

# **Workplace Health & Safety Policy**

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# ARETHUSA COLLEGE

## Workplace Health & Safety Policy

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline procedures to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, a healthy and safe workplace.

### Scope

This policy applies to students and employees including full time, part time, permanent, fixed term and casual employees as well as contractors volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at the College. It outlines the steps Arethusa College (the “College”) takes to safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, students and other users of the college facilities. It also sets out the expectations that the College have of students and employees and provides specific information about College requirements where there are health and safety incidents involving threats, intimidation and physical violence as well as addressing as sun safety, safety equipment, manual handling, and workstations. The Policy also includes the College’s position and policy on rehabilitation.

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### POLICY

Arethusa College is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing employees, students and other users of the College facilities as far as reasonably practicable. The College acknowledges its responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2001 and other relevant legislation and strives towards continually improving the area of Health and Safety.

Arethusa College endeavours to ensure a healthy and safe workplace by providing and maintaining:

- Safe systems of work;
- Safe plant, machinery, equipment and workplace conditions; and
- Necessary information, instruction, training and supervision.

In order to support this policy the school executives and management ensures the school:

- Complies with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements, codes of practice and industry standards and makes adequate provision of resources to meet these requirements;
- Promotes health and safety awareness and the development of healthy and safe working procedures;
- Provides information, training, instruction and any required protective equipment;
- Consults with employees on health and safety matters and on ways to reduce workplace hazards and improve control systems;
- Maintains effective accident analysis and hazard reporting systems;
- Encourages the rehabilitation of injured employees; and
- Sets health and safety objectives and regularly reviews performance.

In addition, the school has a Policy and Risk Manager whose role includes several main functions:

1. Promote cooperation and communication with employees to perform and monitor health and safety procedures designed to enable and provide a safe work environment.
2. To ensure health, safety and welfare issues that arise at the workplace are reported;
3. To assist in resolving health, safety and welfare issues that arise at the workplace;
4. To develop, in consultation with employees, the formulation of health, safety and welfare policies, practices and procedures to be followed in the workplace;
5. To consult on any proposed changes to health, safety and welfare policies, practices or procedures, which may affect health, safety or welfare;
6. To review developments in the field of rehabilitation and the employment of workers with some form of disability in collaboration with the Business Manager; and
7. To assist the Business Manager in the return to work of employees who have suffered from work related injuries.

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The Policy and Risk Manager will undertake regular review of risk management and safety strategies and procedures in consultation with employees.

During induction, new employees are introduced to and / or shown the location of the Policy and Risk Manager's office. The Policy and Risk Manager will regularly attend employees meetings to discuss health and safety issues or alert employees to any changes to health and safety procedures or laws. The Principal and Business Manager will assist the Policy and Risk Manager in reiterating to employees the importance of health and safety responsibilities and requirements being upheld in the workplace.

### Reporting Hazards

To ensure the safety of the workplace, all hazards should be reported - even if you think someone has or should already have reported it. If you have discovered a hazard you should report it to the Policy and Risk Manager, Business Manager or Principal.

If the hazard is potentially serious or even life threatening you should send someone else for help and, without causing any danger to yourself, stay at the scene to warn others of the danger.

**DO NOT ENDANGER YOURSELF BY BEING TOO CLOSE TO THE HAZARD OR TRYING TO FIX THE PROBLEM.**

Remain at the scene until help arrives or the situation becomes too dangerous to remain.

***No task is so important as to compromise health and safety.***

### Reporting Health and Safety Incidents

All health and safety incidents that occur on school premises or during off-campus school activities should be recorded on a Health and Safety Incident Report form and submitted to the Policy and Risk Manager. Forms completed electronically should be saved and emailed to the Policy and Risk Manager. Handwritten forms should be personally given to the Policy and Risk Manager or scanned and emailed. When completing a Health and Safety Incident Report form, other forms may need to accompany it, such as a 'Blue' Incident Report form in order to provide further information about the incident. The Principal should also be notified of the incident.

Health and Safety Incident Report forms are available on the employees intranet, from administration or in employees rooms.

If a major incident occurs you should stay with the victim and send someone else for help. If you are close to a phone you should ring school administration with the following information:

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- who you are
- where you are
- what has happened
- how serious the injury is
- what assistance you need.

If you are trained in first aid, apply the appropriate first aid measures to assist the victim. Whatever your training is, be sure to pass on your observations and any information you have regarding the situation to those who come to aid the situation.

### Sun Smart

Skin cancer is a major public health problem in Australia, with two out of three people requiring treatment for some form of skin cancer during their life time. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun is a major cause of skin cancer. The incidence of skin cancer can be reduced by minimizing personal UVR exposure.

This policy aims to reduce employees' exposure to UVR from the sun by implementing appropriate occupational health control strategies. These strategies include:

- Where possible, work (and classes) will be carried out in shaded areas or temporary shade will be erected.
- Where possible, work, including lessons which involve outdoor activities that must occur in the direct sun, will be scheduled before 11: 00am or after 3:00pm.
- At all times (including cool and overcast days) employees who are working outdoors will protect themselves against UVR by wearing approved hats, clothing and applying SPF 15 (or higher) broad spectrum sunscreen.
- The school will provide SPF 15 (or higher) broad spectrum sunscreen.
- The school will include sun protection issues in any strategic plans and plans for environmental changes.
- The school will include sun protection procedures in any induction course for new employees.
- The school will promote sun safe ideals and reinforce sun safety expectations and requirements.

### Fire Safety equipment

The most visible safety equipment is fire extinguishers and hose reels. Employees members are advised to familiarise themselves with the placement and method of operation of such equipment by reading the instructions attached. Other fire safety equipment may include:

- Fire and smoke detectors

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- Fire blankets
- Security alarms
- Security sensors

Safety equipment also includes personal protective equipment. If you are directed to wear personal protective equipment you must do so and also wear it in the proper manner.

### Manual Handling

Careless and improper lifting technique and carrying can cause serious injury. Whenever practicable, heavy lifts are to be made by mechanical means. If an item is deemed or assessed to be too heavy/awkward or unsafe to lift, it should be left alone and not lifted.

If manual handling is unavoidable:

- size up the load and seek help if necessary;
- position the feet correctly, as close as possible to the object to be lifted;
- bend knees and get a secure grip;
- maintain a straight back and ensure you are comfortable;
- take a deep breath, keep your head erect and lift by straightening your legs;
- keep your back straight, your arms in and your elbows and knees slightly bent;
- when carrying a load, hold it close to the body and avoid twisting the back; and
- when lowering a load, follow the procedure in reverse, keeping the back straight.

### Keyboard Workstations

Some school employees spend a great deal of time sitting in the one position at a computer and keyboard. For this reason correct posture, a correctly adjusted seat and correct positioning of the keyboard and monitor are important.

To adjust seat correctly, adjust the height so feet rest firmly on the floor and weight is through the feet. Thighs should be fully supported except for a two-finger width space behind the knees. Adjust the back rest depth to achieve this.

Maintain a relaxed posture by:

- relaxing your shoulders
- having your elbows by your side
- keeping your forearms and hands parallel to the ground
- making sure your wrists are not bent when using the keyboard

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- seating yourself a comfortable distance from the keyboard (usually the length of your forearm away).

Ideally the top of the screen should be approximately at eye level and about 60-70 cm from your eyes. Your neck should be at rest and relaxed.

You should be able to maintain the recommended seating position when using the keyboard. The keyboard should be placed 6-7 cm from the edge of the keyboard surface to allow the wrist/forearm to rest when you are not typing.

The document you are working on and the screen should be the same distance from your eyes. Use a document holder which allows you to place the documents in the most convenient position.

The document should be placed:

- in a level position beside the screen when the keyboard is in the central position or
- directly below the screen just above the keyboard.

Altering the angle of your screen may overcome problems with glare and reflection; however your screen should only tilt 5 degrees upwards. Generally the best position for the screen is at right angles to the window and parallel to overhead fluorescent lights. The contrast of text and background on the screen should be adjusted to a moderate level. It is also desirable to have an outlook on which to rest the eyes occasionally.

### Rehabilitation

Arethusa College is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for employees. In the event of illness or injury where employment is a significant contributing factor, the school recognises the substantial benefits gained from workplace rehabilitation.

The school accepts that workplace rehabilitation facilitates the healing process and subsequent return to work. The school commits to the early provision of timely and adequate services to support a medically approved 'return to work' duties programs for employers who are injured or ill.

The aim is, as much as possible, to:

- maintain ill or injured workers in the workplace
- facilitate an early return to work
- maximise independent functioning of the worker if work is disallowed.

In order to do this, the school will:

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- ensure the workplace rehabilitation commences as soon as possible following injury, in accordance with medical advice
  - ensure appropriate medically approved and suitable duties programs are available to all ill or injured workers
  - consult with employees in the formulation of safe structured rehabilitation plan development
  - respect rights and confidentiality, both written and verbal, of all employees
  - ensure all employees are aware of workplace rehabilitation and will support injured workers
- 
- adequately resource the position of the Business Manager who assumes responsibility as the 'Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator' with assistance from the Policy and Risk Manager
  - adopt a multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation and comply with legislative obligations and
  - review this policy and procedures at least every three years to ensure legislative requirements are met.

### **SUITABLE DUTIES PROGRAM – 'RETURN TO WORK'**

A suitable duties program in the rehabilitation process enables an injured worker to return to work through a graduated and supervised return to work process. The goal of the program should be meaningful and achievable.

Selected duties are individually developed and matched to the capabilities of the worker, taking into account the worker's age, skills, education, work experience and nature of the incapacity. The suitable duties program is regularly reviewed and upgraded on advice from the treating doctor and takes into account any restrictions, limitations and amendments recommended by the doctor.

Suitable Duties Plans may be:

- Fully funded by Work Cover.
- Partially funded by both the employer and the insurer or employer and Work Cover - the employer pays wages for hours worked and insurer / Work Cover fund the balance.
- Medical expenses only. Employer pays the up front cost and the insurer reimburses.

### **Responsibilities - General**

All employees and visitors are required to:

- adhere to standard work processes and instructions for workplace health and safety

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- perform all duties in a manner which ensures the health and safety of all and
- cooperate with executives and management to enable compliance with health and safety responsibilities.

Employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to:

- comply with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements and working procedures codes of practice and industry standards
- wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), if applicable
- report, and where appropriate, rectify hazards and participate in the analysis of accidents and
- Accept responsibility for protecting themselves and others.

### Responsibilities - Rehabilitation

It is the responsibility of anyone injured at work to:

- lodge an application for worker's compensation within six months of the entitlement arising;
- advise their chosen doctor of workplace rehabilitation availability and organise completion of the Work Capabilities Checklist;
- actively participate in workplace rehabilitation, therefore minimising the cost of injury;
- communicate regularly with the Business Manager ('Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator') regarding compensation issues; and
- be aware of the Staff Grievance Policy.

The Business Manager fulfills the role of 'Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator' and maintains current Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator Accreditation. The Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator is responsible for:

- determining that absence from work is due to actual illness or injury. If absence exceeds two (2) consecutive work days, the employee must provide a doctor's certificate within seven (7) days to support the absence and give it to the Business Manager;
- ensuring an efficient system exists for immediate reporting of injuries to establish early worker contact regarding rehabilitation; and ensuring compliance with the employers' duty to notify Work Cover, treating all information confidentially;
- educating all workers regarding the Workplace Rehabilitation Policy and Procedure following an injury; and for educating supervisors of their role and responsibilities in the rehabilitation process;
- developing, coordinating and monitoring individual plans with the treating doctor, and ensuring such plans and amendments are signed by the treating doctor;
- maintaining an objective confidential file of workers participating in the rehabilitation program. Such files must contain accurate signed case notes, all communications, actions and decisions relating to the case. Verbal and written confidentially must be observed;
- promoting the Workplace Rehabilitation Program internally with all employees and externally with treating doctors; and

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- maintaining accurate statistics including claim duration, average claim cost and injured worker evaluation.

All employees are expected to offer support and encouragement to the injured worker. Workplace rosters and procedures are to be adjusted to enable successful rehabilitation plan implementation. Managers, Supervisors and fellow workers are to actively assist the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator in identifying duties to develop suitable return-to-work plans.

### RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

Evacuation and Lockdown Policies  
Risk Management Policy  
Sexual Harassment Policy  
Workplace Bullying Policy  
Staff Grievance Policy

### FORMS

All forms are available on the school intranet, administration and in staff rooms.

- Health and Safety Incident Report
- Hazard Report Form - the template for the *Hazard Report Form* can be located on the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR) website (as at 24/10/2013). [http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/hazardreport\\_form2003.pdf](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/hazardreport_form2003.pdf)
- 'Blue' Incident Report
- Property Damage Report
- Workplace Risk Assessment Checklist
- Acquisition of New Goods

### LEGISLATION

*Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011*  
Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011  
Workplace Health and Safety (Codes of Practice) Notice 2005  
*Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*  
Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2003



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### POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

**Date of Policy**

2009

**Approved by Board**

2009

**Review Date**

Biennially, in consultation with employees.

Reviewed October 2013