



# Guidelines for managers, supervisors and employees

## **What is a smoke-free campus?**

Smoking will not be permitted on any USQ campus from 31 May 2018. This extends to all property, including:

- all campuses
- all owned or leased buildings, research facilities, grounds, ovals, parks, car parks, undercover areas
- in all USQ owned or leased vehicles

There are no designated smoking areas. Employees, students, contractors and visitors will need to move to an area off-campus if they wish to smoke.

## **Who is affected by the new smoke-free initiative?**

All employees, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors who come on to USQ campuses will need to adhere to the [Code of Conduct Policy](#), [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#) and [Student Code of Conduct Policy](#). This also includes members of the general public walking through our campuses.

## **Why are we going smoke-free?**

By going smoke-free, USQ is supporting the health of our students, employees, contractors and visitors. Evidence shows that smoke-free environments support smokers to quit and reduce the number of people taking up smoking. This is part of a broader commitment by all Queensland Universities to provide healthier smoke-free environments, and supports the USQ Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

We also have a legal responsibility to provide a safe workplace and to protect employees, students, contractors and visitors



from the serious health risks associated with exposure to second-hand smoke.

We recognise that our employees, students, contractors and visitors have a personal choice to smoke, but we also recognise the right for those employees and students who do not smoke to work and study in a smoke-free environment.

### **What support is there for employees and students to quit smoking?**

With the right tools and support, quitting smoking is possible and can be one of the most life-changing achievements a person can make.

The health of employees and students is important to USQ. There are a range of support options to assist staff and students who would like to stop smoking.

### **How is the smoke-free initiative being communicated?**

Communicating USQ's smoke-free initiative is important and a variety of methods will be used to raise awareness within the USQ community, including:

- signage
- smoke-free materials such as posters
- social media, bulletin items, signature blocks and emails
- pre-arrival information for new employees and students, as well as information via induction and orientation programs, and relevant University events.



## **How is the smoke-free initiative being implemented?**

Any employees, students, contractors or visitors who are smoking on any USQ campus may be approached by others and reminded about our [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#).

Managers or supervisors can assist in implementing the initiative and encouraging compliance by:

- ensuring all employees are aware of the smoke-free initiative by discussing the [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#) at an appropriate opportunity (i.e. team meeting). Discussing the requirement to go off-campus to smoke and when doing so please consider personal safety, neighbouring properties and litter.
- ensuring employees are aware of support available to assist them to quit smoking

Academic employees can remind students at the first lecture of term with the PowerPoint slide.

## **Who is responsible for ensuring a smoke-free environment at USQ?**

Ensuring USQ has a smoke-free environment is everyone's responsibility - all students and employees share in the responsibility for helping USQ campuses to go smoke-free.

In creating a healthier University environment, USQ encourages all employees, students, contractors and visitors to be part of a positive culture change and to have respectful conversations with individuals smoking on campus about the smoke-free



initiative and its aim to improve the overall quality of life for everyone.

Anyone smoking on campus can expect to be reminded of the smoke-free initiative by others and requested to either discontinue smoking or to move off campus if they wish to continue smoking.

### **What can you do if you see someone smoking on campus?**

Transitioning to a smoke-free campus requires respect for others – both non-smokers and smokers. Everyone is encouraged to respectfully and politely remind smokers that they must go off-campus if they wish to smoke. This can be a difficult conversation to have. If you're unsure how to have the conversation with someone smoking, you can refer to the signs on-campus, or use the following tips as a guide:

- always remember that smoking is an addiction; sometimes smoking is associated with stress or an addiction to nicotine, so it's important to be mindful of this when explaining the initiative
- always assume the person is unaware of the change to a smoke-free campus
- smile, introduce yourself and politely tell the person that the University has gone smoke-free
- respectfully request the smoker to either put out the cigarette or move off-campus if they wish to keep smoking
- thank the person for complying with your request; if they become angry or confrontational, excuse yourself and report the incident to USQ security.



The University's approach to the smoke-free initiative is one of support for employees and students who want to stop smoking. However persistent failure to comply with the [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#) may be managed and dealt with under the relevant University policy or procedure and can result in disciplinary action or penalty.

For students, this includes the [USQ Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [USQ Student General Misconduct Procedure](#). For employees or other University members, this includes the [Code of Conduct Policy](#).

Thank you for helping to keep USQ's environment healthy.

### **Where can individuals go if they want to smoke?**

Anyone who wishes to smoke, will need to go off-campus. The [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#) outlines that smoking is not permitted on any USQ campus. This includes all buildings, grounds, gardens, residential areas, car parks and vehicles. Please check the campus maps for further clarification:

- USQ Toowoomba
- USQ Springfield
- USQ Ipswich.

Please note that previously allocated designated smoking areas have been removed from all USQ campuses from 31 May 2018.

When moving off-campus, smokers are asked to choose an area that is not remote, is safe and is well-lit at night.

## **How do I best manage employees who take excessive breaks to smoke?**

If a manager or supervisor finds that an employee is spending too much time away from their work, over and above their designated meal breaks, a proactive and supportive approach that encourages a change in behaviour is the first step. This can avoid matters potentially escalating to disciplinary action. Excessive breaks from work should be treated the same whether they are going for a smoke, coffee, or chatting to colleagues. An informal discussion with the individual regarding the concerns of the amount of time being taken away from their work is best. The provision of guidance on what is expected and potential consequences of continuing the behaviour can resolve the matter informally. It is also important to remind the employee of the support available to them to quit smoking. The checklist below provides a guide for approaching employees regarding excessive breaks to smoke.

Whilst it is the individual's choice to smoke, they have to manage this appropriately so it does not affect their work. In the situation where an employee continues to take excessive breaks to smoke, consult your manager to ascertain the next steps to guide your actions, and seek additional support from Human Resources if required.

### **Checklist for supervisors and managers**

1. Familiarise yourself with the Code of Conduct Policy, [Smoke Free Procedure \(currently under review\)](#) and human resource policies relating to designated meal breaks.
2. Address the issue promptly. Make a time to speak with the employee at the earliest opportunity to discuss the issue.



The aim is to address the issue at the local level early on to avoid escalation of disciplinary action and offer support that will encourage behaviour change.

3. Listen actively and encourage open discussion that gives the employee the opportunity to provide an explanation for their behaviour. The aim is to support a change of behaviour, so it is important to listen with empathy. However, it needs to be reinforced that smoking on-campus is not permitted and that they will need to move off-campus within their designated breaks to smoke.
4. Explain the potential consequences and advise that continuing behaviour could be considered a breach of [Code of Conduct Policy](#) and if the behaviour continues, disciplinary action under the Code of Conduct Policy could be considered.
5. Offer appropriate support and ensure that the individual understands where they are permitted to smoke (i.e. nearby areas off-campus). Advise the employee about the support available to manage or quit smoking.
6. Follow-up by scheduling a follow-up meeting to check that the matter is resolved, and take further action if required.

### **Further information**

For further information, please email [USQSafetyandWellbeing@usq.edu.au](mailto:USQSafetyandWellbeing@usq.edu.au).