

Postgraduate Research Hazards and Risks Protocol

Purpose and Scope

To ensure that any risks or hazards involved in postgraduate research, as they relate to health and safety, are identified and managed. Some research activities undertaken on campus may already be covered by Faculty Health, Safety and Wellbeing processes.

Definitions

Harm: is illness or injury, including physical or mental harm caused by work- related stress.

Serious Harm: Any condition that amounts to or results in permanent loss of bodily function or temporary severe loss of bodily function as defined in the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 as amended.

Hazard: an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation or substance that is an actual or potential source of harm and includes a situation where a person's behaviour is an actual or potential source of harm.

Significant Hazard: means a hazard that is an actual or potential cause of source of:

- Serious Harm; or
- Harm being harm that is more than trivial, the severity of the effects on any person depend (entirely or among other things) on the extent or frequency of the person's exposure to the hazard; or
- Harm that is not easily detectable, until a significant time after exposure to the hazard.

Risk: Unplanned event which if it occurs may impact the achievement of the intended research. Therefore, risk merely reflects the "uncertainty" inherent to the research.

Risk Management: The process of identifying, assessing and managing "uncertainty". Risk Management is therefore seen as just good management – as such it is dynamic and integrated into day-to-day decision-making processes.

Application

Managing hazards and risks is an ongoing process that needs attention over time, specifically when there are any changes to the initial research proposal, especially where the changes may increase the risk or introduction of different hazards.

Hazard and Risk Identification

Identify reasonably foreseeable hazards and risks that may pose risks to health and safety. This is done by completing the '[Postgraduate Research Hazards and Risks Assessment](#)' template. When the template is completed, it is to be held by the student and/or supervisor and is not required to be submitted to the Faculty Postgraduate Office. It is expected that the assessment may need to be revisited and updated as the research develops.

Evaluate Risks Where Required

Compare estimated risk levels and compare the balance between potential benefits and adverse outcomes. Appendix 1 of the *Postgraduate Research Hazards and risks Assessment* details a list of risks and hazards to consider, although this is not an exhaustive list.

Manage Risk

Elimination of risk where possible. Where risk cannot be eliminated, it will be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable. The AUT [Health, Safety and Wellbeing](#) team (HSW) are available to discuss risks and hazards and offer

recommendations on how best to mitigate these risks. It is recommended where high risk has been identified that this be discussed with the HSW team.

Outcome

To ensure that any risks or hazards involved in postgraduate research are identified and minimised with mitigation methods noted.

Related Documents

[HSW Risk Assessment and Management Procedure](#) - Staff Access Only

[HSW Risk Assessment and Management Protocol](#) - Staff Access Only

[Postgraduate Research Hazards and Risks Assessment](#)

Review

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