

**Guideline Title:** Work Health and Safety Hazard Identification and Risk Management

**Guideline Owner:** Chief Safety Officer

**Keywords:** WHS, Hazard, Risk Management, Framework

**This guideline supports the University to operationalise the Work Health and Safety Policy and must be complied with.**

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## 1. INTENT

The purpose of this guideline is to outline the processes and requirements for Hazard identification and to provide a proactive Work Health and Safety (WHS) Risk Management framework that aims to minimise hazards so far as is Reasonably Practicable.

The [Work Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure](#) provides further details on the steps to be followed when conducting WHS Risk Assessments.

## 2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This guideline applies to all Workers, ECU Students and visitors.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

The [University Glossary](#), the [WHS Definitions Register](#) and the following definitions apply to this procedure:

Term:	Definition:
Semi-Quantitative Risk Assessment	A semi-quantitative Risk assessment uses a matrix that combines simple qualitative (words and meanings) and quantitative (number) techniques to obtain an estimate of the level (Consequence x Likelihood) of Risk.

## 4. GUIDELINE CONTENT

### Hazard Observation, Reporting and Resolution

- 4.1. The Hazard observation, reporting and resolution process allows everyone to report Hazards that are identified in the course of University activities. This process sets up a chain of command to assess Hazards to either take prompt action to fix them or refer them on to someone who can.
- 4.2. Workers or Students who identify a Hazard must, where safe to do so, implement immediate Controls to contain the Hazard, such as stopping others entering an unsafe area via barricading or signage or wiping up a spill. They must also report it to:
  - a. Their immediate Manager/Supervisor or, in the case of Students, an ECU staff member, as soon as Reasonably Practicable, and
  - b. Record it in [Riskware](#), ECU's online Hazard reporting system.
- 4.3. Visitors who identify a Hazard should report this to their ECU contact person who is required to record the Hazard in [Riskware](#).
- 4.4. Where a Hazard is not resolved to the satisfaction of the Hazard reporter, ECU has a Hazard Resolution Procedure that must be followed. Please refer to the [Hazard Resolution Procedure](#) for further information..
- 4.5. Any Incident or Near Miss must be reported following the requirements set out in the [Incident Reporting and Investigation Guideline](#).

### Work Health and Safety Risk Framework

- 4.6. The [WHS Risk Framework](#) is a foundation of managing WHS performance and applies to all WHS Hazards whether operational, compliance, project, research or activity based.
- 4.7. There are 4 categories of Risk Assessment within ECU's WHS Risk Framework as summarised in *Appendix A: WHS Risk Categories*. This approach enables the appropriate level of assessment to be used to match the context, nature and scale of the Risks i.e. the more significant and complex the process, the more formal and 'methodology driven' the Risk Assessment method.
- 4.8. In relation to ECU's WHS Risk Framework the following accountabilities and responsibilities apply:
  - a. The Director Human Resources Services is accountable for, and the Chief Safety Officer responsible for, ensuring:
    - ECU's WHS Risk Framework and any associated documents, training and inductions meet legislative requirements are regularly reviewed and updated, and
    - The ECU wide WHS Hazard Risk Register (HRR) and WHS Critical Risks and Controls Standard is maintained.

- b. ECU Officers are accountable and Managers, Supervisors and Responsible Officers are responsible for ensuring the School(s) or Centre(s) within their control complete Risk Assessments as required.
- c. Where activities being performed within their area of control pose Critical Risks, ECU Officers are accountable and Managers, Supervisors and Responsible Officers are responsible for ensuring the Critical Controls outlined in the WHS Critical Risks and Controls Standard are in place prior to any work being performed and are monitored for effectiveness. Additional Controls to eliminate or reduce the Risk so far as is Reasonably Practicable must also be considered through the completion of WHS Hazard Risk Assessments.
- d. ECU Officers, Executive Deans and Directors, supported by the Local WHS Committee Chair, are accountable for ensuring that the School(s) or Centre(s) within their control maintain a current HRR that identifies WHS Hazards, Risks and Controls associated with its activities, locations and equipment. The HRR must also consider Critical Risks and Controls where applicable.

## Risk Analysis Process

### *Hazard Identification*

- 4.9. Hazard identification involves recognising situations where Hazards may cause harm or damage. Hazards can be identified by:
- a. Referring to the [WHS Hazard and Risk Factor Prompt Sheet](#)
  - b. Informal methods such as observing the workplace during daily activities
  - c. Identifying and analysing tasks and activities including those where equipment is used
  - d. Conducting inspections in work locations
  - e. Consulting with Workers and Students, including Health and Safety Representatives
  - f. Review of Hazard and injury/illness information from Incidents and Hazard reports
  - g. Review of operational manuals for equipment where relevant
  - h. Review of any safety alerts from industry and regulators or product recalls from design/manufacturers where relevant, and
  - i. Review of Hazards already identified in the School/Centre HRR.

### *Assessment and Evaluation*

- 4.10. The process of assessing the Risk involves reviewing available information about the situation, Hazard Risk factor type, existing Controls and effectiveness of the existing Controls in place to determine the Consequence and Likelihood using the definitions in the [ECU Risk Matrix](#).
- 4.11. Once the Consequence and Likelihood have been determined, the [ECU Risk Matrix](#) is used to derive an overall Risk rating and evaluate acceptability in line with [ECU's Risk Acceptance Criteria](#).

### **Pre-Task Hazard Assessment**

- 4.12. At the University, the pre-task Hazard Risk Assessment most commonly used is the Job Safety Analysis (JSA). The [Job Safety Analysis Work Instruction](#) provides further information on the process.
- 4.13. All work to be performed under a Permit to Work must be risk assessed with a pre-task hazard assessment prior to commencement of the work. Refer to the [Permit to Work Procedure](#) for further details.
- 4.14. If Risks remain rated Substantial and above or uncertainty remains following the JSA, a WHS Risk Assessment must be conducted.

### **WHS Risk Assessments**

- 4.15. Semi-quantitative WHS Risk Assessments involve rating the Risks through the application of ECU's Risk matrix. There are two types of WHS Risk Assessments most commonly used at ECU:
  - a. Hazard Risk Assessment (HRA)
  - b. Hazard Risk Register (HRR)
- 4.16. A HRA must be conducted where Hazards may be present and include the following circumstances:
  - a. To resolve a specific identified Hazard
  - b. When a health and safety issue is raised
  - c. When commencing or changing an activity including:
    - Teaching activities (e.g., per Unit)
    - Research activities including clinical trials and grant applications
    - Purchasing new plant or equipment
    - Travel activities (e.g., study tours, fieldwork)
    - Events (e.g., Open day)
    - New projects (e.g., infrastructure), and
  - d. Where a JSA results in a residual rating of Substantial or above.
- 4.17. HRR's must be developed and maintained for each School and Centre that considers all School or Centre activities, locations and equipment.
- 4.18. HRAs and HRRs are completed electronically within the WHS Risk Register module of Riskware and more detail on the process for conducting these Risk Assessments is documented in the [WHS Risk Assessment Procedure](#).

### **Risk Management**

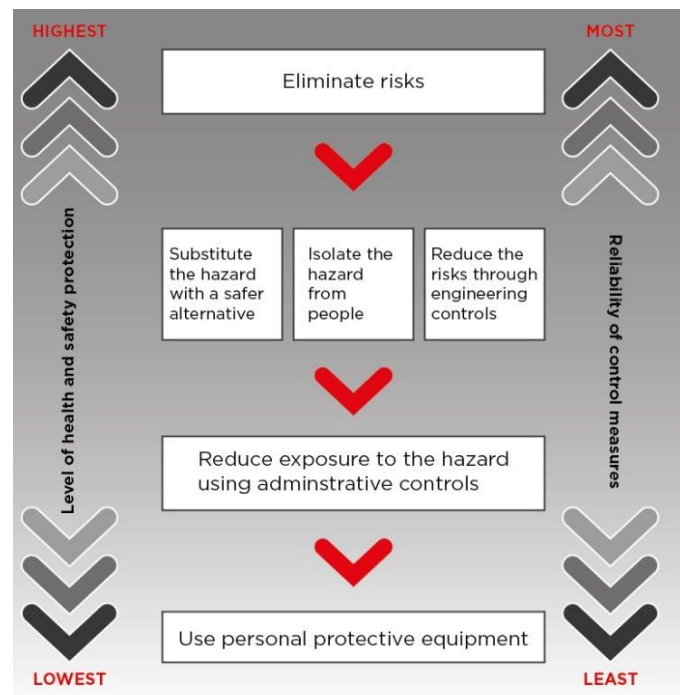
- 4.19. The ECU WHS HRR identifies the University's Critical Risk and Controls. Each Critical Risk and Controls are outlined in the WHS Critical Risks and Controls Standard and must be considered as part of the Risk management process.
- 4.20. Existing Controls must be documented on the Risk Assessment, with an evaluation of Control effectiveness conducted. If the current Hazard/Risk:
  - a. cannot be eliminated
  - b. is intolerable in line with ECU's Risk appetite statement, or

- c. existing Controls are evaluated as not fully effective, further Controls should be identified to minimise the Risk so far as is Reasonably Practicable. The [WHS Risk Assessment Procedure](#) provides further guidance on determining what is Reasonably Practicable.
- 4.21. Emphasis and priority should be placed on those Risks evaluated above the established ECU Risk Acceptance Criteria threshold. Work must not commence or continue if Risks remain at a level that is deemed unacceptable or intolerable as defined in the acceptance criteria of the [ECU Risk Matrix](#).

**Hierarchy of Control (HoC)**

- 4.22. The Hierarchy of Control must always be applied, from the highest level of Control (Elimination) to the lowest level of Control (PPE) as in Table 2.
- 4.23. Always aim to eliminate the Hazard as it is the most effective Control. If this is not Reasonably Practicable, minimise the Likelihood or Consequence of exposure to the Hazard by working down through the hierarchy.
- 4.24. Administrative Controls and personal protective equipment (PPE) are the least effective at minimising Risk because they do not control the Hazard at the source and rely on human behaviour and supervision. These Control measures should only be used:
  - a. to supplement higher level Control measures (as a back-up)
  - b. as a short-term interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the Risk can be used; or
  - c. when there are no other practical Control measures available (as a last resort).

**Table 1: Hierarchy of Controls** (source: Safe Work Australia)



- 4.25. Existing Controls should be documented on the HRA or HRR. If additional Controls are required to further reduce Risk, they must also be documented on the HRA or HRR and person and timeframe for completion must also be allocated.

### **Monitoring and reviewing**

- 4.26. Monitoring and reviewing Hazards, Risk levels, and evaluating the effectiveness of Controls is an important part of managing Hazards and Risks. Periodic review of this information ensures the Hazard profile is up to date, Risk levels have not changed, and the chosen Controls remain effective.
- 4.27. The process and requirements for conducting Risk reviews are documented in the [WHS Risk Assessment Procedure](#).

### **Consultation, Communication and Reporting**

- 4.28. The Hazard identification and Risk management process is a collaborative process aimed to ensure stakeholders understand the Hazards related to their work and are able to participate and contribute to Risk Control opportunities.
- 4.29. Affected Workers and Students should be engaged either in the process to conduct the Risk Assessment or review the assessment where possible. Doing this will provide them with the opportunity to participate and contribute to decisions related to any Hazards/Risks associated with their work/study. Risk owners are responsible for communicating Risk Assessments and registers to all relevant stakeholders, including volunteers.
- 4.30. Risks that are evaluated with a residual Risk of substantial or higher should be a standard agenda item for discussion at the local WHS committee meeting. A report can be sourced from Riskware to facilitate this discussion.

### **Document and Record Management**

- 4.31. Completed hardcopy JSA's must be maintained as a record by the local area and be stored in ECU's records management system.
- 4.32. HRA's and HRR's are maintained within the Riskware WHS Risk module.

### **Training**

- 4.33. ECU's Staff, Contractor and Student Health and Safety inductions provide information to Workers and Students on Hazard and Incident reporting processes.
- 4.34. ECU staff receive Hazard identification, Risk management and Hazard resolution training as part of the mandatory health and safety induction. In addition, Leaders receive an overview of the health and safety Risk management processes and their accountabilities as part of the mandatory Health and Safety for leaders training course. An online WHS Risk module is also available for Workers and Students who need to conduct Risk Assessments as part of their role.

- 4.35. All ECU Workers who are required to conduct pre-task Risk Assessments such as JSA's should be provided information outlining the requirements and processes of how to conduct pre-task Risk Assessments, including the use of any associated forms/templates.
- 4.36. Training support and material is available for Riskware users on the Human Resources Services website.

## 5. ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Guideline Owner the Chief Safety Officer has overall responsibility for the content of these guidelines and their operation.

## 6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Legislation

*Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)*

### Standards

AS/NZS ISO 9001: *Quality management systems*

AS/NZS ISO 45001: *Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*

AS/NZS ISO 31000: *Risk Management: Principles and Guidelines*

### Policies

[Integrated Risk Management Policy](#)

[Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

### Operational documents and resources

[Hazard Resolution Procedure](#)

[Health and Safety Hazard and Risk Factor Prompt Sheet](#)

[Incident Reporting and Investigation Guideline](#)

[Integrated Risk Management Guidelines](#)

[Job Safety Analysis Work Instruction](#)

[Permit to Work Procedure](#)

[Work Health and Safety Risk Assessment Procedure](#)

[WHS Critical Controls and Risks Standard](#)

## 7. CONTACT INFORMATION

For queries relating to this document please contact:

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## 8. APPROVAL HISTORY

Guideline approved by:	Chief Safety Officer
Date guideline first approved:	February 2019
Date last modified:	12 May 2023
Revision history:	<p>May 2023: V3.0 – addition of critical Risks and Controls and updated template</p> <p>May 2021: V 2.0 – updated to include Control effectiveness and for WHS Act 2020 (WA)</p> <p>February 2019: V1.0 – new guideline</p>
Next revision due:	May 2026
HPCM file reference:	HSMS/30



## Appendix A – WHS Risk Categories

Risk Category	Description	Format	Escalation	Review and Approval
ECU WHS Hazard Risk Register	A formal register identifying ECU wide Hazards, Risks and Controls.	ECU wide WHS Hazard Risk Register maintained in Riskware by People and Culture.	The ECU WHS Hazard Risk Register should be used to inform the planning of the ECU Strategic Risk Register and consider WHS Risks with the potential to impact ECU's ability to deliver the Strategic Plan.	Review and approved in line with the ECU Risk Acceptance Criteria or annually as a minimum.  Endorsed by University Executive and approved by the Vice-Chancellor.
Hazard Risk Register	A formal register that identifies WHS Hazards, Risks and Controls associated with a School or Centre activities, locations and equipment.	Hazard Risk Register, maintained in Riskware by Schools and Professional Services.	The Hazard Risk Register, and in particular Risks with a Current Risk rating of Substantial or above, should be reviewed and considered when conducting School/Centre Operation Risk Register reviews in relation to their potential to impact on the ability to meet operational objectives.  Hazard Risk Registers provide input to the ECU WHS Hazard Risk Register.	Review and approved in line with the ECU Risk Acceptance Criteria or annually as a minimum.  Approval by member of Chancellery, Executive Dean or Director accountable for the work area.
Hazard Risk Assessment	Used to identify Hazards, assess, control and review Risks for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified Hazards</li> <li>• To resolve a health and safety issue</li> <li>• Where a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) results in a residual rating of Substantial or above.</li> <li>• For a new or changed activity or project including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching activities (e.g. per Unit)</li> <li>• Research activities including clinical trials and grant applications</li> <li>• Purchasing new plant or equipment</li> <li>• Travel activities (e.g. study tours, fieldwork)</li> <li>• Events (e.g. Open day)</li> <li>• New projects (e.g. Infrastructure)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Hazard Risk Assessment maintained in Riskware by relevant Risk Owners.	New/changed Risks incorporated in Hazard Risk Registers.	Review and approval in line with the ECU Risk Acceptance Criteria.
Pre-Task Hazard Assessment	Used to identify Hazards and implement Controls before starting a job or task.	Job Safety Analysis (JSA)	Risks with a residual rating of Substantial or above require a Hazard Risk Assessment.	At the commencement of each task and work shift. Approval by work supervisor.