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## 1. OBJECTIVE

This guide assists with the determination and implementation of first aid measures when utilising the Prescribed Approach for the management First Aid.

## 2. BACKGROUND

The **Prescribed Approach** to implementing First Aid in a work and/or learning environment is a legislated, prescriptive system for the management of First Aid. The legislative requirements for first aid are detailed in the **Occupational Health and Safety Act (Vic)** (the **OHS Act**) and the **Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (Vic)** (the **OHS Regulations**)

## 3. SCOPE

This process applies to RMIT globally.

**NOTE** – Referenced legislation applies to Australian jurisdiction only. RMIT campuses in other jurisdictions must refer to local applicable legislation, where available.

## 4. WHAT MUST GO RIGHT?

The expected outcomes – known as ‘what must go right’ – will be that:

- Work and learning environments are identified as either Low or High risk
- Staff and other stakeholders, including Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), are consulted on matters relating to first aid measures and management in their area
- Senior and Operational Leaders ensure that the provision of first aid measures meet the legislated, prescribed requirements, for areas under their control
- First aid measures and processes are communicated to staff, students, researchers, third parties and others as required

## 5. PROCEDURE / IMPLEMENTATION

### 5.1. Using the prescribed approach

Senior and Operational Leaders need to decide on the approach for the provision of First Aid management, for areas under their control.

If the Leaders choose to follow the prescribed approach, they need to do everything specified in the prescribed approach. Leaders are advised to read the recommendations in both approach options before deciding to apply this prescriptive option. Refer to **HR – HSW-PR31-WI04 – First Aid – Risk Assessment Approach Guidelines** for details and requirements relating to the risk assessment approach.

To apply the prescribed approach, Leaders need to determine the nature of injuries and illnesses that could occur in the work and learning environments under their control and whether staff, students, researchers and third parties are at low risk or higher risk of injury or illness. Leaders then need to apply the first aid provisions prescribed. Some provisions may vary according to risk level and number of staff, students, researchers and third parties. Leaders may

use the **HR – HSW-PR31-CL01 – Checklist for Applying First Aid Arrangements – Prescribed Approach** to record how they have applied the prescribed approach.

**5.2. Number of people in the work and learning area**

When considering the number of people (staff, students, researchers and third parties) in the work and learning area for the purpose of providing first aid officers, first aid kits and first aid rooms, Leaders need to consider the maximum number of people likely to be in the work and learning area at any one time. Leaders must also consider the number of volunteers and other people who may be present in the work and learning area under their control.

If work and learning occur outside normal business hours, Leaders must provide adequate facilities for the welfare of all people across those hours, which means that first aid facilities and first aid officers need to be available whenever people work or learn.

**5.3. Determining if a work and/or learning place is low risk or higher risk**

Senior and Operational Leaders need to consider the types of injuries or illnesses that are likely to occur in the work and learning environments under their control, and whether these are likely to be serious. Table 1 provides some examples of the types of injuries associated with common hazards that may require first aid.

**Table 1 – Illnesses and injuries associated with common workplace hazards that may require first aid**

<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Potential harm</b>
<b>Manual tasks</b>	Overexertion can cause musculoskeletal illnesses.
<b>Working at height or on uneven or slippery surfaces</b>	Slips, trips and falls from height can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, head or spinal injury, and harness suspension trauma.
<b>Electricity</b>	Potential ignition source—could cause injuries from fire. Exposure to live electrical wires can cause shock, burns and cardiac arrest. Harness suspension trauma may result if a person is electrocuted while working in a harness.
<b>Machinery and equipment</b>	Being hit by moving vehicles or being caught by moving parts of machinery can cause fractures, amputation, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, crush injury.
<b>Hazardous substances</b>	Toxic or corrosive substances may be inhaled or may contact skin or eyes causing poisoning, chemical burns, irritation, breathing difficulties, respiratory arrest. Flammable substances could result in injuries from fire or explosion.
<b>Hazardous atmosphere</b>	A hazardous atmosphere (such as a confined space) may have low oxygen levels or increased concentrations of contaminants, leading to unconsciousness or burns from fire or explosion. Poor air quality (for example, due to bushfire smoke) can cause shortness of breath and respiratory irritation and exacerbate heart and lung conditions including asthma.
<b>Extreme temperatures</b>	Hot surfaces and materials can cause burns. Working/learning in extreme heat can cause dehydration and heat-related illness. It can also increase risks by reducing concentration and increasing fatigue and chemical uptake into the body. Exposure to extreme cold can cause hypothermia and cold injury (such as frostbite or non-freezing cold injury). Liquid nitrogen can cause cold burns.
<b>Radiation</b>	Welding arc flashes, ionising radiation and lasers can cause burns and blindness. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, heat-related illness and eye damage.
<b>Violence</b>	Behaviours including intimidation and physical assault can cause both physical and psychological injuries.

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<b>Biological</b>	Infection, allergic reactions, anaphylaxis, contamination.
<b>Animals</b>	Bites (e.g. snakes, spiders, ticks), stings (e.g. bees, wasps, ants), kicks, falls, crush injuries, scratches, disease transmission.

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Examples of serious injuries include:

- amputation of any part of the body
- a head injury (such as a fractured skull or altered consciousness)
- an eye injury such as loss of sight
- de-gloving or scalping
- electric shock
- a spinal injury
- the loss of a bodily function (for example loss of movement of a limb, loss of sight or hearing)
- fractures
- lacerations (such as a cut requiring stitches).

Serious injury or illness can include injuries incurred as a result of work and learning with plant (such as machinery), hazardous substances, dangerous goods, confined spaces, hazardous manual handling and working at height.

#### 5.3.1. Low-risk work and learning places

Low-risk work and learning places are those where:

- people are not exposed to hazards that could result in serious injury or illness that would require immediate medical treatment, and
- the work and learning environment is located where medical assistance or ambulance services are readily available. Low-risk work and learning environment could include offices, libraries.

#### 5.3.2. Higher risk work and learning places

Higher risk work and learning places are those where:

- people may be exposed to hazards that could result in serious injury or illness that would require immediate medical treatment and/or
- the work and learning environment is not located where medical assistance or ambulance services are readily available (i.e. an isolated or remote location).

Higher risk work and learning environments could include laboratories, workshops, studios, isolated or off campus.

#### 5.3.3. Work and learning places with both low-risk and higher risk areas

If a work and learning place includes low-risk working areas as well as higher risk areas (for example a work and/or learning place with an administrative office plus a workshop), Leaders need to apply the prescribed approach for the higher risk workplaces.

#### 5.3.4. Low-risk micro-work and learning places

A low-risk micro-work and learning place is one that:

- meets the criteria of low-risk work and learning places above, and
- has fewer than 10 people at the work and learning place

Low-risk micro-businesses could include retail shops and outlets, offices, libraries and art galleries.

A low-risk micro-work and learning place is considered to comply with its duty to provide adequate first aid facilities by providing a basic first aid kit in the work and learning environment.

#### 5.4. First aid officers

Operational Leaders need to ensure that there is at least one first aid officer available at the work and learning place at any one time during operating times. When planning numbers of first aid officers at the work and learning place, Operational Leaders need to consider coverage for situations such as extended hours, out of business hours, leave and flexible and hybrid work and learning arrangements.

##### 5.4.1. Low-risk work and learning places

In low-risk work and learning places, Operational Leaders need to provide:

- one first aid officer for 10 to 50 people
- two first aid officers for 51 to 100 people
- an additional first aid officer for every additional 100 people.

##### 5.4.2. Higher risk work and learning places

In higher risk work and learning places, Operational Leaders need to provide:

- one first aid officer for up to 25 people
- two first aid officers for 26 to 50 people
- an additional first aid officer for every additional 50 people.

Senior and Operational Leaders are deemed to have met their legislative duties, in areas under their control, if they have provided the applicable number of first aid officers as outlined above.

Senior and Operational Leaders need to ensure they provide first aid officers with appropriate training, so they are able to perform their role effectively.

The skills and knowledge first aid officers need may vary according to the type of work and learning environment. Having regard to the outcomes of the risk assessment, Operational Leaders need to ensure that an adequate number of suitably trained first aid officers are provided for the welfare of staff, students and researchers in the work and learning environment. In addition, Operational Leaders need to ensure that the first aid officers have access to adequate first aid kits and where appropriate, first aid rooms and occupational health centres.

Operational Leaders need to ensure that a record of any first aid treatment given is recorded by the first aid officer in PRIME or equivalent. Operational Leaders and First Aid officers should consider recording first aid treatment as “Confidential” to maintain the injured person’s privacy. First aid treatments are to be reported to Senior Leaders and other key stakeholders on a regular basis to assist Colleges/Portfolios, schools/departments and RMIT as a whole, when reviewing risk assessment outcomes.

First aid treatment records, and the privacy of an individual’s health information, are subject to the requirements of the **Health Records Act 2001**.

Note: All RMIT Security staff are qualified in First Aid (**Provide First Aid (HLTAID011)**) and can respond to incidents regardless of location or College / Portfolio and will do so as per the **RMIT Campus Emergency Plan**. However, RMIT Security must not be relied upon as the primary First Aid responders for high risk areas. In cases of high-risk tasks

and activities, schools or departments should address the need for, and provision of, First Aid officers locally in the first instance, with RMIT Security acting as backup only.

## 5.5. First aid training

The requirements for first aid training are detailed in **HR – HSW-PR31 – First Aid**. First aid training requirements are identical regardless of the approach chosen.

## 5.6. First aid kits

### 5.6.1. Low-risk work and learning places

In low-risk work and learning places, Operational Leaders need to provide:

- one first aid kit for 10 to 50 people
- one additional kit for every additional 50 people up to 200
- one additional kit for every 100 additional people above 200.

### 5.6.2. Higher risk work and learning places

In higher risk work and learning places, Operational Leaders need to provide:

- one first aid kit, including specific first aid kit modules, for up to 25 people
- two kits, including specific first aid kit modules, for up to 50 people
- one additional kit, including specific first aid kit modules, for every additional 50 people.

Senior and Operational Leaders are deemed to have met their legislative duties, in areas under their control, if they have provided the applicable number of first aid kits as outlined above.

For isolated or remote locations, Operational Leaders must provide adequate facilities for the welfare of people by ensuring people have access to appropriate first aid kits.

### 5.6.3. Location, Contents and container

The details around the requirements for first aid kit locations, contents and container types is available in **HR – HSW-PR31-WI05 – First Aid Kits and Facilities**

## 5.7. First aid rooms

The provision of a first aid room will depend on the type of workplace and the number of staff, students, researchers, third parties and other persons. Employers will be considered to comply by providing a first aid room in:

- low-risk work and learning places with more than 200 people
- higher risk work and learning places with more than 100 people.

For more information about first aid rooms and their contents, refer to **HR – HSW-PR31-WI05 – First Aid Kits and Facilities**.

In higher risk work and learning places, Operational Leaders need to ensure arrangements are in place for provision of appropriate emergency health care by a registered health professional (in addition to access to Ambulance Victoria or a hospital emergency department). These services may be provided within the work and learning place or be readily accessible outside the work and learning place – such as at a medical centre.

# First Aid – Prescribed Approach Guidelines

HSW-PR31-WI03

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The services need to:

- be able to provide emergency medical treatment
- be readily available during the work and learning place operating times
- have an understanding of the types of hazards in the work and learning environment and the potential effect on the health of people that may arise from exposure to those hazards.

**Table 2 – Prescribed approach – Low risk - Summary of numbers of first aid officers, kits and rooms**

Low-risk workplaces					
	Up to 10 employees (microbusiness)	10–50 employees	51–100 employees	101–200 employees	More than 200 employees
<b>First aid officers*</b>	Not required	One first aid officer	Two first aid officers	Three first aid officers	Three first aid officers for 200 employees plus one officer for every additional 100 employees
<b>First aid kits**</b>	One first aid kit	One first aid kit	Two first aid kits	Two first aid kits for the first 100 employees plus one kit for every additional 50 employees	Four first aid kits for 200 employees plus one kit for every 100 additional employees
<b>First Aid Rooms</b>	Not required	Not required	Not required	Not required	Required

**Table 2 – Prescribed approach – High risk - Summary of numbers of first aid officers, kits and rooms**

High-risk workplaces				
	Up to 25 employees	26–50 employees	50–100 employees	More than 100 employees
<b>First aid officers* (including any necessary additional training)</b>	One first aid officer	Two first aid officers	Two first aid officers for the first 50 employees plus one officer for every additional 50 employees	Three first aid officers for the first 100 employees plus one officer for every additional 50 employees
<b>First aid kits** (including any necessary additional modules)</b>	One first aid kit	Two first aid kits	Two first aid kits for the first 50 employees plus one kit for every additional 50 employees	Three first aid kits for the first 100 employees plus one kit for every additional 50 employees
<b>First Aid Rooms</b>	Not required	Not required	Not required	Required

\* Operational Leaders need to ensure that there is at least one first aid officer available in the work and learning environment at any one time during operating times. This may require, for example, considering arrangements when first aid officers are on leave.

\*\* For isolated or remote locations, Operational Leaders must provide adequate facilities for the welfare of people by ensuring people have access to appropriate first aid kits.



### 5.8. Other first aid equipment

Senior and Operational Leaders need to consider whether it is reasonably practicable to have an automated external defibrillator (AED) in the work and learning environment.

Senior and Operational Leaders need to provide safety showers and/or emergency eyewash equipment in the work and learning environment where there is a risk of hazardous substances or infectious substances splashing on people resulting in injuries.

For more information about first aid equipment refer to **HR – HSW-PR31-WI05 – First Aid Kits and Facilities**.

### 5.9. Immunisation for first aid officers

Where there is a risk of vaccine-preventable disease, first aid officers need to be offered vaccinations in line with **The Australian Immunisation Handbook**.

For RMIT staff members or post-graduate students, the school or department will pay for any immunisations or screening required if exposure to the risk is related to their role or research.





Further details on immunisation is available in **HR – HSW-PRXX – Immunisation**

### 5.10. Signage

Operational Leaders need to provide safety signs to ensure first aid facilities are adequately signed, and that the telephone numbers of emergency services and details to assist people to locate first aid officers are provided (e.g. telephone numbers, locations or a photograph if the first aid officer has provided one). Signs must comply with **AS 1319 Safety signs for the occupational environment**, for example by including a white cross on a green background. See Table 2.

Additional guidance on signage is provided in **AS 1319 Safety signs for the occupational environment**.

**Table 2 – Examples of first aid signage**

	
<p><i>Sample first aid location sign</i></p>	<p><i>Sample first aid location sign</i></p>
	
<p><i>Sample first aid directional sign</i></p>	<p><i>Sample first aid directional sign</i></p>



### 5.11. First aid procedures

Senior and Operational Leaders need to develop and implement first aid procedures, in the work and learning environments under their control, to ensure that staff, students, researchers and third parties, have a clear understanding of first aid arrangements.

For example, the procedures need to include:

- types and locations of first aid kits
- location of first aid facilities (such as first aid rooms)
- first aid kit contents and review dates
- list of emergency numbers
- systems for emergency communication with first aid officers and emergency services, including for remote or isolated people, and processes for checking and maintaining these
- arrangements for training first aid officers
- arrangements for providing first aid information and instruction for people (including communicating to people the names of first aid officers, their locations and how to find them in the work and learning environment)
- processes for ensuring emergency services reach the unwell person as quickly as possible when called
- processes for reporting injuries and illnesses in the work and learning environment
- requirements for notifying WorkSafe of a notifiable incident and how the notification will be carried out
- infection control processes, including avoiding exposure to blood and body fluids or substances

### 5.12. Reviewing first aid arrangements

Senior and Operational Leaders need to review their first aid arrangements regularly to ensure that they are still adequate for the risk level and number of people in the work and learning environment.

The review must include, but not be limited to:

- numbers of first aid kits and contents of kits
- location and type of first aid kits
- number and availability of first aid officers needed and their training requirements
- whether first aid training is up to date
- whether a first aid room is needed, and
- whether first aid contact details are up to date and have the appropriate information.

Furthermore, Senior and Operational Leaders should consider the questions below when reviewing first aid arrangements for areas under their control.

**Do all people have access to first aid officers and first aid kits?**

**Are more first aid kits needed?**

**Are more first aid officers needed?**

**Do people have access to first aid officers at all times?**

**Are the first aid kits and modules suitable for the hazards in the work and/or learning environment?**

**Are first aid kits well maintained and identifiable to people?**

**Is a first aid room or health centre required?**

**Are first aid facilities well maintained?**

**Do first aid officers have skills, training and competencies to provide first aid in the work and/or learning environment and are their skills up to date?**

**Do people know how to access first aid?**

**Are first aid contact details up to date?**

## 6. Responsibilities

### 6.1. Senior and Operational Leaders

- Ensure first aid reviews/ assessments have been conducted in their areas of control.
- Ensure appropriate numbers of trained first aid officers and adequately stocked first aid kits are available and purchased where necessary.
- Ensure first aid officers are trained at the level determined by the risk assessment and currency is maintained.
- Ensure first aid management is documented and that staff, students, researchers and third parties are provided information, instruction and training relating to first aid matters
- Ensure that consultation around first aid management has occurred with impacted people, including HSRs.
- Review performance against this process on a regular basis.

### 6.2. First Aid Officers

- Hold current and relevant first aid qualifications to fulfil the duties of their role.
- Respond promptly to provide first aid treatment service to an injured or ill staff member, student, third party or other persons where RMIT is present
- Arrange prompt and appropriate referral as required.
- Advise their Operational Leader and HSW team of any changes, updates, additions or errors in the First Aider Register, as it applies to the first aid officer

### 6.3. Staff, students, researchers and third parties

- Assist in first aid risk assessments where required.
- Follow this process and all reasonable instructions relating to HSW and first aid in the work and learning environment.

### 6.4. HSW Team

- Liaise with Operational Leaders and first aid officers on matters relating to the management first aid
- Regularly review this process in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Develop and report on KPIs relevant to this process.
- Monitor compliance with this process and report on outcomes.

## 7. Definitions

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

<b>Term / acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>First aid facilities</b>	Includes first aid kits, first aid rooms and associated first aid equipment such as AED's

<b>Term / acronym</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>First aid officer</b>	A member of RMIT staff who volunteers to provide emergency treatment and life support in accordance with the level of first training undertaken
<b>Higher-risk workplace</b>	<p>Higher-risk workplaces are those where employees may be exposed to hazards that could result in serious injury or illness that would require immediate medical treatment. Higher risk workplaces include workshops, laboratories, and any areas where hazardous machinery or materials are used.</p> <p>Examples of serious injuries requiring immediate medical treatment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amputation of any part of the body</li> <li>• A serious head injury</li> <li>• A serious eye injury</li> <li>• Degloving or scalping</li> <li>• Electric shock</li> <li>• A spinal injury</li> <li>• The loss of a bodily function</li> <li>• Serious lacerations.</li> </ul>
<b>HSR</b>	Health and Safety Representative: An employee who is a member of the DWG and elected by its members to represent them in relation to health and safety matters, risks, or concerns
<b>Low-risk workplace</b>	<p>Low-risk workplaces are those where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees are not exposed to hazards that could result in serious injury or illness that would require immediate medical treatment such as those associated with plant, hazardous substances, dangerous goods, confined spaces and hazardous manual handling</li> <li>• The business is located where medical assistance or ambulance services are readily available to the community and to the workplace where the business operates.</li> <li>• Low-risk workplaces include offices, libraries and most retail operations.</li> </ul>
<b>Operational leaders</b>	<p>Any staff member with direct reports or supervision over a cohort, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deans and Associate Deans</li> <li>• Directors, Deputy and Associate Directors</li> <li>• General Managers and Managers</li> <li>• Coordinators and Supervisors</li> <li>• Teachers</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deans and Associate Deans</li> <li>• Directors, Deputy and Associate Directors</li> <li>• General Managers and Managers</li> <li>• Chief Investigators</li> </ul>

## 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-PR31 – First Aid

# First Aid – Prescribed Approach Guidelines

**HSW-PR31-WI03**

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- HR – HSW-PR31-WI04 – First Aid – Risk Assessment Approach Guidelines
- HR – HSW-PR31-WI05 – First Aid Kits and Facilities
- HR – HSW-PR31-CL01 – Checklist for Applying First Aid Arrangements – Prescribed Approach
- HR – HSW-PR31-TM01 – First Aid Risk Assessment Template
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Victoria)
- Compliance Code - First Aid in the Workplace (WorkSafe Victoria)