



# Procedure: Fall prevention

## Purpose

This procedure describes the process to manage health and safety risks to prevent falls from a height and working at heights. This procedure meets the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) and the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (Cth). This procedure is based on the Work Health and Safety Codes of Practice '[Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces](#)' and '[Preventing Falls in Housing Construction](#)'. This procedure is linked to the University's Work health and safety policy and is one of the Safe Work Procedures within the WHS Management System.

## Definitions

**Competent person** means a person who has acquired through a combination of training, qualification and experience the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.

**Fall** means a fall by a person from one level to another.

**Local area** refers to a College, Research School or Service Division of the University.

**Risk control** means taking action to eliminate health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if that is not possible, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

**Risk of a fall** means a circumstance that exposes a worker while at work, or other person while at or in the vicinity of a workplace, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the worker or other person.

A **Worker** is defined as anyone who carries out work for the University. A worker includes staff, volunteers, contractor, students and visitors at the University.

## Procedure

### Scope

1. The University has developed this procedure to:
  - manage the risks of working at heights;
  - manage the risks of working around pits; and
  - assist in preventing falls in the workplace.
2. This procedure applies to all types of work at the University where there is a risk of workers falling, or being struck by falling objects, from any height, including:
  - working near unprotected edges, holes, shafts, pits or trenches;
  - working at height, on a roof, and where levels change on construction and demolition sites, structures, plant (equipment) or vehicles; and
  - using equipment (e.g. ladders, elevated work platforms) to access elevated levels.

### Responsibilities

3. College Deans, Research School and Service Division Directors, or their nominated representatives, are responsible for:
  - providing, and maintaining appropriate facilities and resources to ensure a safe and healthy work environment; and
  - ensuring WHS risk management principles are implemented.
4. The Director, Facilities and Services or their nominated representative is responsible for:
  - assessing University infrastructure for fall risks;
  - ensuring fall prevention is considered, and eliminated or controlled, as part of all new construction and refurbishments;
  - identifying and controlling all fall hazards within their area of responsibility so far as reasonably practicable;
  - controlling the risk of falling objects so far as is reasonably practicable; and
  - control hazards as per the WHS Hazard Management procedure.
5. Building custodians or nominated local area representatives are responsible for:

- ensuring that fall hazards associated with their area of responsibility are identified and controlled, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- providing relevant workers with adequate information, training and instruction;
- establishing emergency and rescue procedures to address fall hazards; and
- reviewing and revising WHS hazard control measures.

### *Workers*

6. A worker involved in work with a fall risk is responsible for:
  - undertaking training and maintaining competence in fall prevention (heights safety);
  - conducting work in the approved manner;
  - controlling the risk of falls and falling objects so far as is reasonably practicable;
  - inspecting and maintaining (or arranging for the maintenance of) equipment in accordance with manufacturers' requirements, including personal protective equipment; and
  - maintaining a level of fitness appropriate for the task;
7. Workers should not work alone where practicable, in case they require assistance in an emergency.

### **Hazard Management**

8. The worker responsible for the work is to ensure that WHS hazard assessment is conducted that includes:
  - Identification, assessment and control the fall hazards;
  - hazards at, above and below ground;
  - control of risks by implementing the most effective control measure that are reasonably practicable; and
  - review of control measures to ensure they are adequately minimising the risks.
9. Working at height is considered a high risk activity at the University, and a permit to work (see [Permit to work procedure](#)) may be required to control and manage identified hazards.
10. Further guidance on fall prevention is available in the Code of Practice

“Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces”. Refer to the [WHS Hazard management procedure](#) for further information.

11. Further information on accessing roof spaces and roof tops can be found in the below documents:

- Supporting document: [Roof spaces access](#)
- Supporting document: [Roof top access](#)

### **Ladder safety**

12. Where a ladder is deemed the appropriate access equipment, the supervisor and ladder user must consider the task, footing, and anchor points, and have an understanding of the fundamental points for the safe use of ladders. Refer to the [Supporting document: Ladder safety](#). Note Facilities and Services, Work Environment Group or subject matter experts should be consulted.

### **Fall protection procedures**

13. Procedures documenting fall protection hazards, risk and control measures shall be discussed with relevant workers before commencing the task. The induction and discussions must be task specific.

### **Emergencies and Rescue**

14. Emergency plans shall be developed and discussed with relevant people. These plans should include foreseeable emergency and rescue situations. For example, how to recover a suspended individual, or how to conduct a rescue from an elevated work platform. Rescue by emergency services organisations should not be relied upon exclusively, particularly in remote locations.

### **Fall prevention equipment**

15. There are many options in fall prevention and fall arrest equipment. The equipment must be:

- carefully selected by competent persons;
- appropriate for the task;
- suitable for the stresses and strains placed on it;
- used by competent persons trained in its use; and
- regularly inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

16. Faulty equipment must be repaired (if practicable) or destroyed.

### *Fall-arrest systems*

17. Industrial fall arrest systems and devices are designed to stop an accidental fall. They must be installed by qualified and competent persons.
18. Anchor points and static lines shall be tested at least annually or according to the designers or installers requirements. These requirements may be modified with an appropriate [WHS hazard assessment](#).

### **Incident Reporting**

19. University staff, students, visitors and contractors shall report incidents and hazards immediately to their Supervisor and via the University's online Workplace safety incident and hazard reporting tool, as per the [WHS Incident management procedure](#).

### **Record keeping**

20. The responsible person shall preserve fall prevention WHS hazard assessment documentation. Records shall be kept for at least five years.
21. The register of employees trained under these procedures shall be maintained within the Human Resources Management System in the licences, certificates and professional membership database.

### **Training obligations and courses**

22. All workers needing to undertake work at heights and people approving WHS hazard assessment documentation shall:
  - have successfully completed a training course in Height Safety (and attend a refresher course every two years) presented by a Registered Training Organisation endorsed by the Australian National Training Authority; and
  - hold a current Height Safety training certificate or card.
23. All workers required to operate Elevated Work Platforms (EWP) should have completed an operators training course or be competent in the use of the equipment. As a minimum, operators must be familiar with a EWP's operation, safety and rescue procedures, and complete a pre start inspection checklist prior to use.

### **Sources**

**Legal and other requirements**

<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth)</i>
<i>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth)</i>
<i>Work Health and Safety – Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces – Code of Practice 2015</i>
<i>Work Health and Safety – Preventing Falls in Housing Construction – Code of Practice 2015</i>
<i>AS/NZS 1418: 2013 <u>Cranes Hoists and Winches Series</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 1576.1:2010 <u>Scaffolding – General Requirements</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 1657–2013 <u>Fixed Platforms, Walkways, Stairways and Ladders – Design, Construction and Installation</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 1891 Industrial Fall–Arrest Systems and Devices Series</i>
<i>AS/NZS 1892 Portable Ladders Series</i>
<i>AS/NZS 2359.2–2013 Powered industrial trucks Operations Powered Industrial Trucks</i>
<i>AS/NZS 2550 <u>Cranes Safe Use Series</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 2865–2009 <u>Confined Spaces</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 4142.3–1993 <u>Man–made Fibre Rope for Static Life Rescue Lines</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 4389:2015 <u>Safety Mesh</u></i>
<i>AS/NZS 4488.2:1997 (R2017) <u>Industrial Rope Access Systems – Selection, Use and Maintenance</u></i>

*AS/NZS 4576:1995 Guidelines for Scaffolding*

*AS/NZS 4994 Temporary Edge Protection Series*

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