

Policy Title:	UNSW OHS Risk Rating System	Contact Officer:	Kathy Richardson Manager OHS & Environment
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- 1) This risk rating system is designed to be used when rating the OHS risks during any of these processes
Completing the second step of the risk assessment process; having first identified the hazards;
- 2) Developing and updating OHS hazard and risk registers;
- 3) Reporting observed hazards during workplace inspections or when incidents have occurred.

The aim of the OHS Risk rating system is to have a consistent standard across the University for rating OHS risks. This is a requirement of both the University's OHS management system and WorkCover's OHS audit criteria for self insurers to be met as part of the University's self insurer licence. The outcome of staff and students applying a consistent risk rating system across the organisation will be: improved local unit decision making in choosing appropriate, adequate risk control measures leading to more effective management of OHS risks and prevention of injury and property and environmental damage.

STEP ONE

Estimate the potential consequences in terms of the severity of harm (ie injury to person or harm to the environment or property damage) should an incident still occur with the risk controls that you already have for this task or process. In determining the risk level, rate the consequences based on the most probable or likely consequences/outcome of exposure, but when performing high risk activities be mindful of the worst case scenario of exposure to the hazard.

Table 1 Consequences level

Level	Health and Safety Descriptor
1	Insignificant. Injuries not requiring first aid
2	Minor: First Aid required only
3	Moderate: Medical treatment required
4	Major Hospital admission required
5	Severe Death or permanent disability to one or more persons

Note 1- If there are potential environment risks, then refer to the environment risk rating system

Note 2- If there are financial risk impacts, then refer to the financial risk rating system.

STEP TWO

Estimate the most probable likelihood of the above consequences occurring should an incident (which could cause harm to persons, property or the environment) occur in the event of exposure to the hazard. This likelihood ranking is to take into account the existing risk controls that you planned or have in place.

Table 2 Likelihood level

Level	Descriptor	Description
A	Almost certain	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances. eg. common or repetitive occurrence at UNSW
B	Likely	The event will probably occur in most circumstances. eg. known history of occurrence at UNSW
C	Possible	The event could occur at some time. eg. history of single occurrence at UNSW
D	Unlikely	The event is not likely to occur in normal circumstances.
E	Rare	The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances

STEP THREE

Estimate the overall risk using Table 3 below for each hazard that would be present during the task or process from combining the individual rankings for likelihood and consequences for each hazard that you have already calculated above. Then you will need to prioritise all the assessed risks in order of significance and focus first on those with the highest risk level in terms of determining the risk control measures and their importance in managing the risks. In the case of rating the overall risk for an incident that has occurred, you are evaluating the actual risk rather than estimating the potential risk of work which is yet to be performed.

Table 3 Overall Risk Rating

Likelihood level	Consequences level				
	1 (insignificant)	2 (minor)	3 (moderate)	4 (major)	5 (severe)
A (almost certain)	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High
B (likely)	Medium	Medium	High	High	Very High
C (possible)	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High

STEP FOUR

Determine what action is required as result of your overall risk rating for each hazard. There is a legal requirement to *eliminate* all reasonably foreseeable risks to health and safety. If they can't be eliminated, then the hazards giving rise to the risks have to be controlled using the hierarchy of risk controls, in accordance with OHS legislation, Australian Standards and Codes of Practice. The hierarchy of risk controls follows a descending vertical order in terms of their importance and those controls higher up the scale should be chosen in preference:

- Firstly: Substitute a less harmful hazard eg less harmful hazardous substance or process;
- Secondly: Isolate the hazard from the person eg enclose noisy machinery or the dust source;
- Thirdly: Minimise the hazard using engineering means eg guarding machinery nip points;
- Fourthly: Use administrative controls eg training, standard operating procedures, job/task rotation
- Finally: Use personal protective equipment and/or clothing if needed.

If the OHS risk cannot be controlled by a single measure, then a combination of measures will be required to minimise the risk to the lowest level that is reasonably practical.

Once you have completed the overall risk rating for your planned tasks, this will determine if you need to take additional action before commencing work or a monitoring role once work commences as follows:

Low risk- the work is safe and no further action is required unless additional hazards arise during the work;

Medium risk- the work is safe, but the risk control measures need monitoring to ensure the risk level does not increase during the task or process;

High risk- the risk controls need to be reviewed and additional controls added to reduce the risk to medium level. You will need to have a very well documented system of work including standard operating procedures, training, monitoring and supervision as the purpose of the risk assessment is to control the risk;

Very high- the activity should not proceed at this time due to the potential risk of a fatality and an alternative safer method of work is required before work can commence.

Note: Where you observe an uncontrolled hazard giving rise to an immediate risk of personal injury or ill health for anyone in the workplace, the supervisor of the work or student should be notified immediately, so that the current situation can be assessed and the risks controlled.