

MANAGEMENT PLAN

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Occupational Violence Management Plan (OVMP) is to give practical effect to the ACT Education Directorate Occupational Violence Policy which provides a framework for the management of occupational violence risks across ACT Education Directorate workplaces.

The policy sets out the commitment of the ACT Education Directorate to ensure the risk of occupational violence to staff in workplaces is eliminated so far as is reasonably practicable, to minimise the impact of any exposure and to provide rapid response and appropriate support following any incident.

In this plan the specific occupational violence risks to be managed and the strategies and interventions designed to eliminate or minimize those risks are outlined.

BACKGROUND

The greater exposure to occupational violence of human service professions such as staff in the education sector has been documented in recent years. The results of surveys in the ACT and elsewhere in Australia has shown an increasing frequency of occupational violence incidents.

The prevalence of bullying and harassment against staff such as teachers, principals and learning assistants as shown in surveys¹, incident reports and feedback from staff is considered to underestimate the level of exposure as these surveys have also shown a lack of awareness of reporting obligations and in some areas a culture of acceptance of occupational violence.

The immediate and longer term impact of the physical and psychological consequences of violence to staff require a concerted response. The ACT Education Directorate policy has been developed in this context and the OVMP outlines the way this challenge is to be met.

Occupational violence is a complex issue with implications for the learning environment and the wider school community. Achieving a safe and supportive school environment² where students are engaged and connected and that achieves the mutual goal of student and staff wellbeing underpins this plan. The OVMP however explicitly addresses the staff protection dimension of safe schools.

The place of specific risk management measures to protect staff is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

¹ E.g. 2016 Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey, which questioned more than 4000 school principals and assistant principals nationwide. It found 41 per cent had experienced threats of violence and 36 per cent had experienced bullying.

² See Safe and Supportive Schools Policy, ACT Education Directorate



Figure 1: Risk Management of Occupational Violence risks in a broader context

SCOPE

The plan addresses occupational violence which is defined as ‘any action, incident or behaviour that departs from reasonable conduct in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed, injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work.’³

Occupational violence may include personal intimidation, verbal abuse, physical assault sexual harassment, threatening behaviour, abuse through technology (text, emails, and phone calls, social media, online forums), making vexatious complaints, and making derogatory, slanderous or threatening statements to or about another person.

This plan applies to all ACT Education Directorate Workplaces and any person considered to be a staff member or ‘worker’ for the ACT Education Directorate pursuant to section 7 of the *ACT Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and others. The workplace can include settings such as school excursions, areas beyond the work location and activities outside of school hours. Occupational violence is not limited to incidents which occur within a workplace but also those that are a result of work.

The actions and behaviours of students, visitors, parents and others (as defined) in so far as they create an occupational violence risk are pertinent to the scope of the OVMP.

³ International Labor Organisation Sectoral Activities Program, *Code of Practice on Workplace Violence in services sectors and measures to combat this phenomenon*, Geneva: ILO, 2003, clause 1.3.1.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff working in ACT Education Directorates have a right to a safe and healthy workplace. These rights are effected by the duties owed to staff by the Directorate through the general of duty of care in the *ACT Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

The ACT Education Directorate have a legal responsibility under the *ACT Work Health and Safety Act 2011* to provide a workplace for staff that is safe and healthy. The Act requires the Directorate to either eliminate risk to worker health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable, and if it is not possible, to eliminate the risk then to minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

The policy outlines the respective responsibilities for managing the risks of occupational violence which can be briefly summarized as follows:

Director General ACT Education Directorate

- Risk management of occupational violence across the system to afford the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable
- Identifying, resourcing and facilitating relevant training for Directorate staff
- Coordinating responses to occupational violence incidents with system wide implications
- Monitoring system wide data on incidents, injuries and health related to occupational violence
- Providing resources, support and assistance as required to workplaces experiencing occupational violence impacts

Managers and School Leaders

- Applying risk management strategies to the circumstances of the workplace
- Modelling behaviours consistent with reducing occupational violence risk
- Communicating and consulting at a local level on occupational violence issues
- Encouraging the reporting of incidents and acting to prevent a reoccurrence within the bounds of local level resources and capability
- Providing or facilitating occupational violence incident support

Employees

- Complying with Directorate policy and procedures on occupational violence
- Reporting incidents of occupational violence
- Applying training provided for managing occupational violence risks
- Ensuring their actions do not create an occupational violence risk to themselves or to others

In the sections that follow the respective roles and responsibilities at different levels in the Directorate are specified in more detail.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

Risk management is a process to help manage workplace health and safety (WHS) and comply with the law. The objective of the WHS risk management process is to provide the highest level of protection at work so far as is reasonably practicable. Some guiding principles for managing occupational violence risks include:

- The risk management process requires communication and consultation between the employer, managers and staff and their Health and Safety Representatives.
- Identification of hazards (see use of term below) is the essential starting point for managing risks.
- Occupational violence hazards and the ways risks associated with them can be eliminated or reduced are not defined in regulations like many other hazards (e.g. manual handling, chemicals) and what is the “state of knowledge” (what is known about risks and how to manage them) needs to be established.

- Where ready-made solutions are not available or circumstances are different, risk management is a way of working out what is reasonably practicable.
- For risk controls to be effective they need to be regularly checked and improved where necessary.
- Basic records of risk management activity such as a risk register allow workplaces to monitor their performance.

IDENTIFICATION OF RISK FACTORS

In this plan the starting point is the identification of risk factors.

The term risk factor rather than hazard is used as hazard typically relates to a single source of harm whereas occupational violence is a multi-factorial issue in which the interaction between individuals, settings and activities is often the source of risk⁴.

The Directorate has used the following sources of information to identify common risk factors found in workplaces:

Current industry information and research

- National and state WHS regulators information about occupational violence risk factors in educational settings.
- Industry association and union information about occupational violence risk factors in educational settings.
- Academic research into occupational violence risk factors in educational settings.

Employee feedback

- Feedback from employees through network meetings, Health and Safety Representatives or through other consultative forums such as Health and Safety committees in identifying how tasks and overall jobs may involve occupational violence risk factors.
- Results of surveys about the nature of risks as experienced by staff and managers.

Analysis of records and data

- Records of injuries or incidents and the results of any investigations resulting from occupational violence risk.
- Occupational violence related claims data and any other health surveillance data

As part of this plan the Directorate has the responsibility of monitoring these data sources and addressing emerging trends in occupational violence risk. This is important as any one workplace is unlikely to be able to detect statistically credible changes in risk levels.

On the basis of current information the Directorate has identified the following occupational violence risk factors. These are classified into Individual, Organisational and Setting risk factors.

Individual risk factors: relate to previous and current behaviours, the availability and sharing of information about individuals or even the risk arising from the lack of any information about a person.

Organisational risk factors: relate to the nature of services provided and the policies and procedures relevant to those services or tasks and the extent to which they may trigger an aggressive response.

Setting risks: relate to the ability to control the environment in which activity takes place and the extent to which the visibility, security and vulnerability of the setting may expose staff to risks.

⁴ The term risk factor does not imply a cause-effect relationship as in some crime research but rather the relational and sometimes cumulative interaction of factors to escalate risk

The ACT Education Directorate's inventory of common risk factors is shown in **Attachment A**.

At the workplace level, there should be a review of current school based risk registers and workplace consultation to identify the presence of any of these common risk factors. Any other risks specific to the workplace should be further examined through a risk assessment process.

These three dimensions highlight the interrelated nature of occupational violence risks in both assessing risks and identifying suitable countermeasures.

An overview of the risk management process is shown before the attachments to the plan.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a method of understanding the nature and the level of risks in order to provide the highest level of protection for staff as is reasonably practicable. Effective risk controls or precautions must be directed at the source of risk shown by a risk assessment.

In this plan there are two elements of risk assessment.

- A. Planned risk assessment:** the conventional process undertaken in anticipation of any workplace risks. This assumes the time and wherewithal to identify risks, assess them and apply prevention measures.

In this process to work out how to control risks as far as is reasonably practicable it is essential to understand the nature of risk and the circumstances that create risks.

The inventory of generic risk factors identified above (Attachment A) need to be assessed to establish the **likelihood** of the risk concerned eventuating, and **the degree of harm** that would result if the risk eventuated. These two factors are the relevant factors for determining the level of a risk.

In this plan the following questions should be used to help make an estimate of likelihood:

- *How often does the risk occur?* - the more often the risk occurs, the greater the likelihood that it will result in harm.
- *How many people might be exposed?* – the greater the number of people that could be exposed to the risk at any one time the greater the likelihood that the risk will result in harm.
- *How long people might be exposed to the risk?* – the longer that someone is exposed to a risk the greater the likelihood that harm may result.
- *How could operating conditions increase the risk?* – the operating conditions in a workplace might become riskier depending on seasonal, environmental and market circumstances.
- *How effective are current controls in reducing risk?* – in most cases the risks being assessed will already be subject to some prevention measures. The likelihood of harm resulting will depend on the adequacy and effectiveness of current measures.

What harm could result from identified risk factors, how many people might be affected and how widespread could the effects be?

In this plan the following questions can help make an estimate of the **degree of harm** that could result from exposure to a risk:

- *Is there available information on consequences?* – check to see if there is information that on the basis of research shows the likely consequences. Are the consequences serious injuries, illness or death or are they less serious such as minor first aid injuries?
- *What factors could influence the severity of an injury?* – For example, the type of physical violence used, the proximity of assistance and nature of threats being made could have consequences for the severity of injury. Severity may mean immediate consequences (e.g. injury from an assault) or longer term consequences (e.g. illness resulting from long term exposure to threats and intimidation).
- *How many people could be injured?* – if something goes wrong is one person affected or are many people affected? What is the nature of the likely injuries?
- *Are there circumstances that could magnify the severity of an injury or incident?* – using information about the nature of risks and the effectiveness of controls can indicate injury consequences when not one, but a number of things go wrong.

The Individual, Organisational and Settings approach highlights that risk assessment in relation to occupational violence needs to understand the combination of risk factors in estimating likelihood and potential consequences.

The plan requires the Directorate and workplaces to assess any risk factors identified and to record their status in a risk register.

*The ACT Education Directorate's generic risk assessment for occupational violence is shown in **Attachment B**. Risks are assessed into low, moderate and high categories and describe the circumstances that create the risk in the individual, organisational and setting levels*.*

At the workplace level the generic risk assessment should be used to establish the profile of the particular workplace. Additional and specific risks to the workplace should be included. Existing assessments in school based risk registers should be reviewed against this generic risk assessment (Attachment B).

*See further guidance on use in attachment.

B. Dynamic Risk Assessment

Dynamic risk assessment is a continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risks, taking action to eliminate or reduce risk, monitoring and reviewing, while carrying out associated tasks. Dynamic risk assessment applies to the situation immediately prior to and during workplace interactions with students, parents or others who have potential for occupational violence.

Typical operational assessments include:

- Scanning the area to assess visibility, proximity to other staff and exits
- Identifying common triggers for imminent violence

In **Attachment C** a list of common risk factors relevant to the likelihood of imminent violence identified by the ACT Education Directorate are outlined. As these factors leave little time for assessment the most important thing is to respond with standard operating procedures. A list of recommended immediate responses is outlined in the risk control section.

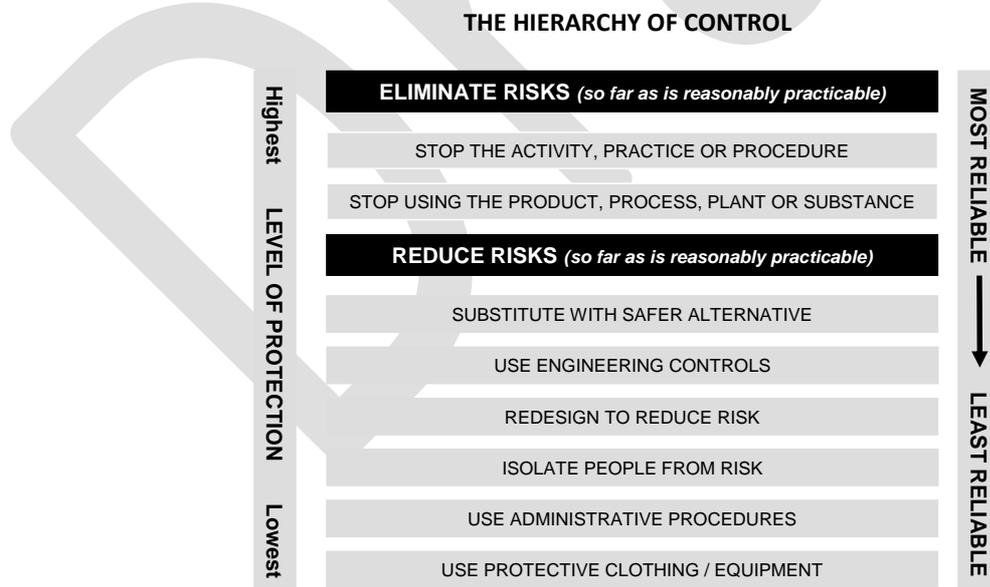
The plan requires relevant staff with frontline duties to be trained in dynamic risk assessment and a record of such training kept.

Dynamic risk assessment relies on high level communication and assessment skills and as such is based on both supervised experience and relevant training. The approach is consistent with the Team Teach method.

An effective process of planned risk assessment should reduce the reliance on dynamic assessments and immediate individual responses. Secondly, with good planned assessment the capacity of staff to know how to respond (e.g. use of Team Teach strategies) will be improved and more reliable.

RISK CONTROLS

The **planned risk assessment** process will identify a number of options for controlling the risk. These options may involve engineering changes, safe work procedures or the use of personal protective equipment. Options that provide the “highest level of protection” so far as is reasonably practicable should be selected. What is meant by the highest level of protection is best described by the concept of the hierarchy of control. The hierarchy is illustrated in the diagram below.



The principle behind the hierarchy of control is that risk controls that are dependent on individual behaviour are less reliable than risk controls that engineer or design out risks. In most cases a combination of measures will be required as risks are usually related to several factors or a sequence of events. This particularly the case in human service settings such as schools.

The generic risk controls show in Attachment D are unlikely to be “standalone” measures and in many cases should be considered in both short and longer term timeframes. For example, “elimination” may be achieved by an initial suspension but over the longer-

term measures to minimize the reoccurrence of violent behavior through individual behavior plans and suitable environmental safety measures will be required. Liaison with the NSET team and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team may be required to help manage complex cases.

*The ACT Education Directorate's inventory of common risk controls is outlined in **Attachment D**. It sets out across the individual, organizational and setting dimensions measures that either eliminate, reduce at source or minimise risks. The measures that afford the highest level of protection should be applied if reasonably practicable before lower level controls that minimize risks are considered.*

At workplace level these common risk controls should be reviewed for their relevance to the risks already described in the risk register.

Dynamic risk assessment as already mentioned is a continuous process and the responses to the risk factors outlined in Attachment D are based on techniques such as Team Teach. Strategies typically include:

- Using non adversarial, calming strategies to defuse anxiety and stress
- Keeping a safe distance.
- Maintaining an exit strategy – ensure you are nearest to the door/escape route.
- Carrying out a 'dynamic risk assessment' to assess potential risks (e.g. weapons, behaviour triggers)
- Avoiding being isolated and alerting others that you may need assistance.
- Ensuring that any instructions or requests are made in a clear manner
- Setting and enforcing reasonable boundaries
- Using an empathetic and non-judgemental approach

STAFF CAPABILITY AND TRAINING

Implementation of this plan requires managers and staff to have the capability to play their part in the plan. The ACT Managing Occupational Violence Policy states core capabilities including hazard identification, managing challenging behavior and de-escalation skills should be addressed.

There are several kinds of capability building training that is required under this plan.

Induction training

General Workplace Health and Safety induction at workplace level should include occupational violence. General and specific topics should include:

- Occupational violence risks in the education setting
- Occupational violence risks specific to the workplace
- The occupational violence risk management plan for the workplace
- Strategies for managing aggressive/violent behavior used at the workplace

- Emergency response procedures
- Reporting of incidents
- Support services available

Calming and Defusing Strategies

Any staff with exposure to potentially violent situations should undertake specific training that covers:

- Recognising signs of imminent violence
- Using calming and defusing strategies
- Dynamic risk assessment
- Activating alarm and or/support processes
- Exit strategies

Existing methods such as Team Teach are relevant to these requirements.

Specific training for workplace managers

Specific training relevant to overall responsibilities or to specific risks in a workplace may be also required. Depending on evaluation of needs it may include:

- Managing and maintaining effective risk management for occupational violence
- Management of risks arising from specific behavioural disorders
- Design measures to improve safety at work

The ACT Education Directorate will facilitate relevant training and monitor emerging needs for training while at workplace level local managers are responsible for assessing and maintaining skill levels through professional development processes.

POST INCIDENT RESPONSE

IMMEDIATE MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO AN OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE INCIDENT

While control measures may reduce instances of occupational violence, it may not be possible to eliminate all circumstances where violence may occur. If a violent incident occurs the following priorities should be addressed:

- Emergency procedures activated
- Containment and control of the situation to ensure the safety of all concerned
- Medical attention where required
- Psychological support
- Reporting and subsequent investigation

Responses will depend on factors including the nature and severity of the event, whether it is a student, parent/other, visitor or intruder exhibiting the behaviours, and the skills and experience of the Directorate's staff involved. Responses are situation dependent and may include calling for backup, security or police assistance. Response strategies are outlined in the Directorate Occupational Violence Response Guide (Flip Chart).

If the incident is a critical incident⁵ the *Critical non-Critical Incident Reporting Policy* should be followed.

Immediately following an occupational violence incident a number of responses may be required:

- Immediate first aid for staff member (and other affected person)
- Medical assistance for staff member (and other affected person)
- Informal debriefing by peers

Apart from immediate first aid or medical attention employees harmed physically or psychologically by violence may need support. Experience has shown that the immediate care and concern of managers and colleagues is much appreciated and may limit or prevent any serious long-term effects. The support framework needs to be flexible to respond to the needs of the particular situation and should recognise that an incident is not only traumatic for the victim but can also affect close colleagues.

Where practicable the workplace should hold a short focused meeting with all workers directly affected by the incident, as close as practicable to the time of the incident. It should be led by the workplace manager for the unit where the incident occurred (or other suitable person, depending on circumstances), and include the following questions:

- What happened?
- When, why and how did it happen?
- What immediate action is required to ensure safety?
- How can we prevent it from happening again? This may require one or more additional meetings.

Onsite debriefing is mandated for all critical incidents. Debriefing may also be required for other incidents.

Professional Debrief provided by the Employee Assistance Program provider must be arranged by management in the event of a critical incident, this should be made available onsite within 2 hours to provide support and assistance to the worker.

Responsibilities at Directorate and workplace level for post incident response are outlined in relevant policies and procedures (see list below).

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING INCIDENTS

Incident reporting is important not only to ensure that appropriate risk management steps are taken, but also to ensure that students and parents who require additional support and assistance are identified. Comprehensive reporting provides an accountability trail for the protection of staff and a record of the pattern of events requiring action.

The *ACT Education Directorate Accident/Incident Reporting Policy* should be followed.

⁵ Critical incident is defined as an incident that causes death or serious injury, or is not considered to be routine activity or action, or requires an exceptional or significant response, or causes a high level of adverse media attention or business disruption; or, a situation that has the potential to cause any incidents of that nature.

From a risk management point of view the reasons for investigating incidents are to:

- Prevent similar incidents recurring in the future;
- Identify any new hazards; and
- Identify and choose suitable controls or strategies.

The following principles should be applied in undertaking any investigation of occupational violence:

- The purpose of the investigation is to examine the causes and results of any incident objectively. No assumptions should be made and any judgement should be based on information that is known to be full and accurate;
- The purpose of an investigation is establish the reasons for the incident to prevent a recurrence not to assign blame;
- Incidents typically have multiple causes and the focus should be on conditions that may create the potential for occupational violence.

If the results of any investigation show that changes need to be made corrective action must be taken.

All incidents must be investigated by the workplace manager with review of existing controls undertaken and suitable management action implemented. The local Health and Safety representative may assist with this process. Serious incidents may also require external investigation by external parties such as WorkSafe ACT.

Responsibilities at Directorate and workplace level for reporting and investigation are outlined in relevant policies and procedures (see list below).

LONGER TERM RESPONSE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Managers must ensure that workers exposed to occupational violence are provided with appropriate support. Some options include the Employee Assistance Program and the Victims Services Scheme.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is an early intervention program operating in the Directorate. Critical Incident Debriefing, group and individual counselling is available for workers who may be adversely affected by exposure to occupational violence. Further information on the current EAP provider can be obtained on the Directorate's Index.

The Victims Services Scheme is an ACT Government Service for victims of crime provided in partnership by ACT Community Health and the Victims of Crime Assistance League [VOCAL (ACT) Inc]. The Victims Services Scheme provides assistance to help victims recover from the harm they have suffered. The assistance includes:

- counselling
- physiotherapy
- massage therapy
- services from psychologists and social workers

All victims are entitled to two hours of service and victims of violent crime are entitled to another six hours. Further service can also be recommended by their case coordinator.

Support may be accessed by calling the Victims of Crime Helpline on 1800 8222 72, or go to the Victim Support website for more information <http://www.victimsupport.act.gov.au/>.

In addition to support services longer term responses include:

- Reviewing plans for the prevention of violence to determine if changes are required.
- Managing the return to work of staff who have taken leave after an incident.
- Monitoring staff involved with the incident for any delayed reactions to the incident.

Responsibilities at Directorate and workplace level for accessing support services are outlined in relevant policies and procedures (see list below).

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This *Plan* will be annually scanned and formally reviewed every three years as part of the policy review process, unless required earlier due to legislation or policy changes.

The review by the ACT Education Directorate should focus on:

- Emerging risk factors for occupational violence and relevance of the plan to any new factors
- Effectiveness of the plan across the Directorate
- Achievement of any performance measures set by the planning process
- Feedback from workplaces about risk exposure and the adequacy of current measures

At workplace level there should be regular review of the effectiveness of the plan as well as specific responses to incidents. Review should be done in consultation with employees and may be appropriate where:

- There are significant changes in violent behaviours or an increase in behaviours of concern although they may not have resulted in any injury to staff
- Change to the education setting which may disrupt routines or needs to be handled sensitively
- Changes in learning strategies that may change classroom dynamics
- Changes to the number or experience of staff in particular settings
- Feedback from staff and Health and Safety Representatives that current strategies are not working

The Directorate is responsible for system wide monitoring and review while workplaces should maintain a regular review process related to the above factors.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELEVANT TO OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

Management of occupational violence is covered by several existing policies and procedures.

ACTPS policy

- ACT Public Sector Managing Occupational Violence Policy 2012
- ACT Public Service Injury Prevention Management Policy: Critical Incident Stress Management (Policy number- ACTPS-IPM-POL-007)
- ACT Public Service Injury Prevention Management Policy: OHS Risk Management (Policy Number - ACTPS-IPM-POL-008)
- ACT Public Sector Accident/ Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy 2012

Education Directorate policies/procedures

- Accident/Incident Reporting Policy
- Critical and Non-critical Incident Reporting Policy
- Safe and Supportive Schools Policy
- Volunteers and Visitors Policy
- Volunteers and Visitors Code of Conduct
- Unwelcome Visitors Handbook

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

[ACT Work Health and Safety Act 2011](#)

[ACT Worker Safety Regulation 2011](#)

[ACT Public Sector Management Act 1994](#)

[Education Act 2004](#)

[Human Rights Act 2004](#)

[Crimes Act 1900](#)

[Crimes Regulation 2001](#)

CONTACT

For support contact **People and Performance Branch** on 02 62059202 or email etdhealthandwellbeing@act.gov.au.

COMPLAINTS

Any concerns about the application of this plan or the plan itself, should be raised with the Directorate's Liaison Unit on (02) 6205 5429 or online at http://www.det.act.gov.au/contact_us. See also the *Complaints Policy* on the Directorate's website.

OVERVIEW OF OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

1. Identify risk factors (Attachment A)

Use the Common Risk Factors table to review potential exposure at workplace. Check against current risk register and update if necessary

Individual	Organisation	Setting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student pattern of disengagement Parent with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace Student with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace Student with history of behaviours of concern Others (e.g. ex-student) with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace Members of the public with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace Students/Parents/others with current drug use leading to escalated state and potentially violent behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of sharing of information about individual occupational violence risks Poor quality intake information Failure of behaviour management plans to protect staff from violence Unclear and inconsistent application of behaviour standards for student/parents/others Unclear procedures for handling complaints/concerns Lack of monitoring of staff risk exposure when managing challenging behaviours Perceptions by parents/students of lack of fairness in process for resolving violence issues Handling cash or valuables Enforcing disciplinary standards Advising of poor performance Poor liaison with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locations in isolated, remote or vulnerable areas Working outside normal hours in isolated location Lack of 'safe' meeting rooms (e.g. proximity to colleagues, external visibility, adequate lighting, suitable access/exit doors, electronic emergency alert systems) Lack of reliable emergency communication Violence prone zones within a workplace identified in risk register Violence prone times in a workplace identified in risk register Violence prone activities identified in risk register Inadequate environmental safety measures such as lighting Ineffective measures to separate public and work areas and prevent unauthorised entry

2. Assess risk factors (Attachment B)

Use the Generic Risk Assessment table to assess the nature of occupational violence risks at the workplace. Use the three elements, individual, organisational and setting in assessing risks and update or amend current risk register as required.

Source of Risk	Low	Moderate	High
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours Low frequency and low severity parental verbal abuse Low frequency and low severity verbal abuse from others Low frequency and low severity verbal abuse from members of the public Effective behaviour management plans for students with special needs/behaviours of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours Low frequency and low severity violent student behaviour Low frequency and low severity violent parent behaviour Low frequency and low severity violent behaviour of others Low frequency and low severity violent behaviour of members of the public Frequent reviews of the adequacy of behaviour management plans because of staff concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours High severity violent behaviour by students High severity violent behaviour by parents High severity violent behaviour by others High severity violent behaviour by members of the public Evidence of current drug use by individuals that could lead to violent or altered behaviours Evidence of the presence of weapons Frequent reviews of the adequacy of behaviour management plans to protect staff from violence
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display and communication of occupational violence policy and procedures Regular and effective consultation on occupational violence Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers briefed on behaviour management plans Clear and consistently applied procedures for student/parent/ other behaviour standards Clear and consistent processes for advising of poor performance and enforcing disciplinary standards Good liaison and clear protocols with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional consultation on occupational violence Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers occasionally briefed on behaviour management plans Minor incidents arising from inconsistent application of behaviour standards Minor incidents arising from unclear processes for handling complaints and enforcing discipline Lack of information about students outside normal intake periods Cash handling minimised by electronic banking and using relevant security measures Adequate liaison with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reactive, incident based consultation Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers not briefed on behaviour management plans Major incidents arising from inconsistent application of behaviour standards Major incidents arising from unclear processes for handling complaints and enforcing discipline High levels of cash handling in areas with easy access Little or no information exchange with local police and community services
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High external visibility levels at the workplace Reliable communication, security and emergency systems Meeting rooms with close proximity to colleagues Effective barriers to separate public and work areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor environmental security (e.g. lighting, access, exits) Designated "safe" rooms but lacking external visibility and communication/security measures Only administrative barrier to separate work and public areas (e.g. signage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor external visibility at the workplace No reliable emergency communication possible No "safe" areas or rooms No barriers between work and public areas Working alone out of hours Workplace in remote, isolated location

3. Understand dynamic risk factors and response strategies (Attachment C)

Use the Dynamic Risk Factors table to ensure staff are trained to recognise common risk factors and are able to apply relevant strategies to calm and defuse situations.

Individual	Organisation	Setting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicators of imminent violence (e.g. Team Teach list of cues) such as have rapid breathing, clenched fists or teeth, flaring of nostrils, flushing, loud talking or chanting, restless and repetitive movements, pacing, or violent gestures, such as pointing Evidence of heightened level of anxiety Refusal to cooperate Rapid mood swings Threats of violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of capacity to manage complex behaviours Lack of briefing of any emergency protocols Lack of briefing on any behavioural triggers for the person set out in a behaviour plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of knowledge of exits Lack of knowledge of nearest safe place Not located close to immediate exit Located to block person's exit No scan for potential weapons Not aware of location of nearest co-worker

4. Apply short term and longer term risk controls (Attachment D)

Use the Common Risk Controls table to ensure current measures are suitable and effective and apply any new measures to eliminate or minimise risks. Consider controls across the three elements individual, organisational and setting to achieve greater effectiveness. Update risk register.

Type of Control	Individual	Organisational	Setting
LEVEL OF PROTECTION HIGHEST	Eliminate or reduce risks at source <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triggers for and warning signs of escalating violent behaviours of particular/individual students are well understood by relevant staff Withdrawal from situation or service Isolation to calm situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intake processes to identify and minimise risks Exchange of information about occupational violence risks or behaviour plans to all those potentially at risk (e.g. relief staff, volunteers) Use of additional or expert staff to address risks such as NSET or HSW team OHS issues included in behaviour management plans for students Clear standards for student and parental behaviour Transparent and fair disciplinary processes Clear protocols with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of safe spaces Adequate security and alarms Suitable internal and external lighting Clear visibility and lines of sight internally and externally Suitable access and exit arrangements including barriers to work areas
	Minimise risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of defusing strategies and techniques to calm an violent/angry student or parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in prevention and intervention strategies for managing violent/potentially violent behaviour of a student or parent is provided to staff Additional support from leadership team/colleagues Training on emergency management Consultation and communication about occupational violence issues Application of existing Safe and Supportive Schools measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to colleagues if needed Reliable emergency communication systems Personal alarms or contact protocols if working in isolated location or working alone Signage on controlled spaces or restricted areas Use of group meetings Room set up to maximise staff safety
LEVEL OF PROTECTION LOWEST	Response and Recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of debriefing, support, counselling and other services following an incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing incident response and emergency plans cover occupational violence incidents Reporting and investigation of incidents Application of existing protocols for discipline and any subsequent, suspension or expulsion measures or use of alternative learning environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to restrict access or lock down

5. Monitor and review risk controls

Attachment A: COMMON OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS

Individual	Organisation	Setting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student pattern of disengagement • Parent with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace • Student with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace • Student with history of behaviours of concern • Others (e.g. ex-student) with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace • Members of the public with history of violence (e.g. criminal behaviour) or aggressive behaviour at the workplace • Students/Parents/others with current drug use leading to escalated state and potentially violent behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sharing of information about individual occupational violence risks • Poor quality intake information • Failure of behaviour management plans to protect staff from violence • Unclear and inconsistent application of behaviour standards for student/parents/others • Unclear procedures for handling complaints/concerns • Lack of monitoring of staff risk exposure when managing challenging behaviours • Perceptions by parents/students of lack of fairness in process for resolving violence issues • Handling cash or valuables • Enforcing disciplinary standards • Advising of poor performance • Poor liaison with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locations in isolated, remote or vulnerable areas • Working outside normal hours in isolated location • Lack of 'safe' meeting rooms (e.g. proximity to colleagues, external visibility, adequate lighting, suitable access/exit doors, electronic emergency alert systems) • Lack of reliable emergency communication • Violence prone zones within a workplace identified in risk register • Violence prone times in a workplace identified in risk register • Violence prone activities identified in risk register • Inadequate environmental safety measures such as lighting • Ineffective measures to separate public and work areas and prevent unauthorised entry

Attachment B: OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Source of Risk	Low-1	Moderate-2	High-3
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours • Low frequency and low severity parental verbal abuse • Low frequency and low severity verbal abuse from others • Low frequency and low severity verbal abuse from members of the public • Effective behaviour management plans for students with special needs/behaviours of concern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours • Low frequency and low severity violent student behaviour • Low frequency and low severity violent parent behaviour • Low frequency and low severity violent behaviour of others • Low frequency and low severity violent behaviour of members of the public • Frequent reviews of the adequacy of behaviour management plans because of staff concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level disruptive and disengaged student behaviours • High severity violent behaviour by students • High severity violent behaviour by parents • High severity violent behaviour by others • High severity violent behaviour by members of the public • Evidence of current drug use by individuals that could lead to violent or altered behaviours • Evidence of the presence of weapons • Failure of behaviour management plans to protect staff from violence
Organisational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display and communication of occupational violence policy and procedures • Regular and effective consultation on occupational violence • Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers briefed on behaviour management plans • Clear and consistently applied procedures for student/parent/ other behaviour standards • Clear and consistent processes for advising of poor performance and enforcing disciplinary standards • Good liaison and clear protocols with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional consultation on occupational violence • Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers occasionally briefed on behaviour management plans • Minor incidents arising from inconsistent application of behaviour standards • Minor incidents arising from unclear processes for handling complaints and enforcing discipline • Lack of information about students outside normal intake periods • Cash handling minimised by electronic banking and using relevant security measures • Adequate liaison with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reactive, incident based consultation • Relief, casual, learning assistants and volunteers not briefed on behaviour management plans • Major incidents arising from inconsistent application of behaviour standards • Major incidents arising from unclear processes for handling complaints and enforcing discipline • High levels of cash handling in areas with easy access • Little or no information exchange with local police and community services
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High external visibility levels at the workplace • Reliable communication, security and emergency systems • Meeting rooms with close proximity to colleagues • Effective barriers to separate public and work areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor environmental security (e.g. lighting, access, exits) • Designated "safe" rooms but lacking external visibility and communication/security measures • Only administrative barrier to separate work and public areas (e.g. signage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor external visibility at the workplace • No reliable emergency communication possible • No "safe" areas or rooms • No barriers between work and public areas • Working alone out of hours • Workplace in remote, isolated location
Rating Range	1-3	4-6	7-9

Attachment B: OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

The **Generic Risk Assessment Table** sets out common risk factors for occupational violence in educational settings.

The risks have been assessed and classified into low, medium and high categories to provide a common starting point for individual workplaces. The table can be used in two ways.

Firstly, as a method of reviewing current arrangements and ensuring all relevant risks have been considered in current plans and, secondly, as a method for matching risk controls to the level of risk.

The first method requires a scan against the current workplace risk register and the management of any risks not currently covered with matching controls.

The second method uses a numerical rating to guide further action by allocating a number to low, medium and high risk factors..

By choosing the highest risk factor for an individual risk factor (e.g. history of high severity violent behaviour) and then adding the organisational and setting factors a rough rating can be established to guide the selection of appropriate risk controls. The high severity violent behaviour is rated 3 but in conjunction with organisational measures such as consultation and communication (rated 1) and a setting with safe areas and reliable security (rated 1) the overall assessment is in the moderate 4-6 range indicating a moderate overall risk assessment. This should be matched by controls that eliminate or reduce risk at source (Attachment D Common Risk Controls).

A rating of 9 would indicate a workplace where high risk is not being managed well while a 3 would indicate effective risk management of occupational violence.

Attachment C: ACT EDUCATION DIRECTORATE DYNAMIC INTERACTIONAL RISK FACTORS

Individual	Organisation	Setting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicators of imminent violence (e.g. Team Teach list of cues) such as have rapid breathing, clenched fists or teeth, flaring of nostrils, flushing, loud talking or chanting, restless and repetitive movements, pacing, or violent gestures, such as pointing• Evidence of heightened level of anxiety• Refusal to cooperate• Rapid mood swings• Threats of violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of capacity to manage complex behaviours• Lack of briefing of any emergency protocols• Lack of briefing on any behavioural triggers for the person set out in a behaviour plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of knowledge of exits• Lack of knowledge of nearest safe place• Not located close to immediate exit• Located to block person's exit• No scan for potential weapons• Not aware of location of nearest co-worker

Attachment D: COMMON RISK CONTROLS FOR OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

	Type of Control	Individual	Organisational	Setting	
HIGHEST LEVEL OF PROTECTION LOWEST	Eliminate or reduce risks at source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triggers for and warning signs of escalating violent behaviours of particular/individual students are well understood by relevant staff Withdrawal from situation or service Isolation to calm situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intake processes to identify and minimise risks Exchange of information about occupational violence risks or behaviour plans to all those potentially at risk (e.g. relief staff, volunteers) Use of additional or expert staff to address risks such as NSET or HSW team OHS issues included in behaviour management plans for students Clear standards for student and parental behaviour Transparent and fair disciplinary processes Clear protocols with local police and community services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of safe spaces Adequate security and alarms Suitable internal and external lighting Clear visibility and lines of sight internally and externally Suitable access and exit arrangements including barriers to work areas 	MOST RELIABLE LEAST RELIABLE
	Minimise risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of defusing strategies and techniques to calm an violent/angry student or parent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in prevention and intervention strategies for managing violent/potentially violent behaviour of a student or parent is provided to staff Additional support from leadership team/colleagues Training on emergency management Consultation and communication about occupational violence issues Application of existing Safe and Supportive Schools measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to colleagues if needed Reliable emergency communication systems Personal alarms or contact protocols if working in isolated location or working alone Signage on controlled spaces or restricted areas Use of group meetings Room set up to maximise staff safety 	
	Response and Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of debriefing, support, counselling and other services following an incident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing incident response and emergency plans cover occupational violence incidents Reporting and investigation of incidents Application of existing protocols for discipline and any subsequent, suspension or expulsion measures or use of alternative learning environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to restrict access or lock down 	