

Risk Management Guidelines – Ergonomics and Manual Handling

Scope and Purpose

These guidelines are designed to assist users with assessing risks and determining appropriate control measures associated with ergonomic or manual handling hazards. These guidelines must be read in conjunction with the [OHS Risk Management Procedure](#).

All risk assessments must be documented using the online system - [SARAH](#).

Abbreviations

OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SARAH	Safety and Risk Analysis Hub

Definitions

A comprehensive list of definitions is provided in the [Definitions tool](#).

When to do a risk assessment

A risk assessment must be undertaken for all activities where ergonomic or manual handling hazards present a risk to health and safety.

How to complete a risk assessment

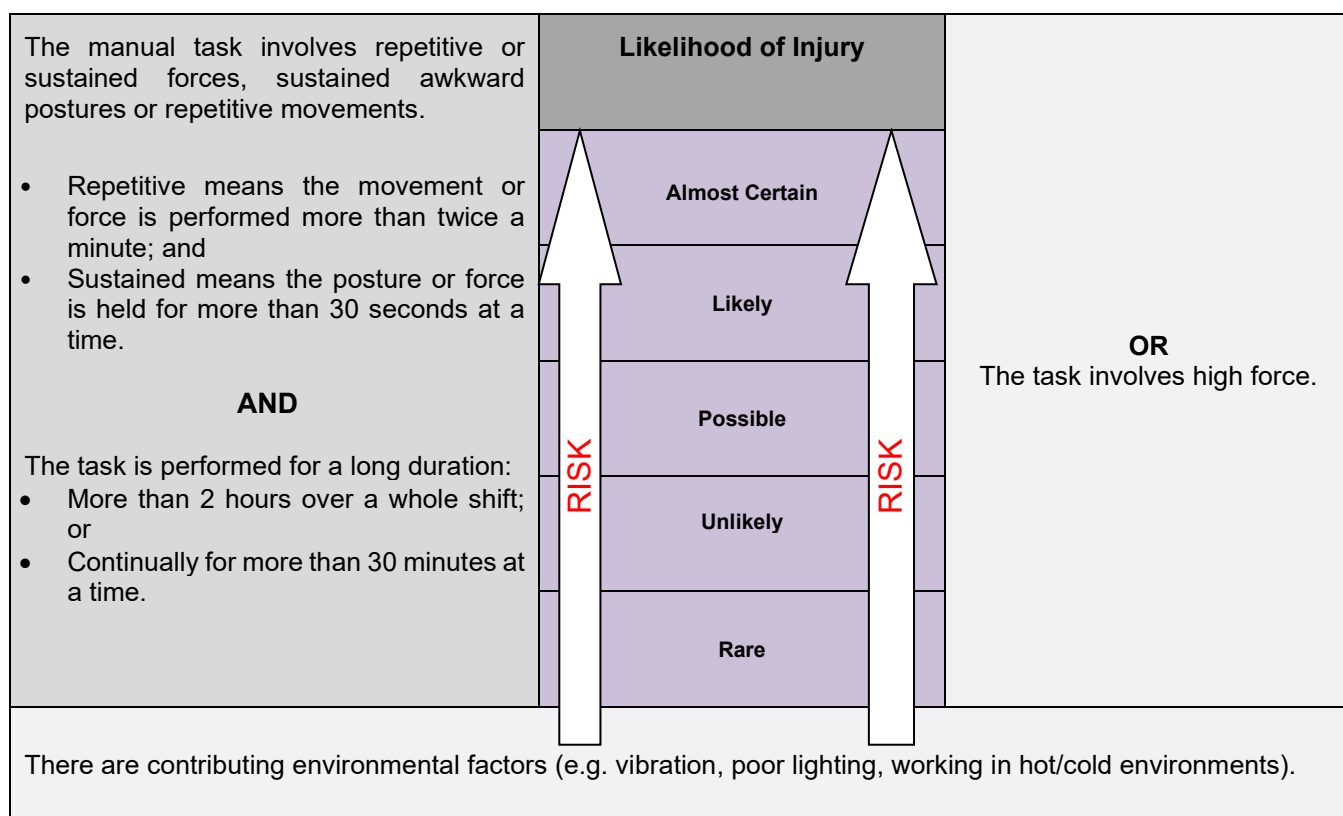
[Tutorial videos](#) on how to use SARAH to complete risk assessments, are available on the [Risk Management and Safe Work Instructions](#) page.

If the activity that is being assessed is common at Monash University, there may be an existing risk assessment available in SARAH, which could be adopted using the cloning function.

To complete a risk assessment:

1. Follow the [OHS Risk Assessment Guide](#) to complete the risk assessment in [SARAH](#).
2. Describe the activity that is being assessed. Refer to any existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or protocols relevant to the activity.
3. Determine who are the people that know about the process and the hazards associated with the activity (e.g. Supervisors, Safety Officers, Subject Matter Experts, [OHS Consultant/Advisor](#)).
4. Select the most appropriate [Mechanism of Injury](#) and the [Agency of Injury](#) associated with the risk factor being assessed.

5. Describe how the risks associated with the Mechanism and Agency can lead to injury or disease in the context of the activity that is being assessed.
6. Consult with your risk assessment team on the risk factors identified.
7. Examples of available resources include:
 - Monash University [Ergonomics](#) and [Manual Handling](#) webpages;
 - WorkSafe [Compliance code: Hazardous manual handling](#);
 - Worksafe [Officewise: A guide to health and safety in the office handbook](#);
 - Safe Work Australia [Lifting, pushing and pulling \(manual handling\) page](#); and
 - Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 4442:2018: *Office desks, office workstations and tables intended to be used as office desks - Mechanical, dimensional and general requirements and test methods*)
8. Identify and describe the existing controls currently in place.
9. From the Risk Matrix in SARAH, select the *Likelihood* of injury or disease occurring with consideration given to the existing controls. Refer to the table below to identify relevant risk factors.



10. Select the *Consequence* of the injury with consideration given to the existing controls. Refer to the table below for consequence descriptors.

Consequence				
Near Hit/Miss – No injury or minor injury requiring minor First Aid.	Injury requiring medical treatment with no lost time.	Injury requiring medical treatment/counselling and time away from work/study.	Serious injury requiring admission to hospital and significant time away from work/study.	Fatality or multiple serious injuries. Major destruction to facility/infrastructure.
Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic

11. The risk rating will be assigned automatically once the *Likelihood* and the *Consequence* are selected. Refer to the Risk Matrix below.

Risk Matrix ✕

		Consequence				
		Near Hit/Miss, no injury or minor injury requiring minor first aid.	Injury requiring medical treatment with no lost time.	Injury requiring medical treatment/ counselling and time away from work/study.	Serious injury requiring admission to hospital and significant time away from work/study.	Fatality, or multiple serious injuries. Major destruction to facility/infrastructure.
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Rare	Negligible	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

OK
Cancel

12. Determine if additional controls are required that could further reduce the risk level. Refer to Table 1 for a list of common ergonomic and manual handling controls based on the Hierarchy of Controls.

13. Nominate a person responsible and the due date to implement each control.

14. Re-assess the residual risk level with the proposed controls implemented.

Table 1: Hierarchy of Controls

Ergonomics and Manual Handling Hierarchy of Controls	
Elimination	Automate the manual task.
	Deliver goods directly to the point of use to eliminate multiple handling.
	Alter the workplace layout, workstation or work area design.
Substitution	Replace heavy items with lighter, smaller or easier to handle items.
	Replace hand tools with power tools to reduce the level of force required to do the task.
Isolation	Isolate/enclose vibrating machinery.
Engineering	Manual or powered trolleys.
	Height adjustable workstations.
	Conveyor belts and turntables.
	Lifting devices and hoists.
	Access equipment and work platforms.
	Load shifting equipment; forklifts, pallet trucks, stackers and pallet jacks.
	Ergonomic computer equipment; keyboards, mice, height adjustable monitors, footrest.
Administration	Workstation assessments
	Job rotation & additional help
	Safe Work Instructions and training in the use of engineering controls
	Training in manual handling/lifting techniques
	Safe Weight Limit indicated on equipment and weight information on loads.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Heat-resistant gloves.
	Comfortable and shock-absorbent footwear/fully enclosed footwear.
	Gloves with extra grip.

Document History

Version	Date of Issue	Changes made to document
2.2	January 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applied new format 2. Updated hyperlinks throughout 3. Updated Consequence descriptors 4. Updated Risk Matrix table to align with SARA.H. 5. Updated title of Responsible Officer in footer.