

AFTER HOURS OR WORKING ALONE (AHWA) | GUIDELINE

1 PURPOSE

To ensure adequate health and safety risk controls are established where workers work outside the Macquarie University (MQ) core working hours; or work alone at any time.

Policy hierarchy	MQ Health and Safety Policy
Other resources	MQ Health and Safety Wiki , MQ Safety at Work MQ Research – Ethics, Integrity and Policies
Associated documents	FSE AHWA Approval Form (Appendix A) FSE Shutdown Period Access Request Form (Appendix B) FSE AHWA Approval Flowchart (Appendix C)

2 SCOPE

This guideline applies to all MQ Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) workers, and may be used to control the activities of workers, students, honorary associates, visitors and others at MQ FSE workplaces or undertaking MQ FSE endorsed activities.

The [Core Business Hours Policy](#) establishes the minimum levels of support provided for the safe operation of Macquarie University teaching, research, support services and facilities. All MQ facilities are covered by the [Facilities Usage Policy](#).

This guideline does not address:

- Fieldwork: See [Staff Portal - Fieldwork](#)
- Issues of flexi-time, overtime, or other paid work matters
- Contractors: See [Contractors](#) website

3 DEFINITIONS

Commonly defined terms are located in the University [Glossary](#). The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Procedure.

Core hours:

Office Work, Teaching and Chiropractic clinics: Core business hours for office work and teaching (including practical sessions in teaching laboratories) are defined as 7am-10pm on weekdays and 8am-6pm on weekends except public holidays and the University shutdown period (typically 25 December to 1 January). For staff teaching classes timetabled to conclude at 10pm the after-hours period is 11pm-7am.

Research Laboratory / Workshop Work: Core business hours for research laboratory / workshop work, given resourcing and supervision requirements, are defined as 7am-7pm on weekdays only, except public holidays and the University shutdown period (typically 25 December to 1 January).

No access will be granted to FSE laboratories during the MQ shutdown period (typically 25 December to 1 January inclusive). Exceptions (for maintenance, animal care, etc.) must be approved in advance by the Executive Dean (or delegate) – see 4.5 and Appendix B.

After-hours:

Office Work, Teaching and Chiropractic clinics: Defined as 10pm-7am on weekdays and 6pm-8am on weekends; and all public holidays and the University shutdown period.

Research Laboratory / Workshop Work: Defined as 7pm-7am Monday to Friday; and all of Saturday, Sunday, public holidays and the University shutdown period. *Note: your work area may have hours that differ from the above period. You need to consult with the manager of the area to determine the after-hours period.*

Buddy system: means pairing a group of workers together to ensure that every worker is being observed by another worker in order to provide an endangered worker with immediate assistance. The buddy system requires an adequate level of competency by both workers on the agreed activities being carried out.

Working alone: Means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location or nature of the work. Assistance from other people includes rescue, medical assistance and emergency services. This may be on or off MQ campus.

Low risk workplaces: MQ workplaces where low risk activities are undertaken or the workplace is designated as low risk. The risk classification may change depending on the risk controls applied at different times e.g. a workplace classified as medium risk during normal work hours may be classified as low risk when activities are restricted by isolating medium or high risk equipment.

Medium risk workplaces: MQ workplaces where medium risk activities are undertaken or the workplace is designated as medium risk. This includes but is not limited to PC2 and BC2 laboratories, animal holding facilities, class 3B laser laboratories, low level radiation laboratories, workshops, construction sites, and general chemistry laboratories. *Note- These areas may become high risk workplaces when accessed after-hours or alone.*

High risk workplaces: MQ workplaces where high risk activities are undertaken or the workplace is designated as high risk. This includes but is not limited to medium level radiation laboratories, class 4 laser laboratories, and high risk workshops which operate equipment or machinery capable of inflicting serious injury or death. *Note- These areas may become very high risk workplaces when accessed after-hours or alone.*

Local unit: The Department/School/Unit responsible for the supervision of the worker, student or visitor undertaking the work.

Supervisor: For Health & Safety purposes, any worker who oversees and directs others in the workplace and has others reporting to them.

Work: Any activity undertaken by a worker on behalf of MQ.

Worker: A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), including work as: an employee, contractor or subcontractor, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, or an employee of a labour hire company assigned to work for a PCBU, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a student gaining work experience, volunteer.

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Responsibility for managing after hours or alone work:

4.1.1 Head of Department/Dean of School or Business Unit

The Head of the work area is responsible for ensuring that there is a local After Hours or Working Alone protocol if there is a possibility that people in their workplace may require after-

hours access or to work alone at any time of the day. The local After Hours or Working Alone protocol may include sign in/out log-books for specific areas or facilities.

4.1.2 Supervisors

All Supervisors who authorise after hours access to a MQ workplace are responsible for the implementation of the local After Hours or Working Alone protocol.

4.1.3 Workers

Workers are required to follow the local After Hours or Working Alone protocol and any other additional requirements set by the work area. They are responsible for taking all reasonably practicable steps to ensure their own safety and security when working after hours or alone.

4.2 Risk management

All risk management must be documented and include any additional controls and requirements of the after hours or alone work. This may be done in the [Assessments, SWI and Procedures](#) section of the MQ H&S Wiki or the After Hours or Working Alone Approval Form (Appendix 1). Risk controls must be reviewed on a regular basis, when new information becomes available, if there is an incident, or when something changes in relation to the work.

Use the FSE After Hours or Working Alone Approval Form (Appendix 1) as a guide for recording, approving and managing working after hours or alone. Use the [Assessments, SWI and Procedures](#) section of the MQ H&S Wiki to assist with identifying the level of risk for each hazard in the task or process e.g. low, medium, high, very high (extreme). This rating is used to determine:

- whether approval can be granted
- the level of supervision required
- additional support/communication requirements
- the type of approval required
- any additional training or controls

The following issues must be considered as part of the risk management process for any after hours or alone work:

Competency

- Competency and level of experience, skill and training of the individual/s
- For after-hours work: the number of people, and their level of experience, working in the area (this might vary on a day-to-day basis)
- Normal level of supervision required for workers to complete the task or process
- Whether the worker is able to make sound judgements about safety

Work process / activity

- Whether the substance, equipment or work is too hazardous or dangerous to be used or undertaken after hours or alone
- Consequences of unattended experiments or equipment
- How long it will take to carry out the task
- Possibility of exposure to violence or aggressive members of the public
- The time of day the activity will be undertaken
- Consequences of a vehicle breakdown
- The risk level of the activity (see 4.3)
- Whether fatigue is likely to increase risk

Communication

- Access to a method of communication (landline phone, mobile phone, or duress alarm);
- Ability of communication equipment to work in all foreseeable situations
- Log-books or access records to identify the last known location of an individual in the event of an emergency/incident
- Use of Lone Worker Tag if system in place within the area

Workplace layout and design, including:

- Controlled access using physical barriers or access restrictions
- Access of facilities, including bathrooms and kitchens within secured areas
- Sufficient lighting and other measures to ensure personal security
- Monitored CCTV

Emergency assistance

- The possible increase in risk because of reduced immediate assistance
- Security in the area where work is being undertaken
- Any pre-existing medical condition of the worker
- The level of MQ emergency/security personnel assistance available after-hours in the event of an incident;
- The journey to and from where the work is being conducted and the mode of transport

4.2.1 Assessing competency of the worker

The supervisor must determine that the worker working after hours or alone is competent to undertake the work. Evidence of competency includes:

- direct observation
- examining the individuals training records such as for on-the-job training, training in Risk Assessments (RA), Safe Work Instructions (SWIs) and/or Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for particular processes or equipment, formal training courses, licenses
- results of competency assessments (technical and behavioural)
- appropriate answers to process-related questions
- review list of authorised persons for equipment

4.2.2 Student supervision

Coursework students – undergraduate and postgraduate - must not work after hours or alone unless the activity is:

- purely administrative in nature e.g. work in computer laboratories, study areas, libraries
- in areas of equivalent low risk as determined by assessment of the risks
- supervised by a competent person authorised by the Head of the work area

Higher Degree Research students may be authorised to work after hours or alone following thorough risk assessment in which the:

- level of supervision is determined, and consideration is given to the nature of the work, the students' level of training and experience, and degree of assessed competence
- level of supervision is documented in the risk management plan and complies with the relevant local After Hours and Working Alone protocol
- level of supervision might range from very little (e.g. occasional check-ins) to fully supervised.

4.3 Approvals

Unless the work has been deemed low risk, all after hours or alone work must be approved within the existing Health and Safety Management System. An approvals flowchart is provided at Appendix C.

Before authorising a worker to work after hours or alone, the work must be approved. This can only be done if:

1. Thorough Risk Management has been completed for the work – Risk Assessment, Safe Work Instructions, etc – with documentation reviewed and revised to include any changed circumstances for after hours or alone work
2. The worker has received all appropriate training
3. The worker has been assessed as competent for the activity
4. An appropriate level of supervision has been set and/or agreed communication process to ensure worker is contactable
5. There is compliance with enterprise agreements

The approval may be for a one-off event, for a specific period, or ongoing.
 The FSE Working Alone or After-hours Approval Form (Appendix A) is a tool that may be used to obtain approval, and can be modified by the local area as needed.

Suggested standard types of approval and supervision for work after hours or alone STAFF & Higher Degree Research Students (see 4.2.2 for HDR supervision requirements) <i>Note: this table provides the minimum risk level; the risk increases for anyone not using the facility regularly</i>		
After-hours/ Alone Risk Level	Approval required	Example(s)
Low	No approval necessary if within opening hours of building/office space.	Administrative-type work e.g. office, library, study area or computer laboratory MQ Observatory minor configuration changes (eg filter or camera change)
Medium	Staff - Approval is necessary but no supervision is required. HDR student – Approval by the Academic Supervisor is required. Competency will be considered on a case by case basis. Depending on an assessment of risk of the experiments as well as experience and competency, a buddy system may be required. • The operation of class 3B lasers will require approval through the MQ Laser Safety Officer. Visit the Laser Safety website. Approval by Head of Department/School/Unit (or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative-type work outside opening hours of building/office space • MQ Observatory major configuration changes (eg telescope or counterweight removal of reconfiguration) – after hours only if necessary • Work with chemicals assessed as low risk e.g. buffers in a lab environment where access to materials or equipment of greater risk is prevented • Use of biological materials, including RG1 – RG2 microorganisms and genetically modified organisms in the appropriate laboratory (general, OGTR certified or DAWR regulated). • Feeding and watering of animals, where the worker does not enter pens or handle the animals • Sample deposit and retrieval from cryogenic storage rooms with air monitoring alarms and no handling of cryogenic substance. Buddy system is mandatory for this activity • Work with small volumes of hazardous substances where the risk is assessed medium • Work in class 3B laser laboratories
High	Staff - Approval and supervision/buddy system required** HDR – Approval and supervision required • The competency of the worker is considered on a case by case basis. • Supervision is by a competent, authorised person who is present at the workplace. • The risks must be controlled to the lowest level achievable. • The operation of class 4 lasers will require approval through the MQ Laser Safety Officer. Visit the Laser Safety website. Approval by Head of Department/School/Unit (or higher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in class 4 laser laboratories • Handling a large animal / entering a pen • Handling venomous or infectious animals • Work with high risk power tools • Entry into -20 (and lower) freezer rooms • High Risk Hazards listed in AS2243.1 (see section 4.4 below) as long as, when risk assessed they are not assessed as 'Very High (Extreme)' risk, according to the Activity Safety Risk Assessment template in the Assessments, SWI and Procedures section of the MQ H&S Wiki
Very High (Extreme)	No approval can be given. Work is prohibited after hours or alone	• Any hazards or activities conducted after hours or while working alone that have been rated 'Very High (Extreme)', in accordance with the Activity Safety Risk Assessment template in the Assessments, SWI and Procedures section of the MQ H&S Wiki, is prohibited and no approval can be given, such as handling of cryogenic substances.

**An exemption to the requirement for direct supervision may be possible for staff only, subject to a risk assessment for the specific activity and the competency of the individual worker for that activity is taken into account.

4.4 List of High Risk Hazards (AS2243.1)

High-risk hazard areas or activities, that may be encountered, include the following:

- Operating equipment or machinery, including workshop machinery, capable of inflicting serious injury, such as chainsaws, firearms, lathes and power saws.
- Handling venomous reptiles, insects, arthropods or fish.
- Working with large animals other than for the purpose of feeding or observation.
- Working with, or near, toxic or corrosive substances where there is a significant risk of exposure to the substance, taking into account the volume and concentration used. Access and work in the Acid Leaching Facility [ALF] in E5A032 requires specialist training, induction and permission from Palaeobiology Lab Leader. Work in the ALF is generally not allowed after hours unless prior approval is granted. Hydrofluoric Acid CANNOT be used in the ALF out of work hours.
- Using apparatus that could result in explosion, implosion, or the release of high energy fragments or significant amounts of toxic or environmentally damaging hazardous material.
- Climbing towers or high ladders.
- Working with exposed energised electrical or electronic systems with nominal voltages exceeding 50 V AC or 120 V ripple-free DC NOTE: These limits are for dry, indoor conditions and a more conservative approach should be taken in other conditions.
- Working with radionuclides requiring a high level laboratory in accordance with AS 2243.4 for Australia and the National Radiation Laboratory Code of safe practice for the use of unsealed radioactive materials, NRL C1, for New Zealand.
- Operating lasers of Class 4.
- Working in environments not at atmospheric pressure.
- Anything else that has the potential for causing serious injury or death.

For other area-specific hazards consult your workplace hazard and risk register.

4.5 University Shutdown Period Approvals

The FSE Shutdown Period Approval Form (Appendix B)* must be completed in advance for all access requests during the MQ Shutdown period (eg 25 December to 1 January inclusive). If approved, access will be processed by FSE Building Services cc MQ Security.

*Note that care of living organisms in the Department of Biological Sciences have a bulk approval process that is coordinated by the Department Manager in early December – any such Biological Sciences enquiries should be directed to Sharyon O'Donnell.

4.6 Compliance with enterprise agreements

The supervisor and worker will ensure that any requirements of the applicable enterprise agreement are complied with when work is undertaken out of core business hours (such as maximum daily hours of work, shift penalties, meal allowance, overtime or time in lieu of overtime etc.). View the MQ [Enterprise Agreements](#).

5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- UNSW Sydney
- University of Western Australia
- Monash University
- University of Technology Sydney

6 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- Australian/New Zealand Standards
 - 2243.1 Safety in Laboratories, Planning and operational aspects
 - 2243.3 Safety in Laboratories, Microbiological safety and containment
 - 2243.4 Safety in Laboratories, Ionizing radiations
- Managing the Work Environment and Facilities Code of Practice
- Regulation 48 of Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- SafeWork NSW: *Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities*
- Worksafe WA: *Guidance Note – Working Alone*

7 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [MQ Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [MQ Safety at Work](#)
- [MQ Facilities Usage Policy](#)
- [MQ Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)
- [MQ Core Business Hours Policy](#)
- [MQ Health and Safety Wiki](#)
- [MQ Code of Conduct](#)

8 NOTES

7.1	Contact Officer	<i>Operations Manager, Faculty of Science and Engineering</i>
7.2	Implementation Officer	<i>General Manager, Faculty of Science and Engineering</i>
7.3	Approval Authority	<i>Executive Dean, Faculty of Science and Engineering</i>
7.4	Date Approved	<i>May 2019</i>
7.5	Date for Review	<i>March 2020</i>
7.6	Documents Superseded by this Procedure	<i>None</i>
7.7	Amendment History	

FSE After Hours or Working Alone | Approval Form

- Working After Hours
 Working Alone

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Note: Read the [FSE After Hours or Working Alone Procedure](#) prior to completion; refer to section 4.2 and 4.3 for risk level guidance.

Office Use: Risk Assessments Reviewed? Yes No Date of Approval:

 / /

Date of Next Review:

 / /

Person(s) covered by this approval: (attach list if more space required)

Name	Position	Telephone & Email	Signature	Date	Approval duration/conditions <i>e.g up to 10pm weekdays until 1/5/19</i>

Location(s) where work will be conducted (if working in multiple locations, authorisation must be obtained from ALL location supervisors)

Location 1:	Name of Location 1 Supervisor:	Approval Signature:	Date:
Location 2:	Name of Location 2 Supervisor:	Approval Signature:	Date:
Name of Supervisor:	Position:	Approval Signature:	Date:
Name of Head of Department:	Department:	Approval Signature (if required):	Date:
Conditions of approval:			

FSE After Hours and Working Alone | Approval Form

Day(s) and time(s) approval is requested (Tick/check all that apply and add times)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays 7pm-10pm period: Approval requested from _____ pm to _____ pm	End date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays 10pm-7am period: Approval requested from _____ pm to _____ am/pm	End date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekends/public holidays 8am-6pm period: Approval requested from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm	End date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekends/public holidays 6pm-8am period: Approval requested from _____ pm to _____ am/pm	End date: _____
Equipment, substances, areas that can be accessed or used:	
Summary of the tasks that can be undertaken:	
Tasks that cannot be undertaken: <i>Any tasks not explicitly mentioned above are excluded from this approval</i>	
Specific controls and additional precautions:	
Communication methods (e.g. Call-back or Buddy System) and management plan (what is the action plan when "no call back" is received?)	Call-back or Buddy contact details:
Emergency shutdown procedures:	After Hours Emergency Contacts
Safe Work Instructions, Safe Operating Procedures, Risk Management Forms <input type="checkbox"/> Attached – Provide list of documents attached here:	

* Refer to 4.2.2 of the FSE After Hours or Working Alone Procedure for information on student supervision requirements

FSE Shutdown Period Access Request | Approval Form

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No access will be granted to FSE laboratories during the MQ shutdown period (typically 25 December to 1 January inclusive). Exceptions (for maintenance, animal care, etc.) must be approved in advance by the Executive Dean (or delegate). Shutdown dates are published on the MQ website in November.

Note: Read the [FSE After Hours or Working Alone Guideline](#) prior to completion; refer to section 4.2 and 4.3 for risk level guidance.

Submit completed form to meredith.lowe@mq.edu.au by COB Friday 13 December 2019

Date of Request:

Person(s) covered by this approval: (attach list if additional space required)

Name	Position	Contact Number	Person's supervisor	Approval duration/conditions

Why is access required?

Person submitting this request

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Position: _____ Department/School: _____

Head of Department/Dean of School Endorsement

I endorse this request and confirm that I have reviewed relevant Risk Assessments, Safe Work Instructions, Safe Operating Procedures, etc

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Location where the work is being conducted	
Equipment, substances, areas that can be accessed or used	
Summary of the tasks that can be undertaken	
Tasks that cannot be undertaken	
Specific controls and additional precautions	
Communication methods, eg Call-back or Buddy System	Communication contact details
Emergency shutdown procedures	
After Hours Emergency Contacts	
Executive Dean (or delegate) approval	
Signature: _____ Date: _____ Restrictions (if any): _____	
Administration – 1. Applicant advised of outcome 2. If approved, access details submitted to MQ Security <input type="checkbox"/> Date: _____	

After Hours or Working Alone Approval Flowchart

Risk Management: All risk management must be documented and include any additional controls and requirements of the after hours or alone work. This may be done in the [Assessments, SWI and Procedures](#) section of the MQ H&S Wiki or the After Hours or Working Alone Approval Form (Appendix 1). Risk controls must be reviewed on a regular basis.

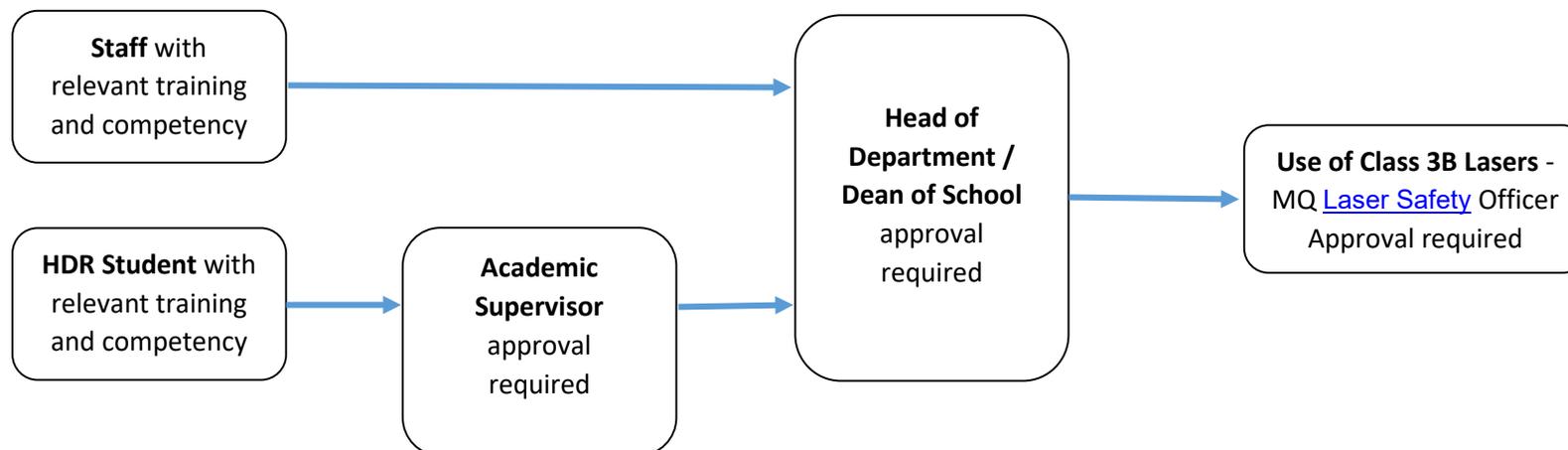


Risk Assessment: Use the [Assessments, SWI and Procedures](#) section of the MQ H&S Wiki to assist with identifying the level of risk for each hazard in the task or process e.g. low, medium, high, very high (extreme).

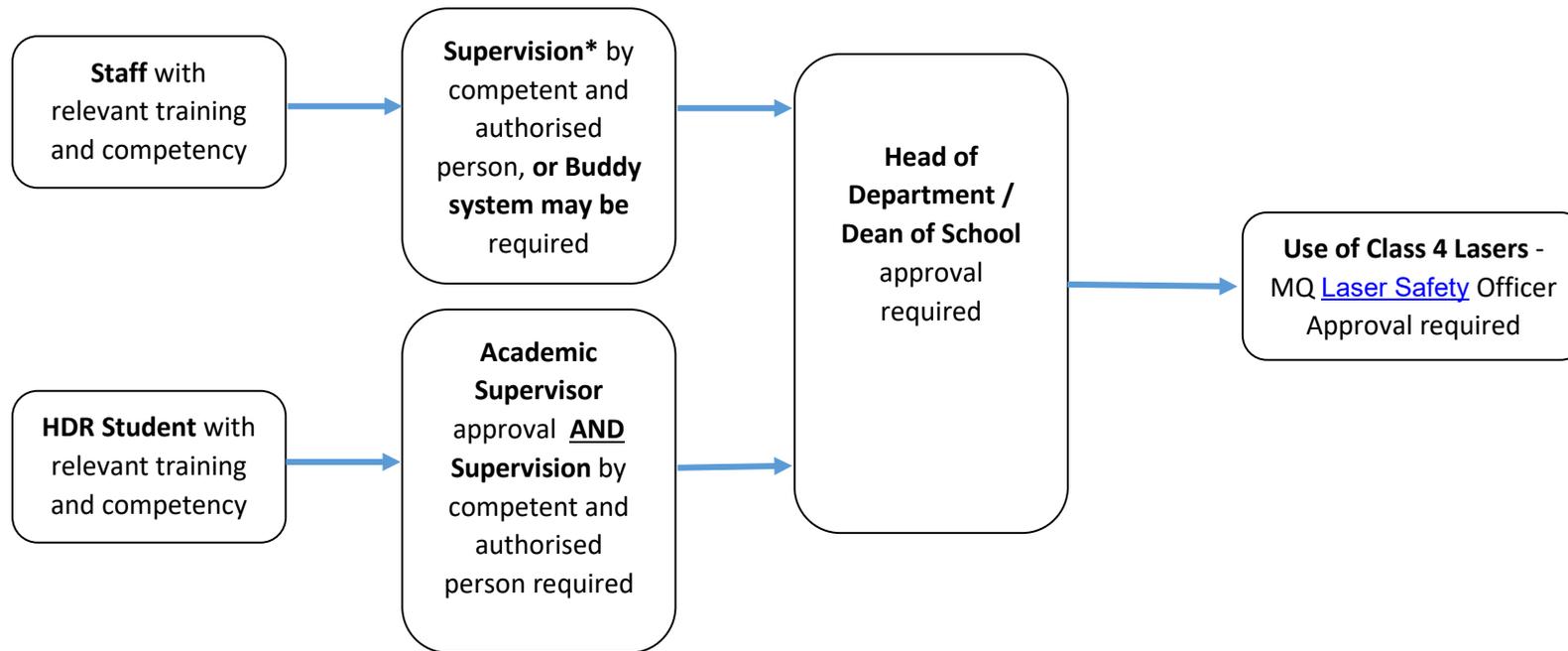


As per 4.2 of the FSE After Hours and Working Alone Procedure, consider the following as part of the **risk management process** for any after hours or alone work: Competency, Work process / activity, Communication, Workplace layout and design, Emergency assistance, Worker competency and training

Medium Risk Activity – after hours or working alone (excludes MQ Shutdown Period – typically 24 December to 1 January inclusive)



High Risk Activity – after hours or working alone (excludes MQ Shutdown period – typically 24 December to 1 January inclusive)



**An exemption to the requirement for direct supervision may be possible for staff only, subject to a risk assessment for the specific activity and the competency of the individual worker for that activity is taken into account.*

Very High (Extreme) Activity – after hours or working alone (excludes MQ Shutdown Period – typically 24 December to 1 January inclusive)

