

## Statement of intent and scope

This guideline applies to all Curtin University employees, including management and supervisors. Curtin also has an obligation to minimise the risk of fatigue to other individuals who are under the control of any Curtin employee, including students and volunteers.

This guideline applies to all Curtin University Campuses and work related activities. These activities can include both administrative and non-administrative activities and it is important to recognise that fatigue can occur in both.

Examples of administrative activities can include general office duties, including using computers at workstations and mentally demanding tasks which require continuous concentration or dealing/interacting with the public.

Non administrative activities can include grounds maintenance, infrastructure maintenance, security and other tasks that require regular physical exertion. Teaching, research and fieldwork activities can also be regarded as non-administrative activities due to the non-routine nature of some of these activities and potential exposure to increased health and safety risk.

Work related travel can impact an individual's sleep patterns if not planned carefully. Additional controls are required for regional/interstate/international travel and associated fieldwork using fatigue management plans.

## Definition of fatigue

In a work context, fatigue is mental and/or physical exhaustion that reduces the ability to perform your work safely and effectively.

Symptoms include:

- tiredness even after sleep
- reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes
- short term memory problems and an inability to concentrate
- blurred vision or impaired visual perception
- a need for extended sleep during days off

## Statement of acceptable hours

All Curtin employees are subject to work hours as described in the Enterprise Agreement or their employment contract.

On some occasions it may be necessary to work additional hours in order to meet a deadline, respond to unexpected events, after hours call outs, emergency or travel itinerary requirements. These additional hours could occur in one 24 hour period or be cumulative in nature and both can create risk of fatigue.

Employees, supervisors and managers are all responsible for identifying the likelihood of fatigue and take appropriate steps to minimise the risk.

## Identify and assess risk

When the risk of fatigue exists, the supervisor or manager must develop a risk assessment in consultation with employee's, safety and health representatives (SHR's) and/or others involved in the activity.

The fatigue risk checklist and the risk assessment template are available online via Curtin's [incident and risk management system](#).

## Minimise and control risk

The hierarchy of control is a simple tool used to control workplace risks. The hierarchy of control takes a step-by-step approach to eliminating or reducing risks, ranking controls from the highest level of protection through to the lowest level of protection.

Use the hierarchy of control tool below to assess risk of fatigue and decide how to control the risk:

Hierarchy of Control	Control
Elimination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Designing working hours to allow for good quality sleep and enough recovery time between work days or shifts for traveling, eating, personal hygiene and sleeping;</li><li>2. Eliminate the need to drive between 10pm and 6am;</li><li>3. Remove overtime arrangements for extended periods.</li></ol>
Substitution	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Reviewing whether the type of work and work schedule is suitable for the allocated time period and modifying if these factors place employees at risk of developing fatigue or acute sleep deprivation;</li><li>2. When scheduling work, consider if it is necessary for the activity to be outside of standard business hours and/or during extended hours, (for non-essential work, consider rearranging the schedule to avoid these times);</li><li>3. Considering scheduling work for hours when the risks may be lower. For example, where practicable, scheduling potentially higher risk work for times when people are normally awake to align with the body clock;</li><li>4. Offering alternatives, where practicable, to employees who may have difficulties adjusting to changing working hours</li><li>5. Redesign job to limit periods of excessive mental and physical demands;</li><li>6. Introduce job rotation to limit build-up of mental and physical fatigue;</li><li>7. Avoid working during periods of extreme temperature;</li><li>8. Budget for staff to use ride services where risk of driving while fatigued is identified.</li></ol>
Isolation	N/A
Engineering	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Whenever possible, travel in vehicles fitted with accident avoidance systems.</li></ol>

Administrative	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Considering whether unscheduled or additional hours of work may increase the level of risk of fatigue;</li> <li>2. Developing fatigue management plans for long daily work hours and related travel, where there may be increased risk of injury , for example requiring adequate breaks when total hours exceed a set limit;</li> <li>3. The set limit should be no more than 13 hours 'door to door', (meaning the time between an individual leaving their home/accommodation in the morning and arrival at their home/accommodation that evening should be no more than 13 hours). How this suggested maximum hour limit is applied depends upon the individual circumstances and type of travel at the time.</li> <li>4. Consulting with employees, safety and health representatives or the Health and Safety Department about levels of fatigue and any safety and health issues arising from them;</li> <li>5. Reviewing overtime in the context of previous patterns and future scheduled work;</li> <li>6. Consider the requirements for relief/standby/on call/additional staff;</li> <li>7. Endeavouring to provide regular and familiar hours of work. This should include giving reasonable notice if working hours or roster changes are planned;</li> <li>8. Consider increasing the frequency or length of breaks.</li> </ol>
Personal Protective Equipment	N/A

A fatigue management checklist is available in CHARM. Please use this checklist to assess risk of fatigue

Employees can help reduce risk of workplace fatigue by:

- helping to identify fatigue risks in the workplace and cooperating with employers and employees trying to control it;
- seeking confidential help with emotional and family problems that may be a contributing factor;
- seek professional advice if health matters, such as a poor diet, recent illness, injury or sleep disorders, may be contributing to it;
- planning social activities so adequate time for sleep is available.

**Investigation fatigue related incidents**

Whilst not always immediately apparent, fatigue is a common underlying cause of incidents. When investigating an incident it is important to consider if fatigue was a contributing factor by asking questions around sleep deprivation, recent hours worked, non-routine activity/unusual change in work practices or personal factors.

**Awareness and training**

Fatigue management training will be included in the Training Needs Analysis matrix and delivered on-line, with refresher training conducted on a 24 month cycle.

## Auditing and improvement

The auditing and improvement process will include:

- Scheduled sample audits of training records against the training needs analysis matrix;
- Scheduled sample audits of completed fatigue checklists and risk assessments
- Review fatigue related incident reports to identify trends;
- Include learnings from audits and incident reviews in training modules and this procedure.

## Relevant documents and links

SafeWork Australia

[Guide for Managing the Risk of Fatigue at Work.](#)

[Code of Practice \(WA\); Working Hours](#)

Sections of acts and regulations referenced in this code of practice include:

The Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984:

- Section 19 Duties of employers
- Section 19A Breaches of Section 19(1)
- Section 20 Duties of employees
- Section 20A Breaches of Section 20(1) or (3)
- Section 23D Contract work arrangements

Contact details	
Contact	Health and Safety Ph: (08) 9266 4900 <a href="mailto:healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au">healthandsafety@curtin.edu.au</a>
Approval Authority	Director, Health and Safety

Revision history		
Revision #	Date	Amendment Description
Version 1.0	29/09/2020	New Document