

# OHS Guidelines for Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) Student Placement and Co-Curricular Internships

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## Scope and Purpose

These guidelines apply to all students from the Australian campuses of Monash University who, as part of the degree in which they are enrolled, are undertaking paid or unpaid work, work experience or study in non-University premises under the control of external organisations.

These guidelines do not apply to:

- Cases where students are studying at other universities via exchange schemes.
- Field trips, site visits or visits to industries, companies, government organisations, educational institutions or hospitals.
- Outside Studies Program undertaken by academic staff members.

The Monash University [OHS Off-Campus Activities and Travel Procedure](#) should be consulted for these activities.

These guidelines supplement the [Work-Integrated Learning \(WIL\) Student Placement and Co-Curricular Internship Procedures](#) and specifically outline the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements for Monash University to ensure that placement organisations provide systems for a safe place of work or study and that students are not put at risk during the placement.

## Abbreviations

OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OH&S	Monash Occupational Health & Safety
WIL	Work-Integrated Learning

## Definitions

A comprehensive list of definitions is provided in the [Definitions Tool](#). Definitions specific to these guidelines are as follows.

**Co-curricular Internship:** An endorsed period of unpaid work experience undertaken by a student outside of the course curriculum in non-University premises under the control of a placement organisation for the purposes of enhancing their professional skills.

**Low Risk Organisations:** For the purposes of these guidelines, low risk organisations refer to organisations that are office-based, where the tasks are predominantly clerical in nature, such as accounting and law firms or administrative organisations.

**Placement Organiser:** The Monash staff member in charge of student placements in their organisational unit.

**Significant Risk Organisations:** For the purposes of these guidelines, significant risk organisations refer to organisations where the tasks undertaken are higher risk than those found in organisations where the tasks are predominantly clerical in nature.

**WIL Student Placement:** A WIL student placement is a period of paid or unpaid work, work experience or study undertaken by a student as part of their course in non-University premises under the control of a placement organisation, e.g. industry, commerce, government organisation, educational institution or with any other placement organisation.

For the remainder of this document, Co-curricular Internships and WIL Student Placements will be referred to collectively as 'placements'.

## All Placements

### 1. Approval of Placements

All placement organisations should be approved before any students are placed with them.

A letter of explanation (Section 9: Tools) and Health and Safety checklist (Section 9: Tools) or equivalent documentation, i.e. formal contract containing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) clause(s) (Section 9: Tools) should be sent to each placement organisation or provided to the placement organisation by the student or placement organiser as appropriate. The letter and checklist or equivalent documentation should be sent to each placement organisation on an annual basis.

- 1.1. A placement should not proceed until the completed checklist or signed copy of formal contract has been returned to the placement organiser and the response assessed.
- 1.2. A single checklist and sign-off response, or equivalent documentation, from each placement organisation is sufficient to cover all participants placed within that organisation over a 12 months period. However, each participant is to be notified individually of their placement and position within the placement organisation according to these guidelines.

### 2. Health and Safety Checklist (Section 9: Tools)

- 2.1. The checklist is designed so that a 'Yes' reply to every question will mean that the placement organisation may then be approved.
- 2.2. Any 'No' response requires further consideration, which may be by:
  - Further discussion, possibly with the involvement of the Safety Officer or Monash Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S);
  - The safety information required may be requested by letter, referring to the points contained in the checklist;
  - By a visit to the placement organisation; or
  - If activities that are higher risk than predominantly office-based are outlined on the checklist when it is returned to the academic/administrative unit, then the placement process for significant risk organisations should be used (see Section 4).

### 3. Visits to Placement Organisations

- 3.1. Placement organisations should be visited when:
  - An unsatisfactory response to the checklist is obtained; or
  - Health and safety concerns are raised by a student undertaking a placement in the organisation (see section 5).
- 3.2. Where a visit is required to assess the compliance of the organisation with OHS legislative requirements and standards the following applies:

- The 'Guidance for the assessment of placements' (Section 9: Tools) provides guidance on the issues that should be addressed during the visit.
- Documented evidence should be obtained of active health and safety management systems such as the index of the safety manual, completed induction checklists, recent audit or inspection reports.

### 3.3. Staff visiting placement organisations:

- Should be a professional in the particular, or an associated discipline;
- Need not be a trained safety expert, but should be aware of the relevant issues;
- Can be provided with additional information and assistance by their Safety Officer or OHS Consultant/Advisor.

### 3.4. There will be some placements where it is impractical to visit the organisation due to logistics, cost or location (e.g. overseas). For these placements:

- The approval of the placement should be authorised by the Head of academic/administrative unit in consultation with the placement organiser and the local Safety Officer based on previous experience of this or similar placement organisations; and
- Feedback from students regarding the health and safety aspects of the placement will be especially important. It is essential that further enquiries are conducted promptly to resolve the health and safety concerns of placement participants.

## 4. Before Commencement of Placements

Students should not start work or activities at a placement until they have:

- Received written 'Notification of placement authorisation' from the academic/administrative unit (see Section 9: Tools);
- Attended a health and safety briefing given by the placement organiser.

## 5. Health and Safety Briefing

- Attendance of the students at the health and safety briefing is essential.
- If attendance at the health and safety briefing is not possible, then other arrangements should be made by the placement organiser to provide participants with the necessary health and safety information.
- The briefing should cover the basic workplace health and safety issues e.g. emergency evacuation procedures, First Aid, Hazard & Incident reporting.
- The briefing should also cover significant safety issues, which are specific to the type of work being undertaken (e.g. ergonomics, manual handling or infection control).
- In this briefing, students should be informed that where there is a significant change of location, they should notify the placement organiser.

## 6. Induction Checklist

- Before commencement of the tasks outlined in the placement, the student should complete an induction checklist.
- The checklist will, in most instances, be provided by the placement organisation.

An example of an induction checklist that could be used is provided in Section 9: Tools.

## Additional Requirements for Placements in Significant Risk Organisations

### 1. Before Commencement

- 1.1. Students should not start work or activities at a placement until they have attended a health and safety briefing and completed an induction checklist as outlined in sections 3.5 and 3.6.
- 1.2. The health and safety briefing for placements in significant risk organisations should also cover significant safety issues that are specific to the type of work being undertaken, e.g. the procedure to be followed where a student may encounter violent or aggressive behaviour, infection control follow up or chemical spill procedures.

#### 1.3. Risk Management

A comprehensive identification of the hazards to be encountered during the placement must be undertaken in the early stages of the placement.

The risk management process of either Monash University or the placement organisation may be used.

Placement organisers and supervisors of placement participants are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessment procedure has been completed during the early stages of the placement.

Following the identification of hazards, risk control measures must be adopted to minimise the risk associated with each hazard. The hierarchy of hazard controls should be used to determine the appropriate risk controls to be adopted.

The effectiveness of risk control measures must be reviewed and improved following any incidents that occur during a placement and before another participant undertakes a placement with that organisation.

## Monitoring and Review of Placements

It is important that the suitability of placements is monitored and kept under review. This process should, where possible, include observations or communication with both the participant and the placement organisation. Any adverse findings should be reported to the placement organiser.

The monitoring and review process should include:

- Provision of a faculty/school/departmental contact for the student to report health and safety (and other, e.g. equity) concerns during the placement.
- If adverse feedback regarding the health and safety aspects of the placement is received from a student during or after the placement, the placement organisation should be contacted and discussions initiated to resolve the issue(s). This may require a site visit. If it is not possible to resolve the health and safety concerns of the participant, the student(s) should be withdrawn from the placement.
- At the end of a placement, the placement organiser should facilitate a review session with the student(s) to discuss and record any problems that occurred during the placement and any required actions taken by the University or placement organisation. This session should aim to detect any risks in the workplace that were not adequately controlled and to ensure that action is taken before any further placements are organised with that placement organisation.

Feedback should be provided to the placement organisation regarding any adverse health and safety aspects of the placement.

## Incident Reporting, Investigation and Recording

The placement organiser must be familiar with the [OHS Hazard and incident reporting, investigation and recording procedure](#) and ensure that an online report is completed in [S.A.R.A.H.](#) for all incidents that occur during placement. Copies of the placement organisation's incident report should be attached to the report in S.A.R.A.H.

The importance of reporting any adverse events, e.g. exposure to mental stress should be reinforced during the student briefing and information provided about support services such as counselling.

- The placement organisation and/or the placement organiser should undertake an investigation of the incident. A thorough investigation of the immediate and underlying causes of an incident is essential to prevent a recurrence.
- The results of the investigation following an incident should be communicated to the placement organisation and incorporated into the next review of the risk assessment of the activity.

## Insurance

Further information on insurance cover for Monash enrolled students whilst on approved placements can be found in the [Work-Integrated Learning \(WIL\) Student Placement and Co-Curricular Internship Procedures](#)

## Responsibility for Implementation

A comprehensive list of OHS responsibilities is provided in the [OHS Roles, Responsibilities and Committees Procedure](#). A summary of the important elements relevant to student or staff placements is provided below.

**Head of Academic/Administrative Unit:** It is the responsibility of the Head of academic/administrative unit to ensure that satisfactory provisions for health and safety are made for student or staff placements organised by their unit. To fulfil this responsibility they should:

- Ensure the OHS policies and procedures of the placement organisation are equivalent, or better than Monash University OHS policies and procedures;
- Ensure that the appropriate staff in their unit are informed about, and follow, these guidelines;
- Ensure staff receive suitable training and can demonstrate competency to carry out their role in placement procedures;
- Ensure that health and safety issues during student or staff placements are reported to the safety officer or the local OHS committee for resolution as required; and
- Institute a system for assessment, approval and review of all student or staff placements undertaken by their area.

**Placement Organiser:** It is the responsibility of the placement organiser to:

- Ensure that these guidelines are followed during student or staff placements;
- Ensure that the risks associated with the placement are managed effectively by the placement organisation. To do this they should ensure that:
  - Possible hazards that may be encountered during the activity have been identified; and
  - Strategies have been implemented to minimise the risks to health and safety.
- Ensure that the responsibilities for health and safety are communicated to all participants;
- Ensure appropriate information, instruction and training is provided to participants; and
- Ensure that monitoring and review of placements is undertaken.

**Supervisors:** Supervisors of student placements should:

- Arrange for participants to be provided with information and to be instructed in safe working procedures;

- Ensure that participants are warned about hazards, and how to avoid, eliminate or minimise them; and
- Maintain written records of training provided.

**Students:** Each student has a moral and legal responsibility for ensuring that his or her work environment is conducive to good OHS standards by:

- Reading any notices relating to the placement, attending any briefing sessions and returning any forms to the placement organiser;
- Taking action to avoid, report, eliminate or minimise hazards of which they are aware;
- Complying with all OHS instructions, policies and procedures;
- Making proper use of all safety devices and personal protective equipment;
- Being familiar with emergency and evacuation procedures; and
- Not wilfully or recklessly endangering the health and safety of any person at the workplace.

## Tools

The following tools are associated with these guidelines:

- [Example of letter to placement organisation](#)
- [Notification of placement authorisation](#)
- [Suggested OHS clauses for formal placement contract](#)
- [Guidance for Health and Safety assessment](#)
- [Health and Safety checklist](#)
- [Student induction checklist](#)

## Records

For OHS Records document retention please refer to:  
[Monash University OHS Records Management Procedure](#)

## Legislation and Related Documents

### Legislation Mandating Compliance

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

### Australian and International Standards

- ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems

### Other

- Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of HE Students (March 1997), CVCP, London, England.
- Health and Safety when Working Overseas (August 1997) Universities Safety Association Topic Group/CVCP, London, England.

### Monash University OHS Documents

- [First Aid procedure](#)
- [Guidelines for the development of safe work instructions](#)
- [OHS Off Campus Activities and Travel Procedure](#)
- [OHS Hazard & Incident Reporting, Investigation & Recording Procedure](#)
- [OHS Roles, Committees and Responsibilities procedure](#)
- [OHS Risk Management Procedure](#)
- [Risk Control Program](#)

## Document History

Version	Date of Issue	Changes made to document
2	August 2011	Guidelines for the health & safety of students and staff during placements, v.2
2.1	July 2015	Updated hyperlinks throughout to new OH&S website
3	November 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated Title to “Student and staff placements OHS guidelines”</li> <li>2. Removed superfluous wording from Scope and Purpose sections.</li> <li>3. Removed repetitive information from section 7 and referenced to other relevant sections.</li> <li>4. Updated section 9 – Incident reporting, to reflect move to online reporting system (S.A.R.A.H.) at Monash University.</li> <li>5. Updated section 10 – Insurance, to ensure this aligns with the Off-campus Activities procedure and updated hyperlinks.</li> <li>6. Revised ‘Resource documents’ and listed these in “Tools” section (will be hyperlinked) to be available as individual documents, rather than being contained within the guidelines.</li> <li>7. Added Compliance section and updated Reference section.</li> </ol>
3.1	August 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated logos in header</li> <li>2. Updated OHS Regulations to 2017</li> </ol>
4.0	April 2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated Document title and Purpose to reflect alignment with University WIL Student Placement and Co-curricular Internships Procedures</li> <li>2. Removed reference to ‘staff placements’ as this is outside the scope of these guidelines</li> <li>3. Updated Definitions section</li> <li>4. Updated hyperlinks throughout</li> </ol>
4.1	April 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated certification logo in header</li> </ol>
4.2	August 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Removed certification logo in header of first page.</li> <li>2. Removed Table of Contents.</li> <li>3. Updated reference to OHS Policy to OHS&amp;W Policy.</li> <li>4. Updated the Standard to ISO 45001 under “Related Documents”</li> </ol>
4.3	November 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updated to the new “Guideline” template.</li> </ol>