Health and Safety Policy

Purpose/objective

The purpose of this policy is to document the Australasian Academy of Higher Education's commitment to a safe and healthy working environment, to high standards of work health, safety and injury management, and to work health and safety legislation. The policy sets out the requirements on all persons in the workplace that support this commitment, and it specifies AAHE's work, health and safety governance and management arrangements.

Scope

This policy applies to all AAHE staff, students, visitors, contractors at all AAHE workplaces.

Definitions

Terms used in this document are defined in the AAHE Glossary.

Policy

1   AAHE has an obligation to ensure that its staff, students, contractors, and visitors are, as far as reasonably practicable, not exposed to risks to their health and safety arising out of AAHE's workplace or activities. To that end, AAHE complies fully with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria)[1], the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Victoria)[2], applicable codes of practice and Australian standards[3].

2   As part of its annual budget AAHE allocates resources, including training and instruction, to facilitate a safe and healthy working and learning environment.

3   AAHE endeavours to identify all potential emergency situations and procedures for response to prevent and mitigate workplace harm.

4   AAHE workers, students, contractors, and visitors also have a responsibility to contribute to the health and safety of the workplace. In particular, AAHE needs the cooperation of its workers, students and visitors to fulfill its commitment to:

   a)   promoting safety leadership and an organisational culture where health and safety are an integral part of management, work and study
   b)   taking a planned and systematic risk management approach to identifying hazards, assessing risk, eliminating or minimising risk, and monitoring and evaluating hazard control measures
   c)   encouraging staff, students and others to raise health and safety concerns without fear of reprisal

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[1] https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/occupational-health-and-safety-act-2004/036
[2] https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/statutory-rules/occupational-health-and-safety-regulations-2017/009
[3] https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/information-sheet-australian-and-other-standards

d) maintaining communication and consultation on work health and safety with staff, students and other relevant persons conducting AAHE business

e) consulting, cooperating and coordinating with parties who manage or control sites that not under AAHE's control or management but to which our staff or students are exposed

f) making available relevant training, safe systems of work, instruction, information and supervision to staff and students to enable them to perform their duties and study safely and effectively

g) maintaining an effective process for reporting and resolving health and safety issues

h) using internal and external expertise to improve workplace safety and injury management standards

i) providing effective support to staff to optimise recovery and return to work in the event of a work-related injury, and

j) managing workers' compensation claims promptly, fairly and equitably.

5   AAHE has in place a WHS risk management protocol to ensure that:

a) hazards associated with work processes are identified

b) risk assessments are conducted

c) control measures are implemented and reviewed, and

d) the risk management process is evaluated.

Procedure

1   Management

1.1   The WHS Committee is responsible for the management and oversight of AAHE's Health and Safety Policy.

1.2   The WHS Committee comprises the Executive Management Committee (EMC), plus a staff representative if staff choose to establish a Designated Work Group and elect a representative in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

1.3   The WHS Committee meets at least once a quarter (or more at the request of the employee representative) and Work Health and Safety is a standing item on the Executive Management Committee and Board of Directors meeting agendas.

1.4   In the event of a critical incident, an Incident Response Handler will be appointed by the Chief Executive Officer from among the EMC or, if appropriate, the IT/LMS Manager (see Critical Incident Policy)

2   Resources

EMC will identify and provide adequate resources to implement and maintain AAHE's Work Health and Safety Policy, including technology and personnel with specialist skills as required.

3   Compliance

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the documentation of procedures and for ensuring compliance with AAHE's legal and other obligations (such as Australian Standards). These legal and other obligations are communicated to employees through the staff induction program, email updates and staff meetings.

4 Hazard identification and risk

4.1 Hazard identification is planned via routine inspections and mandated risk assessments conducted by the office of the Chief Operating Officer for specified activities.

4.2 The Chief Operating Officer maintains hazard registers of the campus which identify activities and services (including those of contractors and suppliers) over which AAHE has control or influence. The hazard registers are periodically reviewed and enable logging of corrective actions to ensure effective controls are identified and actioned.

4.3 Hazard identification takes into account:

    a) AAHE work situations and activities that have the potential to cause harm
    b) The nature of potential harm, and
    c) AAHE's incident, illness and injury history.

4.4 Hazard identification is facilitated by:

    a) Audits
    b) Inspection and monitoring
    c) Observation
    d) Analysis of hazard reports
    e) Analysis of damaging incidents and dangerous occurrence history
    f) Expert knowledge, and
    g) Staff consultation

5 Critical incidents

Refer to AAHE's Critical Incident and Business Continuity Management Policies.

6 Responsibility and accountability

Responsibilities of Executive Management
• Consult with AAHE staff and students in relation to health and safety matters.
• Make available adequate budgetary provision to comply with health and safety legislation and AAHE's Work Health and Safety Policy
• Accountability for their performance in managing health and safety in areas under their control.
• WHS responsibilities are appropriately defined and included in all position descriptions and the performance review process where appropriate.
• Inform themselves on the nature of WHS risks in their areas and have an understanding of any associated hazards and risks.
• Delegate responsibility for the management of hazards and risks to their supervisees as appropriate.
• WHS is a standing agenda item in EMC meetings.
• Attend any scheduled WHS training sessions for managers.
• Annual review and report to the Board of Directors on AAHE's hazard identification, control and risk management performance.

Responsibilities of Staff and Students
- Ensure their actions or inaction does not place themselves or other persons at risk of injury or illness.   - Ensure the timely reporting of all hazards, near misses, incidents and injury or illness to their immediate supervisor or lecturer.   - Take action to avoid, eliminate or minimise hazards.   - Undertake scheduled safety orientation, induction or training provided to them.   - Comply with all AAHE WHS procedures, guidelines and rules developed by WHS Committee.   - Seek information or advice where necessary before carrying out new or unfamiliar work.   - Make themselves familiar with emergency and evacuation procedures in areas they access including the location of emergency equipment.   - Comply with the instructions given by emergency response personnel such as emergency wardens and first aiders.
Critical Incident Response Handler
Refer to AAHE's Critical Incident Policy
Contractors
Contractor WHS responsibilities are set out in tender and contract documents.

WHS responsibilities are reinforced through induction, training sessions, and the annual performance review process.

7   Reporting

7.1   WHS management reports are a standing item on the Board of Directors agenda.

7.2   EMC presents an annual summary report to the Board of Directors on Work Health and Safety, including hazard identification, controls, risk management and critical incidents.

7.3   As required by the Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004), Statutory Notification to *Worksafe Victoria*[4] occurs whenever a workplace incident results in:

- death
- a person needing medical treatment within 48 hours of being exposed to a substance
- a person needing immediate treatment as an in-patient at a hospital
- a person needing immediate medical treatment for one of the following injuries:
    - amputation
    - serious head injury or serious eye injury
    - extensive removal of skin

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[4] https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/report-incident-criteria-notifiable-incidents

- o   electric shock

- o   spinal injury

- o   loss of a bodily function, or

- o   serious lacerations.

Related documents and relevant legislation

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021, Section 2.3
TEQSA Guidance Note: Wellbeing and Safety
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria 2004)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 (Victoria 2007)
Safe Work Australia Information Sheet – Australian and Other Standards
Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Policy
[Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (legislation.gov.au)](legislation.gov.au)
National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Staff Code of Conduct
Equity and Diversity policy
Critical Incident Policy
Risk Management Policy
Business Continuity Management Policy
Performance Management Policy

Document information

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1	Board of Directors	15/7/21	1/10/23	