



Safety Transformation Phase 2

Low-risk Area Guide

What does this guide aim to achieve?

- Help the ongoing definition of standards of safety and wellbeing as we aim for safety excellence.
- Improve safety performance in low-risk areas so workplace inspections can become straightforward and routine. This is not designed to replace any workplace inspection checklists.
- Provide focus areas for improvement.

Who is this guide for?

- Everyone who uses low-risk facilities, which is everyone! [Lean and 6S methodology](#) encourages us all to take responsibility for the continuous improvement of our spaces.
- It is written from the perspective of the primary occupants of the room/area.

What areas does this guide cover?

- [Low-risk areas](#) inspected at [6-monthly intervals](#), which typically include personal offices, hallways, meeting rooms, bathrooms, kitchens, storage spaces (onsite & offsite).

What does this guide NOT cover?

- Any room that contains higher risk materials such as hazardous chemicals, research samples, research radioactive sources.
- Any room where workshop activities are undertaken, including soldering.
- Any other room deemed higher risk and therefore inspected at 3-monthly intervals.
- These rooms must be brought to the attention through line management for Phase 2 Safety Transformation inspections.

Aspect	Compliant	Safety Excellence (compliance + best practice)
<p>What risks in your area are most likely to cause harm or have the most severe consequences?</p>  <p><i>Discuss Safety with your colleagues</i></p>	<p>Follow checklists designed to assist you to eliminate/mitigate hazards</p>	<p>Discuss within your area what constitutes a safe office environment. What are the less tangible systems and people factors that could be improved?</p> <p>Ask the questions: Would a change of business process make this room safer? Would an investment in safety equipment or processes make sense?</p> <p>Proactively follow the hazard flowchart. Implement meeting safety shares.</p> <p>Check the WHS unit safety shares to learn lessons from others.</p>
<p>Environment – Lighting</p>	<p>Sufficient light to perform tasks in that workspace.</p>	<p>Desks are placed in locations consistent with original room design, providing optimal light for workstations. If necessary, install new light fixtures to remediate poor light situations.</p>
<p>Environment – Ventilation, Temperature and Noise</p> 	<p>Adequate controls in place to keep these environmental factors within limits. Heaters are not allowed under desks.</p>	<p>Where environmentally responsible and feasible, people have the choice to control their own microclimate. (e.g., desk arrangements according to temperature preferences, individual fans, operable windows, headsets to reduce noise).</p> <p>Open plan offices have sufficient breakout spaces and private meeting rooms nearby.</p>
<p>Storage – Height</p>	<p>Large or heavy items should be stored at easily accessible heights to minimise the demands of handling.</p>	<p>Items used frequently are not stored above shoulder height.</p>

	<p>Frequently handled items (>1/month) should be placed within easy reach. Smaller, lightweight, and infrequently handled items may be stored in the lower or higher areas of a storage system.</p> <p>You have equipment to reach the items safely (not your office chair).</p>	<p>Equipment (e.g., step ladders) is readily available nearby from known and labelled locations.</p> <p>Wall-mounted shelves are mounted into studs behind the plaster board. They are not burdened beyond their rated capacity (e.g., by boxes of paper).</p> <p>Free-standing shelves are structurally attached to the wall if there is any possibility of toppling.</p> <p>ISD is engaged to perform maintenance activities to check for asbestos before drilling.</p>
<p>Storage – Systems</p>  <p><i>Credit: Pinterest/Livingedge</i></p>	<p>Fit for purpose storage system to suit the size, shape, and weight of items. No items, shelving or supports come into contact with light fittings or fire safety systems.</p> <p>The floor in office spaces is not being used for storage.</p> <p>Minimum 90cm clearance required for egress from any part of the room.</p>	<p>De-dusting, de-cluttering: Only items likely to be used in next 12 months to be retained. Find a more appropriate place for other items (personally owned items at home; infrequently used items put in storage rooms). Items of unknown origin, ownership, or usefulness to be removed, unless required by law.</p> <p>The safe working load is known and is marked on each shelf.</p> <p>Desks are free from clutter, allowing cleaners to clean properly.</p> <p>Design a new storage system that suits the future needs of the organisation. Labels/signage, flow of materials in and out of a room, clearing space for future projects.</p>
<p>Physical – Furniture</p>	<p>Furniture fit-for-purpose and in good condition.</p> <p>Screws and bolts of desk and chair are fastened securely.</p>	<p>Obtain and dispose of furniture from UTAS' Re-use program.</p> <p>Unnecessary furniture is disposed of.</p>

<p>Physical – Chair setup</p>	<p>Chair height is adjusted so your elbows are bent at 90 degrees</p>	<p>Old uncomfortable chairs are disposed of.</p> <p>You have spent 5 minutes learning how to properly set up your chair</p>
<p>Physical – Desk setup</p>	<p>Monitor(s) at eye level. Keyboard and mouse in good condition. You have a headset.</p>	<p>You have spent 5 minutes learning how to properly set up your desk You are familiar with UTAS' Ergonomics guidelines.</p>
<p>Facilities – Electrical</p> 	<p>No use of double-adapters.</p> <p>Power boards and cords are in good condition. If there is any doubt about their age or safety, replace.</p> <p>Cords are kept away from hot surfaces, and positioned so they are not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a trip hazard - covered by floor coverings, or - in contact with feet or chair castors 	<p>Electrical cables not tagged or not in-date to be reported to your local safety coordinator to be tested in the next round of tagging.</p> <p>Appropriate number of power outlets exist. Cords are neatly organised and not covered by floor coverings.</p> <p>You know that your electrical circuits are RCD protected. If not documented for your area, follow up with ISD's Compliance & Risk Officer.</p>
<p>Systemic – Workplace Inspections</p>	<p>Office areas workplace inspection checklist conducted every 6 months, recorded in MySafety then tracked on this register for reporting to the College Leadership Team.</p>	<p>At least one person in your business unit is delegated direct responsibility for ensuring workplace inspections occur on the required basis.</p> <p>The areas of inspection are grouped sensibly to maximise efficiency.</p>
<p>Systemic – Who is the person responsible for SHW in this office?</p>	<p>Every staff member knows who their WHS responsible officers are, as well as first aiders and fire wardens. Every staff member understands their WHS responsibilities and duty of care.</p>	<p>Responsible officers and SHW committee details are included on visual management board, displayed in a location accessible to the greatest number of staff in your area.</p> <p>Every individual staff member feels empowered to proactively notice, report and action hazards in</p>

		office-adjacent spaces, such as bathrooms, kitchens, lifts, vehicles, etc.
Systemic – Emergency Preparedness	<p>You have a first aid kit and fire wardens in your area.</p> <p>You conduct fire drills on a regular basis.</p> <p>An evacuation poster exists. Fire wardens and first aider names and photos are displayed on posters.</p>	<p>Everyone is aware of first aid kit, AED unit and fire blanket locations.</p> <p>Your unit has business continuity plans to support key processes during emergencies.</p> <p>A sign exists at the first aid officer’s workstation.</p> <p>Signage exists for fire extinguishers, fire blankets and AEDs.</p>
Systemic – 6S Implementation	6S Lean is about going beyond compliance →	Lean is running in your area : Safety, sort, set, shine, standardise, sustain. Lean 6S systems should be visible (e.g., visual management boards).
People – Induction	All new staff are safety inducted and safety trained as they are onboarded , including volunteers and casual employees.	<p>Safety training to recur every 18 months.</p> <p>Recognition that processes and standards change, and people move around the organisation, so re-induction becomes a part of our culture.</p>
People – Moving and stretching 	<p>Long periods of sitting are broken up by desk stretches.</p> <p>Give yourself visual rest: Look into the far distance while you are thinking</p>	<p>Take breaks and move every hour, ideally away from your desk.</p> <p>Set up exercise routines with your colleagues during lunch breaks.</p>
People – Job design	<p>Your position is aligned with organisational strategy.</p> <p>You take breaks and have variety in your tasks.</p>	You are aligned with your purpose; you have a feeling of ownership of your job.

		Your team supports each other to distribute workload.
People – Wellbeing	Inappropriate behaviour is addressed fully via Safe and Fair Communities Unit or your People and Wellbeing representative .	A culture of care for each other includes breaks, safety to be yourself, speak up, good relationships with your manager and those who report to you. You use staff counselling provided by UTAS for support with needed without stigma.
People - Training	People performing tasks requiring certification have up-to-date certificates.	Staff discuss training opportunities with their managers to conduct safer and more efficient processes, maximising safety through expertise.
People – Physical Access	The safety of staff is taken into consideration with designing access controls. Is your office accessible to anyone walking off the street?	Only those who need to access a room on the University campus for University business are granted access. Access is reviewed on the same frequency as workplace inspections.
COVID-19	Signs on doors showing maximum occupancy per room. Hand sanitizer available. Everyone on campus has completed COVID-Safe return to campus MyLO unit.	The operations of your unit are protected from a resurgence of COVID-19 through a relevant Business Continuity Plan.



Further resources

- [UTAS Safety and Wellbeing](#)
- [Managing the work environment and facilities: Code of Practice](#)
- [Worksafe Tasmania Code of Practice – Managing the work environment and facilities](#)

Need help to move items? Need guidance on a specific issue? Email EDCoSE@utas.edu.au and we will arrange to help you.