

WORKING FROM HEIGHTS RISK MANAGEMENT STANDARD

SCOPE

This standard relates to all activities under the management and control of Monash University in Australia and applies to affected staff, students, contractors and visitors.

The purpose of this standard is to provide an overarching framework for the effective management of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) associated with working at heights.

1. Identification of Permanent Fall from Height Spaces

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Person to ensure that permanent spaces relating to buildings owned and controlled by Monash University have been assessed for falls from heights risks based upon following criteria:

Type	What is required to enter it	Types of work locations
Very High	Work by Permit only	Immediate risk of falls from heights which may include: - Working within 2 metres of a live edge and/or roof designs (such as an unprotected skylight) that pose an immediate risk of falls from heights. These might include dangerous slope and/or slippery surfaces with: - No height safety systems; - Damaged fall prevention systems; - Insufficient fall prevention systems; or - Requirements for the use of a fall protection harness.
High	Specific approval from all relevant managers.	Risk is present but only when activities are being performed which may include: - Roof access utilising appropriate fall prevention systems; - Roof access working further than 2 metres from any live edge; - Roof access that poses an elevated risk of falls from heights such due to slope and/or slippery surface.; - Risks associated with falling objects (such as tools) being dropped from one elevation to another.
Medium	Access pending local induction	Access control with limited additional risk level which may include: Egress using certified roof access ways.
Low	Access pending contractor induction	Spaces with no inherent elevated level of risk.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Person to ensure that:

- Any suspected falls from heights risks are assessed against the above criteria;
- All falls from heights risks are recorded in the designated Mapping Tool; and
- Appropriate signage is placed at all access points to a falls from heights risk space prior to that space being accessed.

2. Identification of a Temporary Falls from Heights Risk

Operational managers must ensure that any works that have the potential to temporarily create a fall from heights risk must be brought to the attention of the Authorised Person.

It is the responsibility of the Authorised Person to ensure that:

- A determination on what type of falls from heights risk based on the above criteria;
- Appropriate signage is placed at all access points to prior to that the space being accessed; and
- Appropriate fall prevention areas (i.e. drop zone areas) are established.

3. Activities involving Working from Heights

3.1 Scoping

When scoping work to be undertaken and to the extent that it is practicable, it must be determined whether or not the activities will include falls from heights risks.

3.2 Risk Management

3.2.1 All hazards associated with possible falls from heights risks must be identified and assessed. Risks that may arise include:

- Workers and other persons falling
- Equipment falling

3.2.2 Operational managers must ensure that any falls from heights risks are identified, so far as reasonable, before work commences. If there is an element of doubt, Operational Managers must consult with the Authorised Person.

3.2.3 Any Operational Manager directing work involving falls from heights risks must be approved to do so using the [OHS Prescribed Activities Approval Form](#).

3.2.4 Risk assessments must be conducted in consultation with the party who will perform the works in accordance with the [HSW Risk Management Standard](#). The risk assessment must be documented and should include consideration and adequate control of risks. A template risk assessment is available in SARAH.

4. Working from Heights Permit-to-Work

4.1 Any work conducted under the management control of Monash University that may result in a fall from heights risk must have a permit-to-work before commencement unless that work involves:

- Rock climbing, abseiling or similar works
- Use of certified stairs and other structures that are being used in accordance with its design and purpose.

4.1.1 Permits are requested through Buildings and Property (B&P)

4.1.2 Permit-to-work requests must be assigned to an Approved Person. The Approved Person is responsible for ensuring that:

- The party conducting the work has demonstrated suitable competency to perform work of this nature;
- Hazards associated with the work appear to have been identified and risks assessed;
- The intended work methods appear to be safe and without risk to health; and
- A Permit-to-work is in place before any works commence.

4.2 Conditions

4.2.1 Permit Holders must ensure that:

- a) Passive fall protection device (physical barriers) are used where practicable, for all persons at risk and to prevent any items from falling onto persons below the work;
- b) Fall restraint systems (work positioning device) are used where practicable, for all persons at risk;
- c) Fall arrest systems are used where practicable, for all persons at risk;
- d) The work area has been isolated, so far as practicable, from other persons;
- e) That any scaffold has been constructed by a suitably qualified and licenced operator and subsequently certified;
- f) Plant (e.g. elevated work platform) is:
 - i. Designed and constructed for the task or range of tasks to be undertaken; and
 - ii. Designed and constructed in such a way as to enable its safe use in the physical surroundings in which it is to be used and the conditions in which it is to be used.
- g) Ladders being utilised are:

- i. Fit for purpose;
 - ii. Appropriate for the duration of the task; and
 - iii. Setup and used in an appropriate manner.
- h) Emergency procedures are in place for the duration of works.

4.3 Monitoring

- 4.3.1 The Permit Holder must ensure that all controls identified through risk management are in place.
- 4.3.2 The Approved Person must conduct monitoring to ensure that, as far as practicable, controls identified through risk management are in place.
- 4.3.3 The Authorised Person, Director, HSW or their representative, may review the conduct of any work activities relating to confined space entry without notice.

5. Responsibility for Implementation

It is the responsibility of the Director, HSW to ensure that this standard is implemented.

6. Records

For HSW Records document retention please refer to the University's: [Information Governance and Recordkeeping Procedure](#)

7. Definitions

Definitions specific to this standard are provided below.

Key word	Definition
Authorised Person	A person who is authorised on behalf of the Director, HSW, to approve and issue a certificate in relation to a specific type of prescribed activity.
Approved Person	A person who has been approved by an authorised person to supervise activities involving prescribed activities.
Contractor	Any person or business engaged by Monash University who enters into a contractual arrangement to conduct work for Monash University, but whose primary employer is not Monash University.
Contractor Management	The process of managing work that is being/has been outsourced by Monash University. In the context of this standard 'contractor management' relates to HSW.
Designated Mapping Tool	The tool used to map spatial information for the University. Currently assigned as SiSFM.
Falls from Heights Risk	Any task that has the potential for a person to involuntarily fall for two metres or more which may include: ● Plant or structure being constructed, demolished, inspected, tested, maintained, repaired or cleaned where a worker could fall 2 metres or more; ● Any fragile, slippery or potentially unstable surface that could result in a fall of 2 metres or more; ● Any equipment used to gain access to an elevated level or to undertake the task at an elevated level (e.g. Ladders, Elevated work platforms) that could result in a fall of 2 metres or more; ● Any slopping surface which is difficult to maintain balance and terminates in a fall of 2 metres or more; ● Working near unprotected edges that could result in a fall 2 meters or more; or ● Working near a hole, shaft or pit that has sufficient dimensions to allow a person to fall 2 metres or more.
Live Edge	An unprotected edge that would result in a fall from heights if an operator fell.
Permit-to-work Certificate	Documented evidence of the issuing of a permit-to-work.

Permit Holder	A person who is authorised by both an approved person and the authorised person to supervise activities involving prescribed activities as documented in a permit-to-work certificate.
Sub-Contractor	Any person engaged by the principal contractor to assist with the contracted works. Any person subsequently engaged by these persons to assist is also deemed to be a sub-contractor.
Suitably Qualified Person	Person who can demonstrate that, through their experience, knowledge, qualifications and/or skills, they are competent to perform Falls from heights and determine safe methods of controlling the risk of fire.

GOVERNANCE

Parent policy	HS&W Policy
Supporting documents	N/A
Associated documents	Australian and International Standards ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems WorkSafe Guidance documents Compliance Code 'Confined Spaces', WorkSafe Victoria September 2008 Monash University OHS documents HSW Contractor Management Standard HSW Risk Management Standard
Legislation mandating compliance	Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004), Victoria Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (2017) Victoria
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Content enquiries	hsw@monash.edu

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Changes made to document
1.0	2026	Administrative changes due to: - Conversion of Procedure to a HSW Standard - Transition Procedure out of University Policy Bank on to HSW website