

WORKING AFTER HOURS OR ALONE PROCEDURE

Section	University Services
Contact	Director Occupational Health & Safety, Wellbeing
Last Review	October 2023
Next Review	October 2025
Approval	Director Occupational Health & Safety, Wellbeing

Purpose:

To ensure that when working outside core working hours compliance is achieved with all Health & Safety, statutory and University regulations, while at the same time providing an open and safe environment that contributes towards meeting the teaching and research objectives of the University. The procedure details University steps for:

- Managing flexible working hours
- Managing after-hours occupational health and safety hazards
- Supporting safe access to the workplace at night, and
- Ensuring safety and security of students, staff, visitors, facilities, and equipment.

Scope:

All Massey University staff, students, and visitors to a Campus.

Procedure:

Massey University is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of workers, students and visitors at all times while working, including flexibility to undertake work outside conventional hours or alone.

When working after-hours, the risks of certain hazards may be increased due to the reduction in immediate assistance in the event of an incident. Outside of University core working hours, trained on site emergency response personnel or experienced staff may be unavailable. These may include building and floor wardens for building evacuation, first aid trained staff, facility staff such as Laboratory Managers, student medical centres and custodial services.

Workers and students are responsible for taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure their own health, safety, and facility security in University facilities and when working off site, after-hours, at night, or alone. Additional requirements may be set by workers or supervisors and such requirements may be ongoing or imposed for short periods from time to time.

Supervisors must be aware of workers or students working after-hours, at night or alone and ensure regular and ongoing after-hours work is monitored to ensure it is reasonable, justified, and not likely to cause ill health. All after-hours or alone work by workers is to include vigilant contact to ensure the wellbeing of the worker. The extent of vigilance is to be based on the risk of the activity.

Supervisors must approve after-hours or alone access using the following strategies:

- Low risk activities - approval can be open-ended and ongoing. Approval may be implicit in course material, conditions of employment, or equivalent. After-hours work may be unsupervised.
- Moderate, high, or extreme risk activities must have a risk assessment.
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The approval must include contact processes and frequency should an emergency occur.

Young students, in the first two years of an undergraduate degree are permitted to undertake low risk activities alone after-hours. If the risk is moderate or high, supervision or an equivalent control must be arranged.

Competent mature students, final year (3-year degree) and higher students or equivalent, honours year, post graduate students, and staff are permitted to work alone after-hours. For moderate and high-risk activities, approval and conditions of access must be documented.

No unauthorised persons are permitted into the University facilities. Staff and students working after-hours must carry their University identification card. In the case of persons approved as a buddy who are not staff or students at the University, a written authority must be carried. All staff and students are entitled to ask to see the University identification card or appropriate authority of any person(s) they encounter on University premises at any time. Any persons found without their University identification card or appropriate authority can be asked to vacate the area by Security.

This procedure is not intended to be a stand-alone document. It must be read and applied in conjunction with:

- The agreements between Massey University and its staff.
- The agreements between Massey University and its students.
- Other University policies and procedures.

Risk Assessment:

Prior to allowing students or staff to work after-hours or alone, Supervisors should complete a risk assessment to:

- Identify, assess, and control the hazards arising from the work.
- Determine any supervision or authorisation requirements.
- Determine emergency arrangements including contact processes and frequency.
- Consider competency, experience, and skill of the worker and if the task permitted is to be undertaken by students or workers.

More detailed information on how to undertake a risk assessment is available on the MySafety website.

Approval to Undertake Work:

Supervisors should record approval given to undertake after-hours work. The record should include:

- Duration of approval,
- Procedure, equipment, areas that can be accessed/used,
- Tasks that can be undertaken, and
- For moderate to high-risk activities, detail of required controls in the risk assessment, including monitoring and emergency procedures.

An example approval form for use with moderate and high-risk hazards is attached below as Appendix 2.

Review of the After-Hours Approval and Risk Assessment:

The after-hours risk assessment and approval must be reviewed if the activity or workplace changes.

Personal Safety When Working After-Hours:

University facilities used after-hours may hold items of value or be attractive to others, who may gain forced entry or wait for a staff member to arrive with keys or access codes. Examples of items which are attractive include: cash, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, apparatus, machinery, artwork, valuables, AV and computing equipment, research material and intellectual property. The attraction may be to gain an item for alternative use, or ideological such as disrupting a process that is not agreed with.

When staff or students are working after-hours, it is preferable to have at least two staff or students working together if possible.

Security must be informed when alarms are deactivated after-hours. Security can provide an escort for staff to their vehicles if they have concerns, or workers should relocate their vehicle or transport to facilitate safe exit from the building and vicinity.

Measures to Enhance Safety for After-hours Lone Working Include:

- Ensuring the building can be adequately secured from the inside.
- Keeping doors locked to prevent casual entry, if appropriate.
- Knowing location of help point locations, or arranging a remote-control device, that can be used to activate an audible alarm and alert Security, if safety is threatened.

If you Arrive Early:

- If you are the first person to arrive at work, check for any sign of forced entry.
- Where any signs of force are observed the facility should not be entered, as an intruder could be present. The Police or Security should be called, and any other employees warned when they arrive.

If you are Finishing Late:

- Park as near to your building as possible in an area that will be well lit at night.
- Consider other transport options if the only parking available is at an isolated location.
- Let someone know you will be working late.
- Check that you are secure inside the building and that no doors or windows have been left open or unlocked.
- When leaving the building check the immediate area outside for any people loitering, before opening the door.
- Use the best lit route to your car and have someone walk with you if possible.

Off Campus Appointments:

Some activities require meeting clients in their homes or in other isolated situations. If you have this kind of work, consider what practices you could adopt to reduce any potential risks to your safety.

- Leave a written record at work of where you are going, the client's name and the estimated time of your return.
- When visiting a house or other place, be guided by your instincts. If the person opening the door has a manner which makes you feel uneasy or uncomfortable, don't go inside. Make an excuse and leave immediately.
- If you enter a place and later start to feel uncomfortable with the person you are talking to, leave as soon as possible. Be aware of potential escape routes.
- Carrying a mobile phone will enable you to advise a colleague of your arrival in the presence of the client. Any person posing a potential threat to your safety would be deterred by the fact that others are aware of your location, and identity of the person you are with.
- You can also arrange a distress code word for phone use which lets your office know if you are in a risk situation.
- When responding to any requests for a meeting, job advertisement, or similar situation, consider the time and place for the proposed appointment.
- If you feel that the situation is potentially unsafe, arrange to take a colleague or buddy with you.
- If you enter a place and later start to feel uncomfortable with the person you are talking to, leave.

Definitions:

After-hours: After-hours is usually any time between the hours of 6pm – 7am Monday to Friday, all day Saturday, Sunday, statutory holidays, and University holidays. This definition may be varied in employment agreements with staff. (Note: The purpose of the time definition is to indicate when infrastructural support from other staff presence is not provided. Infrastructural support during working hours includes support processes such as reception, first aiders, building wardens, technical support, telephony, custodial service, access to specialist advice, "licensed" supervision. Some after-hours work may need to arrange alternative support).

Buddy:

A person who accompanies a student or staff member after-hours in a support role. A buddy is not necessarily another staff member or student. The buddy should be able to provide assistance and summons support should this be required.

Low risk, moderate, high-risk activities: See examples in Appendix 1.

Night:

Half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise.

Work:

Activity undertaken by students enrolled in papers in order to meet learning requirements of those papers or on behalf of the University such as laboratory processes, teaching, research activity, clerical work, maintenance, or study.

Supervisor:

Covers any staff member with authority to supervise other staff, students, visitors, and persons with business at Massey University. Manager includes titles such as: Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Chief Executive, Head of Department, Head of School, Head of Institute, Head of College, Head of Section, Director, Manager, Supervisor, Laboratory Manager, Containment and Transitional Facility Manager, Course supervisors, Lecturers, and equivalent titles.

Worker:

All people undertaking University work in any capacity including employees; contractor or subcontractor, employees of a contractor or subcontractor, employees of labour hire companies assigned to work in the University, outworkers (including homeworkers), apprentices or a trainee, persons gaining work experience or undertaking a work trial, and volunteers.

Working alone:

A situation, where normal supervision or peer support is not readily available.

Related documents:

Relevant Legislation

- Health, Safety at Work Act 2015
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Education and Training Act 2020

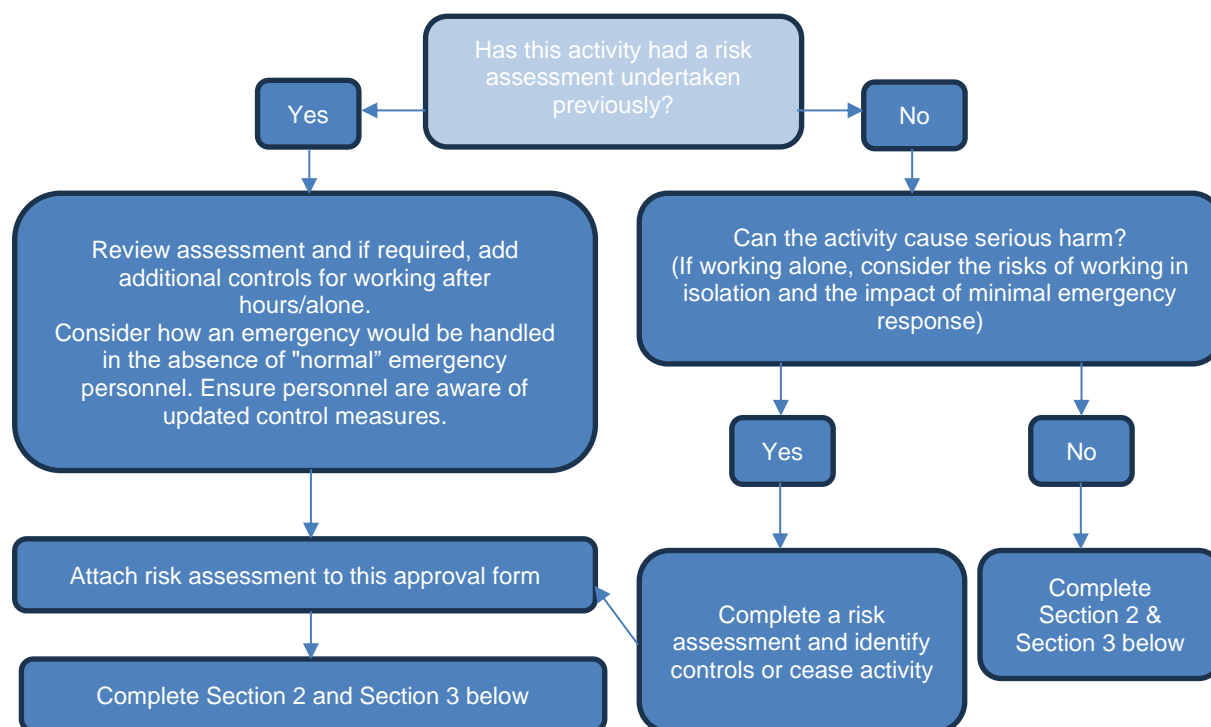
Related Procedures

- None

Appendix One – Risk Level and Approval Performance Requirements	
Suggested Type of Approval	Notes and Performance Requirements
<p>Open ended or “Block Approval” can be given for this type of work, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in an office environment. • Using computer laboratories. • Studio work not involving hazardous substances, hazardous mains powered machinery, or high-risk work. • Interview/survey work with communities except high-risk groups. • Lone working where other support is readily available. • Readings or observations from low-risk experiments • Work in seminar rooms, study areas, libraries, and accommodation facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office work hazards are low. • Workers/students should arrange a contact to advise safe return. • It is advisable to have arrangements to ensure safe lone night working, such as parking near office or security escort to vehicle. • Low risk work in a laboratory or studio work may be deemed as a moderate risk due to the surrounding hazards.
<p>“Block Approval” may be given for this type of work, e.g. a competent worker who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using hazardous workshop machinery, • Interviews with alcohol or drug dependents in a public place, • Undertaking laboratory low risk work in a moderate risk laboratory • Working in a remote area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some moderate risk activities require appropriate supervision, e.g. students undertaking work with hazardous substances, radiation, or operating workshop machines.
<p>“Individual Approval” may be given to a worker provided the hierarchy of controls has been used and adequate controls have been implemented and documented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should not undertake work where the risk is identified as high without supervisor written approval. • Every effort should be made to reduce the level of risk. • Where an after-hours worker is alone, contact should be made on a regular and planned basis. The frequency should be dependent on the nature of the activities and the perceived hazards. Contact might take the form of periodic visits by the supervisor or regular communication by telephone, radio, or monitoring device.
<p>No approval. Every effort should be made to reduce the level of risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No staff or student should undertake very extreme risk activities

Appendix 2 - Approval for Working After-Hours or Alone
To be used for Moderate or High-Risk Activities

Name(s):		Title/Group:	
Activity:			
Time Restrictions:			
Location:			
Section 1	Risk Assessment – Supervisor/Manager in control of work area to complete:		



Section 2	Communication Plan		
Routine Checks By:		Frequency:	
Method:	Visual <input type="checkbox"/>	Phone <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: <input type="text"/>
Contact Phone Numbers:	After Hours Worker:		Welfare Checker:
Emergency Actions & Contact Numbers:			
Section 3	Sign Off		
Person Working After-Hours/Alone	Lab Manager/Supervisor		

<p>The risks determined in the risk assessment are adequately controlled and I will ensure all hazard control measures are implemented and after-hours registers are completed. I also understand the emergency procedures for this activity.</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>The hazards associated with this after-hours/alone work have been adequately addressed and I believe it safe for this work to be undertaken in this manner.</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>
<p>Dissemination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those working after-hours and those completing welfare checks must have a copy of this approval. Block approvals may also be posted in the work area. 	