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# UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF A HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE (FACULTY /SERVICE DIVISION)

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SUPPORTING

YOU

# CONSULTATION ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION COMMITMENT



## Introduction

The University of Auckland is dedicated to ensuring the highest standards of health, safety and wellbeing for all staff, students, contractors and visitors. This means going beyond compliance with legal requirements and adopting a good practice model that works for everyone on a day-to-day basis.

Through a process of engagement, consultation and participation, within faculties and service divisions, we aim to create a positive environment and a culture of mutual trust and respect. We strive to ensure that our people feel valued and supported, and are proud to be part of the University community.

As leaders of academic and professional staff, you have a vital role to play in maintaining and continuously improving the University's health and safety systems and processes, by welcoming staff participation, valuing their input and acting on their recommendations.

How can this be achieved in practice? One effective strategy is to introduce equal membership for leaders, managers and staff representatives on health, safety and wellbeing (HSW) committees within faculties and service divisions. This approach encourages greater staff participation and is in line with international benchmarks for health, safety and wellbeing.

## What is the purpose of a HSW committee?

A HSW committee provides a forum for nominated staff and management to consult, engage and participate in health, safety and wellbeing issues and initiatives relevant to the faculty or service division; and assists the University to provide a safe and healthy environment for everyone.

Its remit is much broader than physical safety in the workplace. To gain the engagement and commitment of all staff, the approach needs to be holistic, encompassing every aspect of the staff experience, including physical and mental health and wellbeing, and a good work-life balance.

A HSW committee empowers all staff to contribute to the ongoing improvement of health, safety and wellbeing at work. It aims to enhance organisational, team and individual performance and reflect the culture and values of the University as a whole.



## What does a HSW committee do?

The main tasks of a faculty/service division HSW committee are to promote awareness and good practice; enable consultation and cooperation between staff and management; and report to and advise the dean/director of service division on all matters relating to the health, safety and wellbeing of staff, students and third parties in the faculty/service division.

A HSW committee is also responsible for initiating, monitoring and reviewing faculty/service division implementation of the University's health and safety management system, and providing recommendations for improvement.

This includes:

- Ensuring that health and safety representatives (HSRs) are given the time to attend University training courses.
- Displaying an up-to-date list of HSRs in workshops, laboratories and staff/student common rooms throughout the faculty/service division.
- Advising on the implications of new areas of research, facilities, building proposals and equipment.
- Identifying relevant issues and making recommendations for improvement.
- Monitoring emergency preparedness procedures, including evacuation, first aid and civil defence.
- Reviewing the health, safety and wellbeing performance of the faculty/service division, and recommending ways to improve performance.
- Helping to resolve health and safety issues that arise in your faculty/service division.

## How should a HSW committee be organised?

A committee will typically consist of:

- Chair (dean of faculty, director of service division or senior management nominee)
- One faculty or service division manager
- Two academic staff members
- Four health and safety representatives, nominated or elected by a work group (of which they are a member)
- Other staff with specialist responsibilities in health, safety and wellbeing, as appropriate
- A student representative

In attendance:

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing manager (from the University's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service)

- Human Resources manager/adviser
- Building warden and first aider (as appropriate)

Meetings should normally be held quarterly, with a quorum of at least six members in attendance. Meetings will be pre-set and agenda items called for by email. Agendas and minutes are written and distributed by a committee member appointed to the position of secretary.

A special meeting can be called to address a specific issue that arises outside the normal meeting schedule, with the agreement of the Chair and committee members.

A two-way consultation process is integral to the participation of all staff in health, safety and wellbeing matters across all University campuses. Hence the faculty/service division HSW committee reports to the University of Auckland Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee, which in turn provides input to faculty/service division HSW committees.



## Where can I find more information

The following documents are available to support health, safety and wellbeing committees:

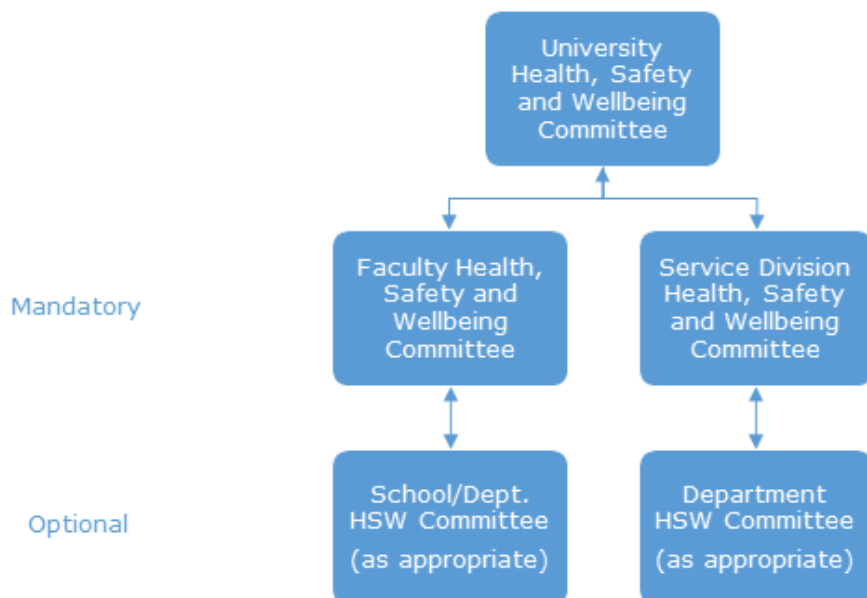
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee Standard
- Terms of Reference
- Good practice checklist
- Meeting agenda template

These documents are available on the University of Auckland website:

[www.auckland.ac.nz/hsw](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/hsw).

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## CONSULTATION



The University's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service provides information, guidance and support. Please contact the service by email on [hsw@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:hsw@auckland.ac.nz) or by phone on (09) 923 4896 or ext 84896. More information on health, safety and wellbeing is also available on the Staff Intranet: [www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/hsw](http://www.staff.auckland.ac.nz/hsw).