

Workplace Rehabilitation

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1.0 Purpose

This procedure has been developed to provide Griffith University's framework for the provision of workplace rehabilitation for staff who have sustained an injury or illness in accordance with the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 s227* and *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014*.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to all staff of Griffith University who have sustained a work-related injury/illness.

In cases of non-work-related injury/illness, workplace rehabilitation may be provided at the discretion of management. Section 3.6 applies to staff members with non-work-related injury or illness on continuing and fixed-term within the fixed term period only.

3.0 Procedure

3.1 Workplace rehabilitation practices

- Workplace rehabilitation will be provided by an appropriately qualified Injury Management & Wellbeing Partner (IM&WP).
- Workplace rehabilitation will commence as soon as practicable following staff members' injury/illness.
- Workplace rehabilitation will be developed in consultation with the treating medical practitioner, using a multi-disciplinary team approach, and will consider reasonable workplace adjustment.
- Suitable duties programs will be medically approved by the treating medical practitioner, be workplace-based, and be time-limited.
- Confidentiality (written, verbal, and electronic information) of medical and rehabilitation information will be maintained.
- Rehabilitation will be in accordance with Queensland legislation, including any relevant guidelines.

3.2 Rehabilitation and Return to Work Insurer

Griffith University maintains a current WorkCover Accident Insurance policy with WorkCover Queensland. The Workers' Compensation laws places obligations on our insurer to support rehabilitation and return to work (RRTW). This includes:

- developing and maintaining a rehabilitation and return to work plan in consultation with the injured staff member, the University, and the treating medical practitioner
- any return to work plans and any amendments must be consistent with the staff member's needs and the current Workers' Compensation Medical Certificate.

3.3 Suitable Duties Program (SDP)

The employer must develop and document an SDP where it is medically recommended in consultation with the injured/ill staff member, their manager/supervisor, Human Resources, designated IM&WP, their medical practitioner, and other health professionals. SDP will consider:

- the nature of the injury and current medical certificate/report for the staff member's injury/illness
- pre-injury duties and substantive classification
- approval from the treating medical practitioner
- the rehabilitation and return to work (RRTW) plan
- functional capacity and work experience
- level of supervision and training required
- suitable hours and timeframes
- reasonable workplace adjustments where required
- meaningful duties which are documented and relevant to rehabilitation objectives
- regular reviews upgrading duties consistently with the staff member's recovery.

SDPs will not affect adversely staff members' future work opportunities. A copy of the plan will be made available to the staff member, their treating medical providers, their supervisors, and WorkCover Queensland.

3.4 Funding for Rehabilitation

WorkCover Queensland will pay all reasonable costs of rehabilitation for accepted workers' compensation claims. Other costs which may be considered desirable to assist workplace rehabilitation, such as equipment or training, may be funded by the Group/Element at the discretion of the relevant Head/Director.

Suitable duties programs (SDP) may be fully funded by WorkCover Queensland or partially funded (where a staff member is fit to work restricted hours). In most cases, the Group/Element will pay the staff member full wages and WorkCover Queensland will reimburse the University for lost time.

In some cases, it may be desirable for the University to meet limited medical and rehabilitation costs prior to acceptance of a workers' compensation claim. This will be at the discretion of the relevant Head/Director with advice from the IM&WP regarding necessary and reasonable costs.

3.5 Residual Incapacity due to Work-Related Injury/Illness

If the outcome of rehabilitation is that the staff member is unable to fully return to pre-injury/illness duties, the IM&WP will work with the rehabilitation team to consider reasonable workplace adjustment. If still unable to return fully to pre-injury/illness duties, the University may seek suitable alternative employment for the staff member over a period of at least 12 months following the work-related injury/illness.

If the staff member cannot be placed in suitable alternative employment within the University in the 12-month period following the work-related injury/illness, the University will proceed in accordance with the Managing Ill Health clause of the respective Enterprise Agreement, which may lead to termination of employment.

3.6 Workplace rehabilitation for non-work-related injury/illness

3.6.1 Rehabilitation for non-Work-Related Injury/Illness

Workplace rehabilitation for non-work-related injury/illness may be provided in some circumstances at the discretion of the University. In such cases, the staff member may be referred for an independent medical assessment before and/or during workplace rehabilitation.

A graduated return to pre-injury/illness duties will normally be completed within 6 to 12 weeks. Workplace rehabilitation for non-work-related injury/illness, if provided, will be conducted according to the Workplace Rehabilitation Policy, Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures and the Guidelines for Non-Work-related Injury and Illness.

Rehabilitation case management for non-work-related injury/illness is undertaken by the IM&WP under the guidance of the treating medical practitioner. In some instances, prior to returning to pre-injury duties, the staff member may be required to provide a full medical clearance certificate from their treating medical practitioner.

3.6.2 Payment of Salary following non-Work-related Injury/Illness

The University will pay the injured staff member for actual hours worked. Accrued sick, recreation or long service leave may be used to supplement hours worked, with the approval of their supervisor.

3.6.3 Residual Incapacity due to non-Work-related Injury/Illness

The University is not required to provide employment following non-work-related injury/illness if a staff member is unable to resume pre-injury/illness duties on a permanent basis. In such cases, the University may seek to terminate employment. However, at the discretion of management, other employment options within the University may be sought.

3.7 Staff counselling

For staff members requiring short-term counselling, the University has an external provider to manage an employee assistance program (EAP). The program entitles Griffith University staff members unlimited sessions of counselling at no charge to the staff member. Counsellors are available for face-to-face counselling, online or telephone counselling.

If counselling is required and relates to an accepted workers' compensation claim, Workcover Queensland may cover the cost of adjustment to injury and/or pain management counselling.

3.8 Grievances in Relation to Rehabilitation

If a grievance arises in relation to workplace rehabilitation, the Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure will apply.

3.9 Confidentiality

Information obtained (written, verbal, and electronic information) during workplace rehabilitation will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality. Approval to access or release medical or rehabilitation information, relevant only to workplace rehabilitation and return to work, will be sought from the staff member using the Authorisation to Release Information form. The IM&WP will release information to key parties only where information is required for workplace rehabilitation and return to work, and with the staff member's consent.

3.10 Case Notes and Records

The IM&WP will keep accurate and objective case notes in a secure location for each staff member undergoing workplace rehabilitation. Case notes must contain details of:

- all communication between the worker, the IM&WP, insurer, manager/supervisor, Human Resources/ Workplace Relations, treating registered persons, and other key parties
- actions and decisions
- reasons for actions and decisions.

Rehabilitation files are electronic and are available only to approved staff members.

3.11 Information and Training

Information and training regarding the Workplace Rehabilitation Policy and related procedures will be available for managers/supervisors and staff members. Information on workplace rehabilitation procedures will be included in induction programs for new staff.

4.0 Definitions

Independent medical assessment (IMA) – assessment by a medical practitioner arranged by the University to assess an employee's capacity for work.

Injury Management and Wellbeing Partner – IM&WP - the IM&WP is a person who is appropriately qualified to perform the functions of an Injury Management and Wellbeing Partner. The IM&WP is the link between an injured/ill worker, their treating doctor, management, supervisors, WorkCover Queensland and any other person involved in return to work. Griffith University Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinators can be found in the University phonebook under Health, Safety, and Wellbeing (Injury Management)

Non-work-related injury/illness – an injury or illness that has not arisen out of employment.

Rehabilitation -

(1) Rehabilitation, of a staff, is a process designed to—

- (a) ensure the worker's earliest possible return to work; or

(b) maximise the worker's independent functioning.

(2) Rehabilitation includes—

(a) necessary and reasonable—

(i) suitable duties programs; or

(ii) services provided by a registered person; or

(iii) services approved by an insurer; or

(b) the provision of necessary and reasonable aids or equipment to the worker.

Rehabilitation and return to work plan (RRTW)- a written plan outlining the rehabilitation objectives and the steps required to achieve the objectives.

Rehabilitation team- a group of key Griffith staff (managers/ supervisors, Element /School heads, IM&WP, Director Health & Safety, Associate Director Health & Wellbeing, Other Health, Safety & Wellbeing staff, Wellbeing Specialist, Director Human Resources, Human Resources Business Partners, Workplace Relations Partner, General Council representatives) WorkCover Queensland, and or treating professionals (e.g. medical and allied health) who have the purpose of ensuring rehabilitation for staff who have sustained an injury or illness that has arisen out of employment.

Rehabilitation service provider – a person engaged to provide rehabilitation services to an injured employee. This may include, but is not limited to a Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Psychologist, Rehabilitation Counsellor, Podiatrist, Osteopath or Chiropractor.

Staff – a staff member is any employee of Griffith University who works under a contract and, in relation to the work, is an employee for the purpose of assessment for PAYG withholding under the Taxation Administration Act 1953, schedule 1, part 2-5. This applies to a person for whom PAYG tax instalments are required or would be required to be withheld by their employer.

Suitable alternative employment – if an employee is unable to return to their usual employment, the University may be able to assist the employee to locate suitable alternative employment taking into account the injury/illness, the employee's qualifications and experience and business needs of the University.

Suitable duties – suitable duties are specially selected duties that are matched to a worker's capacity for work. Suitable duties could mean doing their normal role but with restrictions or doing another job entirely.

Suitable duties program (SDP) – a suitable duties program is the document outlining the agreed suitable duties and hours of work. A suitable duties program involves consultation between all key parties and will be monitored and upgraded as the worker's recovery progresses.

Treating medical practitioner – the registered doctor or other medical professional (such as a Dentist) who provides treatment to an injured employee.

WorkCover Queensland – Griffith University's workers' compensation insurer is WorkCover Queensland. WorkCover will make decisions on claims regarding the University's liability and will coordinate the overall rehabilitation plan based on the available medical information. WorkCover works closely with the RRTWC to ensure the safest and best possible return to work outcome for injured/ill workers.

Workers' compensation claim – a claim made via the injured worker's employer or directly to WorkCover Queensland for a work-related injury or illness. The worker may be entitled to lost wages and/or payment of medical expenses relating to the injury.

Workers' compensation medical certificate – this is a Workers' Compensation Regulator medical certificate required for the lodgement of a workers' compensation claim. Workers' compensation medical certificates are issued by the worker's treating medical practitioner and should be provided by the treating practitioner at each review.

Workers' Compensation Regulator (the Regulator) – the Regulator has many functions including administering of the medical assessment tribunals, providing administrative reviews of insurer decisions and educating the scheme about rehabilitation and return to work.

Workplace rehabilitation - is a system of rehabilitation accredited by the Regulator that is initiated or managed by an employer.

Work-related injury/illness – is an injury that has arisen out of or in the course of employment. It may include injury or illness or aggravation of injury/illness.

5.0 Information

Title	Workplace Rehabilitation Procedure
Document number	2023/0001233
Purpose	This procedure has been developed to provide Griffith University's framework for the provision of workplace rehabilitation for staff who have sustained an injury or illness in accordance with the <i>Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 s227</i> and <i>Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014</i> .
Audience	Staff
Category	Operational
Subcategory	Safety
UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	This document aligns with Sustainable Development Goal: 3: Good Health and Well-Being
Approval date	14/12/2023
Effective date	14/12/2023
Review date	14/12/2025
Policy advisor	Associate Director, Health and Wellbeing
Approving authority	Director, Health and Safety

6.0 Related Policy Documents and Supporting Documents

Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standards Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code of Conduct Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Staff Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy Workplace Rehabilitation Policy
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting and Recording Procedures for Incidents, Injuries, Dangerous Incidents, Hazards, and Near Misses Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure Workers Compensation Procedure
Local Protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Action Plan Guidelines for Non-Work-related Injury and Illness Injury Management Kit - Manager/Supervisor Injury Management Kit - Staff
Forms	N/A