

## Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures

<b>Approving authority</b>	Vice President (Corporate Services)
<b>Approval date</b>	22 July 2018
<b>Advisor</b>	For advice on this policy, contact the Team Leader, Wellbeing and Injury Management  Health, Safety and Wellbeing  <a href="mailto:workrehab@griffith.edu.au">workrehab@griffith.edu.au</a>   (07) 373 57320
<b>Next scheduled review</b>	2021
<b>Document URL</b>	<a href="http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Workplace%20Rehabilitation%20Procedures.pdf">http://policies.griffith.edu.au/pdf/Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures.pdf</a>
<b>TRIM document</b>	2018/0000080
<b>Description</b>	This document outlines the University's approach to providing workplace rehabilitation for injured and ill staff members.

### Related University Documents

[Equity Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)  
[Griffith University Privacy Plan](#)  
[Guidelines for Non-Work-Related Injury and Illness](#)  
[Health and Safety Policy](#)  
[Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure](#)  
[Reporting and Recording Procedures for Incidents, Injuries, Dangerous Incidents, Hazards and Near Misses](#)  
[Workers' Compensation Procedures](#)  
[Workplace Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination Policy](#)  
[Workplace Rehabilitation Policy](#)

### External Links

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#)  
[Employee Assistance Program](#)  
[Fair Work Act 2009](#)  
[Guidelines for Standard for Rehabilitation](#)  
[Privacy Act 1988](#)  
[Taxation Administration Act 2001](#)  
[WorkCover Queensland](#)  
[Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003](#)  
[Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014](#)  
[Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)  
[Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011](#)

[\[Introduction\]](#) [\[Scope\]](#) [\[Definitions and Terms\]](#) [\[Application\]](#) [\[Rights of staff members in the event of work-related injury/illness\]](#) [\[Roles associated with workplace rehabilitation for work-related injury/illness\]](#) [\[Workplace rehabilitation for work-related injury/illness\]](#) [\[Workplace rehabilitation for non-work-related injury/illness\]](#) [\[Staff Counselling\]](#) [\[Other matters\]](#) [\[Delegated Authorities\]](#)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

These procedures have been developed to provide the framework for the provision of workplace rehabilitation for staff members who have sustained an injury or illness.

---

## 2. SCOPE

For staff members with work-related injury/illness, these procedures apply to 'workers', as defined by the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003*. For staff members with non-work-related injury or illness, section 8.0 applies to continuing staff and fixed term staff members within the fixed term period.

---

## 3. DEFINITIONS AND TERMS

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

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

### **Rehabilitation -**

- (1) Rehabilitation, of a worker, 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 Coordinator (RRTWC)** - the RRTWC is a person who is appropriately qualified to perform the functions of a Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator. The RRTWC 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).

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

**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.

**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** – 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.

**Worker** – a worker is a person 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.

**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.

## 4. APPLICATION

The following applies for staff members' work-related injury/illness:

### 4.1 Workplace rehabilitation principles and practices

- Workplace rehabilitation will be provided by an appropriately qualified Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator (RRTWC);
- 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 time limited;
- Confidentiality of medical and rehabilitation information will be maintained;
- Rehabilitation will be in accordance with Queensland legislation, including the Guidelines for Standard for Rehabilitation under the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014*.

## **5. RIGHTS OF STAFF MEMBERS IN THE EVENT OF WORK-RELATED INJURY/ILLNESS**

Staff members who have sustained a work-related injury/illness have the right to:

- choose their own treating medical practitioner;
- apply for workers' compensation in accordance with the Workers' Compensation Procedures;
- authorise the RRTWC to contact their treating medical practitioner for the purpose of workplace rehabilitation and return to work;
- confidentiality, safe keeping of workers' compensation and rehabilitation information;
- be provided with suitable duties, if practicable;
- consultation in the development of workplace rehabilitation or suitable duties programs;
- representation if so desired;
- access to Individual Grievance Resolution Procedure in accordance with University policy.

---

## **6. ROLES ASSOCIATED WITH WORKPLACE REHABILITATION FOR WORK-RELATED INJURY/ILLNESS**

### **6.1 Rehabilitation Team**

The rehabilitation team will develop, implement and monitor suitable duties programs and may include all, or some of the following persons:

- injured/ill staff member;
- supervisor/manager of the injured/ill staff member;
- treating medical practitioner;
- RRTWC;
- WorkCover Queensland Customer Advisor;
- associate/representative of the staff member (if requested);
- HR Business Partner;
- rehabilitation service provider (where required).

### **6.2 Injured/Ill Staff Member**

The injured/ill staff member will:

- notify their supervisor of the existence of any work-related injury/illness;
- provide a Workers' Compensation Medical Certificate for all absences/treatment subject to a workers' compensation claim;
- advise their treating medical practitioner of the availability of workplace rehabilitation;
- maintain relevant communication with the RRTWC;
- maintain an accurate record of hours worked, signed by the supervisor, to provide to the RRTWC;
- continue participation in normal performance review processes during workplace rehabilitation.

### **6.3 Supervisor/Manager**

The supervisor will:

- notify the RRTWC as soon as possible of a staff member's injury/illness;
- support and encourage the injured/ill staff member during workplace rehabilitation;

- assist the RRTWC to identify and coordinate suitable duties;
- support reasonable adjustment to enable successful implementation of workplace rehabilitation and suitable duties;
- monitor the staff member's progress regarding suitable duties;
- continue normal performance review processes during workplace rehabilitation.

#### **6.4 Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator (RRTWC)**

The RRTWC will:

- ensure an efficient system exists for early notification when staff members sustain a work-related injury/illness;
- assist the University with the duty to report injury within 8 business days to WorkCover Queensland as soon as becoming aware of the injury;
- initiate early communication with the injured/ill staff member to clarify the nature and severity of the injury and ensure initial notification processes is completed;
- ensure early intervention through early contact with all key parties;
- develop, coordinate and monitor workplace rehabilitation and suitable duties programs in consultation with the rehabilitation team, ensuring consistency with the current medical certificate/report for the staff member's injury/illness;
- liaise with WorkCover Queensland about the injured/ill staff member's progress and suitable duties programs, including actual hours worked;
- provide a copy of the suitable duties program (SDP) to the treating practitioner where required;
- maintain accurate, relevant documentation, and confidentiality in accordance with the Guidelines for Standard for Rehabilitation under the *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Regulation 2014*;
- ensure information is provided to all staff members about the Workplace Rehabilitation Policy and Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures, and what to expect when an injury occurs, including this information in new staff induction programs;
- educate supervisors regarding their role and responsibilities for workplace rehabilitation;
- promote an internal culture of acceptance for workplace rehabilitation;
- promote workplace rehabilitation to treating medical practitioners to work cooperatively, and to gain their trust and assistance;
- maintain a file for each staff member with a work-related injury/illness, which includes all documents, correspondence, dated case notes, and accounts;
- ensure confidentiality is maintained for all written and verbal information;
- maintain relevant statistics regarding workers' compensation and workplace rehabilitation;
- ensure Workplace Rehabilitation Policy and Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures are current, and RRTWC accreditation is maintained;
- provide injured workers with the opportunity to give feedback regarding workers' compensation and workplace rehabilitation;
- provide reports to the University on workers' compensation trends and premiums.

#### **6.5 Co-Workers**

Co-workers will be encouraged to support injured/ill staff members and will be informed about their co-worker's workplace rehabilitation only as needed and as it relates to work.

## **7. WORKPLACE REHABILITATION FOR WORK-RELATED INJURY/ILLNESS**

### **7.1 Rehabilitation and Return to Work Plan**

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

### **7.2 Suitable Duties Program (SDP)**

The employer must develop and document a SDP where it is medically recommended in consultation with the injured/ill staff member and rehabilitation team. SDP will take into account:

- nature of 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 plan;
- functional capacity and work experience;
- level of supervision and training required;
- suitable hours and time frames;
- reasonable workplace adjustments where required;
- meaningful duties which are documented and relevant to rehabilitation objectives; and
- 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, supervisor and WorkCover Queensland.

### **7.3 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 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 of Element with advice from the RRTWC regarding necessary and reasonable costs.

### **7.4 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 RRTWC will work with HR Business Partners 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 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.

## **8. WORKPLACE REHABILITATION FOR NON-WORK-RELATED INJURY/ILLNESS**

### **8.1 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 RRTWC 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

### **8.2 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 approval of their supervisor.

### **8.3 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.

---

## **9. 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 up to four (4) sessions of counselling at no charge to the staff member. Counsellors are available for face-to-face counselling 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.

---

## **10. OTHER MATTERS**

### **10.1 Grievances in Relation to Rehabilitation**

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

### **10.2 Confidentiality**

Information obtained 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 RRTWC 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.

### **10.3 Case Notes and Records**

The RRTWC 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 RRTWC, insurer, supervisor, treating registered persons and other key parties;
- actions and decisions; and
- reasons for actions and decisions.

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

#### **10.4 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 will be included in induction programs for new staff.

#### **10.5 Review**

The *Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003* requires this procedure to be reviewed at least every three years.

---

## **11. DELEGATED AUTHORITIES**

The Head of Element may approve:

- limited medical and rehabilitation costs until WorkCover Queensland accepts a claim;
- other necessary and reasonable costs associated with the rehabilitation and return to work plan, e.g. equipment or training;
- costs associated with providing a rehabilitation program for a staff member's non-work-related injury/illness.

The Vice President (Corporate Services) is responsible for the oversight of strategic direction and procedures related to workplace rehabilitation within the University.

Implementation of the Workplace Rehabilitation Procedures is the responsibility of the Director, Health, Safety and Wellbeing.