

SAFETY ALERT

WHS-ALERT-008-2022

Date: 22 April, 2022

Area of Concern: All Staff and Students



Slips and Trips

Slips and trips which result in falls were one of the most common causes of incidents at JCU in 2021 and accounted for 16% of recorded injuries. The most common cause of slips and trips are results of slippery floor surfaces and inappropriate footwear. Slips and trips can cause serious injury, in some cases it can result in ligament damage or broken bones.

Slips and trips are not “just one of those things”, they occur when a person’s foot loses traction with the floor. Slips and trips can be easily prevented through situational awareness, good housekeeping, design, appropriate footwear, maintenance, risk management and reporting. Staff and students can take a number of simple actions to avoid slip and trip injuries.



What can be done to minimise the risk?

- Clean up spills immediately – this includes little spills/drips from cups and water bottles, request a cleaner if required;
- Report all slip or trip incidents and hazards in Riskware;
- Report any floors that require maintenance as a MEX request to the Estate Directorate;
- Where possible utilise signage to warn others of potential slip or trip hazards;
- Avoid carrying items in front of your body when using stairs as this makes it difficult to see the steps and does not leave you with a free hand to hold the rail (consider using the lift if you are unable to hold onto the stair rail);
- Look where you are walking – carry items in a bag so you have a clear view;
- Avoid using your phone while walking as this will distract you from seeing slip or trip hazards;
- Be aware of hazards caused by the weather – internal floors may be slippery when wet. Take care and walk more carefully so you can react to traction changes. Shake off excess water on bags and umbrellas, wipe your shoes on the mats at building entrances to reduce slipping risks;
- Wear appropriate footwear for the activities you are doing and the environment you will be going into. Consider if you choose to wear thongs, they may be easy to wear and cool for the feet, but what do they protect?;
- Although the pathways are regularly maintained, be aware of hazards due to vegetation in the area – leaves on pathways will be slippery and seeds roll easily under your foot – avoid stepping on these as you move between areas. If possible, move these hazards from the walkways.