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Working at Height Policy

Document Control:

Policy Owner:	Director of Health & Safety or equivalent role
Policy Author(s):	Allan Steel Graham Hakes - Communication and Operationalisation.
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Amendment History:

Version Number:	Effective Date:	Summary of Amendments:	Author:
V1.1 22 03 17	22/03/17	Initial version of document amended to remove reference to WAIT tool	John Phillips
V1.2 12 09 22	23/09/22	Review – Minor administrative changes	Graham Hakes
V1.3 28/04/26	24.09.26	Review – Change of template and minor administrative changes	Allan Steel

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Working at Height Policy is to prevent injury and ill health arising from falls from height by ensuring that all work at height activities are properly planned, risk assessed, organised, supervised, and carried out safely. The organisation is committed to complying with the requirements of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 and will, wherever reasonably practicable, avoid work at height. Where work at height cannot be avoided, appropriate measures will be implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk of falls, including the selection of suitable work equipment, the provision of competent supervision, and the use of collective and personal fall protection systems.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Work at Height Regulations 2005 is relevant to all work at height activities carried out on the University campus and this Policy applies across the University's campuses, including Gibbet Hill, Westwood and Innovation Campus, Stratford-on-Avon. The Policy also applies to all activities managed by the University at off-campus properties. Working at height means any work where, if precautions were not taken, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury, this includes work:

- above ground/floor level
- where a person could fall from an edge, through an opening or fragile surface, or,

- where a person could fall from ground/floor level into an opening in a floor or a hole in the ground.

Working at height does not include a slip or a trip on the level, nor does it include walking up and down a permanent staircase in a building.

3. Responsibilities

The table below outlines the key responsibilities associated with this Policy and should be read alongside the detailed role responsibilities set out in the [Leadership and Management of Health and Safety at the University of Warwick](#) document.

Role	Responsible for
The Director of Health and Safety or equivalent position	Advising on the standards and regulations that must be achieved in order to meet legal requirements; for keeping the University's Health and Safety website up to date with the related policy documents; and for ensuring that spot checks and audits are undertaken to provide assurance that activities are being carried out in compliance with this Policy.
Heads of Departments	Heads of Departments are responsible for the implementation of this Policy with regard to identifying, through general risk assessment, any potential working at height activities in their respective departments and for ensuring that the Estates department is informed of all such spaces which are part of the estate. For working at height activities which are not part of the estate (associated with work equipment used for research for example) the Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that appropriate controls are put in place, to minimise the risk to staff, contractors, students and visitors. Heads of Department are also responsible for ensuring that access to such spaces is controlled.
Departmental Senior Administrative staff	Supporting Heads of Department in meeting the expectations placed on them in relation to delivering the requirements of this Policy.
Supervisors & Managers (including Technical & Facilities Managers, Academic staff e.g. Principal Investigators)	Ensuring that all people, activities, and research projects they lead are planned, conducted, and supervised safely. This includes ensuring that appropriate risk assessments are completed, that staff and students working under their supervision are competent, trained, and supported, and that all safety requirements relevant to their work are implemented and followed.
All staff	Complying with this Policy and the associated arrangements, instructions and guidance.

RACI Matrix	
Responsible	Director of Health & Safety or equivalent Heads of Department or equivalent Managers (including Technical & Facilities Managers, Academic staff e.g. Principal Investigators)

Accountable	Vice Chancellor
Consult	Departmental Senior Administrator Supervisors Health and Safety Services Officers and Advisers
Inform	All staff

4. Policy Statement

- 4.1 All work at height must be properly planned and organised, and a risk assessment must be carried out before the work is commenced. Reference should be made to the University guidance on work at height, which is available via the Health, Safety and Wellbeing web pages.
- 4.2 Suitable control measures must be implemented to ensure work at height is carried out safely, including the use of a Permit to Work (PTW) where required by the University's Permit to Work Policy or where identified through risk assessment.
- 4.3 Activities involving scaffolding, tower scaffolds, rope access techniques and Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs) must be subject to suitable risk assessment and control measures. A PTW will normally be required unless the activity forms part of routine operations and is undertaken under documented safe systems of work by competent personnel with appropriate supervision and rescue arrangements in place.
- 4.4 A PTW would not normally be required for the use of step ladders, podium steps, hop-up platforms, trestles fitted with guard rails, elephant's feet (or equivalent equipment), or for routine work at height activities managed through approved local procedures. Please refer to the Permit to Work Policy for further guidance..
- 4.5 Ladders can only be used for work at height when a risk assessment has shown that using equipment offering a higher level of fall protection is not justified because of the low risk and short duration of use; or there are existing workplace features which cannot be altered.
- 4.6 Steps must be taken to ensure not only the safety of those working at height, but also to ensure the safety of those who might be impacted by the work at height, for example passers-by and those working beneath any work at height activity.
- 4.7 Those individuals involved in work at height must be competent and must receive an appropriate level of supervision for the work. The level of competence and supervision required is dependent on the risk associated with the work.
- 4.8 Equipment used for work at height must be registered in an inventory and must be properly inspected and maintained, and records kept of all such maintenance and inspection work. Some items will require statutory inspections, and the Estates Department must be informed of the existence of all equipment used for work at height so that the necessary arrangements can be made for such statutory inspections (see also the Work Equipment Policy).

4.9 When not in use, all equipment must be kept secure so that it cannot be used by any unauthorised individuals. This includes ensuring that unauthorised access to elevated work platforms is not possible.

4.10 Access to roof spaces is controlled under a separate policy on Permits to Work.

5. Associated Documents and Links

UoW Working at Height

UoW [Permit Requests](#)

[HSE Working at Height](#)