

MCN After-Hours Access and Work Policy  
PQMS1-MCN-POL-0032-V5



## 1. PURPOSE

1.1 The Melbourne Centre for Nanofabrication (MCN) is committed to ensuring a safe and secure environment for all individuals working in its laboratories and cleanrooms.

1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to establish a formal governance framework for access to and work within MCN facilities outside standard business hours.

1.2 After-hours work presents elevated risk due to reduced staffing levels, limited immediate technical support, reduced emergency response capability, and increased likelihood of lone working.

1.3 This Policy ensures that all after-hours activities:

- (a) Are operationally justified;
- (b) Are formally risk assessed in the specific context of reduced support conditions;
- (c) Demonstrate that risks are reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable (ALARP); and
- (d) Are subject to documented approval and oversight.

1.4 This policy aligns with **Victorian and Australian workplace health and safety laws**, including:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) – Requires all workplaces to provide a safe environment, even outside normal working hours.
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic) – Mandates risk management, particularly for hazardous substances, lone workers, and emergency preparedness.
- WorkSafe Victoria Guidelines – Enforce risk assessments, fatigue management, and supervision for after-hours work.
- Fair Work Act 2009 – Covers safe working hours and duty-of-care obligations.
- Dangerous Goods Act 1985 (Vic) – Regulates the handling and storage of hazardous substances.
- Safe Work Australia Codes of Practice – Provides best practices for laboratory safety, chemical handling, and emergency response.

## 2. SCOPE

2.1 This Policy applies to all individuals accessing MCN facilities outside standard business hours, including but not limited to:

- (a) Staff;
- (b) Residents;
- (c) Academic and Industry users;
- (d) Contractors and Service Engineers

2.2 This Policy also applies to supervisors, managers, and home organisations endorsing or authorising after-hours work.

2.3 Standard Business Hours are defined as 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Any time outside these hours constitutes After-Hours.

2.4 After-hours access does not apply during MCN and University closures (e.g. Public Holidays, maintenance closures etc.).

## 3. RISK PHILOSOPHY AND POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 MCN adopts a precautionary risk philosophy. Safety, regulatory compliance, and effective risk control are prioritised over convenience, productivity, scheduling pressure, or personal preference.

3.2 After-hours work is outside standard operating conditions and is considered an exception rather than routine practice.

3.3 Where an activity can reasonably be conducted during Standard Business Hours, it must be conducted during those hours.

3.4 Convenience-based factors (including travel time, traffic, childcare arrangements, or competing professional commitments) would not ordinarily constitute sufficient operational justification.

3.5 Risk should not be transferred into higher-risk time periods unless there is clear, well-considered, and appropriately documented operational justification.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy:

4.1 **After-Hours** means any time outside Standard Business Hours.

4.2 **ALARP (As Low As Reasonably Practicable)** refers to the principle that risk must be reduced so far as is reasonably practicable, taking into account the likelihood of harm, the severity of harm, knowledge of hazards, and the availability and suitability of controls.

4.3 **High-Risk Activity** means any activity involving hazardous materials or systems that could cause injury requiring assistance or treatment.

4.4 **Home Organisation** means the institution, employer, or enrolling body responsible for the user's employment, enrolment, supervision, and duty of care.

4.5 **Residents** means users with a current residency and are based at the MCN

4.6 **Supervisor** means the academic, managerial, or organisational representative with direct line-management or supervisory responsibility for the user.

4.7 **User** means any individual granted access to MCN facilities.

## 5. GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

5.1 MCN is responsible for providing and maintaining a safe workplace and safe systems of work within its facilities.

5.2 Users remain under the employment, enrolment, and supervisory authority of their Home Organisation.

5.3 Supervisors and Home Organisations retain primary duty of care obligations for the safety, wellbeing, supervision, and conduct of their personnel.

5.4 Approval by MCN for after-hours work does not transfer, dilute, or assume supervisory or institutional accountability.

5.5 MCN reserves the right to:

- (a) Refuse, suspend, or revoke after-hours access;
- (b) Impose additional controls or conditions;
- (c) Require supplementary documentation or independent review; and
- (d) Audit approved activities and associated risk assessments.

## 6. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

### 6.1 Operational Justification

6.1.1 An operational justification should be clearly articulated, demonstrating that the activity cannot reasonably be conducted during Standard Business Hours.

6.1.2 Lack of planning, scheduling preference, or personal convenience would not generally be considered sufficient justification.

## 6.2 Risk Assessment Requirements

6.2.1 All after-hours activities must be supported by a documented risk assessment specific to the proposed activity.

6.2.2 The risk assessment must:

- (a) Identify all reasonably foreseeable hazards;
- (b) Evaluate risks in the context of reduced on-site staffing and emergency response capability;
- (c) Address lone working considerations;
- (d) Specify control measures sufficient to achieve ALARP; and
- (e) Define the precise scope of approved activities.

6.2.3 The risk assessment must be reviewed and approved by the User's Supervisor and responsible Manager.

6.2.4 Where required by the Home Organisation's governance framework, the risk assessment must also be approved by the relevant Head of Department, Centre, or Organisation prior to submission to MCN.

6.2.5 Submission to MCN constitutes formal confirmation that all required organisational approvals have been obtained.

## 6.3 Mandatory check-in and Physical Access

After-hours entry to MCN is conditional upon a dual-step verification process: users must complete a Sine Pro digital check-in in parallel with a personal security fob scan..

### 6.3.1 Sine Pro Check-In Requirements

All individuals must check in via the Sine Pro kiosk or application immediately upon arrival at the facility. Individuals must check out prior to leaving the facility.

### 6.3.2 Physical Access and Fob Security

- (a) Users must only access the facility using their own **individually issued security fob**.
- (b) Every individual entering the facility must scan their own fob; "tailgating" or following another user into an area without scanning is strictly prohibited.
- (c) Users must not provide access or lend their security fob to any other person, regardless of that person's perceived authorization level.
- (d) Unauthorized provision of access to others is considered a major security and safety violation.

## 6.4 Unattended After-Hours Instrument Use

Where a process is fully automated and does not require a user to remain on-site, After-Hours access is not required. MCN Instrument Managers can issue After-Hours Instrument Licences where needed.

## 7. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

7.1 The following activities are prohibited after-hours under all circumstances:

- (a) Use of hydrofluoric acid (HF), buffered HF (BOE) or Piranha solution;
- (b) Use of pyrophoric or explosive materials;
- (c) Handling concentrated acids, bases or strong oxidisers;
- (d) Use of carcinogens, mutagens, toxic or highly volatile substances;
- (e) Use or transfer of liquid nitrogen;
- (f) Procedures involving electrical hazards;
- (g) Any activity classified by MCN as high-risk.

## 8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 8.1 Users

Users must:

- (a) Conduct only activities within the approved scope;
- (b) Comply with all MCN procedures and conditions of approval;
- (c) Cease work immediately if conditions deviate from the approved risk assessment;
- (d) Report all incidents or near misses as soon as practicable; and
- (e) Maintain emergency awareness and communication capability.

### 8.2 Supervisors and Home Organisations

Supervisors and Home Organisations must:

- (a) Exercise due diligence in evaluating after-hours requests;
- (b) Ensure personnel are competent and appropriately trained;
- (c) Ensure risk assessments are technically robust, fit for purpose and comply with ALARP principles;
- (d) Confirm hazards are adequately identified and controls are appropriate and effective;
- (e) Ensure organisational governance approvals are obtained where required; and
- (f) Accept accountability for the actions of their personnel.

Endorsement constitutes formal confirmation that these obligations have been satisfied.

## 9. WORKING ALONE

9.1 Working alone after-hours is strongly discouraged.

9.2 Where unavoidable, the risk assessment must explicitly address lone working controls, including communication protocols and emergency escalation procedures.

## 10. EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS

10.1 Users must be familiar with emergency exits, emergency equipment, and shutdown procedures.

10.2 In an emergency, Users must contact Monash Emergency (9905 3333) and call 000 where required.

10.3 All incidents must be reported to MCN as soon as practicable.

## 11. NON-COMPLIANCE

11.1 Non-compliance with this Policy or approved conditions constitutes a governance breach.

11.2 Consequences may include:

- (a) Immediate suspension or revocation of access;
- (b) Suspension of instrument licences;
- (c) Mandatory retraining;

## 12. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- MCN General Conduct Policy
- MCN Security Policy
- Monash OHS Policies and Procedures
- MCN Facility Manual

## 13. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND CONTROL INFORMATION

DOCUMENT HISTORY			PQMS1-MCN-POL-0001-V1
Version no.	Date of Issue	Reviewed by: name	Amendments
1	05/08/2015	Bernie Orelup	Created to PQMS format
2	09/05/2019	Bernie Orelup	Created for GRC
3	03/08/2022	Bernie Orelup	Minor Corrections
4	30/06/2025	John Zhu	Date of Review
5	28/04/2026	Michael Imsic	Major revision to align with Victorian and Australian workplace health and safety laws