

Ladder Safety Guidelines

1. General

- (i) All ladders used in the University shall be designed, constructed and maintained according to the NSW Construction Safety Act Regulations and relevant Australian Standards.
- (ii) Wherever ladders are required to provide access to places where people need to work, they shall be provided and be properly maintained.
- (iii) Only Industrial/Commercial category of ladders are authorised for use by UWS staff. Domestic category ladders are **NOT** to be used.

2. Placement

- (i) Ladders shall be placed so that each side rail (or stile) is on a level and firm footing and so that the ladder is rigid, stable and secure.
- (ii) The side rails (or stiles) shall **not** be supported by boxes, loose bricks, or other loose packing.
- (iii) No ladder shall be placed in front of a door opening towards the ladder unless the door is fastened open, locked or guarded.
- (iv) Wherever possible, ladders shall be used at such an angle that the horizontal distance from the foot of the ladder to the structure the ladder rests against is one quarter (1/4) of the length of the ladder.
- (v) Every ladder or run of ladders rising a vertical distance of 6m or over shall be provided with an intermediate landing place or places so that the vertical distance between any two successive landing places is not more than 6m.
- (vi) Ladders shall rise to a height of at least 1 metre above any landing place, or where a person must stand to work.
- (vii) Where a ladder passes through an opening in the floor of a landing place, the opening shall be as small as is reasonably practicable.

- (viii) A ladder placed such that its top end rests against a window frame shall have a board fixed to its top end. The size and position of this board shall ensure that the load to be carried by the ladder is evenly distributed over the window frame.
- (ix) Step ladders shall be set up on a level and firm footing. They shall not be stood on loose bricks or any other loose packing or surface.

3. Securing

- (i) Ladders shall be securely fixed at the top and foot so that they cannot move either from their top or from their bottom points of rest. If it is not possible to secure a ladder at both the top and bottom then it shall be securely fixed at the base. If this is not possible, then a person should stand at the base of the ladder and secure it manually against slipping.
- (ii) Ladders set up in public thoroughfares or other places (where there is potential for accidental collision with them) must be provided with effective means to prevent the displacement of the ladders due to collisions, for example, use of barricades.

4. Use

- (i) Only one person at a time may use or work from a single ladder.
- (ii) Always face the ladder when ascending or descending it.
- (iii) Do not use a ladder or step ladder if:
 - a) There is a missing or a weakened, broken or otherwise defective rung or tread, or a broken or defective stile, or
 - b) Any rung or tread depends for its support solely on nails, spikes, or other similar fixing device.
- (iv) Only a "trestle ladder" shall be used to support a plank upon which a person has to work.
- (v) Ladders made by fastening cleats across a single rail shall **not** be used.
- (vi) No metal ladder and no ladder reinforced with wire shall be used in the vicinity of any electrical conductor or of any electrified equipment or apparatus as such use may result in a person receiving an electric shock.

- (vii) Ladders shall not be joined together to form a longer ladder unless the longer ladder conforms with the strength and rigidity requirements of the Construction Safety Act Regulations.
- (viii) A ladder shall not be used as a guy, brace, tom, strut, beam, skid, or for any use other than its correct use as a ladder.

5. References

- (i) NSW Construction Safety Act regulations 80, 140AA, 140AB & 140AC

- (ii) Australian Standards referred to in the Regulations:
 - AS 1657-1992
 - AS 1892.1-1986
 - AS 1892.2-1992
 - AS 1892.4-1992.