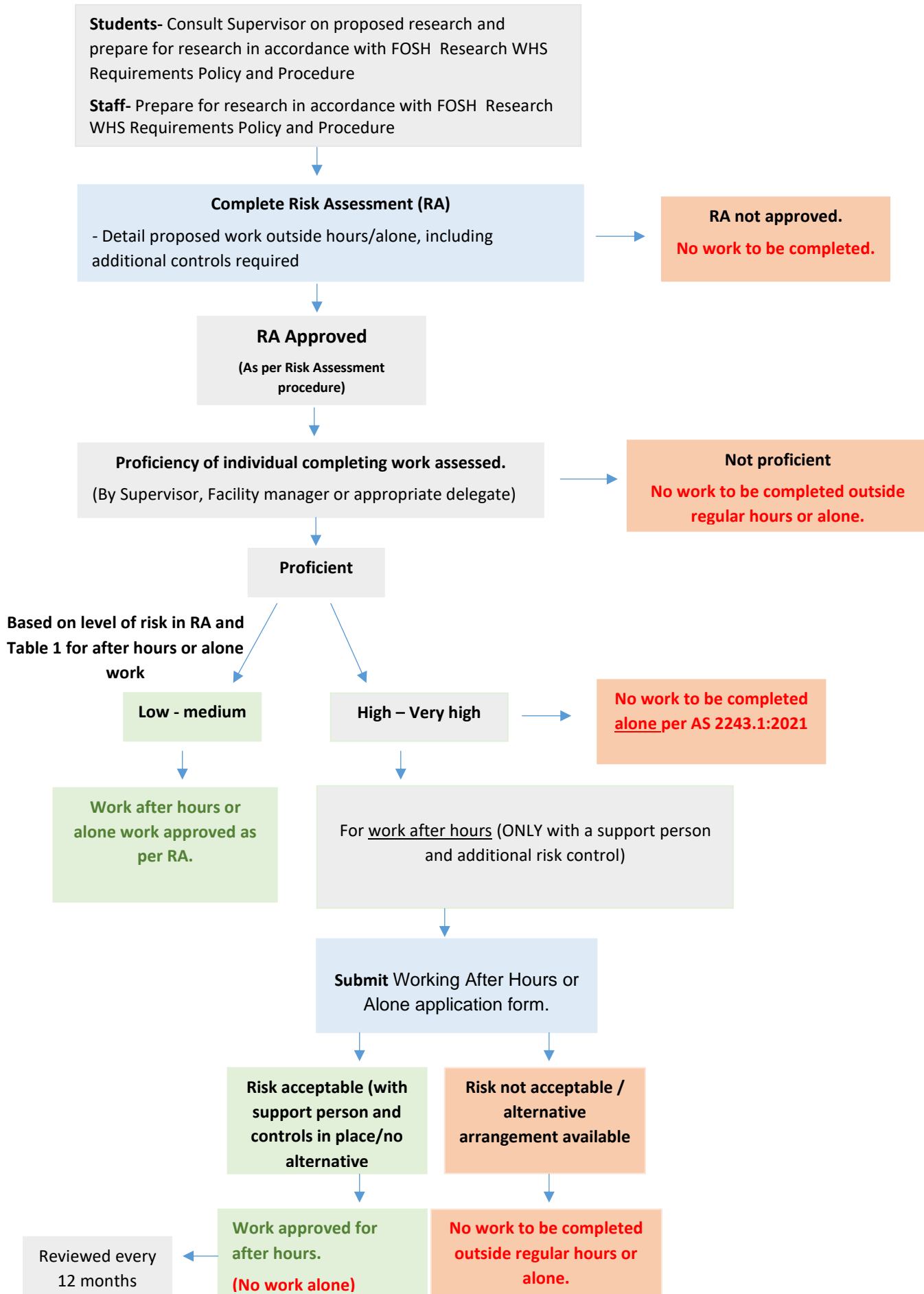
B.2 High risk hazards

High risk hazards which may be encountered include the following:

- a. Operating equipment or machinery, including workshop machinery, capable of inflicting serious injury, such as chainsaws, firearms, lathes and power saws.
- b. Handling venomous reptiles, insects, arthropods or fish.
- c. Working with large animals other than for the purpose of feeding or observation.
- d. Working with, or near, toxic, corrosive substances or nanomaterials where there is a significant risk of exposure to the substance, taking into account the volume used.
- e. Using apparatus that could result in explosion, implosion, or the release of high energy fragments or significant amounts of toxic or environmentally damaging hazardous material, including pressure vessels. (Refer to AS 1210 for pressure vessel requirements.)
- f. Climbing towers or high ladders.
- g. Working with exposed energized electrical or electronic systems with nominal voltages exceeding 50 V a.c. or 120 V ripple-free d.c. NOTE These limits are for dry, indoor conditions and a more conservative approach should be taken in other conditions.
- h. Working with radionuclides requiring a high-level laboratory in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.4.
- i. Working with microorganisms of Risk Group 3 and higher, or which require the use of a Containment Level 3 facility or higher containment level in accordance with AS/NZS 2243.3.
- j. Operating lasers of Class 3B and above.
- k. Working in environments not at atmospheric pressure.
- l. Working in the field or remote locations, including working in zones prone to volcanic seismic/earthquake and storm events.

Appendix B

Approval Flow Chart for Working after hours or alone



Status and Details

Effective Date	19/12/2025
Review Date	Policies and procedures must be reviewed at latest by 3 years. Guidelines as required.
Approval Authority	See the Delegation and Approval Policy, delegation schedule A for advice on approval authorities for different document types.
Unit Head	Faculty of Science and Health
Author	<div>0.16/2009Draft</div> <div>0.21/2011Included more definitions/LD</div> <div>0.38/2011Amended K Kent</div> <div>0.48/2011Amended L Hawkins</div> <div>1.08/2011LHawkins 1.1</div> <div>1.110/2018Amended J Poposki</div> <div>1.24/2024Amended J. Newman</div> <div>1.312/2025Amended J Newman</div>
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