



# WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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## Rationale or Purpose

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) is of fundamental importance to Villanova College. It is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and caring environment consistent with the values of the Gospel and the Augustinian ethos for all in its community. St Augustine made as his foundational principle the creation of a faith community where all members are "*cor unum*": one in mind and heart on the way to God. Specifically, this policy and its associated processes are underpinned by the ideal of developing and nurturing a strong sense of community.

The law also sets standards for workplace health and safety.<sup>1</sup>

This policy outlines the College's governance framework for achieving excellence in health and safety through the elimination or minimisation of risks to health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the framework for:

- Complying with all relevant Acts, Regulations, Standards and Codes of Practice and supporting the College's values;
- Setting out the principles of the College's commitment and management of WHS requirements;
- Achieving a safe working environment;
- Developing safe methods of work;
- Promoting good health within the workforce;
- Reducing the number and severity of injuries in the workplace;
- Setting out the College's approach to the continuous improvement of WHS;
- Giving effect to the College's WHS Management System, policies, procedures and guidelines.

## Policy

Villanova College will endeavour at all times to comply with the requirements of the law concerning workplace health and safety. It is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all workers, including contractors and volunteers, as well as students, religious, parents, visitors and members of the public. Hazards and risks to health and safety will be eliminated or minimised, as far as is reasonably practicable. Villanova College regards its workplace health and safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, resources are made available to comply with all relevant Acts and Regulations to ensure the workplace is safe and to minimise risk to health.

## Implementation

### Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to all workers and officers of Villanova College as well as other persons at the College including students, religious, parents, volunteers, and visitors.



External contractors and sub-contractors performing work at the College are required to outline their commitment to work health and safety through their own policy and management system.

## **Principles**

The College is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace in accordance with the following principles.

- 1.The College will develop, implement and maintain a health and safety management system which includes the requirements of this Policy.
- 2.The College will implement a health and safety risk management process to ensure workplace hazards are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed where they are not able to be eliminated.
- 3.Through implementation of an effective WHS monitoring system, the College will conduct regular 6 monthly formal inspections of each area of the College and regular 12 monthly reviews of the effectiveness of risk control systems, such as training or chemical management.
- 4.The College will endeavour to implement a system of responsibility for WHS management of specific areas of the College workplace amongst the College leadership team and other members of management of the College for the purposes of ongoing monitoring of WHS and reviews of the effectiveness of risk control systems.
- 5.The College will strive to allocate sufficient financial and physical resources to enable the effective implementation of this Policy.
6. The College will endeavour to establish measurable objectives and targets for WHS aimed at the elimination of work-related illness and injury. It will report on those measurements and targets to the College Board of Directors.
- 7.The College will endeavour to ensure that the College WHS website is updated with current legislative and College WHS Management System requirements.
8. The College will strive to provide, handle and store equipment, structures, substances and systems of work without risk to health.

## **Responsibilities**

The College has a responsibility under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 to comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld). ('Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation')

### **1) Duties generally**

The College acknowledges that a duty under the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation cannot be transferred or delegated to another person.

The College also acknowledges that in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation:

1. More than one person can concurrently have the same duty;
2. Each duty holder must comply with that duty to the standard required by the legislation even if



another duty holder has the same duty;

3. If more than one person has a duty for the same matter, each person -
  - a. retains responsibility for their duty in relation to the matter;
  - b. must discharge their duty to the extent to which they have the capacity to influence and control the matter or would have had that capacity but for an agreement or arrangement purporting to limit or remove that capacity; and
  - c. must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a duty in relation to the same matter.

## **2) General Responsibility for Workplace Health and Safety**

All Villanova College's managers and employees as well as other workers, students, parents, religious and visitors have a shared responsibility for contributing to the health and safety of all persons.

The promotion and maintenance of health and safety issues and the dissemination of WHS related information is primarily the responsibility of management. Management at all levels, in consultation with employees, have the responsibility for developing, implementing and continually reviewing the College's WHS Program.

## **3) Specific Roles and Responsibilities**

The specific roles and responsibilities of a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, Officers, Workers and other persons at the College are outlined below.

### **1. Responsibilities of the College as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking**

In its legal role as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, Villanova College must undertake its role and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation as follows:

1. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:
  - a. Workers engaged, or caused to be engaged by the College; and
  - b. Workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the College
2. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the College.
3. The College will also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable -
  - a. the compliance with all legislation and regulations relating to health and safety; and
  - b. the provision and maintenance of a work environment that eliminates or minimises all workplace hazards and risks; and
  - c. the provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures; and
  - d. the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work; and
  - e. the safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances; and
  - f. the provision of appropriate safety equipment and personal protective equipment; and
  - g. the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers in carrying out work for the College, including ensuring access to those facilities; and
  - h. the provision of any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of the College; and
  - i. the provision of a process to consult with and involve workers on matters relating to health, safety and wellbeing; and



- j. that the health of workers and the conditions at the College are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the College; and
- k. the provision of a suitable injury management and return to work program.

4. If – a) a worker occupies accommodation that is owned by or under the management or control of the College; and b) the occupancy is necessary for the purposes of the worker’s engagement because other accommodation is not reasonably available, the College will, so far as is reasonably practicable, maintain the premises so that the worker occupying the premises is not exposed to risks to health and safety.

5. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the College itself, the means of entering and exiting the College and anything arising from the College are without risks to the health and safety of any person.

6. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the fixtures, fittings and plant at the College are without risks to the health and safety of any person.

7. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of consultation, cooperation and issue resolution in relation to work health and safety as required under the relevant provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation.

8. The College will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, compliance when reporting notifiable incidents under the relevant provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation.

9. The College’s governing body must also undertake its role and responsibilities under the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 by complying with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation.

## **2. Responsibilities of Villanova College Officers**

### **i. General Responsibilities of Officers**

In their legal role as Officers, the College’s Board Members, Principal and College Leadership Team and Business Manager must undertake their role and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation as follows:

1. If the College has a duty or obligation under the legislation, an Officer will exercise due diligence to ensure that the College complies with that duty or obligation.

2. Due diligence includes taking reasonable steps -

- a. to acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety matters; and
- b. to gain an understanding of the nature of the operations of the College and generally of the hazards and risks associated with those operations; and
- c. to ensure that the College has available for use, and uses, appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety from work carried out as part of the conduct of the College; and
- d. to ensure that the College has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, hazards and risks and responding in a timely way to that information; and



- e. to ensure that the College has, and implements, processes for complying with any duty or obligation of the College under the legislation; and
- f. to verify the provision and use of the resources and processes mentioned above.

3. Each Officer is required to ensure that this policy and the WHS program are developed and effectively implemented in areas under their control, and to support supervisors and hold them accountable for their specific responsibilities.

### **ii. Responsibilities of Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors has the responsibility to oversee the monitoring of the College's workplace health and safety performance.

### **iii. Responsibilities of Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that the workplace under their control is safe and without risks to health, and that the behaviour of all persons in the workplace is safe and without risks to health.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring a healthy and safe environment for all.

The Principal has responsibility for, and is committed to, the effective implementation of the College WHS Policy and WHS Program.

The Principal will support Department Heads, Managers, Supervisors and other leaders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities within their area of responsibility.

If the Principal does not have the necessary authority to fix a WHS issue, the Principal is accountable for reporting the matter promptly, together with any recommendations for remedial action to the College Board of Directors.

The Principal will present for review at each ordinary meeting of the College Board of Directors a Workplace Health and Safety Report comprising the following: a description of any recent reported workplace hazard or incident resulting in potential or actual harm to health and safety; any Workcover claims and their current status; any update of the Hazard and Corrective Actions register maintained by the College; and any other matters associated with workplace health and safety or compliance requirements.

### **3. Responsibilities of Workers**

Workers must undertake their role and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Legislation as follows:

1. take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety; and
2. take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others; and
3. comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction on health and safety that is given by the College to allow compliance with the legislation; and
4. co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the College relating to health or safety at the College, including the College's WHS Program, to ensure their own health and safety and the health and safety of others in the workplace;



5. carry out their work according to the safe systems of work and use all plant, materials, tools and substances in the manner for which they are intended.

Where a contractor fails to comply with or observe a direction on health and safety from the College this will be considered a breach of the contract and sufficient grounds for termination of the contract.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Other Persons at the College**

In their legal role as other persons at the College, students, parents, religious and visitors, must undertake their role and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation as follows:

1. take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety; and
2. take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of others; and
3. comply, so far as the person is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the College.

#### **5. Role of Compliance Officer**

The Compliance Officer is available to provide advice regarding general health and safety matters, update the College on legislative changes and assist with the development, implementation and monitoring of this policy and the WHS management system.

### **Practical Implementation**

#### **Implementation under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulation 2011**

In practice, the College's commitment to protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health and safety means that it will implement the following measures in line with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation:

- A risk management process;
- Provide information, training, instruction and supervision;
- Provide a process for consultation, cooperation and issue resolution;
- Provide a process for monitoring the health and safety of workers and the conditions at the College.

#### **1) Risk Management Process**

The College has established a Risk Management System with procedures for identifying, assessing and controlling workplace hazards and risks. This risk management system has been developed in accordance with the International Risk Management Standard AS/NZ ISO 31000.

The College will implement a Hazard and Corrective Actions Register. It recognises that the effectiveness of workplace health and safety depends to a significant extent on the College staff's ability to deal with health and safety issues in a timely way. Workplace health and safety hazards are categorised and dealt with having regard to whether the particular matter is high, medium, or low risk. The register is the methodology to be used for a continuous improvement process in WHS at the College and shows an ongoing commitment to safety at the College.

#### **2) Provide information, training, instruction and supervision**

In accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation, the College strives to ensure that appropriate information, training, instruction and supervision is provided to workers to enable them to perform their work without risk to their health or safety, as far as is reasonably practicable. This



information, training, instruction and supervision is designed to be suitable and adequate, having regard to:

- The nature of the work carried out by the worker; and
- The nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training, instruction or supervision is provided; and
- The control measures implemented.

The College strives to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the information, training and instruction is provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided.

The College subscribes to CompliSpace which makes available management systems relating to the provision of information, training, instruction and supervision for workers at the College.

The College is committed to train its staff on this policy and any related processes relating to WHS in their induction and endeavours to refresh training annually.

### **3) Provide a process for consultation, cooperation and issue resolution**

The College acknowledges its duty to consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking, who are or are likely to be, directly affected by a matter relating to work health or safety. Where more than one person has a duty for the same matter, each person, must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a duty in relation to the same matter.

The College will consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers in relation to the following health and safety matters in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation:

- a. when identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety arising from the work carried out or to be carried out by the College;
- b. when making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks;
- c. when making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers;
- d. when proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of workers;
- e. when making decisions about the procedures for (i) consulting with workers; or (ii) resolving work health or safety issues at the workplace; or (iii) monitoring the health of workers; or (iv) monitoring the conditions at any workplace under the management or control of the College; or (v) providing information and training for workers; and
- f. when carrying out any other activity prescribed under the relevant legislation.

When consulting with workers, the College will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable:

- a. that relevant information about the matter is shared with workers; and
- b. that workers be given a reasonable opportunity -
  - (i) to express their views and to raise work health or safety issues in relation to the matter; and
  - (ii) to contribute to the decision-making process relating to the matter; and
- c. that the views of workers are taken into account by the College;
- d. that the workers consulted are advised of the outcome of the consultation in a timely way; and
- e. that records of the consultation process and outcome are retained.



The College uses various consultative mechanisms, including staff meetings, WHS Committee meetings and College Leadership Team Meetings to facilitate communication between management and workers for the purpose of consultation, cooperation and to enable resolution of health and safety issues.

#### **4) Provide a process for monitoring the health and safety of workers and the conditions at the College.**

The College is committed to monitoring the health of workers and the conditions at the College. The College has implemented under the management system of CompliSpace an incident reporting form which requires workers and other persons to report any hazards or incidents resulting in potential or actual harm to health and safety. Through the workshop email system and in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act and the Regulations, the College regularly monitors, collates and reports on hazards.

The College is also committed to reporting notifiable incidents to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation. Notifiable incidents include the death, serious injury or illness of a person or a dangerous incident, arising out of the conduct of the College.

### **Implementation of Additional Programs, Structures and Management Systems**

#### **1) Workplace Health and Safety Program**

Villanova College has established a documented Workplace Health and Safety Program. The College is committed to the effective implementation of its WHS Program and will ensure that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. The program relates to all aspects of WHS including, but not limited to:

- WHS training and education for all employees – general and hazard specific;
- Workplace system and procedure design, workplace design and standard workplace methods;
- Changes to workplace methods and practice;
- Emergency procedures and drills;
- Provision of WHS services, equipment and facilities;
- Workplace inspections and safety plans;
- Reporting and recording of incidents, accidents, injuries and illnesses;
- Provision of information to employees, contractors, sub-contractors and visitors.

The College utilises the management system of CompliSpace to assist with the effective implementation of its WHS Program.

#### **2) Consultation**

A WHS Committee has been appointed to provide a consultative mechanism for the College. Employees are able to provide input into the WHS program and make recommendations to management in relation to work health and safety issues.

Management will consult with contractors and visitors when planning work to determine the most effective means of ensuring both parties fulfill their WHS responsibilities.





### 3) Related Policies/ Procedures

The College has in place written processes that comply with Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations, Standards and Codes of Practice. Related policies/procedures are:

- Injury Management and Return-to-Work Program
- Human Resources Programs and Training
- Recruitment and Selection Procedures
- Induction Procedures
- Employee Code of Conduct

### 4) Evaluation of Workplace Health and Safety

#### i. Measuring Effectiveness of WHS

Villanova College is committed to the establishment of measurable objectives and targets for WHS to ensure continuous improvement aimed at the minimisation of work-related illness and injury.

The effectiveness of the College's WHS and Risk Management Program will be determined by a range of measures including:

- Effective identification of hazards and timely response of safety issues raised;
- Effective development and implementation of safety plans;
- Decrease in lost time due to illness and injury, and a resulting reduction in premiums; and
- Annual report by the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) a counselling service contracted by the College to support employees.

#### ii. Bi-annual external audit

The College will carry out through an external auditor a bi-annual risk review of WHS activities, processes and procedures conducted by the College. This inspection will support the College's commitments in this policy. It will assist with the continued improvement of safety management. It will also assist the College to meet its general duty of care to provide a safe workplace, and assist officers of the College, to meet their duty to exercise due diligence as required by the Workplace Health and Safety Act and Regulation.

The external auditor will be provided with access to all areas of the College including staff areas and storage cupboards that normally might be locked due to storage of some plant, chemicals, chemical registers or Safety Data Sheets. The College will endeavour to make available to the auditor all records relating to WHS, for example, maintenance records kept by the facilities department. The College will strive to make available staff responsible for particular areas of the College for consultation with the external consultant so that management systems and procedures may be reviewed and implementation of the procedures may be followed up with those staff e.g. training and competency records.

### Definitions

The terms defined in this clause have the following meaning in this policy unless the context indicates otherwise:

**College Leadership Team** means the Deputy Principal, Heads of School, Dean of Teaching and Learning, Dean of Mission and Identity, and the College Administrator.



**Contractor** is an individual or corporation who is not an employee or volunteer and is engaged by the College on a contract to provide services on a regular or one-off basis. It includes consultants and presenters of one-off programs.

**Corporation** means a corporation as defined under the Corporations Act 2001(Cth) Section 57A.

**Dangerous incident** is as defined under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

**Employee** means all persons employed by the College, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term, casual and temporary employees. It includes co-curricular coaches.

**Officer** for a corporation is as defined in section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth), and includes a person:

- who makes, or participates in making decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of the business; or
- has the capacity to significantly affect the corporation's financial standing.

**Parent** means the parent, guardian or carer charged under a Federal or State Court order with the legal responsibility for the long-term care, welfare and development of a student. It includes a prospective parent of the College.

**Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU):** a business or an undertaking that is either conducted alone or with others, whether or not for profit or gain.

**Principal** means the Principal of the College or the nominee of the Principal. It refers to the person who has delegated responsibility for the day to day operations of the College for which Villanova College Ltd is the governing authority.

Reasonably practicable: means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Serious injury or illness is as defined under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

**Student** includes any person regardless of age who is enrolled or on exchange/study tour at the College. It also includes a prospective student of the College.

### **Volunteer**

Consistent with the Working with Children (Risk Assessment and Screening) Act 2000, this refers to a person undertaking work for the College without receiving financial reward. 'Undertaking work' is



understood to mean holding a position or performing a function with the actual or apparent authority of the College.

Volunteer includes but is not limited to a member of the board of directors, a board committee, the College Foundation committee, Parents and Friends Association, the Music Support Group and the Sports Club.

### **Visitors**

Visitors include persons who visit the College and are not classified as workers of the College. Visitors to the College may include but are not limited to College community members other than students, parents and religious, as well as conference and function attendees, commercial clients, students and staff from other schools and tenants or licencees.

### **Workers**

Workers means employees of the College, contractors and subcontractors and their employees, employees of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work at the College, outworkers, apprentices, trainees, students gaining work experience and volunteers.

**Workplace:** means a workplace as defined by the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

## **Review of Policy**

This policy is to be reviewed bi-annually or more frequently to take account of any changes to relevant legislation or regulations or to the College's operations and practices and to ensure it remains appropriate to the changing environment.

**Review Date:** November 2022.

**Endorsement:** This policy was approved and endorsed by the College Board on 26 November 2020.

## **References**

### **i. Legal Framework**

In Queensland, the key legislation is: the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld); Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Qld); Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld); and the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld).