Related Policy: Work Health and Safety Policy

Responsible Officer: Executive Director, Infrastructure Services and Development

Approved by: Executive Director, Infrastructure Services and Development

Approved and commenced: November, 2014

Review by: November, 2014

Responsible Organisational Unit: Infrastructure Services and Development (Infrastructure Planning and Compliance Unit)

CONTENTS

1 Objective ................................................................................................................... 2
2 Scope ........................................................................................................................ 2
3 Procedure .................................................................................................................. 2
3.1 Permits ...................................................................................................................... 2
3.2 Risk Assessment ....................................................................................................... 2
3.3 Risk Control ............................................................................................................... 2
3.3.1 Signage ..................................................................................................................... 3
3.3.2 Training ..................................................................................................................... 3
3.4 Emergency Response ............................................................................................... 3
3.5 Ladders ..................................................................................................................... 4
3.6 Permit to Work Register ............................................................................................. 5
3.7 Responsibilities .......................................................................................................... 5
4 Definitions and Acronyms ........................................................................................ 6
5 Supporting Documentation ........................................................................................ 8
6 Versioning ................................................................................................................. 8
1 Objective
The objective of this Procedure is to establish the minimum requirements for the management of risks associated with working at heights at University of Tasmania (University) workplaces.

2 Scope
This Procedure applies to all University of Tasmania activities that involve working at heights where there is the risk of a worker or other person falling or being struck by falling objects from any height, including the use of ladders.

3 Procedure

3.1 Permits
For works being undertaken in occupied buildings, known permit requirements and risk issues shall be provided by the University to the contractor via the University’s Asset Management Information System (AMIS) Work Request communication system.

A Working at Heights Permit shall be completed and approved by a Permit to Work (PTW) Co-ordinator prior to work being performed:

- at a height of 2 metres or above or
- at a height less than 2 metres if identified as a risk assessment control.

In addition to a Working at Heights Permit, other permits may be required including an Excavation, Penetration and Demolition Permit if work involves excavation greater than 1.5m in depth (refer to the University Excavation, Penetration and Demolition Procedure).

3.2 Risk Assessment
Permits to work shall be issued subject to the provision of a current Safe Work Methods Statement (SWMS) for the task being undertaken and completion of the University’s Take5 Safety Analysis (or similar).

Risk assessment and control methodologies are detailed in the following Codes of Practice:

- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing the risks of falls at workplaces
- Managing falls in housing construction and
- Hazardous manual tasks.

3.3 Risk Control
The University shall, as far as is reasonably practicable, eliminate or control hazards in the workplace in accordance with the hierarchy of control.

Specific control measures relating to fall hazards are to be implemented in the following order:

a) Ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that any work that may involve a fall hazard is carried out on the ground or on a solid construction
b) if a) is not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised by using a passive fall prevention device

c) if a) and b) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised using a work positioning system

d) if a), b) and c) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised using a fall arrest system

e) if a), b), c) and d) are not reasonably practicable, then the risk must be minimised by implementing the following risk control measures:
   - using a ladder
   - an administrative control
   - all other reasonably practicable risk control measures.

Risks associated with an object falling must be controlled by implementing one or more of the following risk control measures (in descending order of priority):

- provision of a safe means of raising and lowering plant, material and debris
- provision of a secure physical barrier to prevent objects falling freely from one level to another
- use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- administrative controls
- other reasonably practicable risk control measures.

All plant/equipment used when working at heights shall comply with current Australian Standards and must have the relevant Australian Standard clearly marked on it. Relevant equipment (such as a safety harness) shall also be inspected prior to use to confirm it is in fit and proper condition and safe to use.

3.3.1 Signage

For work carried out at height that poses a risk to people below from falling objects, access shall be restricted and, as far as reasonably practicable barricaded. Signage shall be erected that clearly states: “Keep Clear – Working at Heights. Beware of Falling Objects”.

3.3.2 Training

Workers shall be provided with the information, training instruction and supervision necessary to protect them from risks to their health and safety for the type of working at heights activities they may be performing or supervising.

3.4 Emergency Response

Appropriate emergency and recue procedures and facilities must be established, provided, and tested to address fall hazards, including:
• emergency procedures relating to the use of risk control measures and
• procedures to rescue a worker who is exposed to a fall hazard and in need of emergency assistance.

When establishing emergency procedures, the following shall be taken into account:
• the type of plant and equipment being used, particularly elevated platform and knuckle booms
• location of the work area
• communication requirements
• the type of rescue equipment available and capabilities of rescuers;
• availability of local emergency services (if they are to be relied on for rescue).

3.5 Ladders

Working on ladders should be minimised and alternate methods introduced where possible and appropriate.

Where ladders must be used, the following requirements apply:
• a portable ladder used for University work activities must be:
  o Australian Standard compliant (AS 1892)
  o inspected regularly and before each use to ensure it is safe to be used
  o included/reviewed in the risk assessment of the project/task.
• a worker or other person setting up a ladder must ensure that it is:
  o suitable for the nature and duration of the work
  o set up on a solid, stable and level surface
  o secure to prevent slippage (e.g. secure top and bottom, on a ‘4:1 ratio’ slope, stepladder spreaders locked in the fully opened position)
  o extended at least one metre above, and with edge protection, at the stepping off point when accessing a working platform or roof
  o away from traffic/access areas (e.g. driveways and doorways) unless appropriate protection/barricading is in place
  o clear of power lines so that the worker or the ladder cannot make contact and
  o away from the edge of an open floor/penetration.
• a worker or other person using a ladder must ensure that:
o only one person is on the ladder at any given time

o materials or tools are not carried while climbing the ladder

o three points of contact are maintained and tools can be operated safely with one hand and that

o the user faces the ladder at all times, unless appropriate fall protection equipment is used in conjunction with the ladder.

For more comprehensive guidance on the selection, safe use and care of ladders, refer to the Safe Work Australia Code of Practice: How to prevent falls at the workplace.

3.6 Permit to Work Register

Organisational Units (OUs) shall maintain a Working at Heights Register of all physical locations and tasks that could cause harm due to a fall by either a person or an object. A template for recording this information is available in the University PTW Procedures.

OUs shall also maintain registers of working at heights equipment under their control (e.g. ladders), including inspection and maintenance records.

3.7 Responsibilities

**Officers** are responsible for ensuring that:

- this Procedure is implemented effectively within their area of responsibility; including the provision of appropriate supervision and that all relevant records are retained in accordance with the provisions of the University Records Management Policy and Procedure and the Work Health Safety Records Management Guidelines

- OU-specific guidelines are developed where necessary and that these are consistent with the provisions of in this Procedure

- risk assessments are reviewed, including review of the implementation and effectiveness of risk reduction control measures and

- ladders under their control are inspected regularly and before each use and

- a Working at Heights Register is maintained.

**PTW Issue Officers (Project Managers/Works Supervisors)** are responsible for:

- authorising and co-ordinating Working at Heights Permits

- ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and documented for Working at Heights activities

- retaining a copy of all authorised permits and risk assessments related to Working at Heights in accordance with the provisions of the University Records Management Policy and Procedure and the Work Health Safety Records Management Guidelines.
The Infrastructure Planning and Compliance Unit is responsible for:

- the provision of Working at Heights Permits and
- monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of this Procedure, including worker compliance.

All Workers and other persons are responsible for:

- performing work at heights in accordance with this procedure and any information, training or instruction they have received and
- inspecting equipment such as ladders and harnesses prior to each use.

4 Definitions and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Unit</td>
<td>Means the secondary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, reporting directly to the College Executive Deans, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative controls</td>
<td>For the purposes of this procedure, administrative controls include ‘no go’ areas, safe work procedures for working safely at height and using signs to warn people of a fall hazard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| College            | Means (a) the primary organisational unit in the academic structure of the University, as per Ordinance 14 – Academic Structure  
                        (b) the University College |
| Contractor          | For the purposes of this procedure, a contractor is any worker engaged by University to perform work for gain or reward other than an employee. |
| Employee            | For the purposes of this procedure, employee refers to any University staff member.                                                          |
| Executive Dean     | Means: (a) the Executive Dean of the relevant College, or (b) in relation to the University College, the Principal of the University College |
| Fall               | A fall by a person from one level to another.                                                                                               |
| Fall arrest system | Equipment designed to prevent or reduce the severity of an injury to a person if a fall does occur, for example, catch platforms, industrial safety nets and safety harnesses |
| Fall hazard        | A circumstance that exposes a worker performing University work or other person in the vicinity of the activities, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the worker or other person. This includes circumstances in which the worker/other person is:  
                        • in or on plant or a structure that is at an elevated level |
• in or on plant that is being used to gain access to an elevated level
• in the vicinity of an opening through which a person could fall
• in the vicinity of an edge over which a person could fall
• on or in the vicinity of a surface through which a person could fall or
• on or near the vicinity of a slippery, sloping or unstable surface.

Head of Academic Unit

The ways of controlling risk can be ranked from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. This ranking, known as the hierarchy of control, is as follows:

- **Eliminate** the hazard - Level 1
- **Substitute** the hazard with something safer
- **Isolate** the hazard from people - Level 2
- **Engineering** controls to reduce the risks
- **Administrative** actions to reduce the level of harm; - Level 3

**Personal Protective Equipment.**

Officer

Any person at the University who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the University is an Officer. As such, members of University Council, Boards, Committees, Senior Management Team, Executive Deans, Heads of Academic Units, and Organisational Unit Heads are deemed to be Officers at the University.

Organisational Unit

College, Faculty, School, Centre, University Institute, other University Entity, Division, Section or University Business Enterprise.

Other person

For the purposes of this procedure, ‘other persons’ refers to all other persons that may be at the University that are not workers, including students and visitors.

Passive fall prevention device

Equipment designed to prevent a fall and which, after installation, does not require ongoing adjustment, alteration or operation by a person to the means by which it is designed to prevent a fall. These include installing edge protection, using temporary work platforms such as scaffolding and elevating work platforms, guard railing safety mesh.

Permit to Work (PTW) Issue Officer

Normally the Project Manager or Supervisor who is in direct control of the work and responsible for coordinating and authorising permits and associated PTW activities.

Plant

Any machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement and tool, any component of any of those things, and anything fitted or connected to any of those things

Work positioning system

A system that involves the use of equipment, other than a temporary work platform, that enables a person or thing to be
positioned and safely supported at a location for the duration of the work being carried out, for example, travel restraint systems and industrial rope access systems.

**Worker**

Any person carrying out work in any capacity at the University, including work as an employee, contractor or subcontractor, employee of a labour hire company, outworker, apprentice or trainee, work integrated learning or work experience student and volunteer.

**Working at Heights**

Involves any activity or task conducted where there is a risk of a person or object falling, with particular attention when carried out:

- on any structure or plant being constructed or installed, demolished or dismantled, inspected, tested, repaired or cleaned
- on a fragile surface (e.g. cement sheeting roofs, rusty metal roofs, fibreglass sheeting roofs and skylights)
- on a potentially unstable surface (e.g. areas where there is potential for ground collapse)
- using equipment to work at an elevated level (e.g. when using elevating work platforms or portable ladders)
- on a sloping or slippery surface where it is difficult for people to maintain their balance (e.g. on glazed tiles)
- near an unprotected open edge (e.g. near incomplete stairwells) and
- near a hole, shaft or pit into which a worker could fall (e.g. trenches, lift shafts or service pits).

**Working at Heights Permit**

A University form that authorises working at heights activities. Permits are available from Property Services and on the University website, and must be authorised by a PTW Coordinator.

**5 Supporting Documentation**

- Relevant Model Codes of Practice (e.g. *How to Prevent Falls at Workplaces; First Aid in the Workplace*).
- *University Permit to Work Procedure*
- *University Excavation, Penetration and Demolition Procedure*
- *University Minimum Standard – Work Health and Safety Project and Task Risk Management*
- *University Records Management Policy and Procedure*
- *University Work Health Safety Records Management Guidelines*
- AS/NZS 1576 Scaffolding series
- AS/NZS 1657 Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders—Design, construction and installation
- AS/NZS 1891.1 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices—Harnesses and ancillary equipment
- AS/NZS 1891.2 supp:1-2001 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices—Horizontal lifeline and rail systems—Prescribed configurations for horizontal lifelines (Supplement to AS/NZS 1891.2:2001)
- AS/NZS 1891.3 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices—Fall-arrest devices
• AS/NZS 1891.4 Industrial fall-arrest systems and devices—Selection, use and maintenance
• AS/NZS 1892 Portable ladders series
• AS/NZS 4142.3 Fibre ropes—Man-made fibre rope for static life rescue lines
• AS/NZS 4389 Safety mesh
• AS/NZS 4488 Industrial rope access systems series
• AS/NZS 4488.2 Industrial rope access systems—Selection, use and maintenance
• AS/NZS 4576 Guidelines for scaffolding
• AS 2550.16 Cranes—Safe Use—Mast climbing work platforms.
• AS/NZS 4994 Temporary edge protection series

6 Versioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Version</td>
<td>Version 3 – Working at Heights Procedure; approved November 2014, amended in December 2017 to incorporate the final academic structure and change to nomenclature for Commercial Services and Development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>