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1. OBJECTIVE

This work instruction is designed to help you identify appropriate HSW risk control measures to eliminate or minimise the risk associated with identified hazards throughout RMIT. This work instruction is to be read in conjunction with **HSW-PR09 – HSW Risk Management**.

2. SCOPE

This work instruction applies to all RMIT, globally.

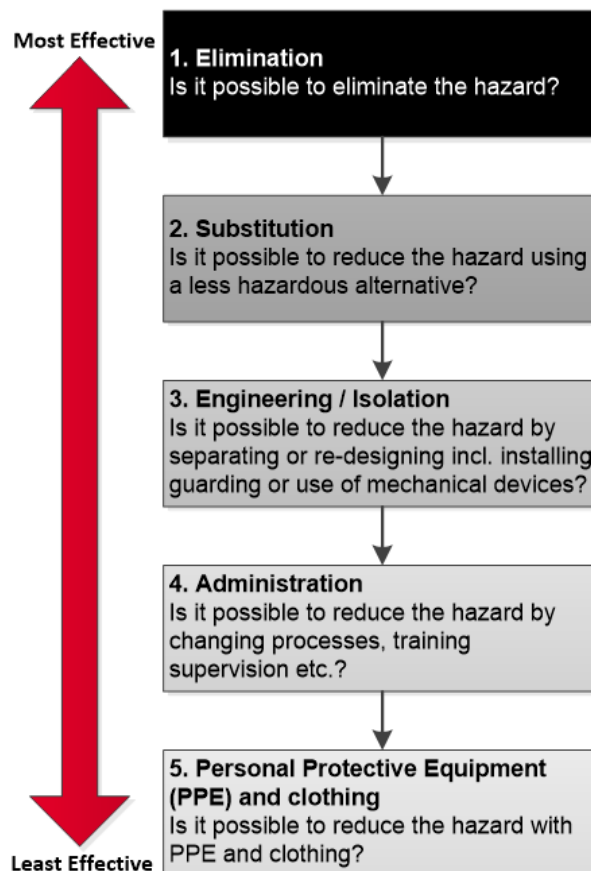
Refer to **RMIT HSW Third Party Framework** for further guidance on the way third parties will be managed by RMIT in relation to risk management.

NOTE – Referenced legislation applies to Australian jurisdictions only. RMIT campuses in other jurisdiction must refer to local applicable legislation, where available.

3. PROCEDURE/IMPLEMENTATION

3.1. HSW Risk Control Measures

All risks must be minimised to the lowest reasonably practicable level. The ways of controlling risks are ranked from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. This ranking is known as the Hierarchy of Controls.



You must always aim to eliminate a hazard, which is the most effective control. If this is not reasonably practicable, you must minimise the risk by working through the other alternatives in the prescribed order of the hierarchy, from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest.

Eliminate the Hazard

The most effective control measure involves eliminating the hazard and associated risk. The best way to do this is by, firstly, not introducing the hazard into the workplace. For example, you can eliminate the risk of a fall from height by doing the work at ground level.

Eliminating hazards is often cheaper and more practical to achieve at the design or planning stage of a product, process or place used for work and learning. In these early phases, there is greater scope to design out hazards or incorporate risk control measures that are compatible with the original design and functional requirements. For example, a noisy machine could be designed and built to produce as little noise as possible, which is more effective than providing workers with personal hearing protection.

You can also eliminate risks by removing the hazard completely, for example, by removing trip hazards on the floor or disposing of unwanted chemicals.

It may not be possible to eliminate a hazard if doing so means that you can't make the end product or deliver the required service. If you can't eliminate the hazard, then control as many of the risks associated with the hazard as possible.

Change the Risks to Reduce Harm

If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the hazards and associated risks, you must minimise the risks using one or more of the following approaches:

Substitution Controls

Substitute the hazard with something safer for instance; replace solvent-based paints with water-based ones.

Engineering and Isolation Controls

Isolate the hazard from people. This involves physically separating the source of harm from people by distance or using barriers. For instance, install guard rails around exposed edges and holes in floors; use remote control systems to operate machinery; use hazardous chemicals in a fume cabinet, store hazardous chemicals in an appropriate dangerous goods cabinet.

An engineering control is a control measure that is physical in nature, including a mechanical device or process. For instance, use mechanical devices such as trolleys or hoists to move heavy loads; place guards around moving parts of machinery; install residual current devices (electrical safety switches).

Change People to Reduce the Risks

These control measures do not control the hazard at the source. They rely on human behaviour and supervision, and used on their own, tend to be least effective in minimising risks.

Two approaches to reduce risk in this way are:

Administrative Controls

Administrative controls are work methods or processes that are designed to minimise exposure to a hazard. For instance, develop processes on how to operate machinery safely, limit exposure time to a hazardous task, use signs to warn people of a hazard. Induction, instruction and training around administrative controls augments the implemented administrative controls and is a required part of implementing administrative controls.

PPE Controls

Examples of PPE include laboratory coats / gowns, earmuffs, respirators, face masks, hard hats, gloves, aprons and protective eyewear. PPE limits exposure to the harmful effects of a hazard but only if people wear and use the PPE correctly.

Administrative controls and PPE must only be used:

- When there are no other practical control measures available (as a last resort)
- As an interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the risk can be used
- To supplement higher control measures.

3.2. Develop and Implement Control Options

Information about suitable controls for many common hazards and risks can be obtained by:

- Checking if there is legislation that has specific requirements for a control measure
- Checking if a Code of Practice/Compliance Code has any guidance on controlling the hazard
- Checking if there is a relevant Australian or International Standards on the topic
- Checking the manufacturers guidance and/or any industry standards
- Checking with other Schools/Work Areas and/or businesses if they have a similar hazard and how have they successfully controlled it
- Asking the staff/students/researchers if they have any solutions to the hazards they face
- Consult subject matter experts

In some cases, published information will provide guidance on the whole work process. In other cases, the guidance may relate to individual items of plant or how to safely use specific substances. You may use the recommended control options if they suit your situation and eliminate or minimise the risk.

3.2.1. Developing Specific Control Measures

You may need to develop specific control measures if the available information is not relevant to the hazards and risks or circumstances at your workplace. This can be done by referring to the chain of events that were recorded during the risk assessment.

For each of the events in the sequence, ask: *“What can be done to stop or change the event occurring?”*

Working through the events in the sequence will give ideas about all possible ways to eliminate or minimise the risk. There may be more than one solution for each of the events.

The control option you choose should be:

- one that provides the highest level of protection for people and is the most reliable.
- available – that is, it can be purchased, made to suit or be put in place.
- suitable for the circumstance in your work or learning environment – that is, it will work properly given the work or learning environment conditions, work or learning process and your people.

Where the hazard or risk has the potential to cause death, serious injury or illness, more emphasis must be given to those controls that eliminate or reduce the level of harm, than those that reduce the likelihood of harm occurring.

When controls are introduced, they should be reviewed to ensure any new / additional hazards are managed effectively.

3.2.2. *Cost of Control Measures*

All risks can be controlled, and it is always possible to do something, such as stopping the activity or providing instructions to those exposed to the risk. There will normally be several different options between these two extremes. Cost (in terms of time and effort as well as money) is just one factor to consider when determining the best control option.

The cost of controlling a risk may be considered in determining what is reasonably practicable but cannot be used as a reason for doing nothing.

The greater the likelihood of a hazard occurring and/or the greater the harm that would result if the hazard or risk did occur, the less weight should be given to the cost of controlling the hazard or risk.

If two control measures provide the same levels of protection and are equally reliable, you can adopt the least expensive option.

Cost cannot be used as a reason for adopting controls that rely exclusively on changing people's behaviour or actions when there are more effective controls available that can change the risk through substitution, engineering or isolation.

3.2.3. *Implementing Controls*

The control measures that you put in place will usually require changes to the way work or learning is carried out due to new or modified equipment or processes, new or different chemicals or new PPE. In these situations, it is necessary to support the control measures with:

- Work procedures - Develop a safe work procedure that describes the task, identifies the hazards and documents how the task is to be performed to minimise the risks.
- Training, instruction and information - Train staff, students in the work procedure to ensure that they can perform the task and/or use plant & equipment or hazardous materials safely. Training should require staff, students to demonstrate that they are competent in the procedure.

It is insufficient to simply give staff, students the procedure and ask them to acknowledge that they understand and can perform it. Training, instruction and information must be provided in a form that can be understood by all staff, students. Information and instruction may also need to be provided to others who enter the workplace, such as volunteers or visitors.

Colleges and portfolios are responsible for documenting the training, instruction and information provided and maintain applicable records as detailed in **HR – HSW-PR04 – HSW Records Management**.

3.3. *Monitoring and Review*

Risk assessments must be reviewed and updated as required to ensure the controls applied are effective in minimising the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. This is required:

- when the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk
- before a change in the work, research and learning environment that is likely to create a new or different health and safety risk, without effective controls in place
- when a new hazard or risk is identified
- when a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) requests a review
- when an incident occurs

Risk assessments must be reviewed as per the table below if none of the above occur. Schools / Departments may implement more frequent reviews.

Residual risk after additional controls have been implemented.

Risk rating	Frequency of Review	Reporting Level
Critical	Risk must be reviewed at least every 6 months	Risk must be approved, visible and reported to at least the Vice Chancellor’s Executive level (or equivalent)
High	Risk must be reviewed at least every 6 months	Risk must be visible and reported to at least the Executive Director level (or equivalent)
Medium	Risk must be reviewed at least annually	Risk must be visible and reported to at least the Director level (or equivalent)
Low	Risk must be reviewed at least annually	Risks must be visible and reported to at least the Senior Manager level (or equivalent)

In addition, periodic reviews of the effectiveness of applied risk control strategies will occur through a range of scheduled and unscheduled activities, including but not limited to:

- Workplace audits and inspections
- Workplace monitoring where necessary (hazardous noise or chemicals)
- Review of incidents and hazards

3.4. Supervision

Refer to **HR – HSW-PR09-WI05 – Supervision** for details around the requirements for effective health and safety supervision

4. Responsibilities

NOTE - As per **HSW-PR09 – HSW Risk Management Process**.

5. Definitions

Defines any key terms and acronyms relating to the process where they apply.

Term / acronym	Definition
Administrative Controls	Reduce or eliminate exposure, of individuals to a hazard or the environment from an environmental aspect, by adherence to procedures or instructions. Documentation must emphasise all the steps to be taken and the controls to be used in carrying out the task, use equipment, substances or biologicals both safely and with minimum impact to the environment.
Elimination	A permanent solution and must be attempted in the first instance. The hazard or environmental aspect is eliminated altogether.
Engineering Controls	Involve some structural change to the work or learning environment or process to place a barrier to, or interrupt the transmission path between, the people or environment and the hazard or environmental aspect. This may include isolation or enclosure of hazards or environmental aspects, machine guards and manual handling devices.

Harm	Is death, injury, illness (including psychological illness) or disease that may be suffered by a person from a hazard or risk.
Hierarchy of Control	The Hierarchy of Control is a list of control measures, in priority order, that can be used to eliminate or minimise exposure to the hazard.
HSW Risk Control Measure	A work process, system of work or a thing that eliminates an HSW hazard or risk or, if this is not reasonably practicable, reduces the risk so far as reasonably practicable.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment - Relates only to hazards and their impact on personal safety risks. It is worn by people as a barrier between themselves and the hazard. The success of this control is dependent on the protective clothing and equipment being chosen correctly, as well as fitted correctly and worn at all times when required.
Reasonably Practicable	There are multiple factors for determining 'what is (or was at a particular time) reasonably practicable in relation to ensuring health and safety'. The test involves a careful weighing up of each of the matters in the context of the circumstances and facts of the particular case: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned eventuating• The degree of harm that would result if the hazard or risk eventuated• What the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk and any ways of eliminated or reducing the hazard or risk• The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or reduce the hazard or risk• The cost eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk
Substitution	Involves replacing the hazard or environmental aspect by one that presents a lower risk.
Third party	A supplier or service provider who is not directly employed or controlled by RMIT University.

6. Supporting Documents

Lists the supporting and related Processes and Guidance Material, Legislative references, Australian and International Standards etc. that may be useful references for process users

- HR - HSW-PR09 - HSW Risk Management
- HR - HSW-PR09-WI02 - HSW Risk Matrix
- HR - HSW-PR09-WI01 - HSW Risk Assessment Methodology Work Instruction
- HR - HSW-PR09-WI04 - SWMS Work Instruction
- HR – HSW-PR09-WI05 – HSW Supervision
- HR - HSW-PR09-FR01 - SWMS Review Checklist Form