

Risk Management Guidelines - Ergonomics and Manual Handling

Introduction

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](#).

When to do an ergonomic or manual handling 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

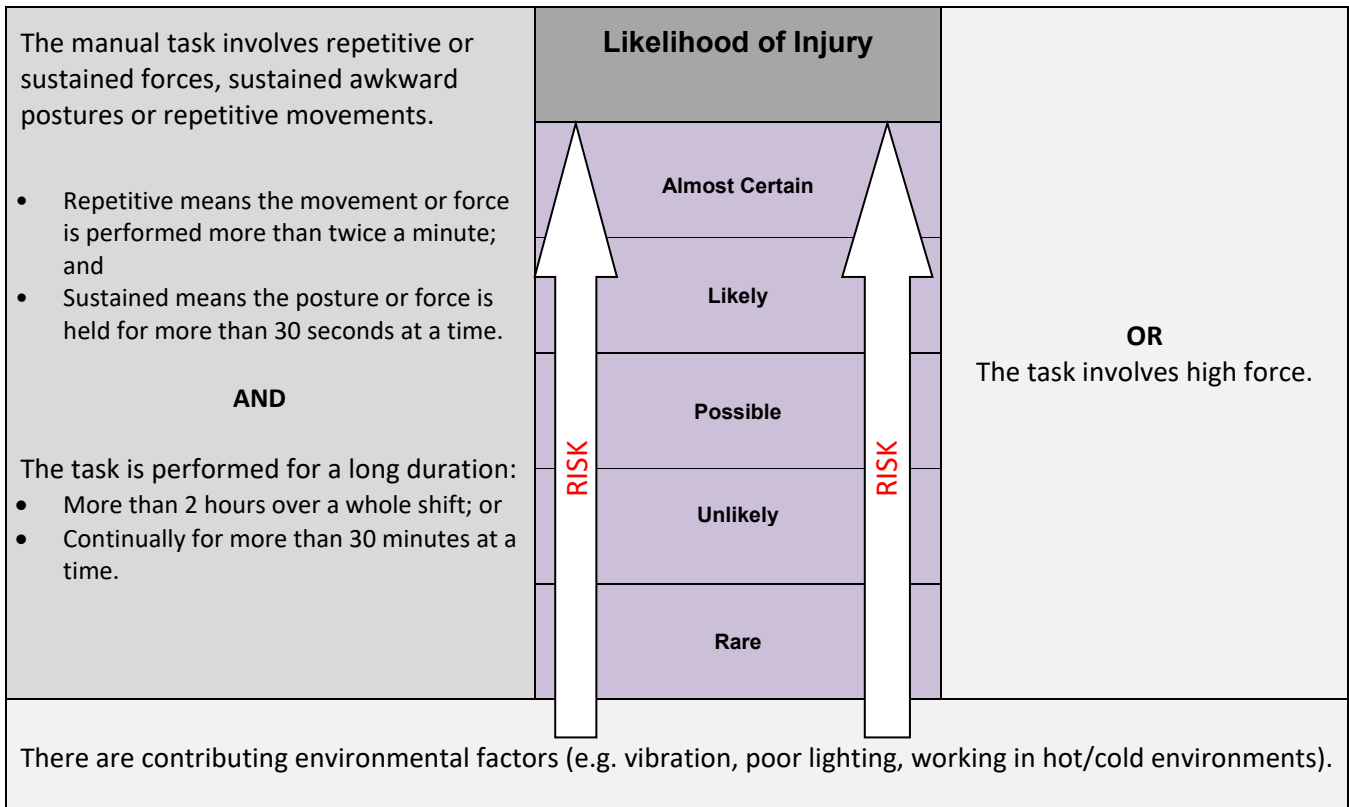
[Tutorial videos](#) on how to use SARAH to complete risk assessments, are available on the [Risk Management and Safe Work Instructions](#) page.

If the activity 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 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:
 - a. Monash University [Ergonomics](#) and [Manual Handling](#) webpages;
 - b. WorkSafe [Compliance code: Hazardous manual handling](#);
 - c. Worksafe [Officewise: A guide to health and safety in the office handbook](#);

- d. Safe Work Australia [Lifting, pushing and pulling \(manual handling\) page](#); and
 - e. 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 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	First aid treatment required for a minor injury	Medical treatment may be required	Serious injury requiring admission to hospital	Fatality or permanent disabling injury
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.

		Consequence				
		←				→
		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

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:

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.