1. **Purpose:**
To outline the methodology by which Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) identifies, assesses, controls and monitors Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks throughout the organisation. This methodology will be used to prioritise risks and to assist in the allocation of resources for the selection and implementation of required risk controls (treatments).

2. **Scope:**
This procedure applies to all DEECD workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. **References:**
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- Victorian Government Risk Management Framework 2007

4. **Definitions:**
- **Deputy Health and Safety Representative:** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a Designated Work Group (DWG) on matters relating to OHS in the absence of the HSR.
- **Hazard:** Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness or loss.
- **Health and Safety Representative (HSR):** An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to OHS.
- **Inherent risk rating:** The initial risk level of a hazard prior to the application of any controls.
- **Management OHS Nominee:** A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.
- **Nominated Employee:** Employee nominated by management to complete specific OHS tasks (this can be the health and safety representative, a member of the health and safety committee or another employee in the workplace).
- **OHS Committee:** A cooperative forum for employers and employees to work together on OHS issues.
- **OHS Risk Register:** A register of the OHS risks identified at the workplace, along with the inherent risk rating, current controls and residual risk ratings.
- **OHS Risk:** A description of the likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing injury or illness.
- **OHS Risk assessment:** The process of determining the likelihood and consequence of injury, disease or illness or damage arising from exposure to a hazard.
Risk control (Risk treatment): Measures that eliminate or reduce OHS risks associated with hazards using the “hierarchy of controls”, where elimination of the hazard will be the first strategy considered.

Residual risk rating: The level of risk remaining after controls (risk treatments) have been selected and implemented.

Workplace Manager: The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

5. Responsibility:

Workplace Manager and/or their Management OHS Nominees are responsible for:

- Providing and utilising resources to implement, maintain and review OHS risk control (treatments) measures in the workplace;
- Ensuring OHS risks in the workplace are routinely identified, in consultation with relevant persons, including reviewing existing OHS risks and new risks that may be introduced when work practices, substances or premises change;
- Ensuring that employees, contractors and visitors have had relevant information, instruction and training in the principles of OHS risk management;
- Reviewing OHS risk controls (treatments) to ensure they are implemented and effective; and
- Maintaining records of the OHS risk assessment process in the OHS Risk Register.

Nominated employees are responsible for:

- Participating in the identification and assessment of OHS risks in the workplace;
- Reviewing reported hazards and incidents to identify OHS risks;
- Conducting OHS risk assessments in accordance with the risk management methodology; and
- Identifying, documenting and implementing controls (treatments) to eliminate or reduce OHS risk in the workplace.

Employees, contractors and visitors are responsible for:

- Participating in training as provided;
- Reporting hazards and incidents in the workplace;
- Advising relevant Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominees where those risks need reviewing or inclusion on the OHS Risk Register;
- Completing OHS risk assessments as required;
- Implementing OHS risk controls and reporting back on the suitability of those risk controls (treatments) in reducing risk; and
- Following safe work procedures and instructions.

6. Procedure:

6.1 OHS Risk Register

Note: Generic OHS Risk Registers were developed for each of the four types of workplaces below. These can be modified to meet the needs of the school or workplace.

- Primary;
- Secondary;
- Specialist Setting; and
A user guide is available as a separate worksheet in the OHS Risk Register. The guide outlines how to use and update the register, including sorting risks by area, location, risk rating and status.

6.2 Initial Review of the OHS Risk Register
The Workplace Manager is to initially consult relevant persons when first reviewing the OHS Risk Register for the workplace. These should include:

- The Management OHS Nominee;
- Nominated employees;
- Domain Managers involved in the task, activity or area;
- Employees who either undertake the task, activity or work in the area or who may be affected by the outcomes of the risk assessment; and
- Relevant OHS Committee member or HSR.

Advice may be sought from the DEECD Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisors or the DEECD OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715.

During the initial review, the Workplace Manager and/or the Management OHS Nominee should review each entry for applicability to their workplace (delete only if not appropriate i.e. if specific equipment or tasks are not present or conducted at the workplace) and list any additional hazards identified in the workplace.

All new hazards identified either during the initial review, or on an ongoing basis, are to be dealt with in accordance with the risk management methodology outlined in section 6.5 of this procedure.

Once the OHS Risk Register is finalised, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominees are to ensure the controls defined within the Register are implemented via the allocation of responsibility and resources.

The Workplace Manager and/or the Management OHS Nominee is then responsible for making sure the OHS Risk Register is maintained on an ongoing basis as outlined in Section 6.3 of this procedure.

6.3 On-going Review of the OHS Risk Register
The Workplace Manager is to review the OHS Risk Register:

- When first implementing the OHS Risk Register in the workplace;
- Annually;
- When hazards are reported;
- When incidents or near misses occur;
- When controls (treatments) are not effective and need review;
- When new substances or plant and equipment are introduced into the workplace; and
- When new or additional information regarding a hazard, relevant to workers, is made available or communicated via the regulatory authority (WorkSafe).

If a control (treatment) has not been implemented by the intended completion date the Workplace Manager is to identify the reasons for the delay and, in consultation with relevant parties, determine
an alternate date and update the OHS Risk Register accordingly.

6.4 Maintaining Records

The Workplace Manager and/or Management Nominee is responsible for keeping a record of the site specific OHS Risk Register and making sure it is available to all relevant persons (e.g. OHS Committee members, OHS Representatives, employees, contractors, visitors and external auditors etc) as required by this procedure.

6.5 Guidance on the DEECD Risk Management Methodology

6.5.1 General

DEECD requires Workplace Managers and/or Management OHS Nominee to implement a risk management approach to managing the health and safety of persons in the workplace to ensure that:

- hazards that persons may be exposed to in the workplace are identified;
- an assessment is conducted to determine the risk (likelihood and consequence of injury or harm to a person) resulting from such hazards; and
- consideration is given to the means by which the risk may be reduced and implement such mechanisms to eliminate, or if elimination is not reasonably practicable, control that risk.

The DEECD risk management process is represented in the diagram below (please note, this diagram is a simple representation of the risk management process given in AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009).

```
STEP 1 Identify the hazards within the workplace (Risk Identification)
STEP 2 Assess the risk (Risk Analysis/Evaluation)
STEP 3 Eliminate or control the risk (Risk treatment)
STEP 4 Review controls (Monitoring and review)
```

6.5.2 Step 1 – Identification of Hazards

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee has a number of triggers and sources of information that would require the review of the OHS Risk Register. These include:

- Identifying hazards prior to purchasing substances or plant and equipment;
- Audits;
- Workplace inspections;
- Consultation with health and safety representatives and employees;
- Hazard reports from EduSafe;
- Health surveillance;
- Observations during work;
- Task analysis;
- Incident reporting and investigation; and
- When implementing specific hazard management procedures e.g. Manual Handling Procedure.

Any hazard not appearing on the OHS Risk Register is to be added onto the register by the Workplace Manager and/or Management Nominee. The hazard condition is to be clearly articulated on the register to enable a correct assessment of the risk level (Section 6.5.3 of this procedure) and required controls (Section 6.5.4 of this procedure) to reduce the risk level.

Associated hazard and risk management forms (e.g. Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form, Manual Handling Hazard Management Form, Workplace Inspection Checklists) are to be used for specific hazards identified.

6.5.3 Step 2 – Assessing the Risk
Risk Assessment is the process of determining the ‘level of risk’ associated with a hazard.

All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with health and safety representatives and affected employees, including:
- the OHS Committee or nominated employee (where relevant);
- other relevant employees, contractors and visitors; and
- with the use of relevant reference material e.g. Material Safety Data Sheets for chemicals.

In determining the ‘level of risk’, the following must be taken into account:
- the experience of the person exposed to the hazard;
- the frequency and/or duration of the person’s exposure to the hazard;
- any existing control measures (treatments);
- contributing environmental conditions; and
- pre-existing hazards.

Where a hazard is similar for different work areas a single generic assessment of one representative work situation may suffice e.g. using whiteboard cleaner in various classrooms at a school. In this case, it is the responsibility of the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee to ensure that the risk assessment is valid for each of the work areas to which it is intended to apply.

Risk assessments are to be documented using hazard specific hazard/risk management forms outlined in each OHS procedure. If no hazard specific management form is specified, the Task Based Risk Management Form may be utilised using the following risk matrix a risk score to each hazard:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The event may occur at sometime, say once in 10 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The event should occur at sometime, say once in 3 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likely 4 The event will probably occur in most circumstances, say once a year.
Almost Certain 5 The event is expected to occur in most circumstances, say many times a month.

Consequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Injury/ill health requiring first aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Injury/ill health requiring medical attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Injury/ill health requiring hospital admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fatality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Risk level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Insignificant</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Severe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost Certain</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Extreme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key

- **Extreme:** Notify Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee immediately. Corrective actions should be taken immediately. Cease associated activity.
- **High:** Notify Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee immediately. Corrective actions should be taken within 48 hours of notification.
- **Medium:** Notify Nominated employee, HSR / OHS Committee. Nominated employee, OHS Representative / OHS Committee is to follow up that corrective action is taken within 7 days.
- **Low:** Notify Nominated employee, HSR / OHS Committee. Nominated employee, HSR / OHS Committee is to follow up that corrective action is taken within a reasonable time.

Using the Matrix

1. Evaluate the **consequences** of a risk occurring according to the ratings in the top row.
2. Evaluate the **likelihood** of an incident occurring according to the ratings in the left hand column.
3. Calculate the **level of risk** by finding the intersection between the likelihood and the consequences.

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee is to make sure that an inherent
and residual risk assessment is completed for each specific hazard that is added to the OHS Risk Register.

The inherent risk assessment which is completed first involves scoring the risk level of the hazard without considering any OHS risk controls (treatments). The second assessment (residual risk rating) involves scoring the OHS risk level of the hazard after considering current existing risk control treatments that are in place. The residual risk rating should be regularly reviewed as new controls are identified and implemented.

Comparing the inherent risk rating to the residual risk rating the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominees are able to demonstrate to relevant parties (i.e. DEECD, WorkSafe, external auditors etc) that the controls (treatments) in place are effective in reducing residual risk levels to a tolerable level.

6.5.4 Step 3 – Eliminate or Control the Risk

Once hazards have been identified and assessed, a control strategy to either eliminate or control the risk is to be developed and implemented. The process represented in the below diagram is designed to identify control strategies from the most effective to the least effective strategy. All DEECD personnel must consider control strategies in the order of the hierarchy appearing below.

*The hierarchy of control*

- **Elimination**
- **Substitution**
- **Engineering**
- **Administrative**
- **PPE**

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must make sure the principles of the hierarchy of control are applied for each and every OHS risk appearing in the OHS Risk Register.

Please note, not all strategies, when implemented in isolation will reduce the residual risk to a tolerable level. In such circumstances, the Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee should consider the implementation of two or more controls in conjunction to achieve the best possible risk reduction. For example, use of hazardous substances may require ventilation (engineering), a review of handling procedures and training (administrative) and the allocation of respirators (PPE). An example of each level of the hierarchy is given below:

- **Elimination**
  - Completely remove the hazard e.g. removal of hazardous substance from the workplace.

- **Substitution**
  - Change a work practice, substance or piece of equipment to provide a safer environment e.g. substitute old, non-adjustable office chairs to
ergonomic chairs to reduce the risk of injuries.

Engineering
Modify the design of the workplace or plant and/or environmental conditions e.g. the use of a fume extraction system to remove fumes generated by hazardous substance use in labs.

Administrative
Developing procedures and systems to control the interaction between people and hazards e.g. reducing the time of exposure to noise by requiring people to be remote from equipment during operation, providing manual handling training to persons so they are better able to identify/report/control/avoid hazards in the workplace.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Implementing PPE to prevent physical contact between a person and a hazard e.g. Correct footwear, gloves etc.

Prior to implementing hazard controls the proposed measures should be reviewed to ensure they do not create new and seemingly unrelated hazards e.g. the installation of barriers and guarding for equipment may restrict access and means of escape.

The effectiveness of controls must be tested prior to implementation i.e. residual risk (see Section 6.5.3 above). A single control will generally affect either the likelihood or consequence of a hazard occurring. The difference between the inherent risk (without controls/treatments) and residual risk ratings (with controls/treatments applied) will demonstrate the effectiveness of controls.

All affected employees must be informed about the control measures being implemented and in particular, the reasons for the changes. The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must make sure that adequate information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to employees, contractors and visitors at all times during the implementation of controls to ensure their correct application.

The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee must also make sure that any relevant administrative controls, such as forms and / or safe work procedures, relating to hazards are updated e.g. if a new item of equipment is purchased, existing workplace inspection checklists and / or safe work procedures would need to be updated.

6.5.5 Step 4 – Monitor and Review Controls
The final step in the process will be to monitor and review the effectiveness of control measures that have been implemented. Control measures should be reviewed at regular intervals to make sure that they have had the desired impact in reducing the likelihood and/or consequences of a hazard occurring.

As indicated in Section 6.5.2 (risk identification) the OHS Risk Register should be reviewed when set triggers occur. The Workplace Manager and/or their Management OHS Nominee are to review the hazard and inherent risk rating in order to determine if the controls are effective in reducing the residual risk rating to a tolerable level. Consultation and feedback arrangements, in place with employees, will provide information on the application and effectiveness of controls at the workplace level.

The Workplace Manager and/or their Management OHS Nominee can use the residual risk rating to prioritise risk control activities.
7. Related Documentation:

OHS Risk Register
Manual Handling Hazard Management Form
Plant and Equipment Risk Management Form
Workstation Ergonomic Risk Assessment Form
Task Based Risk Management Form

8. Version Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Section Amended</th>
<th>Amendment</th>
<th>Date Created</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Minor wording changes, update of standards and changes to risk matrix in line with other OHSMS documentation.</td>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Employee Health Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Change “Catastrophic” risk description to “Severe”</td>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>S. Roscoe</td>
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