

Environmental Health and Safety Policy

University Policy No: SS9200
Classification: Safety and Security
Approving Authority: Board of Governors
Effective Date: March 2021
Supersedes: March 2012
Last Editorial Change:
Mandated review: March 2028

Associated Procedures:

[EHS Procedures](#)

Purpose

- 1.00 The purpose of this policy is to convey the university's commitment to a safe and healthy environment for work and study. The university is committed to excellence in environmental health and safety stewardship through a university-wide EHS Management System.

Definitions

- 2.00 For the purposes of this policy:

"administrative authority" means individuals with administrative responsibility for units, including but not limited to: vice-presidents, deans, chairs, executive directors, directors, and other senior positions at the university.

"activity" includes any activity that is directly related to or arising out of the operations of the university at any location.

"chair" means the chair of an academic department and includes the director of a school or program.

"employee" means a university community member who UVic is responsible for as a worker under the *Workers Compensation Act*, including but not limited to faculty, librarians, and staff.

"EHS Management System" means Environmental Health and Safety Management System, an integrated system of programs and procedures that outline responsibilities, activities, and assessment of performance with respect to health, safety, and environmental objectives.

"OHSE" means the Occupational Health, Safety and Environment department.

"student" means a person who is registered, enrolled, or participating in any course or program offered by the university.

"unit" means academic, research, or administrative areas at the university, including but not limited to: faculties, divisions, departments, schools, offices, centres, and the university's libraries.

"university community" means:

- (a) credit and non-credit students, including distance students and continuing studies students;
- (b) employees (including faculty, librarians, and staff);
- (c) anyone holding a university appointment;
- (d) post-doctoral fellows;
- (e) all persons who are employed under contracts with university faculty members as the employer and who provide research or administrative services directly supporting faculty members' research activities;
- (f) anyone volunteering with a university program or activity;
- (g) members of the Board of Governors and Senate;
- (h) visitors (including visiting researchers); and
- (i) anyone who ordinarily resides on campus because of their relationship with the university.

Scope

- 3.00 This policy applies to members of the university community and others who participate in activities. This policy also applies to separately incorporated organizations who participate in activities, and to contractors who are contractually required to comply with this policy.

Policy

- 4.00 The university is committed to excellence in environmental health and safety stewardship to ensure a safe and healthy environment for work and study.
- 5.00 The university meets the requirements of applicable environmental health and safety statutes and regulations by controlling risk and preventing harm.
- 6.00 The university is committed to the integration of environmental health and safety planning, implementation, auditing, and reporting into core university management activities and into existing cycles of academic and service planning.
- 7.00 Environmental health and safety is the responsibility of every member of the university community, members of separately incorporated organizations conducting activities, and others who participate in activities.
- 8.00 The President and Vice-Presidents are responsible within their areas of responsibility for the implementation of this policy and procedures. They may delegate responsibilities to the appropriate administrative authority.
- 9.00 The administrative authority shall require units to undertake action consistent with the requirements of the EHS Management System.
- 10.00 The Vice-President Finance and Operations is responsible for the development and maintenance of university-wide environmental health and safety procedures to support this policy.

Authorities and Officers

11.00 The following are the authorities and officers for this policy:

- i) Approving Authority: Board of Governors
- ii) Designated Executive Officer: President
- iii) Procedural Authority: Vice-President Finance and Operations
- iv) Procedural Officer: Associate Vice-President Human Resources

Relevant Legislation

[Workers Compensation Act, RSBC 1996 c 492](#), and [OHS Regulation](#)

All other applicable federal, provincial, and municipal regulations.

Related Policies and Documents

[Critical Incident Response Policy](#) (SS9115)

CSA Z1000-14 Occupational Health and Safety Management (not available online)

[Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) (GV0205)

[Off-campus Activity Risk Management Policy](#) (AD2210)

[Prevention of Violence in the Workplace Policy](#) (SS9120)

[Response to At-Risk Behaviour](#) (SS9125)

[Risk Management Policy](#) (GV0225)

[Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy](#) (GV0245)

[University Strategic Framework](#)

[University of Victoria Emergency Response Plan](#)

Environmental Health and Safety Procedures

Procedural Authority: Vice-President Finance and
Operations

Procedural Officer: Associate Vice-President
Human Resources

Effective Date: March 2021

Supersedes: March 2012

Last Editorial Change:

Parent Policy: [Environmental Health and Safety Policy \(SS9200\)](#)

Purpose

1.00 The university is committed to a university-wide EHS Management System that follows the principles described in the CSA Standard Z1000-14: Occupational Health and Safety Management. The university's EHS objectives are to:

- (a) ensure the health and safety of the members of the university community;
- (b) meet or exceed requirements of health and safety statutes and regulations;
- (c) identify responsibilities and accountabilities for individuals and units;
- (d) ensure the effective planning and response to emergencies;
- (e) develop and implement effective programs to ensure regulatory compliance and due diligence;
- (f) support effective programs through safety committees with clear mandates;
- (g) promote effective communication on health, safety, and environmental issues and emergency planning initiatives;
- (h) ensure that accountability measures are in place as required by the EHS Management System through effective auditing;
- (i) provide consultancy to assist individuals and units in both compliance and achievement of best practices; and
- (j) develop and promote an internal responsibility system.

Internal Responsibility System

2.00 An internal responsibility system is a joint partnership amongst all members of the university community. It is based on the principle that every individual has a direct responsibility for health and safety as an essential part of their work, taking initiative on health and safety issues and working to solve problems and make improvements on a continuous basis. There is also a contributive responsibility by health and safety committees and OHSE.

Responsibilities and Accountabilities

3.00 All members of the university community have responsibilities to ensure that hazards are identified and risks are appropriately mitigated. Specific responsibilities and accountabilities are outlined for each group as follows.

3.01 Executive:

- (a) implementing this policy and procedures within their areas of responsibility, including:
 - (i) delegating responsibilities to the appropriate program or unit and respective administrative authority; and
 - (ii) requiring program units to prepare plans and undertake action consistent with the requirements of the EHS Management System.

3.02 The Vice-President Finance and Operations:

- (a) developing and maintaining university-wide health and safety auditing measures, risk management, standards, and guidelines to support the policy.

3.03 Deans, executive directors, and directors:

- (a) ensuring that chairs, managers, and supervisors fulfill their responsibilities;
- (b) incorporating adequate provisions for safe working practices and conditions in operational policies and procedures, and in programs and projects;
- (c) participating in safety meetings as appropriate to review safety programs and performance and to determine any necessary courses of action;
- (d) monitoring, evaluating, reporting and recommending to the appropriate vice-president on safety performance in accordance with the university's safety policies and procedures;
- (e) assisting as required in the investigation of incidents, injuries, and near misses; and
- (f) developing safety priorities in time to include any budget requirements in the regular budgetary process.

3.04 Chairs, managers, supervisors, and principal investigators:

- (a) providing safe working conditions and practices;

- (b) complying with the university's safety policies and procedures, and with applicable federal, provincial, and local laws and regulations;
- (c) orienting employees to the safety and first aid requirements and resources related to the job;
- (d) arranging training sessions and conducting meetings as required with immediate staff in order to communicate safety information, concerns, work habits, policies, and procedures, and to promote safety consciousness on the job;
- (e) reporting immediately any work-related accident, injury, or near-miss to OHSE through the appropriate administrative channels;
- (f) ensuring inspections are conducted at appropriate intervals to confirm the existence of safe working conditions, methods, practices, procedures, equipment, and tools;
- (g) taking immediate action to correct any unsafe working condition, method, practice, procedure, equipment, or tool contrary to the university's safety policies and procedures, and federal, provincial, and local regulations;
- (h) assessing the safety performance of their employees through both formal and informal reviews as a part of their regular performance appraisal process;
- (i) consulting with employees to assess the safety-related knowledge and skills required to ensure safe performance of employees on the job, arranging training as appropriate, and taking necessary corrective action; and
- (j) cooperating with OHSE and the appropriate safety committees.

3.05 Occupational Health, Safety and Environment:

- (a) providing consultation on health, safety, and environmental issues;
- (b) interpreting health, safety, and environmental legislation and regulations;
- (c) developing and implementing core health and safety programs;
- (d) providing key services such as training in collaboration with departments;
- (e) acting as the university's representative with regulatory agencies;
- (f) overseeing separately incorporated entities' compliance with this policy when they are required to do so; and
- (g) auditing the university's health, safety, and environmental performance with respect to regulatory compliance and best practices.

3.06 Employees:

- (a) complying with the university's safety policies and procedures, and with applicable federal, provincial, and local laws and regulations;
- (b) seeking guidance from their immediate supervisor concerning safety-related knowledge and skills required to ensure safe performance on the job;
- (c) attending safety training programs and meetings as assigned;
- (d) not attending work, or discontinuing work, if unable to perform assigned tasks safely in accordance with sections 4.19 and 4.20 of the BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, due to the use or after-effects of alcohol, cannabis, illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or over-the-counter medications, or any other issue that may impair judgment or performance.
- (e) immediately reporting to their supervisor any work-related accident, injury, or near-miss, and any hazardous work practice or work condition;
- (f) cooperating with OHSE and the appropriate safety committees;
- (g) complying with the health and safety policies and procedures of other institutions when they are engaged in university-related activities in these other institutions; and
- (h) arranging for the instruction and supervision of students in the safety aspects of classes or laboratories for which the employee has responsibility.

3.07 Students:

- (a) complying with the university's safety policies and procedures, and departmental regulations associated with all of their university-related activities;
- (b) seeking guidance from their instructors or supervisors concerning safety-related knowledge and skills required to ensure safe performance in their university-related activities;
- (c) attending safety training programs and meetings as instructed;
- (d) safely undertaking academic activities, unimpaired by alcohol, drugs, or other substances
- (e) immediately reporting to their instructor or supervisor any accident, near-miss, or hazardous practice or condition with respect to their university-related activities; and

- (f) complying with the health and safety policies and procedures of other institutions when they are engaged in university-related activities in these other institutions.

3.08 Visitors:

- (a) where applicable, complying with the university's safety policies and procedures and pertinent unit regulations.

3.09 Separately-incorporated entities and contractors who are required to abide by this policy:

- (a) complying with applicable health, safety, and environmental laws and regulations, university safety policies and procedures, and pertinent unit regulations.

Safety Committees

4.00 The university will have the following safety committees:

- (a) the Risk Management Steering Committee, whose purpose is to understand, discuss, and communicate risk at a strategic level, provide due diligence reports to the Board of Governors, and advise the Vice-President Finance and Operations;
- (b) joint occupational health and safety committees required by WorkSafeBC, which include:
 - (i) the University Safety Committee, which provides oversight on institutional health and safety programs and policies, and support for joint LSCs;
 - (ii) joint local safety committees (LSCs), which promote healthy and safe working environments and emergency preparedness;
- (c) research safety committees, which provide regulatory oversight for specific research activities; and
- (d) union-management safety committees, as specified in their relevant collective agreements.