

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Nōnahea i Whakarerekē Last Modified	May 2025
Rā Arotake Review Date	August 2028
Mana Whakaae Approval Authority	University Council
Āpiha Whakapā Contact Officer	Executive Director – People, Culture and Campus Life

Kupu Whakataki | Introduction

This policy outlines Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha's | University of Canterbury's commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

Kaupapa Here | Policy Statement

Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury is committed to creating a workplace that enables and supports our Staff and Students to succeed and thrive. We encourage excellence in health, safety, and Wellbeing to create a safe and inclusive environment.

This policy applies to all University workplaces and Everyone who works, studies or visits the University. We expect all of our people to demonstrate respect, care, and regard for each other when undertaking their activities.

To the best of our ability, we will:

- Cultivate a just and fair health and safety culture that aligns with [University Values](#) in which people are not punished for actions, omissions and decisions taken by them, that are in line with their experience and training, but where gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated.
- Assign and communicate clear responsibilities throughout the organisation for the governance and management of health and safety.
- Where practicable, eliminate hazards, manage and reduce health and safety risks.

- Strive for excellent health, safety and Wellbeing practice with legal compliance as a foundation.
- Consult, cooperate and collaborate with third parties and contractors where we have overlapping health and safety duties.
- Provide and maintain safe facilities, accommodation, plant, equipment and systems, and seek to ensure safety is embedded in our design approach and decision making.
- Ensure hazardous substances are used, stored and disposed of safely.
- Engage, consult and work in partnership with our people and their representatives to collaboratively learn and optimise our health and safety performance.
- Ensure that people have the relevant information, training, skills and resources to work and learn safely.
- Manage and reduce the risk of ill health and injury, monitor the health, safety and Wellbeing of our people, and provide support to return to work or learning.
- Prepare for emergencies, deliver effective business continuity, and ensure emergency procedures are in place and communicated.
- Encourage and enable accurate reporting of hazards, near misses, incidents, unsafe practices and conditions.
- Be proactive and responsive in taking appropriate action to maintain and improve health and safety, including:
 - stopping any unsafe activity,
 - establishing organisational health, safety and Wellbeing objectives,
 - consistently monitoring our health and safety performance, to identify trends, and
 - seeking opportunities to improve whilst actively managing health and safety risks.
- Review this policy along with the health and safety management system periodically and undertake positive assurance exercises, such as internal and external audits, inspections and learning reviews.
- Recognise and reinforce positive behaviours, practices and celebrate success.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Duties

Everyone at the University has a role to play in good health and safety. Everyone is expected to take personal responsibility to the extent they can influence and control how they carry out activities.

The University Council, as the governing body of the University, will ensure that appropriate systems, policies, capability and capacity are available to care for their people and meet the University's obligations.

Everyone's Duties

We expect all of our people to:

- take reasonable care for their own health, safety and Wellbeing;
- take reasonable care that they do not adversely affect the health, safety and Wellbeing of others;
- follow this policy and any other policies, procedures, or reasonable instruction given by the University in relation to health, safety and Wellbeing;
- promptly and accurately report hazards, near misses and incidents, unsafe practices, or conditions, and take appropriate action to maintain health and safety; and
- attend health and safety training, as provided by the University.

Officers' Duties

Where the University Council, the Vice-Chancellor and members of the Senior Leadership Team are considered Officers of the PCBU, they will:

- acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of health, safety and Wellbeing matters for the University;
- understand the nature of the University's operations and of the associated hazards and risks;
- ensure the University has appropriate resources and processes to eliminate, so far as is Reasonably Practicable, or minimise so far as is Reasonably Practicable, risks to health, safety and Wellbeing;
- ensure that the University has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards and risks and for responding in a timely way to that information that align with [University Values](#);
- ensure that the University Council, Council committees, and Management committees receive regular reports from management regarding health and safety performance and issues; and
- ensure that the University has, and implements, processes for complying with any duty or obligation, and verify the provision and use of the above resources and processes through reviews and audits.

Reporting Incidents and Addressing Behaviour Inconsistent with this Policy

We will ensure that our culture encourages people to report mistakes without fearing the consequences of reporting. It is important that Everyone reports incidents, near misses and mistakes/errors promptly so that the University can take action to improve its health and safety policy, system or processes.

It is unlikely that the University would take disciplinary action against anyone for proactively reporting an incident, near miss or error/mistake and cooperating fully throughout any investigation or corrective action process.

The actions of an individual that lead to an incident, near miss error/mistake will be assessed considering both the experience and training of that individual, and the systems in place to respond to such behaviours.

However, reckless violations and deliberate acts that has or could have led to an injury **are not tolerable**. If the University determines that a Staff Member's or Student's behaviour was deliberate or reckless, or a Staff Member or Student refuses to cooperate with the University's investigation or corrective action process, then these will be treated as serious matters and addressed in accordance with applicable policies, regulations and contractual terms and conditions.

Tautuhinga | Definitions

Everyone – collectively means staff, students and anyone else such as a visitor.

Officer(s) – has the same meaning as in the [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#). In regards to the University, this includes members of the University Council, the Vice-Chancellor and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members for their areas of responsibility.

Person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) – means a person conducting a business or undertaking alone or with others, whether for profit or gain.

Reasonably Practicable – means something which is, or was, at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring safety and wellness, considering all relevant matters.

Staff or Staff Member – for the purposes of this policy means “worker” which has the same meaning as set out in [section 19 Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#). “Staff” or “Staff Member” extends to cover all persons working at, for, or on behalf of, the University (whether paid or unpaid), including but not limited to contractors, subcontractors and their employees, adjunct appointees, Erskine visitors, consultants, guest lecturers, interns and volunteer workers.

Student(s) – for the purposes of this policy, means “learner” which has the same meaning as set out in [The Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International learners\) Code of Practice 2021 \(domestic and international\) \(Ministry of Education website\)](#)

Wellbeing – means the state of complete physical, emotional, mental, and social health; not merely the absence of disease, illness or injury.

He kōrero anō | Related Documents and Information

Whakaturetanga | Legislation

- [Accident Compensation Act 2001 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work \(General Risk and Workplace Management\) Regulations 2016 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work \(Worker Engagement, Participation, and Representation\) Regulations 2016 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work \(Hazardous Substances\) Regulations 2017 \(LI 2017/131\) \(as of 24 June 2021\) Contents \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work \(Asbestos\) Regulations 2016 \(New Zealand Legislation website\)](#)

Te Pātaka Kaupapa Here | UC Policy Library and Website

- [Student Code of Conduct | University of Canterbury](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct | University of Canterbury](#)
- [University Values](#)

Mōwaho | External

- [WorkSafe \(WorkSafe New Zealand website\)](#)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	Action	Approval Authority	Action Date
<i>For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz</i>			
1.00	Converted document to new template.	Policy Unit	Oct 2013
1.01	Document review date extended.	Policy Unit	Mar 2014
2.00	Comprehensive review; updating of hyperlinks.	Vice-Chancellor	Aug 2014
3.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer.	Vice-Chancellor	May 2015
4.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer; new legislation prompted comprehensive review.	Vice-Chancellor	Apr 2016
5.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, minor changes only.	Vice-Chancellor	Apr 2017
6.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, no changes to content.	Policy Unit	Feb 2018

6.01	Updating of broken HR advisor link.	Policy Unit	May 2018
7.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer, minor changes, alignment of language with H&S legislation, inclusion of wellbeing in the document.	Vice-Chancellor	Jul 2019
8.00	Review by Contact Officer. Language amended to be non-binary. Removal of reference to Canterbury Safety Charter, and update to internal website reference. Ratified by SLT on 29 September 2020.	Vice-Chancellor	Sep 2020
9.00	Unscheduled but major review by Contact Officer. Format and layout changes, Approval Authority and Contact Officer changed and updated; definitions added, amended and updated to align with H&S legislation definitions and <i>Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021</i> ; policy statement updated; sub-headings amended, reporting and addressing behavior consistent with this policy added; external links added, deleted link to Council Health and Safety Charter; deleted links to HR toolkit and intranet; added links to Health and Safety at Work Regulations.	University Council	Nov 2021
9.01	Unscheduled review, minor corrections to content post-publishing of v 9.00	Policy Unit	Dec 2021
9.02	Unscheduled review, correction of grammar	Policy Unit	Dec 2021
10.0	Major review, including an external review.	Council	May 2025

This policy remains in force until it is updated.