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1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this process is to maintain a work and learning environment that is as safe and with minimal risks to health. Workplace inspections must be conducted on a regular basis based on the level of risk associated with the work and learning environment. This is a proactive safety measure to identify and control potential hazards that may otherwise be overlooked during day-to-day operations.

2. BACKGROUND

N/A

3. SCOPE

This process applies to all RMIT, globally.

Areas/spaces not intended for daily people use and occupation, e.g. Plant Rooms, or under the control of PSG, are not in scope of this process.

4. WHAT MUST GO RIGHT?

Should this process be implemented appropriately by RMIT, the expected outcomes – known as ‘what must go right’ – will be that:

- Involvement from all levels of leadership, staff, students, researchers and third parties.
- All identified hazards have assigned corrective actions with timelines for resolution.
- Actions are escalated to appropriate leadership levels as required.
- Inspections to cover all occupied areas in a designated space.
- Communicate inspection outcomes (i.e. - hazards or control measures) to people in local area.

5. PROCEDURE/IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Workplace Inspection Team

Workplace inspections are to be completed by a team of staff from the local area. The workplace inspection team is to be comprised of the following:

- Management Representative for the work/learning environment being inspected
- Health and Safety Representative(s) or Deputy Health and Safety Representative (where available) – are invited and should be encouraged but their attendance is not mandatory. However, they are not responsible for completing the inspections (i.e., the HSR’s role is to represent their work group)
- Staff involved in the work/learning area being inspected
- Staff from another work/learning area – to provide ‘fresh eyes’ perspective on the area being inspected

The Head of the School/department should also be invited to participate in the inspection where possible.

Workplace inspections are to reference any previous inspections conducted to ensure previous identified hazards have been rectified.

All sections of the relevant Workplace Inspection Checklist forms are to be completed.

- **HR – HSW-PR12-CL01 - Workplace Inspections – General Checklist**

- HR – HSW-PR12-CL02 - Workplace Inspections – Biological Laboratory Checklist
- HR – HSW-PR12-CL03 - Workplace Inspections – Workshop Checklist
- HE – HSW-PR12-CL04 - Workplace Inspections – Laboratory Areas Checklist

The above checklists are to be completed either electronically or hard copy (print out checklist).

5.2. Areas to be Inspected

Inspections shall be conducted for all areas that are occupied by the local department/school. These areas include, but are not limited to:

- Breakout spaces
- Common areas
- Corridors
- Kitchens
- Studios
- Laboratories
- Meeting rooms
- Office areas
- Stair wells/cases
- Toilets
- Classrooms
- Workshops

5.3. Frequency of Inspections

Operational Leaders are to conduct risk assessments for work/learning areas under their control to determine the level of risk associated with these areas.

The frequency of workplace inspections will differ depending on the level of risk associated with work area to be inspected and the nature of the work/learning that is undertaken in the area. The following frequencies should be considered as a guide:

RISK CLASSIFICATION	ENVIRONMENT	NOMINAL INSPECTION FREQUENCY
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratories - (e.g. containing hazardous substances/materials, plant/equipment, powered hand tools, lasers, animals, biological, PC2, radiation, quarantine etc.) • Workshops/Studios – (e.g. hazardous substances/materials, plant/equipment, powered hand tools, lasers, etc.) • Hazardous materials/substances storage areas 	Every three (3) months
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratories/Workshops/Studios – (non-powered hand tools only, electrical appliances) • Performance venues • Galleries – (display capacity greater than 2 metres in height) • Sporting and recreational facilities 	Every six (6) months
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galleries – (display capacity less than 2 metres in height) • Studios (other than listed above) • Office areas/meeting rooms/breakout spaces • Classrooms/teaching areas/lecture theatres • Kitchens/common areas • Toilets/corridors/stairwells/staircases • Storage areas/rooms (excluding hazardous materials storage) 	Every twelve (12) months

As a minimum, inspections shall be carried out at least 12 monthly for all work/learning environments.

If a workshop, laboratory or studio includes an office area, the office area shall be inspected at the same time as the workshop, laboratory or studio.

Operational Leaders have the authority to schedule Workplace Inspections more regularly, particularly in higher risk areas such as workshops, laboratories and studios. Each local area must develop and manage a schedule to ensure all inspections are completed on time.

A decrease in frequency of inspections must be requested by the area's Senior leader and approved by the Director Health and Safety.

5.4. How Inspections are Conducted

The workplace inspection must be conducted by:

- Consulting the appropriate manager/supervisor of the local area, and
- Consulting staff working in the area, and
- Examining any documents, plant, equipment and substances as applicable.
- Choosing a time that will not unduly disrupt work activities being carried out within the inspected area

The names of all those participating in the inspection shall be entered on the Workplace Inspection Checklist appropriate to the area.

A visual check of every room occupied by the local area must be conducted during each workplace inspection. If, for some reason, an area or room is not able to be entered, this must be recorded on the checklist for follow-up at the next available opportunity or the next workplace inspection. In the event there is a space whereby ownership is unclear (between Property Services and a School for example), the inspection team will take notes of any immediate hazards and report them through the relevant channels and/or department that manages the space.

During the workplace inspection, the members of the workplace inspection team must record any hazards identified or deficiency observed on the Workplace Inspection Checklist. These hazards, if unable to be rectified immediately, must be entered as corrective actions as part of the inspection. This can then be assigned to the responsible person for actioning and tracking purposes.

5.5. Corrective Actions for Inspections

Immediately after the workplace inspection is completed the inspection team must allocate corrective actions to any identified hazards and deficiencies. The corrective actions are to be entered against the workplace inspection to monitor and ensure the corrective actions implemented and are closed. Alternatively, if digital versions of inspections are completed, the digital report is used for monitoring. The actions identified must be:

- Be given priority to issues identified that have greater risk
- Be reasonably practicable
- Be allocated a reasonable amount of time for them to be closed out
- Be assigned to an appropriate staff member with the authority or ability to execute the action
- Be reviewed for their appropriateness

The table below provides guidance and examples for identified hazards and corrective actions.

Corrective Action Scenario	Appropriate Timing	Examples
The team (or member of) rectifies the hazard at the time of inspection.	The team is able, capable and competent to fix the hazard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tripping hazards such as an extension lead across a thoroughfare. • Empty cardboard boxes blocking an emergency exit.
The team (or member of) rectifies the hazard at the completion of the inspection.	The team is able, capable and competent to fix the hazard but it would cause delays in the inspection process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture has blocked access to an extinguisher, and it will require some time to rearrange the layout of the area. • Missing SDS for a chemical.
Requires corrective action within a specified timeframe (e.g., 1 week) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the appropriate responsible person. • Initiate temporary measures to manage the hazard. 	The hazard presents a risk that can be temporarily managed with administrative controls.	Broken or faulty equipment that can be effectively tagged out or removed from general use.
Activities/access in the area needs to be halted immediately. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the appropriate responsible person. • Initiate immediate measures to control the hazard. 	A hazard that presents an immediate danger to people; that could result in serious injury or death.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposed electrical wires. • Chemical spill emitting toxic fumes.
Requires corrective action that is outside the scope of the workplace inspection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the appropriate responsible person • Initiate temporary measures to manage the hazard 	A long-standing hazard that has been difficult to control/manage. It may involve corrective actions and plans that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complex; • time consuming; or • costly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A chemical laboratory that does not have an emergency shower or eyewash within the requirements of the Australian Standards • Long standing non-compliance by people in wearing mandatory PPE • Manual handling • Ergonomic hazards

An appropriate person must be allocated and be responsible for monitoring the completion of the corrective action(s). This person must have authority to:

- ensure that corrective actions are completed by those who have been allocated the task; or
- have the capability to escalate the corrective action task to a higher level

5.6. Review of Inspections

Results of workplace inspections must be reviewed and signed-off by a Senior Leader within 5 working days of the inspection being completed.

Information collected as a result of any workplace inspection shall be reviewed by Senior and Operational Leaders to identify the following:

- Recurring issues
- Requirement for further training
- Requirement for further risk assessment
- Requirement for further resources

Hazards or deficiencies that require detailed assessment in accordance with risk management processes should be placed on the Risk Register for that School or department. A separate detailed risk assessment must be conducted to determine a risk assessment score and risk control recommendations.

The outcome of workplace inspections is to be discussed at the local HSW Committee meeting (where they exist).

5.7. Document Retention

Completed digital or hard copy workplace inspections are to be retained as detailed in **HSW-PR04 – HSW Records Management**.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. Senior Leaders

- Ensure requirements of this process are implemented.
- Ensure adequate resources are made available for staff to complete inspections (e.g. time, financial).
- Ensure workplace inspections are completed according to the required schedule.
- Ensure all corrective actions are completed within the allocated time frames.

6.2. Operational Leaders

- Ensure requirements of this process are implemented.
- Complete risk assessments to determine the level of risk associated with work/study areas to be inspected.
- Determine the frequency of workplace inspections for specific areas based on their level of risk.
- Prepare detailed inspection schedules that outline times, dates and staff required to do inspections, and review periods.
- Ensure inspections are carried out according to the required inspection schedule.
- Ensure corrective actions are completed within the allocated and agreed timeframes.
- Incorporate any ongoing identified hazards into the local area risk register.
- Provide adequate resources e.g., time, financial for staff to complete inspections.
- To participate in at least one workplace inspection every 12 months.
- Ensure results of the workplace inspection are communicated to the health and safety committee and local area.
- Maintain records of all workplace inspections.
- Ensure staff members are trained in hazard awareness and hazard identification.

6.3. Staff

- Support management by participating in workplace inspections.
- Identify and report hazards in the workplace.
- Support management in actioning any recommendations or corrective actions arising from a workplace inspection.

6.4. HSW Team

- Development, review and update of workplace inspection process and related inspection checklists
- Systematic verification the implementation of the Workplace Inspection process through HSW internal Audits
- Provide advice and assistance to Schools / departments in the implementation of this process

7. Definitions

Defines any key terms and acronyms relating to the process where they apply.

Term / acronym	Definition
Corrective Action	Also referred to as a Control Measure and issued when a process or issue has been identified which could be further safe guarded, enhanced or streamlined in some way.
Workplace	Refers to all areas occupied by RMIT staff, students, third parties, volunteers, and visitors. May also be referred to as the work and learning environment.

8. Supporting Documents

Lists the supporting and related Processes and Guidance Material, Legislative references, Australian and International Standards etc. that may be useful references for process users.

- HR – HSW-PR09 – HSW Risk Management
- HR - HSW-PR10 - Incident Management & Investigation
- HR - HSW-PR25 - Non-Conformance / Corrective Actions
- HR - HSW-PR12-CL01 - Checklist: Workplace Inspection – General
- HR - HSW-PR12-CL02 - Checklist: Workplace Inspection - Bio Safety
- HR - HSW-PR12-CL03 - Checklist: Workplace Inspection – Workshop
- HR - HSW-PR12-CL04 - Checklist: Workplace Inspection – Laboratory Areas