OHS Risk Management Procedure

OHS Risk Management Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the methodology by which Department of Education and Training (the Department) identifies, assesses, controls and monitors Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks throughout the organisation. This methodology will be used to prioritise risks and to assist in the allocation of resources for the selection and implementation of required risk controls.

Scope

This procedure applies to all Department workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. Procedure

## 3.1 OHS Risk Register

Generic *OHS Risk Registers* have been developed for each of the four types of workplaces below:

* Primary School
* Secondary School
* Specialist School
* Corporate Offices.

These can be modified to meet the needs of the individual school or workplace.

## 3.2 Initial Review of the OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager** is to initially consult relevant persons when first reviewing the generic OHS Risk Register for the workplace. These should include:

* the **Management OHS Nominee**
* Area Coordinators involved in the task, activity or area
* employees who either undertake the task, activity or work in the area or who may be affected by the outcomes of the [risk assessment](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx)
* Health and Safety Representative (HSR)
* Health and Safety Committee member/s (where relevant)

During the initial review, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should review each ‘Hazard Type’ entry for applicability to their workplace (delete only if not appropriate i.e. if specific equipment or tasks are not present or conducted at the workplace) andlist any additional hazards identified in the workplace.

All new hazards identified either during the initial review, or on an ongoing basis, are to be dealt with in accordance with the risk management methodology outlined in Section 3.3 of this procedure.

Once the workplace OHS Risk Register is finalised, the **Workplace Manager** and / or **Management OHS Nominees** are to ensure the controls defined within the Register are implemented by allocation of sufficient resources and delegation of responsibility to personnel with the required authority to make decisions.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for making sure the workplace OHS Risk Register ismaintained on an ongoing basis as outlined in Section 3.4 of this procedure.

A user guide is available as a separate worksheet in the generic OHS Risk Register. The guide outlines how to use and update the register, including sorting risks by area, location, risk rating and status.

Advice may be sought from the Department **OHS Advisory Service** on **1300 074 715**.

## 3.3 Guidance on the Department Risk Management Methodology

3.3.1 General

The Department requires **Workplace Managers** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** to implement a risk management approach for maintaining the health and safety of persons in the workplace to ensure that:

* hazards that persons may be exposed to in the workplace are identified
* a risk assessment is conducted to determine the risk (likelihood and consequence of injury or harm to a person) resulting from such hazards
* consideration is given to the means by which the risk may be reduced and implement such mechanisms to eliminate, or if elimination is not reasonably practicable, reduce the risk.

The Department risk management methodology is represented in the diagram below (please note, this diagram is a simple representation of the risk management process from the International Standard ISO 31000:2009).

STEP 1

Identify the hazards within the workplace

Assess the risk (Risk Analysis/Evaluation)

Eliminate or control the risk

Review controls (Monitoring and review)

STEP 2

STEP 3

STEP 4

3.3.2 Step 1 – Identification of Hazards

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** have a number of triggers and sources of information that would require the review of the workplace OHS Risk Register. These include:

* identifying hazards prior to purchasing substances or plant and equipment
* reviewing audit results
* reviewing workplace inspections
* consultation with the HSR and employees
* reviewing hazard reports from eduSafe Plus
* reviewing health surveillance reports
* observations during work
* task analysis
* incident reporting and investigation
* when implementing specific hazard management procedures e.g. *Manual Handling Procedure.*

Any risk not appearing on the workplace OHS Risk Register is to be added into the register by the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management Nominee.** The hazard description is to be clearly articulated on the register to enable a correct assessment of the risk level (Section 3.3.3 of this procedure) and required controls (Section 3.3.4 of this procedure) to reduce the risk level.

Associated risk management forms (e.g. *Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form*, *Workplace Inspection Checklists* etc.) are to be used for specific hazards identified.

3.3.3 Step 2 – Assessing the Risk

Risk Assessment is the process of determining the ‘level of risk’ associated with a hazard. The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** can use the risk rating to prioritise risk control activities.

All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with the HSR and affected employees, including:

* the Health and Safety Committee (HSC)
* other relevant employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors
* with the use of relevant reference material e.g. Safety Data Sheets for chemicals

In determining the level of risk, the following must be taken into account:

* + the experience of the person exposed to the hazard
	+ the frequency and/or duration of the person’s exposure to the hazard
	+ any existing controls
	+ contributing environmental conditions
	+ pre-existing hazards.

Where a hazard is similar for different work areas a single generic assessment of one representative work situation may suffice e.g. using whiteboard cleaner in various classrooms at a school. In this case, it is the responsibility of the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** to ensure that the risk assessment is valid for each of the work areas to which it is intended to apply.

Risk assessments are to be documented using hazard-specific risk management forms outlined in each OHS procedure. If no specific risk management form is specified, the *Risk Assessment Template* may be utilised using the following risk matrix to assign a risk level to each hazard:

Consequence Criteria

| **Descriptor** | **Level** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Insignificant** | **1** | No injury |
| **Minor** | **2** | Injury/ ill health requiring first aid |
| **Moderate** | **3** | Injury/ill health requiring medical attention |
| **Major** | **4** | Injury/ill health requiring hospital admission |
| **Severe** | **5** | Fatality |

Likelihood Criteria

| **Descriptor** | **Level** | **Definition**  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Rare** | **1** | May occur somewhere, sometime (“Once in a life time / once in a hundred years”) |
| **Unlikely** | **2** | May occur somewhere within the Department over an extended period of time |
| **Possible** | **3** | May occur several times across the Department or a region over a period of time |
| **Likely** | **4** | May be anticipated multiple times over a period of time.May occur once every few repetitions of the activity or event |
| **Almost****Certain** | **5** | Prone to occur regularlyIt is anticipated for each repetition of the activity of event  |

Risk Matrix

| **Likelihood** | **Consequence** |
| --- | --- |
| **Insignificant** | **Minor** | **Moderate**  | **Major** | **Severe** |
| **Almost Certain** | Medium | High | Extreme | Extreme | Extreme |
| **Likely** | Medium | Medium | High | Extreme | Extreme |
| **Possible** | Low | Medium | Medium | High | Extreme |
| **Unlikely** | Low | Low | Medium | Medium | High |
| **Rare** | Low | Low | Low | Medium | Medium |

Using the Matrix

1. Evaluate the **consequences** of a risk occurring according to the ratings in the top row.
2. Evaluate the **likelihood** of an incident occurring according to the ratings in the left hand column.
3. Using the Risk Matrix, calculate the **level of risk** by finding the intersection between the likelihood and the consequences.

Risk Level/Rating and Actions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description of risk** | **Actions** |
| **Extreme:** | Notify **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** immediately. Corrective actions should be taken immediately. Cease associated activity. |
| **High:** | Notify **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** immediately. Corrective actions should be taken within 48 hours of notification |
| **Medium:** | Notify **Nominated employee, HSR / HSC**. Nominated employee, OHS Representative / HSC is to follow up that corrective action is taken within seven days. |
| **Low:** | Notify **Nominated employee, HSR / HSC**. Nominated employee, HSR / HSC is to follow up that corrective action is taken within a reasonable time. |

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to ensure that an inherent and residual risk assessment is completed for each specific hazard that is added to the workplace OHS Risk Register.

The inherent risk assessment which is completed initially involves scoring the risk level of the hazard without considering any OHS controls. The second assessment (residual risk rating) involves scoring the OHS risk level of the hazard after considering current existing risk controls that are in place. The residual risk rating should be regularly reviewed as new controls are identified and implemented.

Comparing the inherent risk rating to the residual risk rating the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominees** should be able to demonstrate to relevant parties (e.g. the Department, WorkSafe, external auditors etc.) that the controls in place are effective in reducing residual risk levels to a tolerable level.

3.3.4 Step 3 – Eliminate or Control the Risk

Once hazards have been identified and risk assessed, a control strategy to either eliminate or control the risk is to be developed and implemented. The process represented in the diagram below is designed to identify control strategies from the most effective to the least effective strategy.

All Department personnel must consider control strategies in the order of the hierarchy of controls appearing below.

**Hierarchy of Controls**

**Effectiveness**

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must ensure the principles of the Hierarchy of Control are applied for each hazard appearing in the workplace OHS Risk Register.

Please note, not all strategies, when implemented in isolation will reduce the residual risk to a tolerable level. In such circumstances, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should consider the implementation of two or more risk controls in conjunction to achieve the best possible risk reduction. For example, use of hazardous substances may require ventilation (engineering), a review of handling procedures and training (administrative) and the allocation of respirators (PPE). An example of each level of the hierarchy is given below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Elimination** | Completely remove the hazard e.g. removal of hazardous substance from the workplace. |
| **Substitution** | Change a work practice, substance or piece of equipment to provide a safer environment e.g. substitute old, non-adjustable office chairs with ergonomic chairs to reduce the risk of injuries. |
| **Engineering** | Modify the design of the workplace or plant and/or environmental conditions e.g. the use of a fume extraction system to remove fumes generated by hazardous substance use in labs. |
| **Administrative** | Develop procedures and systems to control the interaction between people and hazards e.g. reducing the time of exposure to noise by requiring people to be remote from equipment during operation, providing manual handling training to persons so they are better able to identify / report / control / avoid hazards in the workplace. |
| **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** | Implement PPE to prevent physical contact between a person and a hazard e.g. appropriate footwear, gloves, safety glasses etc. |

Prior to implementing risk controls the proposed measures should be reviewed to ensure they do not create new and seemingly unrelated hazards e.g. installation of barriers and guarding for equipment may restrict access and means of escape in case of an emergency.

The effectiveness of risk controls must be tested prior to implementation i.e. residual risk (see Section 3.3.3 above). A single control will generally affect either the likelihood or consequence of a risk occurring. The difference between the inherent risk and residual risk ratings (with controls applied) will demonstrate the effectiveness of controls.

All affected employees must be informed about the risk controls being implemented and in particular, the reasons for the changes. The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must ensure that adequate information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors at all times during the implementation of controls to ensure their correct application.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must also ensure that any relevant administrative controls, such as forms and/ or safe work procedures, relating to hazards are updated e.g. if a new item of equipment is purchased, existing workplace inspection checklists and/ or safe work procedures should also be updated.

3.3.5 Step 4 – Monitor and Review Controls

The final step in the process is to monitor and review the effectiveness of risk controls that have been implemented. Risk controls should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that they have had the desired impact in reducing the likelihood and/or consequences of a hazard occurring. Consultation with, and feedback from employees will provide information on the application and effectiveness of risk controls at the workplace level.

## 3.4 Ongoing Review of the OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to review the workplace OHS Risk Register:

* on an annual basis (review to be scheduled in the *OHS Activities Calendar*)
* when hazards are reported
* when incidents or near misses occur
* when new substances or plant and equipment are introduced into the workplace
* when new or additional information regarding a hazard, relevant to workers, is made available or communicated via the regulatory authority (WorkSafe).

If a risk control **has not** been implemented by the intended completion date, the **Workplace Manager** is to identify the reasons for the delay and, in consultation with relevant parties, determine an alternate date and update the workplace OHS Risk Register accordingly.

## 3.5 Maintaining Records

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management Nominee** are responsible for keeping a record of the workplace OHS Risk Register and ensuring it is available to all relevant persons (e.g. Health and Safety Committee members, HSR, employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors and external auditors etc.) as required.

4. Defined terms

Terms defined within this Procedure can be located on the Department’s [Defined Health, Safety Terms](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) website. Defined roles will appear **in bold**.

5. Related references

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

*Australian and New Zealand Standard Risk Management Principles and Guidelines AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009*

*Victorian Government Risk Management Framework 2011*

6. Related documentation

*Manual Handling Procedure*

*OHS Activities Calendar*

*OHS Risk Register*

*Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form*

*Risk Assessment Template*

*Workplace Inspection Checklists*

7. Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to OHS Risk Management is available by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au.