



UNIVERSITY SAFETY & HEALTH POLICY

The National University of Singapore (NUS) is committed to ensuring a high standard of safety and health (S&H) and to the prevention of injury and ill health for its staff, students, contractors and visitors¹ in association with its research, teaching and service activities at all sites owned, operated or controlled by the University. This commitment is demonstrated through the implementation of the following policy statements.

Policy Statements

1. Safety & Health Culture

NUS is committed to building a positive S&H culture where S&H is embraced as a core value. S&H would be integrated in the University's education, research and workplace activities, thus creating a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students, contractors and visitors.

2. Legal Compliance

NUS is committed to comply with all applicable S&H legislation, corporate S&H policies and directives.

3. Implementation of Safety and Health Management Systems

NUS shall proactively identify, assess and control S&H hazards associated with its activities to prevent injuries and ill health to NUS staff, students, contractors and visitors. NUS shall promptly investigate and identify root causes of incidents and implement measures for the prevention of recurrences. This shall be achieved through the implementation of S&H management systems and related S&H programmes, standards and directives at the University, faculties and departments. The specific requirements for the identification and management of S&H risks are detailed in the various NUS S&H manuals. S&H shall be integrated into work activities and appropriate S&H assessment shall be conducted prior to the commencement of activities where required.

4. Regular Monitoring & Review

The University's S&H performance shall be monitored through the Enterprise Risk Management System and changes shall be made to S&H management systems to enhance and raise S&H standards. NUS shall establish necessary mechanisms to monitor non-conformances to NUS S&H policies, manuals and standards to ensure necessary corrective and preventive actions have been taken. The S&H management system shall also be subjected to comprehensive review at defined periods to ensure continual improvement of its S&H performance.

5. Safety and Health Roles and Responsibilities in NUS

Every staff and student has a responsibility to comply with the NUS S&H Policy. The responsibility in ensuring S&H in the University begins with top management and extends to all levels of management, including Heads of Department (HoDs), supervisors, faculty and staff, working collaboratively to continually improve the University's S&H performance. The responsibilities of various stakeholders and institutional safety and health committees in ensuring a safe working environment at NUS are outlined in Appendices A and B respectively.

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President
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¹ Interns, collaborators, long and short-term visitors

Appendix A

Key Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

1. Management's Responsibilities

The ultimate responsibility for S&H in NUS rests with the President of the University. The President may delegate the authority for S&H management to the Provost, Deputy Presidents, Vice Presidents, and other members of the Senior Management. Senior Management shall provide leadership, strategic direction, and adequate resources for the establishment of a positive S&H culture at NUS. This would include:

- a. Establishing necessary University-level committees to address specific S&H issues;
- b. Establishing a [comprehensive framework](#) and approving specific initiatives and programmes to enhance and strengthen S&H policies, practices and culture in NUS;
- c. Establishing S&H goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) for all Deans, HoDs, Directors and other members of University management and monitoring the performance of these KPIs.

The Deans, HoDs, Directors and other members of the management of the University are responsible for providing leadership in S&H stewardship. They shall:

- a. Ensure that units under their management including activities undertaken in shared, common and/or core facilities, are in compliance with legislation, NUS S&H policies and standards;
- b. Where appropriate, ensure that areas under their management have a S&H Management System in place;
- c. Display visible leadership towards safety by leading the establishment and promotion of a positive S&H culture in their areas of management, and encourage positive safety behaviour and practices of staff, students, contractors and visitors;
- d. Ensure that units under their management have adequate resources such as space, manpower and funding for risk controls, programmes and equipment based on risk priority;
- e. Ensure that individuals under their management have defined S&H roles and responsibilities;
- f. Ensure that individuals under their management have the authority to implement appropriate S&H policies, risk controls and programmes;
- g. Ensure unsafe behaviour and practices as well as non-compliances are adequately addressed and appropriate preventive and disciplinary measures are taken.

2. Supervisor's Responsibilities

All University supervisors are responsible for protecting the S&H of staff, students and visitors under their supervision and within their area of management. This responsibility includes:

- a. Ensuring continued compliance with NUS S&H policies, programmes, directives and applicable legislative requirements;
- b. Ensuring risk assessments in relation to the safety and health risks posed to any person who may be affected by his undertaking in the workspace are conducted and, where applicable, personal health factors are considered during the risk assessment.
- c. Ensuring that equipment are safe to use and well maintained;
- d. Ensuring that their staff are competent to perform their tasks safely by identifying and addressing their training needs;
- e. Ensuring that staff participate in University safety training programmes and complete any required job-specific training;
- f. Ensuring that students and/or visitors are trained before they carry out activities that may pose a S&H risk and that they are supervised when carrying out these activities;
- g. Ensuring that a system is established for the selection and management of contractors, including reviewing the S&H impact of their activities;
- h. Ensuring necessary corrective and preventive actions are taken to address any non-conformances to NUS S&H policies, manuals and standards.

In academic areas, supervisors include Principal Investigators (PIs), class instructors/laboratory supervisors, laboratory directors, or others having direct supervisory authority. For administrative areas, the supervisors are the managers. Specifically, in the area of research, the PI shall assume responsibility for safety in his or her laboratories/workshops and other type of workspaces. The HoD shall be the person responsible for safety in

teaching laboratories and other areas of work in his or her Department. For Adjunct Professors, it is the responsibility of the co-PI or HoD to ensure their compliance with University S&H policies.

3. Office of Safety, Health & Environment (OSHE)'s Responsibilities

OSHE is the corporate office in charge of workplace S&H matters, environmental compliance and emergency management in NUS. OSHE is responsible for the following:

- a. Advising and assisting Senior Management in ensuring that the University is in compliance with S&H regulations and other requirements;
- b. Developing University-level S&H policies, standards, programmes, directives and other elements of the S&H management system;
- c. Deploying Safety and Health Officers to NUS faculties, schools, research institutes and administrative clusters to advise Deans, Directors and Cluster Heads in implementing their S&H management system;
- d. Advising and guiding the Department Safety and Health Coordinators in the discharge of their S&H responsibilities;
- e. Acting as the point of contact between S&H regulatory agencies and the University;
- f. Serving as the secretariat for University-level S&H committees.

4. Safety and Health Coordinators' Responsibilities

The Safety and Health Coordinators are appointed by the Departments/Research Institutes and Centres (DRICs) to provide assistance and support to supervisors and managers in their respective units for the development, implementation and monitoring of their unit's S&H systems and programmes. It is mandatory for [all laboratory-based and non-laboratory-based high hazard DRICs](#) to appoint a Safety and Health Coordinator. Their responsibilities include:

- a. Serving as the first point of contact for the DRIC's staff and students on all S&H matters;
- b. Liaising with OSHE on all S&H matters pertaining to the DRIC;
- c. Providing guidance, advice and technical assistance to HoD/Director and DRIC Safety and Health Committee on all S&H matters;
- d. Facilitating the implementation of S&H management system and adoption of S&H best practices in the DRICs.

5. NUS Staff and Students' Responsibilities

Staff and students are responsible for:

- a. Keeping themselves informed of situations and conditions that could affect their safety and health;
- b. Participating in risk assessments and training programmes provided by their supervisors, instructors and OSHE (if applicable);
- c. Adhering to S&H regulations, NUS requirements and practices in their workplace, classroom, laboratory and student residences;
- d. Reporting to their supervisors or instructors on hazards, near misses, incidents or accidents in the workplace, classroom, laboratory or on campus;
- e. Communicating to contractors and visitors any relevant information that they might require to minimise S&H risks while performing their activities.

Appendix B

Key Roles and Responsibilities of Institutional Safety and Health Committees²

1. Risk Management Steering Committee (RMSC)

The key purpose of the committee is to maintain sound and robust risk (including safety, health and environmental risk) management in NUS, and to provide appropriate communications to key stakeholders. The committee will review the risk profile of NUS, prioritise and ensure proper implementation of risk management initiatives in the University.

2. Safety and Health Management Committee (SHMC)

The committee provides strategic direction on the development and implementation of a safety and health management framework that would safeguard NUS staff and students, the general public and the environment from hazards arising from NUS activities.

3. Institutional Laboratory Safety Committee (ILSC)

The committee provides strategic oversight on all laboratory-related S&H issues in NUS and serve in an advisory capacity to University Management on such matters. It includes any field activities that are required to support laboratory-based (including workshops/machine shops) research but it does not have oversight of biohazards, which is under the purview of the Institutional Biosafety Committee.

4. Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)

The primary role of the IBC is to safeguard NUS staff and students, the general public, and the environment from biohazards. The IBC is responsible for reviewing and approving research and teaching activities conducted by faculty, staff, students, and/or visiting scientists at NUS, that involve the use of biohazardous materials, including regulated animal and plant pathogens, biological toxins, and recombinant or synthetic nucleic acid molecules.

² The detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Institutional Safety and Health Committees can be found in the NUS Safety and Health Management System Manual