

# MONASH UNIVERSITY

## PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS CONTROL LIBRARY

### Introduction to the Psychosocial Hazard Control Library

Reducing Psychosocial Hazards at Work: Practical Strategies and Controls

This resource offers examples of controls for each of the 15 psychosocial hazards identified at Monash University. The below provides an overview of each identified psychosocial hazard, along with a list of suggested controls to consider. These controls are designed to support effective planning, consultation, and risk reduction across Monash University.

#### Key Principles:

- **Not all hazards can be eliminated** — for example, organisational change is often necessary. The goal is to reduce the impact and support staff through well-designed controls.
- **What's reasonably practicable matters** — consider your operational constraints, resources, and timelines when selecting controls.
- **Alternative solutions may be more sustainable** — if increasing headcount isn't possible, consider boosting autonomy or streamlining tasks.
- **Hazards often overlap** — for example, poor change management can drive high job demands. Controls in one area often benefit others.
- **Tailor controls to your context** — controls should reflect how the hazard appears in your local environment.
- **Consultation is critical** — engaging directly with affected staff ensures the controls are relevant, realistic, and impactful.

#### Resources:

- WorkSafe Compliance Code [examples of psychosocial hazards, risks and controls](#)
- [Your Role In Supporting Others](#)

## Psychosocial Hazard: Poor Organisational Change Management

Poor organisational change management occurs when changes at work are not clearly planned, communicated, or supported. When handled poorly, change can trigger stress responses that if frequent or prolonged may lead to physical or psychological harm. For example, if a restructure is announced with little notice, unclear timelines, and no opportunity for staff input, it may result in confusion, anxiety, and reduced trust in leadership.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of consultation and communication, leading to fear and uncertainty</li> <li>• Excessive change causing fatigue and disengagement</li> <li>• Poor explanation of the purpose behind changes</li> <li>• Low staff involvement and engagement in change processes</li> <li>• Overwork during change implementation</li> <li>• Inadequate planning and coordination</li> <li>• Absence of feedback loops</li> <li>• Overwhelming information from multiple sources</li> <li>• Staff feeling excluded, frustrated, and undervalued</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change Management Planning and Leadership</li> <li>• Design consultation processes that suit your workforce and engage staff early in planning and implementation</li> <li>• Establish formal change management guidelines, including proactive psychosocial risk assessments</li> <li>• Introduce a dedicated change management role or function (e.g. change mentor) or change management teams to support staff through transitions</li> <li>• Ensure management structures and reporting lines are clearly defined (e.g. via an organisational chart)</li> <li>• Adjust work plans and performance targets to accommodate learning curves and transitional demands</li> <li>• Communication, Engagement, and Continuous Improvement</li> <li>• Communicate upcoming changes clearly and promptly, explaining the reasons and expected impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer accessible training, support, and updated work instructions to help staff perform new tasks or implement new roles, systems and/or procedures confidently.</li> <li>• Train supervisors and managers on the psychosocial impacts of change and effective communication strategies.</li> <li>• Share organisational change success stories to build confidence and reinforce positive outcomes.</li> <li>• Provide leadership development programs focused on managing change and supporting teams.</li> <li>• Provide change resilience training to all staff</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equip leaders with clear, timely communication materials for use during change periods</li><li>• Use structured consultation mechanisms such as open forums, toolbox talks, or town hall meetings to identify and address risks early</li><li>• Continue consultation post-implementation, including anonymous feedback channels and a centralised source of truth for updates and support</li><li>• Conduct retrospective meetings to reflect on lessons learned and celebrate achievements</li></ul>	
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## High Job Demands

Jobs often involve varying physical, mental, and emotional demands but when these demands are excessive, sustained, or consistently exceed a staff member's capacity, they become a hazard. For example, poorly designed work roles lead to tasks with an excessive administration burden which could be coupled with having to work with staff or members of the public who require high levels of emotional engagement.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustained and excessive workload due to shifting priorities and limited job control</li> <li>• Top-down decision-making not recognising lower-level demands</li> <li>• Extended hours during peak periods, including weekends</li> <li>• Reactive work patterns and increased absenteeism</li> <li>• High leave balances and chronic understaffing</li> <li>• Pressure to perform with fewer resources amid recruitment challenges</li> <li>• Inability to disconnect from work, leading to psychological strain</li> <li>• Unreasonable demands and inability to take leave</li> <li>• Students placing unreasonable or policy-defying demands on teaching staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Broader socialisation of workload maps to improve visibility and balance</li> <li>• Enhance visibility of work demands and resourcing across the organisation</li> <li>• Lessons from COVID shutdowns inform resourcing flexibility and repurposing</li> <li>• Use structured planning at annual, monthly, and weekly intervals to manage workload distribution</li> <li>• Apply rosters and peak period planning to anticipate demand</li> <li>• Monitor leave balances and establish blackout periods for critical times</li> <li>• Conduct additional MyPlan reviews and priority conversations throughout the year</li> <li>• Forecast workload demands and assign tasks based on individual capabilities</li> <li>• Reduce administrative burden and upskill staff to support workload sharing</li> <li>• Promote calendar ownership (e.g. “no agenda, no attend” and “no meeting Fridays”)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement regular 1:1 meeting to monitor workload and provide support</li> <li>• Provide leadership training to support effective workload conversations and negotiations and include an understanding of job-design fundamentals</li> <li>• Encourage regular reflection and innovation to improve job design and delivery</li> <li>• Provide stress management training</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage effective time management and clear prioritisation of tasks</li><li>• Use tools like Google Docs, ASANA, and MyPlan for transparent workload tracking</li><li>• Improve the means to secure funding for required work prior to distributing work or commencing a project</li><li>• Promote the Right to Disconnect through formal policy</li><li>• Provide access to time off in lieu or overtime</li></ul>	
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### Low Job Demands

Sustained low job demands such as monotonous or under-stimulating tasks can also pose a hazard, particularly when staff are unable to engage in meaningful work aligned with their skills. When this lack of challenge is severe, prolonged, or frequent, it can lead to disengagement, low motivation, and even psychological distress. For example, a highly trained technician who spends weeks performing repetitive data entry with no opportunity to use their expertise may feel undervalued and disconnected from their work.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneven task distribution within teams causing interpersonal friction</li> <li>• Team dynamics impacted by competition, low motivation, and career concerns</li> <li>• Imbalanced workload, some staff overloaded, others underutilised</li> <li>• Increased automation of tasks for some roles</li> <li>• Repeated assignment of tasks below staff expertise</li> <li>• Staff feeling under-stimulated and lacking role clarity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement job rotation to introduce task variety</li> <li>• Reduce monotonous and repetitive tasks through automation or outsourcing</li> <li>• Assign more challenging and diverse tasks to maintain engagement</li> <li>• Establish task allocation systems that align work with individual skills and interests</li> <li>• Create opportunities for ongoing skill development</li> </ul> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">Conduct career development conversations to support internal mobility and broader career goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide consistent feedback and recognition for staff efforts</li> <li>• Schedule regular feedback sessions to monitor engagement and identify signs of boredom</li> </ul>

### Low role clarity

Low role clarity occurs when workers are uncertain about their duties, performance standards, or workplace expectations often due to inconsistent guidance or conflicting instructions. This ambiguity can lead to stress, reduced confidence, and errors. For example, a team member who receives differing task priorities from multiple managers may feel pulled in opposite directions, resulting in confusion, delays, and frustration.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Burnout due to unclear roles and unsupported task expectations</li> <li>• Tasks assigned without access to skilled resources or adequate training</li> <li>• Staff working outside scope and experiencing overwork</li> <li>• Lack of clarity around team responsibilities including unclear expectations</li> <li>• Role misunderstandings and overlapping priorities</li> <li>• Conflicting instructions from multiple senior staff</li> <li>• Unclear reporting lines and task prioritisation</li> <li>• Insufficient feedback and performance management</li> <li>• Junior staff assigned irregular or inconsistent tasks</li> <li>• Training gaps as roles evolve over time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role Clarity &amp; Organisational Alignment</li> <li>• Define clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines to avoid overlap and dual accountability</li> <li>• Maintain up-to-date position descriptions that reflect evolving tasks and expectations</li> <li>• Map roles and tasks to ensure organisational alignment and reduce ambiguity</li> <li>• Document key tasks and processes to promote transparency and consistency</li> <li>• Use tools like MyPlan, climate surveys, and position descriptions to guide role clarification</li> <li>• Performance Management &amp; Development</li> <li>• Hold regular team meetings and 1:1 session to support role and team clarity</li> <li>• Link role objectives to MyPlan goals</li> <li>• Adjust time and task expectations to reflect capacity and priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage feedback-seeking behaviours to support conversations about role clarity (refer to leadership training on managing high job demands)</li> <li>- Offer mentoring and buddy systems to support onboarding and growth</li> <li>- Provide professional development strategies and role-specific training</li> </ul>

### Poor Organisational Justice

Poor organisational justice arises when decisions or interactions in the workplace are perceived as unfair, lacking transparency, or failing to treat individuals with respect. This can include biased implementation of policies, breaches of confidentiality, inequitable distribution of workloads or shifts, or ignoring inappropriate behaviour. For example, if a team member repeatedly observes underperformance from a colleague but sees no response from management while minor errors by others are penalised it can erode trust, lower morale, and create a perception of double standards.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceived nepotism and unequal salary or working conditions</li> <li>Inconsistent handling of poor performance (e.g. promotions after misconduct)</li> <li>Disparities between actual and perceived fairness, with perception driving psychological harm</li> <li>HR policies not consistently understood or applied</li> <li>Unconscious bias and misinterpretation of procedures Lack of consultation during internal policy changes</li> <li>Breaches of confidentiality regarding sensitive information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Consistent and Inclusive Leadership across the whole of the University</li> <li>Build supportive leadership capability to reduce favouritism and improve fairness</li> <li>Use KPIs and performance goals to guide leadership accountability</li> <li>Acknowledge structural divides (e.g., academic vs. professional staff) and address them through inclusive leadership practices</li> <li>Fair and Transparent Workplace Practices</li> <li>Design unbiased and transparent processes, policies, and procedures in consultation with staff</li> <li>Apply transparent criteria for promotions and performance management</li> <li>Ensure equitable access to resources, opportunities, and organisational systems</li> <li>Implement whistleblower programs and supportive mechanisms for reporting issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable two-way feedback loops and open communication channels through investigations</li> <li>Provide access to peer support staff and access to HSW or equivalent internal support persons eg; HR Business Partner</li> <li>Offer management training to ensure consistent and inclusive leadership practices</li> <li>Ensure supportive mechanisms are in place to help individuals recover from workplace conflict or unfair treatment</li> <li>Foster a positive workplace culture through inclusive training, especially around working with diverse groups</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve performance management systems to address underperformance fairly and consistently</li><li>• Implement quicker, clearer conflict resolution processes with reduced unconscious bias</li><li>• Ensure clear understanding and consistent communication of legislative, EBA, and policy requirements</li><li>• Enhance recruitment processes for consistency, fairness, and trust-building</li><li>• Use tools like the Monash HR policy suite, risk assessments, and mandatory training to support fairness</li></ul>	
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### Low Job Control

Low job control happens when workers have minimal autonomy over their tasks, schedules, or work methods. It often includes rigid oversight, unpredictable rosters, insecure contract arrangements, and being excluded from decisions that affect their job. For example, a casual staff required to work shifting hours with no input on scheduling and whose every task is closely monitored may feel powerless and undervalued, increasing stress and reducing engagement.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff working outside their position descriptions</li> <li>• Vague or unclear role descriptions</li> <li>• Limited staff involvement in decision-making processes</li> <li>• Staff feeling their input is undervalued</li> <li>• Micromanagement reducing staff autonomy</li> <li>• No flexibility in work arrangements</li> <li>• Lack of mutual trust between staff and leadership</li> <li>• Role creep—staff taking on additional roles without consent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow flexibility in how, when, and where work is completed, where applicable</li> <li>• Remove overly rigid procedures and unnecessary approval layers</li> <li>• Redesign jobs to provide staff with more control over their work</li> <li>• Implement flexible working policies and practices</li> <li>• Encourage staff input into task design, workflows, and work priorities</li> <li>• Support job crafting to align roles with individual strengths and preferences</li> <li>• Encourage leadership that enables trust and shared decision-making</li> <li>• Flatten hierarchical structures to reduce top-down control and increase collaboration</li> <li>• Encourage team-based decision-making and ownership of outcomes</li> <li>• Address role clarity and dual supervision challenges to improve autonomy and focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing leadership training to encourage leaders to empowering staff through flexibility and autonomy</li> <li>• Enable staff to self-pace and have choice in task execution</li> <li>• Facilitate regular 1:1 check-ins to align on priorities, deliverables, and timelines</li> <li>• Use regular team meetings and feedback sessions to strengthen engagement and connection</li> <li>• Train leaders to empower staff and avoid micromanagement</li> <li>• Promote open communication and two-way feedback</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build leadership capability to support flexible work, autonomy, and neurodiverse staff</li></ul>	
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## Poor Support

Poor support occurs when workers lack the emotional, practical, or resource-based assistance needed to perform their jobs effectively. This may include insufficient training, limited supervisor guidance, faulty equipment, or inadequate access to peer collaboration. For example, a new staff member expected to use complex software without proper instruction while also working in isolation and relying on outdated tools is more likely to experience frustration, errors, and reduced confidence.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clear articulation of hazards leads to staff perceiving poor support</li> <li>• Lack of communication from leadership to broader staff cohort</li> <li>• Lack of initial and ongoing training, including for managers</li> <li>• Inadequate financial support limits infrastructure and resourcing which impacts support perceptions</li> <li>• Poor managerial support within teams leads to ineffective team collaboration</li> <li>• Lack of support from leaders during times of change leading to other hazards such as high job demands</li> <li>• Absence of empathy and emotional support in working relationships with leadership and others in the team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure leaders have the knowledge to understand psychosocial hazards impacting work and performance and can implement; local level remediation strategies to support staff early.</li> <li>• Provide timely and adequate training, information or support to staff when onboarding or on an as needs basis to solve business issues.</li> <li>• Encourage regular one-on-one check-ins to support ongoing communication</li> <li>• Eliminate isolated or unsupported roles where workers are left without access to help or guidance</li> <li>• Create physical and/or virtual spaces that encourage collaboration and peer support</li> <li>• Foster a culture of teamwork through team-building activities and shared goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train leaders in effectively using EBA, HR, and compliance policies to guide fair decision-making</li> <li>• Upskill leaders in supportive leadership behaviours and relationship-based management and reinforce through mandatory training</li> <li>• Training leaders on psychosocial risk management and compromised mental health, teach leaders how to have a 'care conversation'</li> <li>• Offer structured feedback and clear behaviour and conduct expectations</li> <li>• Recognise and reward team efforts (e.g., vouchers or other incentives)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote reasonable workload expectations and consider the impact of rigid policies on staff wellbeing</li></ul> <p>Implement performance and development tools (e.g., MyPlan/MyDevelopment) to record realistic goals and support staff growth</p>	
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### Low Reward and Recognition

Low reward and recognition occur when there's a mismatch between the effort workers put in and the acknowledgment or benefits, they receive whether through praise, feedback, growth opportunities, or fair compensation. This imbalance can leave staff feeling undervalued or overlooked. For example, a team member who consistently works overtime to meet deadlines but receives no feedback, thanks, or opportunity for advancement may begin to feel demotivated, disengaged, and less committed to their role.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff feel like “just a number,” leading to low morale and second-guessing decisions</li> <li>• Limited awards for large work groups create equity and transparency concerns</li> <li>• Restrictive eligibility criteria and unstandardised processes in reward and recognition programs discourage participation</li> <li>• Formal recognition only occurs at Faculty/Division level; process is complex and discouraging</li> <li>• Local and peer-to-peer recognition exists but lacks broader support or visibility</li> <li>• Limited development opportunities for professional staff</li> <li>• Staff often change roles for promotion, creating disconnect between local and faculty recognition</li> <li>• Lack of school support for local recognition efforts</li> <li>• Small teams may focus on problems rather than recognition and rewards (R&amp;R)</li> <li>• R&amp;R systems do not support isolated staff or those disconnected from management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove inconsistent or unfair reward systems and introduce structured, transparent, and equitable recognition programs with clear criteria</li> <li>• Use inclusive recognition strategies that cater to diverse staff preferences (private, public, team-based)</li> <li>• Embed recognition into leadership practices and organisational rituals (e.g., all-hands meetings, annual awards, local events) and publicise rubrics and criteria used for evaluating rewards to ensure fairness</li> <li>• Develop frameworks for professional development and recognition, especially for non-academic staff</li> <li>• Build awareness of internal award opportunities (faculty, VC awards) and support staff applications and increase the variety and value of prizes, including non-monetary rewards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and Organisational Support for Recognition</li> <li>• Train leaders and managers on fair, meaningful, and empathetic reward and feedback practices</li> <li>• Increase leadership empathy and understanding of staff workloads and local business contexts</li> <li>• Use performance management tools like MyPlan to integrate recognition and development goals</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote leadership engagement and presence in recognition activities</li><li>• Provide institutional support for meaningful recognition practices, acknowledging time and emotional investment</li><li>• Implement tools like “shout out” buttons, peer-to-peer kudos cards, and customer feedback channels</li><li>• Foster a culture where staff feel empowered to share accomplishments and provide feedback</li></ul>	
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## Exposure to Traumatic Events Material, or Content

Exposure to traumatic events in the workplace can occur through direct involvement, witnessing, or even indirect contact such as reading or hearing about distressing incidents. These experiences are more likely to be perceived as traumatic when they are sudden, uncontrollable, life-threatening, or involve intentional harm. For example, an emergency services operator who regularly listens to calls involving violence or loss of life may experience emotional distress over time, particularly without adequate managerial or psychological support.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical emergencies and witnessing injured colleagues during and after incidents</li> <li>• Social media fallout from public or controversial events</li> <li>• Clinical trial complexities, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placebo reactions</li> <li>• Patient benefits and outcomes</li> <li>• Demographics of trial participants</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use of animals in research and teaching contexts</li> <li>• On-campus environmental risks, such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protests</li> <li>• High-speed cycling and other unpredictable activities</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Emotionally sensitive teaching content affecting both staff and students</li> <li>• Mental health first aiders managing acute and distressing incidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redesign jobs to minimise exposure to traumatic content where feasible</li> <li>• Rotate work assignments to provide breaks from emotionally demanding roles</li> <li>• Use technology (e.g., file flagging) to identify and limit exposure to distressing material</li> <li>• Implement recruitment practices focusing on person-job fit and realistic job previews</li> <li>• Provide safe physical and psychological spaces for workers and managers to decompress</li> <li>• Establish trauma-informed protocols and promote psychological first aid principles</li> <li>• Maintain emergency procedures, drills, duress alarms, and risk assessments</li> <li>• Embed risk management and disaster planning with regular SOP audits</li> <li>• Develop clear escalation maps and communication plans for rapid response</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equip management and staff with tools and authority to respond sensitively on the spot</li> <li>• Provide education to staff on emotional intelligence and the implications of exposure to vicarious and direct trauma.</li> <li>• Conduct reflective practice for high-risk groups</li> <li>• Provide psychological first aid training to staff in high-risk areas to support check-ins after traumatic or stressful incidents</li> <li>• Ensure any Train first aiders are aware of trauma-sensitive practices</li> <li>• Link staff to external supports and simplify reporting options</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foster collaboration across teams to share management approaches and viewpoints on managing exposure to trauma</li></ul>	
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## Remote and Isolated work

Remote or isolated work refers to situations where staff perform their duties without immediate access to support due to location, time, or the nature of the job. This includes working in areas with limited communication, delayed emergency response, or where staff are physically separated from others sometimes for extended periods. For example, a technician working alone on a remote mining site with restricted internet access and no nearby coworkers may face heightened safety risks and feelings of isolation if support or emergencies arise.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online teaching and remote fieldwork create disconnection and strain</li> <li>• Operations across multiple campuses and time zones reduce cohesion</li> <li>• Unequal resource allocation and travel demands increase fatigue</li> <li>• Staff working alone after hours or opening offices solo</li> <li>• 'Island tasks' performed in isolation limit team engagement</li> <li>• Limited supervisor availability outside standard hours</li> <li>• Feelings of being unsupported during non-core work periods</li> <li>• Restricted access to food and communal spaces</li> <li>• Fragmented work experience due to lack of shared environments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design roles to minimise isolation and promote co-location where possible</li> <li>• Structure work rosters to avoid lone shifts or long periods without contact</li> <li>• Redesign work to be performed in pairs or teams where practicable</li> <li>• For virtual staff, introduce regular virtual team meetings and scheduled wellbeing check-ins</li> <li>• Provide mobile devices and digital tools to improve connectivity for remote staff</li> <li>• Offer virtual team-building activities to maintain social connection in dispersed teams</li> <li>• Provide training on digital communication and remote work best practices</li> <li>• Recognising Contributions and Supporting Development</li> <li>• Establish a structured and inclusive reward and recognition framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide one-on-one feedback and development conversations regularly</li> <li>• Celebrate individual and team milestones (e.g. birthdays, coffee runs) to build morale</li> <li>• Maintain ongoing check-ins with isolated staff to detect and respond to distress early</li> <li>• Leverage peer-to-peer kudos, customer feedback, and local awards to rebuild connection and motivation after challenges</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use tools like MyPlan to document development goals, feedback, and recognition</li><li>• Rotate reward panel members and prevent back-to-back wins to ensure fairness</li><li>• Provide support for award applications and recognition submissions</li><li>• Ensure equal access to professional development for remote/isolated staff</li></ul>	
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### Poor Environmental Conditions

Poor environmental conditions refer to work settings that expose staff to physically unpleasant or hazardous elements, leading to stress or potential harm. These may include extreme temperatures, excessive noise, poor air quality, or exposure to biological hazards. For example, a cleaner repeatedly tasked with handling bodily fluids in an area without proper ventilation or protective gear may face both physical health risks and elevated psychological strain.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No access to tearooms or ergonomic furniture</li> <li>• Unmet aesthetic preferences (e.g. lack of windows, poor lighting)</li> <li>• Inability to control environmental settings at an individual level</li> <li>• Poor hygiene practices and inadequate maintenance</li> <li>• Disruptions from ongoing construction and noise</li> <li>• Buildings not upgraded or unsuitable for purpose</li> <li>• Essential tools/facilities out of service for extended periods</li> <li>• Limited carpark access during graduations and peak periods</li> <li>• Noise from infrastructure and unresolved hazmat concerns</li> <li>• Unclear accountability for building-related issues</li> <li>• Poor temperature control and substandard air quality</li> <li>• High indoor temperatures (29–30°C) causing discomfort</li> <li>• Lack of private spaces for sensitive conversations</li> <li>• Inadequate extraction systems in workshops/labs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular environmental audits and ergonomic assessments</li> <li>• Remove physical hazards and provide appropriate PPE for environmental conditions</li> <li>• Ensure hazard reporting systems (SARAH) are accessible, transparent, and traceable and use B&amp;P systems for HSW reporting and access requests</li> <li>• Ensure timely triage of reported hazards to prioritise and resolve high-risk situations and maintain transparency in responses to staff-reported issues, especially repeated concerns</li> <li>• Redesign work areas for ergonomic comfort (e.g. adjustable furniture and workstations), improve lighting, ventilation, and noise control in all workspaces</li> <li>• Implement policies that ensure regular breaks and promote safe postures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train all staff on hazard awareness and escalation procedures</li> <li>• Build team morale and shared responsibility through inclusive discussions on safety</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rodent infestations, poor cleaning standards, and outdated bathrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide flexible and hybrid work arrangements to improve comfort and privacy when needed</li> <li>• Appoint and empower Health &amp; Safety Representatives (HSRs)</li> <li>• Allocate adequate budgets for infrastructure and environmental improvements</li> <li>• Use physical signage to reinforce safety standards and expectations</li> <li>• Conduct regular staff surveys, town halls, and wellbeing check-ins to monitor emerging environmental risks and support needs.</li> </ul>	
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## Bullying

Work-related bullying involves repeated and unreasonable behaviour that creates a risk to health and safety. This can include both intentional and unintentional actions, such as using offensive or abusive language, giving unjustified criticism, excluding someone from work activities, or withholding essential information. It may also involve setting unrealistic deadlines, assigning tasks that are too easy or too difficult for the person's role, or failing to provide necessary guidance or resources. For example, a worker who is routinely singled out during meetings, denied access to key project updates, and set up to fail by being given conflicting instructions may experience significant stress and feel undermined in their role

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colleagues withholding information (e.g., meeting details) as a form of exclusion or control</li> <li>• Gossip and rumour spreading through weaponised language and false accusations</li> <li>• Repeated and sustained micromanagement including Surveillance and excessive demands for updates</li> <li>• Deliberate exclusion and being ignored</li> <li>• Put-downs and being yelled at</li> <li>• Unreasonable instructions and excessive practical jokes</li> <li>• Team pressure and coercive dynamics</li> <li>• Power imbalances—both top-down and bottom-up perceived to be root cause problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate excessive power imbalances through thoughtful role design and clear responsibilities - Link KPIs to positive workplace behaviours and Code of Conduct adherence</li> <li>• Ensure leadership visibility and commitment through forums, workshops, and active role modelling and involve staff and student representatives in culture-building efforts where applicable.</li> <li>• Design roles to minimise ambiguity, interpersonal conflict, and unsustainable workloads and plan at the department level to ensure role clarity, realistic task prioritisation, and equitable resourcing to reduce chronic stress.</li> <li>• Raise awareness about available support systems including early intervention, and how to access support and promote formal reporting channels (e.g. SARAH) and communicate anonymous versus non-anonymous reporting.</li> <li>• Ensure clear issue resolution pathways, including when multiple staff are involved</li> </ul>	Provide training and deliver in an ongoing manner, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bystander training</li> <li>• Leadership development</li> <li>• Cultural competence and inclusion</li> <li>• Respectful behaviours and ethical teamwork</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Share case studies to help staff recognise inappropriate behaviour and available responses</li> <li>• Encourage team-building activities and social events to build cohesion and trust</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide clear codes of conduct for staff and students, such as implementing zero-tolerance policies on harassment, bullying, and discrimination and ensure policies are effectively implemented, not just documented</li><li>• Monitor workplace culture using tools like PULSE surveys and Monash HR data controls and provide access to HSW, HR departments, and union support - Make survey results transparent and act on findings to strengthen trust</li><li>• Reinforce expectations via ongoing communication from leadership and promote inclusion through equity, diversity, and cultural safety initiatives and reduce power imbalances.</li><li>• Provide alternate or multiple reporting lines to ensure psychological safety when raising concerns</li></ul>	
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## Harassment

Workplace harassment involves unwelcome or offensive behaviour whether a one-off incident or repeated pattern that humiliates, intimidates, or offends someone based on a protected attribute such as sex, pregnancy or breastfeeding status, race, age, marital or domestic status, sexuality, or disability, as outlined in the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991. It can be carried out by a colleague, a group of co-workers, or someone in a position of authority, and is assessed by how the behaviour is experienced not necessarily the intent behind it. For example, if a female staff is repeatedly subjected to inappropriate comments about her sexuality and is questioned why she doesn't have a husband yet.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A female academic is repeatedly asked by colleagues why she doesn't have children</li> <li>• A transgender staff is consistently misgendered by peers and supervisors, even after correction</li> <li>• A mature-age professional staff member is told they're "Too old to keep up with tech" during meetings</li> <li>• A same-sex couple working at the university is subject to gossip or inappropriate questions about their relationship</li> <li>• A staff member is repeatedly overlooked for promotion due to assumptions about their marital status or caregiving responsibilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed respect, inclusion, and psychological safety into recruitment, promotion, and performance management systems</li> <li>• Use equity-focused hiring practices and inclusion training committees in decision-making</li> <li>• Provide confidential, safe reporting channels with clear response protocols and use clear accountability processes to follow up on reported incidents and maintain trust in the system</li> <li>• Integrate respectful workplace behaviours into job expectations and performance reviews (e.g. via MyPlan)</li> <li>• Provide clear codes of conduct for staff and students, such as implementing zero-tolerance policies on harassment, bullying, and discrimination and ensure policies are effectively implemented, not just documented</li> <li>• Use tools like SARAH (for reporting staff issues) and ProFESS (for student-related support in Medicine)</li> </ul>	<p>Provide training and deliver in an ongoing manner, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bystander training</li> <li>• Leadership development</li> <li>• Cultural competence and inclusion</li> <li>• Respectful behaviours, ethical teamwork</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Encourage 1:1 conversation between staff and supervisors to surface concerns early</li> <li>• Support supervisors with training in handling interpersonal issues, psychological safety, and early intervention</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure leadership visibility and commitment through forums, workshops, and active role modelling</li><li>• Monitor workplace culture using tools like PULSE surveys and Monash HR data controls and provide access to HSW, HR departments, and union support - Make survey results transparent and act on findings to strengthen trust</li><li>• Promote visible leadership behaviour that consistently models respect and prioritises staff wellbeing</li></ul>	
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## Violence & Aggression

Violence or aggression at work involves any situation where a person is threatened, abused, or physically assaulted in connection with their job. This can come from anyone in the workplace colleagues, clients, customers, patients, or the public and may include verbal abuse, intimidation, or physical attacks. For example, a retail worker who is shouted at, threatened, or pushed by a frustrated customer during a dispute over store policy may suffer both emotional distress and physical risk, especially if such behaviour is ongoing or not adequately addressed

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats and inappropriate comments made on social media</li> <li>• Road rage incident in the workplace carpark</li> <li>• Physical aggression involving thrown objects</li> <li>• Destruction of objects and equipment</li> <li>• Offensive student artwork targeting specific groups, dismissed as artistic expression</li> <li>• Micro-aggressions including curt communication, eye rolling, tone, swearing, and personal comments</li> <li>• Confrontations by staff (e.g., blocking office doors to prevent exit)</li> <li>• Aggressive behaviour from patrons (e.g., in library settings)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct job redesign and root-cause analysis to minimise exposure to high-risk or triggering situations</li> <li>• Develop clear escalation pathways and remove individuals who pose ongoing risk to others</li> <li>• Install physical safety measures: secure entry systems, CCTV, and personal duress alarms</li> <li>• Offer remote or contactless service options to reduce physical exposure where feasible</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient rostering to avoid staff working in isolation or unsafe conditions</li> <li>• Increase staff understanding of their rights and the available support systems. Including the use SARAH for transparent and traceable hazard and incident reporting</li> <li>• Publish incident investigation outcomes to build organisational accountability</li> <li>• Implement consistent safety protocols across all campuses, including travel controls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver targeted training to senior leaders to model safe, inclusive, and respectful behaviour</li> <li>• Provide meaningful training in Conflict resolution and de-escalation</li> <li>• Enforce mandatory training modules with regular refreshers</li> <li>• Encourage participation in wellbeing campaigns such as White Ribbon Day</li> <li>• Support recovery through quiet spaces, coffee catchups, and stress-relief initiatives (e.g. libraries)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruit visible and active Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) with regular staff engagement</li><li>• Apply policies, procedures, and local guidelines (e.g. HSW, HR, SCU to structure incident response</li><li>• Encourage proactive engagement with HR or leadership regarding workplace safety concerns</li><li>• Provide alternate or multiple reporting lines to ensure psychological safety when raising concerns</li></ul>	
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## Poor Workplace Relationships

Poor workplace relationships or interpersonal conflict arise when interactions between colleagues, supervisors, or others in the work environment are marked by tension, disrespect, or unresolved disagreements. This may involve frequent arguments, dismissive behaviour, or ongoing disputes about tasks, processes, or client interactions.

For example, two team members who constantly clash over project responsibilities refusing to collaborate or communicate constructively can disrupt workflow, lower morale, and create a toxic team atmosphere.

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<p>Poor workplace relationships stemming from:</p> <p>Oversized teams leading to communication breakdowns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor direction, low performance, and instability within roles</li> <li>• Lack of trust, unresolved conflict, and low morale</li> <li>• Negative competition and uneven workload distribution</li> <li>• Misunderstandings, poor management, and lack of accountability</li> <li>• Personality clashes</li> <li>• Limited peer communication and weak leadership presence</li> <li>• Poor behaviour not addressed by leaders</li> <li>• Misaligned expectations around work habits and capacity</li> <li>• Low collaboration and disrespect for differing opinions</li> <li>• Features of low-level bullying, harassment have negative impact on team interactions</li> <li>• Disagreements over remote vs. on-site work arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed respect, inclusion, and psychological safety into recruitment, promotion, and performance management systems</li> <li>• Use equity-focused hiring practices and inclusion training committees in decision-making</li> <li>• Provide confidential, safe reporting channels with clear response protocols and Use clear accountability processes to follow up on reported incidents and maintain trust in the system</li> <li>• Integrate respectful workplace behaviours into job expectations and performance reviews (e.g. via MyPlan)</li> <li>• Provide clear codes of conduct for staff and students, such as implementing zero-tolerance policies on harassment, bullying, and discrimination and ensure policies are effectively implemented, not just documented</li> <li>• Use tools like SARAH (for reporting staff issues) and ProFESS (for student-related support in Medicine)</li> <li>• Ensure leadership visibility and commitment through forums, workshops, and active role modelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure leaders model positive behaviours and intervene early when issues arise</li> <li>• Build leader and manager capability through early training and continued development</li> <li>• Provide staff with training in conflict resolution, communication, and respectful relationships</li> <li>• Offer mentoring opportunities to support individual development and peer support</li> <li>• Promote understanding of diverse working and communication styles</li> <li>• Support upskilling for long-term staff to increase engagement and adaptability</li> <li>• Create opportunities for informal peer connection (e.g. tea rooms, toolbox talks, “cooler conversations”)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor workplace culture using tools like PULSE surveys and Monash HR data controls and provide access to HSW, HR departments, and union support - Make survey results transparent and act on findings to strengthen trust</li><li>• Promote visible leadership behaviour that consistently models respect and prioritises staff wellbeing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organise social and wellbeing events to rebuild connection and support post-conflict</li></ul>
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### Sexual Harassment includ gender-based violence

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual behaviour, whether physical, verbal, or written that creates a risk to someone’s health and safety. It can involve a single incident or repeated actions and may occur in person, online, or via messaging platforms. Examples include sexual comments, leering, inappropriate touching, repeated requests for dates or sex, or the sharing of explicit images or messages. Even indirect exposure, such as overhearing sexualised conversations in a virtual meeting can cause harm and is equally unacceptable. Gendered violence is any behaviour, directed at, or affecting a person because of their sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, or because they do not adhere to socially prescribed gender roles

Workplace Examples	Controls (organisational level)	Controls (individual level to build capability and resilience)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate jokes, comments, emails, and physical contact</li> <li>• Use of gendered language and unconscious bias</li> <li>• Women reported harsher criticism compared to male colleagues</li> <li>• Behaviours often normalised or accepted, reflecting poor workplace standards</li> <li>• Bystander inaction and lack of socially safe spaces or tools</li> <li>• Cultural expectations, perceptions, and generational differences influencing behaviour</li> <li>• Staff told to “smile” or comments made about hiring to “achieve gender balance”</li> <li>• Sexual harassment and team members ganging up on individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforce mandatory training (e.g. induction, Respect at Monash, Equal Opportunity) with regular refreshers</li> <li>• Maintain clear policies, procedures, and legislation to support safe and respectful conduct</li> <li>• Leadership to demonstrate visible commitment to reducing sexual and gender-based violence</li> <li>• Regularly publish the university's annual sexual harassment report to maintain transparency</li> <li>• Minimise or eliminate alcohol at social events to reduce risk of inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>• Use safe reporting tools (e.g. SARAH, B Safe app) and provide clear escalation protocols</li> <li>• Remove gender-identifying information from job and grant applications to reduce bias</li> <li>• Eliminate known environmental risks (e.g. unsafe or isolated locations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training on conduct, respectful behaviours, and workplace expectations</li> <li>• Encourage staff to use B Safe app for awareness and incident reporting</li> <li>• Encourage conversations about values and conduct to support ongoing behavioural learning</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Include consequence management for breaches of conduct to ensure accountability</li><li>• Maintain accessible reporting mechanisms (e.g. SARAH, B Safe) for incidents</li><li>• Have escalation processes in place to support resolution of serious issues</li><li>• Ensure support from the Safer Community Unit for those affected by misconduct or harm</li></ul>	
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**For more information please visit:**

- [Monash Psychosocial webpage](#)
- [Support available to staff and students](#)