Safety Recognition Toolkit

About this Toolkit

UNSW is committed to providing staff, students and visitors/guests a safe and healthy place in which to work, study and collaborate. As such, UNSW aims to empower its people to implement best practice, act in accordance with WHS legislation and Australian Standards, and recognise the value of proactive safety behaviours.

Recognition of proactive safety behaviours is one of the most powerful ways to let staff know they are valued and their contribution to safety matters. This toolkit is designed to provide all staff with guidance on how to provide timely, meaningful and relevant recognition of proactive safety behaviours.

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Why Safety Recognition?

Purpose

The purpose of the Safety Recognition program is to reinforce and celebrate proactive safety behaviours, express gratitude and appreciation of our safety champions, and establish a proactive approach towards health and safety.

The program focuses on **recognition as an intrinsic reward**, as it is shown to be an effective form of behavioural change.[1]

Prioritising recognition has other advantages as it drives staff engagement, lowers absenteeism rates, supports individual and team goals, and improves teamwork and relationships.

The program also supports the University's 2025 Strategic Plan and the UNSW values of respect, excellence, innovation, collaboration and diversity.

1 O'Flaherty, S., Sanders, M.T., and Whillans, A. (2021, March). Research: A little recognition can provide a big morale boost. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from https://hbr.org/2021/03/research-a-little-recognition-can-provide-a-big-morale-boost

Why Safety Recognition?

Principles

The following principles underpin and guide safety recognition at UNSW.

- Recognition is effective in changing behaviour if it is offered as close to the desired behaviour as possible, specific and connected to the person's or group's actions, and delivered by a person held in esteem.[2]

- Sincere and personalised recognition goes a long way as it shows genuine appreciation of the individual's or team's achievement and performance.[2]

- Acknowledgement of staff efforts and contribution to safety helps to motivate and engage staff.[3]

- Recognition of proactive safety behaviours and celebration of safety achievements and performance is part of day-to-day business practice.

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2 Daniels, A. (2016). *Bringing out the best in people.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education
3 Gostick, A. & Elton, C. (2009). *The carrot principle: how the best managers use recognition to engage their people, retain talent, and accelerate performance.* New York, NY: Free Press. Retrieved from
https://www.worldcat.org/title/carrot-principle-how-the-best-managers-use-recognition-to-engage-their-people-retain-talent-and-accelerate-performance/oclc/276818913

Proactive Safety Behaviours

To reinforce safety behaviours that are proactive and increase our safety awareness, staff are encouraged to recognise individuals and teams who demonstrate proactive safety behaviours. Here are some suggestions of behaviours to recognise:

Category	Proactive Safety Behaviour
Taking action to prevent incidents, injuries and near misses	Individuals who proactively take action to prevent incidents, injuries and near misses from occurring or stop unsafe practices. Some examples of this proactive behaviour include but are not limited to: ■ Self-reported safety hazard resulting in prevention of an incident ■ Rapid response to a near miss resulting in containment of an area
Shift in trend	A group/school/unit who actively works to achieve a shift in trend. Some examples of this proactive behaviour include but are not limited to: ■ >95% completion rates of mandatory training modules ■ 100% completion rates of Health & Safety Induction form (HS006) ■ A reporting trend where hazard and near miss reporting is increased ■ >95% completion of actions within agreed timeframes as per Health & Safety Plans.
Innovation	A group/school/unit or individual who introduces an innovation that matures UNSW's capability in safety. Some examples of this proactive behaviour include but are not limited to: ■ Wearable technology that can be used to monitor worker safety and provide accurate risk assessment data. ■ Virtual reality training used to provide immersive training experiences of hazardous situations that allow staff to learn and practise safety protocols in a controlled environment.
Improvement in safety knowledge or resources	A group/school/unit or individual who introduces new and improved safety resources and/or information, or go above and beyond in knowledge sharing. Some examples of this focus behaviour include but are not limited to: ■ Creation of new knowledge that advances a Community of Practice. ■ Development of a new training program that helps reduce injury rates.

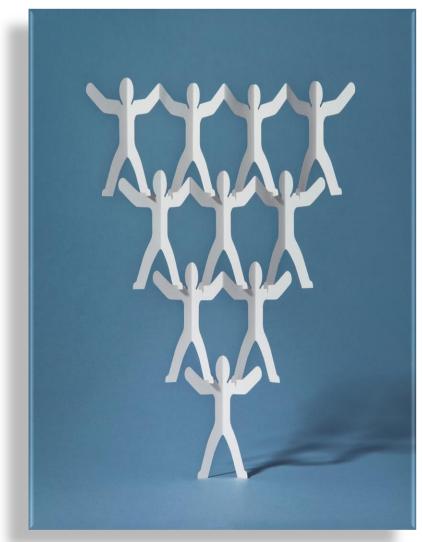# Roles and Responsibilities

Vice-Chancellor and Level 1 members

- Drive an engaged workforce by championing safety recognition which reinforces the University's strategy and values.

Faculty Executive Directors, Divisional Operations Directors, Heads of School and Senior Leaders

- Ensure fair, consistent and transparent processes for recognising proactive safety behaviours.
- Drive recognition efforts and model the culture of safety recognition in Faculties and Divisions.

Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders

- Encourage staff to recognise proactive safety behaviours demonstrated by colleagues and team members and promote a spirit of recognition in their teams.
- Make recommendations for staff to be recognised at Faculty/Divisional and University level.

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Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Provide personal and meaningful recognition of proactive safety behaviours demonstrated by colleagues.

Safety Programs Team

- Ensure that safety recognition is included in Health and Safety Plans.
- Provide guidance and support to Faculties and Divisions on safety recognition.
- Oversee the use of safety recognition initiatives and regularly review the program to enable best practice.

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Ideas for Safety Recognition

The Safety Recognition Program sets out the opportunity for different types of recognition.

Peer-to-Peer Recognition

All staff are encouraged to provide personalised and meaningful recognition of safety behaviours demonstrated by colleagues. Some examples of peer-based recognition include:

- Offering to buy a coffee for your colleague
- Leaving their favourite chocolate bar on their desk
- Giving a hand-written thank-you note
- Taking the time to stop and provide feedback on their proactive safety behaviour
- Sending an email to thank them for the value they added to the safety culture and copying their manager in the email
- Setting up a quick team huddle with peers when someone has demonstrated a proactive safety behaviour
- Creating a message board in a common area such as in the Staff Breakout Room or on MS Teams, where staff can share safety recognition that they receive or shout out something a colleague has done. Copies of emails, thank-you card and other forms of recognition can be pinned or posted on the message board.
- Vouching for a peer's skills and providing endorsements on LinkedIn by recognising their contribution to safety culture.

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Ideas for Safety Recognition

Manager/Supervisor/Team Leader-led Recognition

Recognition provided by a Manager, Supervisor, or Team Leader shows appreciation for staff efforts and can increase staff morale leading to increased engagement levels and improved safety performance. Some suggestions for Manager/Supervisor/Team Leader-led recognition include the following:

- Scheduling time during regular team meetings to call out team and individual's proactive safety behaviour
- Sending a thank-you email or card to acknowledge staff contributions to safety
- Preparing a certificate or letter of appreciation
- Holding a special morning or afternoon tea to acknowledge safety contributions
- Arranging for the team to go out to lunch to acknowledge team's safety contribution
- Acknowledging proactive safety behaviours with an article in the local work area's newsletter, Yammer, the monthly Safety Newsletter, or other University-wide communication channels
- Implementing a team member's safety idea or proposal and highlighting this via an all-team email.
- Encouraging the team member to attend training that sets a clear career progression path
- Providing mentoring and work shadowing opportunities
- Providing an opportunity to take on additional responsibilities which are personally rewarding.

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Ideas for Safety Recognition

Faculty/Divisional Recognition

Faculty and Divisional level recognition of proactive safety behaviours can be provided in many ways. In addition to any of the previously-mentioned examples, recognition provided from the Faculty/Divisional level can also include:
- A special mention or presentation at Level 2 and/or Level 3 Health & Safety Committee Meetings or Town Halls
- Arranging for the Dean or Division Lead to personally phone or email or visit the individual or team and acknowledge their contribution in person
- Providing end-of-year award by Faculty/Division to acknowledge proactive safety behaviours and safety achievements.

University-wide Recognition

University level recognition that acknowledges the achievements of staff who demonstrate proactive safety behaviours can include:
- A special mention in the monthly Safety Newsletter, Yammer and other University-wide communication channels
- Presenting safety recognition awards to individuals and to teams during the annual Safety and Wellbeing Month in October
- Recognising the individual or team's proactive safety behaviour and safety achievement in Level 1 meetings
- Nominating the individual or team for the Vice-Chancellor Awards for their safety achievement.

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Safety Recognition Tips

- **Notice how team members and peers go "above and beyond" for health & safety:** The first step of meaningful recognition is a receptive mindset. Pay attention to safety behaviours and make note of moments and positive attitudes that deserve recognition.
- **Do it frequently and make it timely:** Offer recognition regularly so that noticing and appreciating staff contributions becomes a habit. Timely recognition can greatly impact job performance and workplace culture.
- **Consider recognition preferences:** Ensure that the type or form of recognition is tailored to the staff member by considering their recognition preferences. For example, some people enjoy public recognition and others prefer private recognition or a simple thank you note.
- **Make it meaningful:** Recognition should happen regularly but needs to be valued, personalised, authentic and genuine rather than a tick-a-box initiative.
- **Staff recognition should reflect equity:** Be aware of perceptions of favouritism or bias. Make sure that your recognition process is transparent and that you'll be able to apply the same level of recognition for any staff who accomplishes a similar achievement.
- **Recognition is commensurate with the safety achievement:** The level of the recognition being offered is proportionate to the behaviour, achievement or impact on the University.

Well done you!

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Templates and tools

The following templates are available and can be downloaded from the Safety website.

- E-Note Templates (Thank you/Congratulations/Great job)
- Safety Award Certificate Templates
- Safety Recognition – Special Mention Form

If you have any questions about the Safety Recognition Program and this toolkit, or would like any clarification, please email: safety@unsw.edu.au

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