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| C:\Users\z9801168\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.Outlook\D90HK2AH\UNSW Landscape.png | | SoMS Working after hours protocol SoMS\_HS\_022 | | | | |
| **Faculty/Division** | | | | **School/Unit** | | |
| Medicine | | | | Medical Sciences | | |
| **Document number** | **Initial issue date** | | **Current version** | | **Effective date** | **Next review date** |
| SoMS\_HS\_022 | 01/02/2006 | | V3.0 | | 29/01/2018 | 29/01/2021 |

1. **Purpose – context for development of the protocol**

This document indicates how the UNSW Working Alone or After Hours Guideline is applied at a practical local level in the School of Medical Sciences (SoMS).

1. **Scope – to which positions/groups does the protocol apply**

All persons in SoMS who work alone or outside of standard working hours in SoMS (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday).

1. **Definitions and acronyms used**

After Hours: Refers to any time between the hours of 6:00pm to 8:00am Monday to Friday and all-day Saturday, Sunday, and Public and University Holidays.

Working alone: Means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location or nature of the work. Assistance from other people includes rescue, medical assistance and emergency services.

RMF: Risk Management Form

SoMS: School of Medical Sciences

SWP: Safe Work Procedures

1. **Protocol statement**

## 4.1 Permission to Work After Hours Permission to work alone or after hours in a given laboratory or workspace within SoMS is granted by the relevant supervisor, based on criteria outlined in HS322 [Working Alone or After Hours Guideline](https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/HS322.pdf) and this protocol.

## *No-one should be given permission to work alone or after hours unless they have completed all relevant safety training, they have a RMF and/or a SWP for the task, they have been deemed competent and there are sufficient arrangements to monitor the safety of the staff/student.*

## A decision to permit work alone or after hours will be based on:

## the experience of the individual worker

## the level of risk involved in that work

## the availability of appropriate risk control measures where required

## Note: During designated University Closures such as often occurs between Christmas and New Year, further risk control procedures may be required. These controls may include the approval of the Head of School for each person working after hours. Specific requirements will be communicated to SoMS staff and students by email prior to each shutdown.

**4.2** **Supervisor Management of Risk**

Supervisors must take into account the level of risk posed by the alone/after-hours activity together with the category of staff or student who will be undertaking that activity. Such as:

**Competency**

* Competency and level of experience, skill and training of the individual undertaking the work;
* For after-hours work: the number of people, and their level of experience, working in the area (this might vary on a day-to-day basis);
* Normal level of supervision required for workers to complete the task or process;
* Whether the worker is able to make sound judgements about his or her own safety

**Work process / activity**

* Whether the substance, equipment or work is too hazardous or dangerous to be used or done alone or after-hours;
* Consequences of unattended experiments or equipment;
* How long it will take to carry out the task;
* The time of day the activity will be undertaken;
* Whether high risk activities involved
* Whether there is a risk of attack by an animal, including reptiles, insects and sea creatures
* The journey to and from where the work is being conducted and the mode of transport;

**Communication**

* Procedure for regular contact with the worker e.g. a “buddy” system: The buddy and the worker maintain regular communication (e.g. visit/call/text every hour) and if communication cannot be made with the worker, the buddy follows a pre-determined response (e.g. go to site/ contact security). Refer to Appendix 1;
* Access to a method of communication (landline phone, mobile phone, or duress alarm);
* Ability of communication equipment to work in all foreseeable situations

**Emergency assistance**

* The possible increase in risk because of reduced immediate assistance e.g. UNSW emergency services;
* Security in the area where work is being undertaken;
* Any pre-existing medical condition of the worker;
* The level of UNSW emergency/security personnel assistance available after-hours in the event of an incident;

Once consideration is given to all potential hazards for working alone or after hours additional risk controls may be needed, such as:

* Supervision of a new or inexperienced worker
* Only permitting low risk activities for inexperienced staff
* Ensuring that two or more persons are present in the laboratory during the activity
* Alerting security of the time and location in which an activity is occurring
* Specifying the time during which the activity may be conducted and/or a maximum duration of the activity to ensure that the worker(s) are not fatigued
* Relocating the activity to a laboratory with low(er) risks
* Requiring the worker to notify a buddy (supervisor/colleague/family member) of the time of the commencement of the activity and its expected duration. The worker is also required to contact the buddy upon completion of the work, and to advise them of time of departure. If the buddy does not receive this departure notification, UNSW security (Ext 56666) to be contacted to check on the welfare of the worker – Refer to Appendix 1.

The following table indicates the type of approval required based on the risk:

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| **After-hours/**  **Alone Risk Level** | **Example(s)** | **Approval required** |
| Low | * Administrative-type work e.g. office, library, study area or computer laboratory | No formal approval necessary, however your supervisor should be informed |
| Med | * Work with chemicals assessed as low risk e.g. buffers in a lab environment where access to materials or equipment of greater risk is prevented. * Use of Risk Group 1 biological agents in a PC1 facility. * Feeding and watering of animals, where the worker does not enter pens or handle the animals * Sample deposit and retrieval from cryogenic storage rooms with air monitoring alarms | Approval is necessary, but no supervision is required.  ● A “buddy” system for monitoring the  worker is recommended |
| High | * Use of Risk Group 1 biological agents in a PC2 or greater facility\*\* * Use of Risk Group 2 or greater biological agents\*\* * Handling an animal / entering a pen * Work with small volumes of hazardous substances where the risk is assessed as medium * Work with power tools * Sample deposit and retrieval from cryogenic storage rooms without air monitoring alarms | Approval and supervision are required.  ●The competency of the worker is considered on a case by case basis.  ●Supervision is by a competent, authorised person who is present at the workplace.  ●The risks must be controlled to the lowest level achievable. |
| Very High | * Decanting or transporting cryogens * All High-Risk Hazards listed in AS2243.1. | No approval can be given. Work is prohibited after-hours and/or alone. |

*\*\* An exemption to the requirement for direct supervision may be possible subject to a risk assessment for the specific activity (e.g. there is no injection risks, no work with Bunsen burners and ethanol, no work with equipment that could cause physical injury (e.g. microtome or centrifuge) and taking into account the competency of the individual worker for that activity. No laboratory worker shall work more than 12hours in a 24hour period.*

## 4.3 Documentation and Record Keeping

Any additional controls and requirements for working alone or after hours should be added to the relevant SWP or RMF for the task or the HS703 Work Alone and After-Hours approval form. Risk controls must be reviewed on a regular basis, when new information becomes available, if there is an incident or when something changes in relation to the work.

Where a written record of the approval is required (i.e. for Medium or High Risk) HS703 [After-Hours Approval Form](http://safety.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/documents/HS703_Work_Alone_or_After_Hours_Approval_Form.doc) must be completed and signed. Additional risk controls for the particular worker and task must be recorded on this form. The approval may be for a one-off event, for a specific period, or ongoing. If appropriate, the information should also be provided to security before the alone or after hours work takes place.

In the case of mandated university shutdowns (e.g. Christmas) the list of approved persons to work alone/after-hours is provided to security.

Completed HS703 After Hours Approval Forms must be retained by the laboratory for a period of at least five years as H&S records.

Completed HS703 After Hours Approval Forms for mandated university shutdowns must be retained centrally by the school for a period of at least five years as H&S records.

## Roles and responsibilities

## 5.1 Staff & Students:

## To inform the relevant supervisor of plans to work alone or after hours (including work in the BRC or other non-SoMS-controlled areas).

## Those comply with the requirements of this protocol and HS322 Working Alone or After Hours Guideline.

## To follow instructions in SWP/RMF/HS703 After-Hours Work Approval forms.

## To carry out any buddy system arrangements required as part of the working alone or after-hours approval.

**5.2 Supervisors:**

1. To approve work alone or after hours in accordance with this protocol.
2. Where necessary, supervisors must apply additional risk controls on the basis of procedural risk and level of experience of the worker and document these.
3. To ensure additional risk controls are documented (in SWP or RMF or HS703 After-Hours Approval Form).
4. To monitor that workers are following all working alone/after-hours requirements.

**5.3 Head of School:**

1. To approve after hours by all staff/students during any mandated university shutdown for example over Christmas**/**New Year.

**5.4 Research Manager:**

1. To collate and retain approved HS703 After Hours Approval Forms for mandated university shutdowns
2. To provide a list to security of approved persons to work alone/after hours during mandated university shutdowns.

**APPENDIX 1 – BUDDY & ESCALATION SYSTEM**

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| **Worker** | **Buddy** |
| Tell buddy your location, contact details and expected start and finished time  Tell buddy you have started  Maintain regular communication between the worker and the buddy  Inform buddy you have finished work and are safe | Call other workers possibly in the area who could check-in  If no response, or at the same time  Call UNSW security (93856666) with details of location, work undertaken, expected start and finish time and any hazards  Confirm it’s ok to be a buddy, make note of the details  If no response  If no response  If no response  Call worker on mobile phone until it is answered  Call worker on lab phone until it is answered |
| **UNSW Security**  Check the area, if necessary contact Emergency Services | If worker can’t be found  Contact Group Head/Head of School/Next of kin |

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| Accountabilities | | | | | |
| Responsible Officer | | Peter Gunning, Head – School of Medical Sciences | | | |
| Contact Officer | | Cristan Herbert, Chairperson SoMS Level 3 HS Consultation Committee | | | |
| Supporting Information | | | | | |
| Related Documents | | [HS-322 Working after hours guideline](http://safety.unsw.edu.au/hs322-working-alone-or-after-hours-guideline)  [HS703 – Working after hours approval form](http://safety.unsw.edu.au/hs703-work-alone-or-after-hours-approval-form) | | | |
| Superseded Documents | | SoMS\_HS\_022 (v2.2) 01/02/2006 | | | |
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| Revision History | | | | | |
| Version | Approved by | | Approval date | Effective date | Sections modified |
| 4.0 | Chairperson, SoMS L3 HS Consultation Committee | | 29/01/2018 | 29/01/2018 | Document reviewed |