

There are no fixed rules on how a risk assessment should be carried out, but there are a few general principles that should be followed. AS/NZS 4360-2004 provides a generic framework for Risk Assessments in Australia and ISO 31000:2018 harmonizes this with International Standards.

There are 5 steps to risk assessment can be followed to ensure that your risk assessment is carried out correctly, these five steps are:

1. Identify the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your assessment and update if necessary

Step 1: Identify the hazards

To identify hazards, you need to understand the difference between a 'hazard' and 'risk'. A hazard is 'something with the potential to cause harm' and a risk is 'the likelihood of that potential harm being realised'. Hazards can be identified by using several different techniques such as watching rehearsals for physical actions, bump ins etc and by walking around the rehearsal room, venue or set.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

Once you have identified a number of hazards you need to understand who might be harmed and how, such as performers on a set, or stage crew, or members of the public. To help you 'rank' these risks you would use a risk matrix (see the example on page 2).

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures

After 'identifying the hazards' and 'deciding who might be harmed and how' you are then required to protect these people from harm. The hazards can either be removed completely or the risks controlled so that the injury is unlikely.

Step 4: Record your findings

Your findings should be written down. In Australia, it is a legal requirement and by recording the findings it shows that you have identified the hazards, decided who could be harmed and how, and shows how you plan to eliminate or minimise the risks and hazards. The easiest way to do this is to create a risk assessment plan. UHT can provided you with a Risk Assessment template.

Step 5: Review your assessment and update as and when necessary

You should never forget that few workplaces stay the same and therefore this risk assessment should be reviewed and updated when required.

Remember, the UHT production team are always available to assist when you are identifying hazards and controlling the risks of your production. They can offer guidance on how to write your risk assessment.

How are risks ranked?

Ranking hazards is one way to help determine which risk is the most serious and which to control first. Priority is usually established by considering the person/people’s exposure and the potential for incident, injury or illness. By assigning a priority to the risks you create a ranking or an ‘action list’.

For less complex situations, an assessment can literally be a discussion or brainstorming session based on your knowledge and experience. In some cases, checklists or a probability matrix can be more helpful. For more complex situations, you can seek guidance from the UHT production team.

As an example, consider this simple risk matrix and the related risk ratings.

Table 1 shows the relationship between **Probability** (likelihood of risk happening) and **Severity** (the potential level of injury).

Table 1: Risk matrix

Probability	High	Orange	Red	Dark Red
	Med.	Yellow	Orange	Red
	Low	White	Yellow	Orange
		Low	Med.	High
		Severity		

The cells in **Table 1** correspond to a risk level.

These risk levels are shown in **Table 2**:

Table 2: Risk Ratings

Description	Colour Code
Immediately Dangerous	Dark Red
High Risk	Red
Medium Risk	Orange
Low Risk	Yellow
Very Low Risk	White

Probability ratings in this example represent:

- **High:** likely to be experienced - ie: falling from a height
- **Medium:** may be experienced – ie: water spill on stage
- **Low:** could occur– ie: trip over cables

Severity ratings in this example represent:

- **High:** Immediate medical attention- major fracture, poisoning, significant loss of blood, serious head injury, or fatal injury
- **Medium:** Medical attention and First Aid required- sprain, strain, localized burn, allergic reaction, asthma, injury requiring days’ off
- **Low:** an injury that requires first aid only; short-term pain, irritation, or dizziness

Risk ratings correspond to recommended actions:

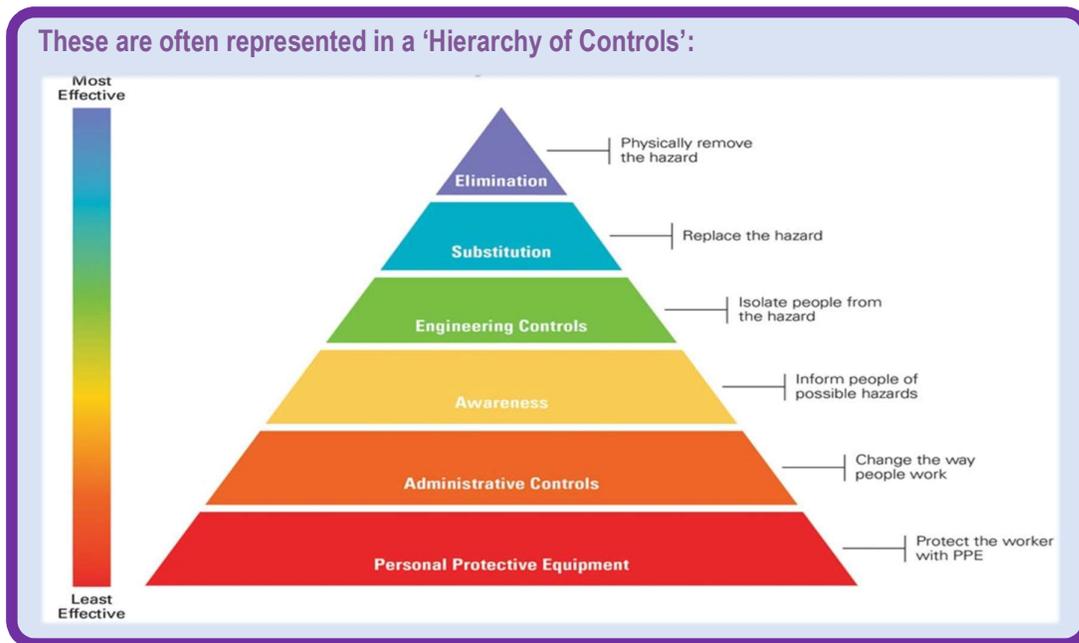
- **Immediately dangerous:** stop process and implement controls
- **High risk:** investigate process and implement controls immediately
- **Medium risk:** keep process going; however, a control plan must be developed and be implemented as soon as possible
- **Low risk:** keep process going, but monitor regularly. A control plan should also be investigated.
- **Very low risk:** keep monitoring the process

Please note, if your production is identifying orange to red colour risks ratings, you must stop that process immediately and come and speak with the UHT Venue and Production Manager.

What are methods of hazard and risk control?

Once you have established the priorities, the organization can decide on ways to control each specific hazard. Hazard control methods are often grouped into the following categories:

- **Elimination (including substitution)** – Physically remove the hazard
- **Engineering Controls** – Place a barrier around the hazard
- **Awareness** – Induct and inform every one of the hazard and risk
- **Administrative Controls** – Change the way you do it. Introduce a safety checklist.
- **Personal Protective Equipment** – Wear shoes, wear a mask, wear eye protection.



Risk Assessment example

You need to record your findings; this is most commonly done in a template like the one shown here:

Category	Inherent Risk Score	Comments (when/where hazard is present)	Control Type	Control Description (Current and Proposed)	Residual Risk Score
Physical hazard identification					
Scenic elements in productions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flown wall • Moving trucks 	C3 - Medium	Scenic elements likely to include flown pieces, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moving scenic elements - Performers interaction with scenic elements - Bodily Injuries - Slips, trips, fall - Anxiety 	EC, A, AC	Performers will have had adequate rehearsals of movement and choreography under work light and show lighting conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performers ensure warm up routine is completed prior to all performances and rehearsals - Performers directed not to stand directly under or in front of scenic element while in motion - Performers directed not to place feet under scenic element when static or in motion - Performers directed to have 3 points of contact ie: hands, feet, bottom, when in motion on scenic element - performers have been choreographed in all motion and movement of scenic elements and have had adequate rehearsal - All performers interaction with scenic element have been choreographed to the performers ability 	E1 Low
Environmental conditions hazard identification					
Lighting effects in productions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snap blackouts • Strobing 	C2 - Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eye injury - Anxiety - Reduced visibility for performers -Epileptic seizure 	A, AC	Performers will have adequately rehearsed movement and choreography under work light and show lighting conditions Public content warning signage will be displayed outside and inside venue. This information will also be available on website and social media platforms advertising the performance	C1 - Low

Incident Reporting

Lastly, it is important that you and your group reports any incidents, injuries, illness or hazards to UHT and the University as soon as possible. You will not get in to trouble!

When you are performing in a UHT theatre venue, please immediately let UHT staff know of any of the above and they will quickly work to resolve this issue or seek further assistance ie: first aid or medical attention. They will also ask you to fill in an Incident Form that the University requires. Again – you will not be in trouble!

The Incident Form is so UHT and the University can log a record of your incident or injury (however minor or major), so we can resolve it quickly or in case of injury, support you.

You can also report any hazard you see in University buildings or on University grounds with this form.

You can ask UHT staff for a form or access one online following this link:

www.safety.unimelb.edu.au/#incident-reporting

If you ever require urgent First Aid or medical attention, call University Security on 8344 0077.