

Work Health and Safety (WHS) Report

Quarter 2 2022

This report provides an overview of Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing issues:

1. Notifiable Incidents
2. Staff and Student Representation
3. WHS Action Plan
4. Flu Vaccination Program
5. COVID-19 Related Matters
6. Audit of Principal Contractor Watpac
7. WHS Report, Quarter 2 2022
8. AHEIA WHS Benchmarking 2021
9. Status of Action Items and Ongoing Improvements to WHSMS

1. Notifiable Incidents

There were no notifiable incidents reported to relevant WHS (OHS) regulators during Quarter 2 2022.

2. Staff and Student Representation

ACU consults with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) about WHS issues that impact upon specific workgroups. Organisational units should also consult with relevant HSRs about safety and wellbeing issues that are impacting upon staff.

The university aims to recruit similar numbers of academic and professional staff representatives to help ensure that both groups of staff are appropriately represented. ACU will also recruit additional academic staff to campus WHS committees and is proposing to recruit Campus Deans as chairs of these committees. This change would support committees to resolve issues that members and their staff and student constituents are concerned about.

Zarina Erasmus has been appointed the Health and Safety Representative for the Faculty of Health Sciences, Melbourne Campus. Additional representatives will be recruited on most campuses throughout 2022.

3. WHS Action Plan

ACU is currently finalising the next version of the plan that will take effect from 1 September 2022. The plan is informed by the WHSMS Bi-Annual Analysis that was conducted during Quarter 4, 2021 and Quarter 1, 2022.

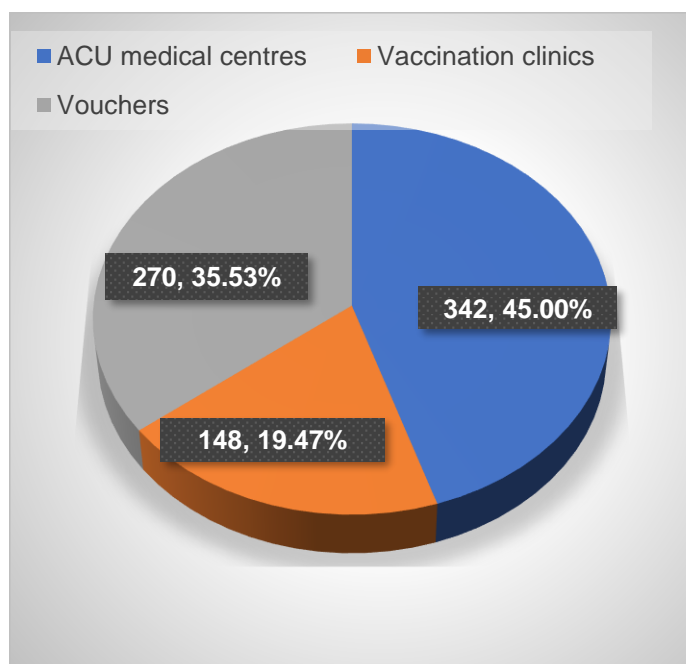
This version of the plan will continue to support ACU to reduce musculoskeletal injuries, strengthen wellbeing and assists work areas to improve their management of WHS risk by applying the WHSMS.

4. Flu Vaccination Program

ACU staff were offered three options for accessing vaccinations during 2022. Staff could either attend a vaccination clinic on (most) campuses, visit an ACU medical centre or download a flu vaccination voucher.

3.1 Participation in this year's program

Accessed by	No of Vaccinations
ACU medical centres	
Brisbane	87
Melbourne	49
North Sydney	206
Sub-total	342
Vaccination clinics	
Ballarat	32
Blacktown	8
Canberra	33
Melbourne	38
Strathfield	37
Sub-total	148
Vouchers redeemed at local chemists	
Vouchers	270
Total	760



Vaccinations were administered to 760 staff during this year's vaccination program, in comparison to 917, 1,064, 772 and 567 (respectively), between the period 2018 and 2021.

During 2022, 45% (342) of participating staff accessed vaccinations through ACU medical centres and 35.53% (270) downloaded vouchers which were redeemed at chemist chains Terry Wright Chemmart, Sigma and Priceline. The remaining 148 staff (19.47%) attended a vaccination clinic that were held on most campuses. Additionally, 91 staff accessed free vaccinations, provided by state governments, which were accessed through ACU medical centres from late May/June.

The challenges which limited participation in this year's program included the discontinuation of vaccination vouchers after state governments commenced providing free vaccinations and the strong demand for vaccination services exceeded the capacity of the Brisbane and Melbourne ACU medical centres to provide this service.

It is recommended that the resourcing of ACU medical centres is reviewed, prior to next year's program, to help ensure that these clinics can meet the demand for influenza vaccinations between May and mid-June.

5. COVID-19 Related Matters

5.1 Consultations about WHS risk assessment

ACU reviewed the University COVID-19 Safety Plan, which is informed by a WHS risk assessment, in late June 2022. The plan was informed by an organisational WHS risk assessment.

The university was due to consult about the following proposed changes from early July:

- More significant guidance will be provided about [vulnerable groups](#);
- Signage will be displayed, across campuses, about mask hygiene;
- The provision of wipes for meeting rooms and learning spaces will be provided on an ongoing basis.
- The use of masks will be informed by WHS risk assessments that are conducted about work and learning activities.

The university consults with a broad range of stakeholders and representatives about its COVID settings. These stakeholders include the Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee, Critical Incident Convenor, Incident Convenors, WHS Management Committee, WHS Local Campus Committees, Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), Executive Deans, Heads of Schools, Deputy Heads of Schools, ACU Staff Consultative Committee, Presidents of student associations, and all ACU staff.

Staff and students are encouraged to provide feedback on an ongoing basis about the university's COVID-19 settings. They can also visit Service Central, AskACU and log reports of hazards that they are concerned about.

The feedback register is scheduled to be published from early August 2022. The register will detail how the university has responded to staff and student input about categories of feedback and will provide information about any adjustments to COVID Safe settings.

5.2 COVID-19 Cases

From 28 February 2022, ACU commenced reporting on the number of COVID-19 notifications received by staff, students, visitors, and contractors. Between 1 April 2022 and 30 June 2022, the following COVID-19 cases were reported about staff and students being infectious on campus.

5.2.1 Number of infectious cases reported, by campus, during Quarter 2 2022

Campus	Student	% of campus total	Staff	% of campus total	Sub-total
Ballarat	6	50.00%	6	50.00%	12
Blacktown	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	2
Brisbane	19	55.88%	15	44.12%	34
Canberra	16	94.12%	1	5.88%	17
Melbourne	58	73.42%	21	26.58%	79
North Sydney	25	64.10%	14	35.90%	39
Strathfield	21	77.78%	6	22.22%	27
Total	147	70.00%	63	30.00%	210

During the reporting period, 147 (69.34%) of the reports were about students and 63 (30.00%) of the reports were about staff members.

Human Resources reviews case data to determine whether multiple infections have occurred within specific rooms or spaces. There was no evidence that clusters of infections were occurring during the quarter.

Case notifications support the University to initiate contact tracing, in collaboration with staff and students, and clean work and learning spaces on campus to reduce the risk of additional infections on campus.

The university will continue to raise awareness about the need to report these infections.

6. Audit of Principal Contractor Watpac

Ibis Business Solutions conducted an audit of Watpac¹ on 1 April 2022. A number of positive observations were identified during the audit, including the management of plant safety requirements and most staff were aware of hazards and controls that were associated with their work. The audit report stated the 'Watpac system is generally effectively implemented across the works being undertaken on the project to ensure that hazards are identified, and controls are implemented to mitigate known risks.'

The key focus areas for improvement:

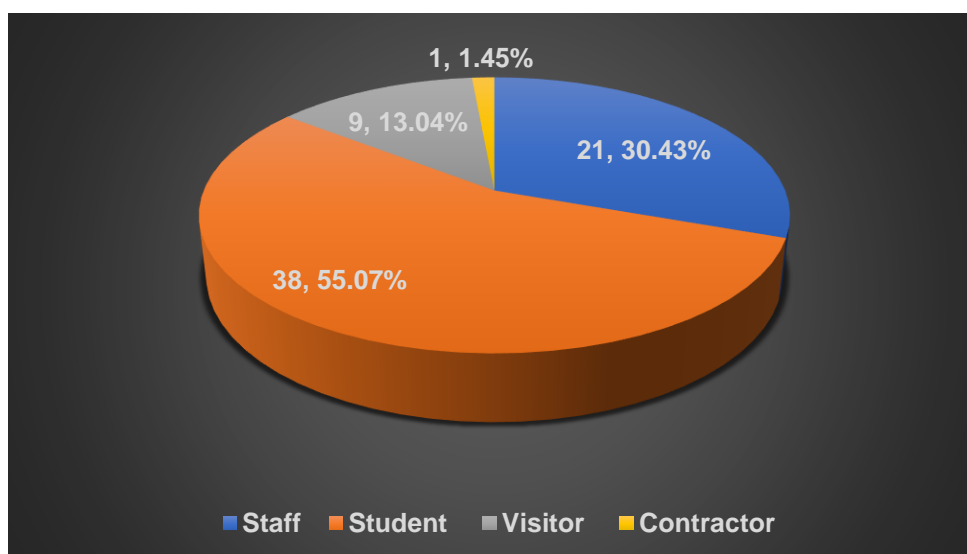
- Management and review of Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS), including implementation of required risk controls;
- Compliance with electrical safety requirements;
- Continual review and inspection of temporary structures; and
- Maintenance of emergency preparedness requirements.

¹ Principal contractor Watpac is constructing the Saint Teresa of Kolkata Building, Melbourne Campus.

In summary, a total of 5 non-conformances and nil improvement opportunities were identified during the audit.

7. WHS Report, Quarter 2 2022

7.1 Number of riskware incidents by person type, Quarter 2 2022



Student reports accounted for 38 of 69 (55.07%) riskware incidents that were logged during Quarter 2, 2022. Staff members reported 21 (33.43%) incidents and 9 (13.04%) visitor, and 1 (1.45%) contractor incident was submitted.

Two of the nine visitor reports impacted upon clients within ACU health clinics, and five reports impacted upon students in sporting competitions.

An additional 15 first aid and two medical incidents were reported by Watpac, Principal Contactor (Saint Teresa of Kolkata Building Project, Melbourne Campus). The corrective actions that have been implemented, as a result of these contractor incidents, address education and training.

7.2 Number of hazard reports by mechanism of injury

Sixteen reports of hazards were logged by staff and one report was submitted by a student.

One of the reports addressed a concern about air quality within the Daniel Mannix Building, Melbourne. The hazard report was resolved as the relevant space has been assessed by consultancy firm Prensa and airflow was compliant with the [VIC COVID-19: Ventilation principles to reduce aerosol transmission in community and workplace settings](#).

Two of the three trip hazards that were identified have been resolved. Two of the reports addressed inadequate lighting that created trip hazards. Two reports detailed surface hazards, such as rippling carpet, worn carpet in offices and raised tiles within bathrooms. Properties and Facilities has considered what corrective actions are available pending renovation of the relevant space.

Potential security hazards were identified by two staff members. One of these reports will be resolved by inserting a swipe card scanner to limit access into the relevant spaces on the Canberra Campus. Reports were logged about hygiene hazards associated with sanitary bins in women's bathrooms. These reports were resolved as these bins were recently inspected and fixed by contractors.

7.3 WHS risk assessments conducted

Two WHS risk assessments were uploaded to Service Central during the quarter. A significant number of WHS risk assessments are typically conducted prior to the commencement of Semester 2 (i.e. in Quarter 3).

The WHS Unit has recently been supporting work areas to conduct WHS risk assessments about safety and wellbeing issues where solutions are not immediately clear or there are additional risks because of COVID safety concerns.

7.4 Mechanism of Injury Report (riskware incidents), Quarter 2 2022

Description	Student		Staff		Visitor		Contractor		Total	Total	Comparing QTR 2 2022 vs. QTR 1 2021
	QTR 2 2021	QTR 2 2022	QTR 2 2021	QTR 2 2022	QTR 2 2021	QTR 2 2022	QTR 2 2021	QTR 2 2022	QTR 2 2021	QTR 2 2022	
Ampule Injury	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Being hit by moving objects	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	-1
Building Evacuation	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Contact or exposure to heat and cold	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Contact with, or exposure to, biological factors	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
Exposure to mental stress factors	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	4	3	-1
Exposure to sharp, sudden sound	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Falls from a height	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	3	1
Falls on the same level (incl. trips and slips)	3	2	7	4	3	0	0	0	13	6	-7
Hitting objects with a part of the body	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	4	1
Illness (excl. psychological) incl. fainting, pains in chest, heart palpitations	7	5	2	5	0	2	1	0	10	12	2
Other and multiple mechanisms of injury	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	1	-4
Other contact with chemical or substance (incl. insect and spider bites and stings)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Other Muscular Stress (incl. manual handling)	4	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	5	5	0
Repetitive movement with low muscle loading (often resulting in RSI)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Sharps (needle stick injury)	10	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	6	-4
Single contact with chemical or substance (excludes insect and spider bites and stings)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	-2
Sporting Injury (incl. gym/cardio and recreational activities)	13	1	0	0	5	5	0	0	18	6	-12
Unspecified mechanisms of injury or other	3	7	1	2	0	1	0	1	4	11	7
Vehicle accident	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2
Verbal abuse/exposure to violence	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	3	0
Total	57	38	22	21	9	9	1	1	89	69	-20

There was a significant reduction in incidents reported about sporting injuries and falls on the same level during Quarter 2 2022, in comparison to the corresponding quarter in 2021. Six reports of each of these mechanisms of injury were reported during the last quarter, in comparison to 18 reports about sporting injuries and 13 falls on the same level during Quarter 2 2021. The reduction in incident reports reported in the last quarter is largely attributed to lower numbers of sporting injuries being reported.

Twelve reports of illness were reported during Quarter 2 2022, in comparison to ten during the corresponding quarter in 2021. There was also a significant increase in the number of reports that were unclassified (unspecified mechanism of injury). Eleven reports were logged during the last quarter, in comparison to four in the corresponding quarter in 2021.

Most of the reports of Unspecified Mechanism of Injury could have been classified by staff members and students. Four of the reports could have been classified as falls on the same level and two reports were about exposure to mental stress factors.

Review and management of incidents

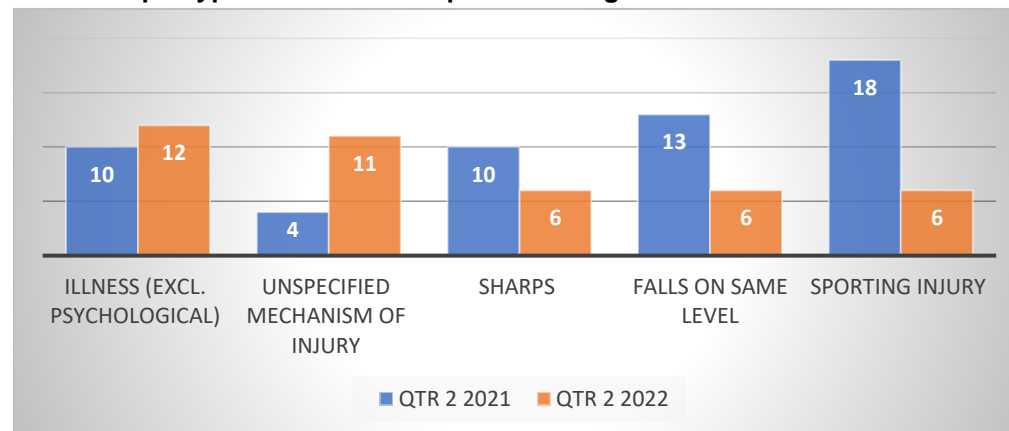
A range of corrective actions were implemented because of incident reviews of reported illnesses. Examples include ensuring that next of kin details are more accessible, a staff member's work tasks were reorganised to reduce workload pressure, and an ill student was provided with details of an appropriate support network. One of the reports impacted upon a client of an ACU health clinic. The incident triggered a review of WHS risk management processes.

The following improvements have been implemented, following the submission of unspecified mechanism of injury reports: an Education Inclusion Plan was developed for a student and a placement host was engaged about adequate patient supervision. A review of the supervision of higher-risk learning activities was also initiated. An incident involving the threat of self-harm was also reported that led to the impacted student receiving appropriate counselling support.

The reports of falls on the same level were reviewed for potential improvements. No contributing factors were identified in respect of most of these incidents and the University had limited influence over the two offsite incidents that were reported. Supervisors should ensure that their teams are aware of the university's recovery at work processes.

Two of the six sharps incidents occurred off-site. The corrective actions that were developed to manage these off-site reports included engaging the event organiser about responsible alcohol service and a professional placement lead collaborated with a placement host to improve the quality of its training.

7.4.1 Top 5 types of incidents reported during Quarter 2 2021/2022



Recent WHS risk assessments, which were submitted via Service Central in July, detailed treatments (controls) applied to reduce the risk of sharps incidents.

Reviews of the sporting injuries were initiated which were limited in scope. However, WHS staff are providing support to Sports, Wellbeing and Residential Life staff to conduct more comprehensive reviews of these reports and complete WHS risk assessments.

Six reports of other muscular stress were reported during Quarter 2 2022. Three of these reports detailed muscular fatigue and injuries that were informed by performing repetitive tasks. Two of the reports resulted in workers compensation claims and the impacted staff are participating in recover at work processes. Staff are encouraged to complete ergonomic checklists for their campus and home workstations to reduce the risk of muscular fatigue.

Action Item	Action	Timeline
1	Remind professional practice leads about the counselling support that is available to students	Ongoing
2	WHS staff to provide support to supervisors who have not closed off riskware Action Plans	31 August 2022

8. ACU's WHS performance in comparison to other universities

Key Performance Indicator	Descriptor	2021	Average among benchmarked universities	Benchmarking position among between 22 - 24 participating universities	AHEIA commentary
Injury report rate	Number of injury rates from staff members per 100 FTE staff.	1.70	3.22	Lower performing 25% of universities	A low rate may reflect low levels of WHS awareness and involvement and possibly an indifference to minor injuries in the workplace.
Claim rate	Number of accepted workers compensation claims per 100 FTE staff.	0.43	0.74	Top 25% of benchmarked universities	The claim rate is a standard lag indicator of WHS performance. It gives a broad indication of injury rates between universities.
Injury ratio	The ratio between the number of works compensation claims and number of injury reports.	0.25	0.23	Top 50% of universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A low ratio can indicate that an effective injury reporting/early intervention system where only serious injuries are acted upon. A high ratio may indicate the need to review the effectiveness or injury reporting and management.
Workers compensation cost	Total compensation costs per 100 FTE. These costs include wage compensation, medical and rehabilitation costs incurred during 2021.	\$11,490	\$13,590	Lower performing 50 - 75% of universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low rate: may indicate the University has an effective recovery at work program/low rate of injury. High rate: May indicate improvements are need in recovery at work and rehabilitation.
Lost time rate	Lost Time Injury days (full days lost that involve compensation) per 100 FTE staff. Included: Days lost in the first 12 months of an injury within the calendar year.	19.89	14.84	Lower performing 50% of universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low rate: organisation may have an effective recovery at work program or low rate of serious injury High rate: a reliable indicator of high workers compensation costs.

Key Performance Indicator	Descriptor	2021	Average among benchmarked universities	Benchmarking position among between 22 - 24 participating universities	AHEIA commentary
Return to work time	The median time taken (full days) for staff to return to work for the first time, following a work-related injury	15.50 days	90.05 days	Lower performing 50 universities	A low time may indicate an effective return to work program with strong staff engagement
Lost time incidence rate	The number of lost time occurrences per 100 FTE that occurred during the year.	0.26	0.30	Top 50% of universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rate: can indicate effective WHS practices • High rate: may indicate issues with WHS risks and compliance that may place upward pressure on workers compensation premiums
Musculoskeletal rate	Number of accepted musculoskeletal claims per 100 FTE staff. These are typically the most common workplace injury that result from manual handling, keyboard work and some slips/trips/falls	0.43	0.43	Lower performing 50% universities	A high rate may indicate the need for specific prevention program around this type of injury
Psychological claim rate	Number of psychological claims that were submitted during the year per 100 FTE staff	0.00	0.08	Top 10% of better performing universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low rate: may be indicative of effective processes for managing stress and dealing with issues. • High rate: may indicate that improvements are needed to issue resolution processes or managing work-relate stress.
Notification rate	Number of notifications, to WHS (OHS regulators, per 100 FTE staff	0.17	0.49	Lower performing 25% of universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level: may indicate a lack of knowledge about statutory requirements • High level: university may need to review the way that it is managing risk.

Each year, ACU benchmarks its performance against a range of performance measures, including WHS. The annual benchmarking is managed by the Australian Higher Education Industry Association (AHEIA).

ACU's claim rate, 0.43 per 100 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff, matched the university's performance in 2020 and can be partly attributed to the lower risks that can be associated with remote working. No psychological workers compensation claims qualified for this year's benchmarking, however, ACU's insurers are managing two long-term claims (impacting on former staff) which are resulting in significant premium impacts under ACU's NSW policy from the 2022-2023 financial year.

ACU's 2021 workers compensation performance was partly informed by several complex workers compensation claims that were characterised by slower recovery times.

ACU's WHS Action Plan prioritises the wellbeing of staff and students and specifies targets for reducing common injuries. The next version of the plan includes a number of action items that will contribute to reducing the risk of these injuries and psychological harm.

The university will continue to raise awareness, among staff and students, about the need to report injuries within riskware. Staff communications, scheduled between Quarter 3 2022 and Quarter 2 2022, will also strengthen awareness of ACU's recovery at work processes. The engagement of staff and supervisors with these processes leads to early intervention because of an injury – typically resulting in more sustainable timely recovery times.

Work areas will be engaged about specific tasks that should be implemented to minimise the risk of injuries and apply lessons from injuries to avoid additional injuries and improve their management of WHS risk. Staff engagement with the plan and their contribution to the safety of their campus can inform improvements in ACU's benchmarking performance.

9. Status of Action Items and Ongoing Improvements to the WHSMS

Number	Action	Status	Commentary
Action Items Previous Reports			
1.	WHS staff will engage relevant nominated supervisors about injuries that are associated with mental stress factors, falls, manual handling and ergonomics (priorities of the WHS Action Plan 2020-2021). Support will be provided to identify the contributing factors to these incidents and to apply learnings across the University.	Ongoing	
2.	WHS staff will contact placement and other teams to prompt these work areas to remind students that counselling support is available whenever they are impacted by traumatic events, both on and off campus.	Ongoing	
4.	WHS Risk management resources, which will support work areas to manage the risks of falls and manual handling injuries, will be uploaded to the WHS SharePoint site and emailed to relevant work areas by the WHS Consultant by the end of Quarter 1, 2022.	In Progress	WHS Consultant is engaging Members of the Executive and their nominees, on an ongoing basis, about the identification and management of risk.
5.	WHS Consultant will engage relevant staff within the Faculty of Health Sciences about the review of relevant WHS risk assessments that address needle stick risks within learning spaces and on placements.	Completed	
Ongoing Improvements to the Work Health and Safety Management System – ACU is implementing actions to concurrently implement the outstanding audit recommendations, which were associated with an audit against the WHSMS, and align the framework with International Standard ISO 45001.			
6	WHS Skills Matrix - To ensure that staff have appropriate competencies	Partly completed – currently engaging stakeholders	WHS Consultant is engaging some work areas about their skills matrix and the professional development of staff that perform high-risk roles.
8	Corrective actions requirements that are associated with the WHSMS.	In Progress	WHSMS Corrective Actions Procedure is currently under review

Number	Action	Status	Commentary
9	<p>Accident investigation training to be provided to staff to increase their capabilities to identify and apply learnings from incidents.</p> <p>More information about status update Automatic riskware notifications were revised to include hyperlinks to resources such as the Accident Investigation video, Safety Hub, and Quick Reference Guide about reviewing incidents. Workshops will be scheduled for relevant Deputy Heads of School, during 2022, to improve the capacity of these decision makers to review and manage student incidents.</p>	Partly completed	Currently being scheduled for Quarter 3 and 4 2022.
10	Internal audit schedule to be developed.	In Progress	WHSMS Audit is currently being scheduled.
11	Increase awareness of the University's consultations about safety and wellbeing by placing noticeboards across all campuses.	Partly completed	
12	Update WHS Policy posters and circulate across ACU, to increase awareness of the University's commitment to safety and wellbeing.	<p>On hold due to reduced campus populations.</p> <p>Digital alternatives will also be considered during Quarter 2 2022</p>	

Provided for Information
Human Resources
August 2022