Pottery Safety

Business Name:	ABN:	
Business Address:		
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:

THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU OF THE PROJECT

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:		
Signature:	Title:	Date:

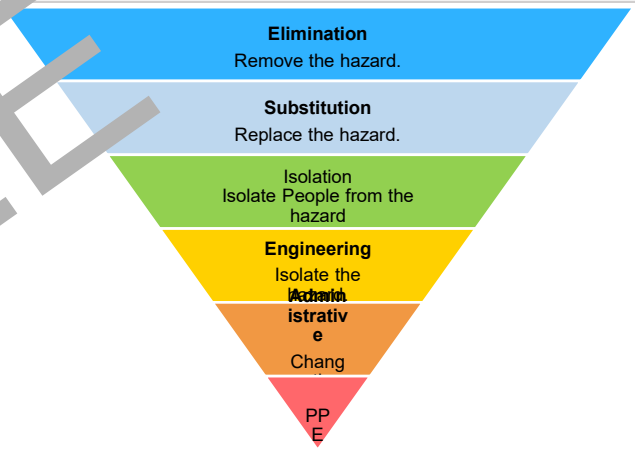
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	

RISK MATRIX

LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE		
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Rev before work
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACU	2M MO RATE	Ensure control measures in place.
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 H	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.

HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS



Risk Rating & Required Action:

4A	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. E inate the hazar redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or hi er-level authorisati is required.
3H	Review and approve additional c rols b ask arts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in ace and effe ive. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
1L	Proceed, following standard operating procedures Monitor and keep records.

Consequence Scale:

Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
Catastrophic	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
Major	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
Moderate	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
Minor	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
Insignificant	No injury	no schedule impact	Deviation caught and corrected on site

Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:
Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:

1. **Eliminate**
2. Substitute
3. Isolate
4. Engineering
5. Administrative
6. PPE

Always document **why** a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.

aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work *(2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.*

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. WHS Governance, Policies and Legal Compliance	• Absence of a documented WHS management system specific to pottery and ceramic work • WHS Act 2011 duties not clearly allocated between PCBUs, officers, workers and students/participants • No formal process to review WHS performance or compliance with WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice • Inadequate consultation with workers on pottery-specific risks (silica, kiln use, manual handling, chemicals) • Failure to monitor changes in legislation, Australian Standards, and guidance relating to art and ceramic studios • Lack of documented incident reporting, investigation and corrective action process	4A	• Develop and implement a WHS management system that explicitly covers pottery, ceramics and kiln operations, aligned with WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations • Assign clear WHS roles and responsibilities for officers, managers, technicians, instructors and workers, including due diligence obligations for officers • Establish a WHS policy endorsed by senior management and communicated to all staff, students and contractors who access pottery areas • Implement structured worker consultation mechanisms (e.g. WHS committee, Health and Safety Representative, toolbox talks) with pottery-specific agenda • Create a legal and standards register covering relevant WHS legislation, silica and hazardous chemicals requirements, plant and electrical safety, and review it at least annually • Implement a formal incident and near-miss reporting procedure, with root cause analysis and documented corrective actions for pottery-related events • Schedule periodic management reviews of pottery WHS performance, including risk assessments, inspection findings and compliance audits	3H
2. Studio Design, Layout and Traffic Management	• Inadequate segregation between clean areas (office, display) and dusty processes (clay mixing, sanding, glazing) • Poor workflow design leading to congestion, slips, trips and falls, or collision between people and trolleys • Insufficient space between workbenches, wheels, kilns and shelving, leading to crush, impact or burn risks • Storage of clay, glazes and tools in corridors or escape paths obstructing emergency egress • Inadequate lighting in throwing, trimming and glazing zones increasing risk of musculoskeletal injury and cuts • Lack of clear traffic management for delivery vehicles and waste pickups at studio loading points	4A	• Design and document a studio layout plan that separates clean and dusty processes, hot work zones and chemical storage areas • Apply traffic management principles including designated pedestrian paths, equipment movement routes and no-storage zones for egress routes • Set and enforce minimum clearance distances around pottery wheels, slab rollers, kilns and shelving based on manufacturer recommendations and good practice • Install appropriate task and general lighting to meet relevant standards for detailed hand work and equipment operation • Implement a studio housekeeping and storage policy that prohibits storage in walkways and emergency exits, with supervisory checks • Use line marking, signage and physical barriers to define kiln zones, clay processing areas and delivery points • Include layout and traffic controls in induction, studio rules and periodic inspections	2M

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3. Clay, Silica and Dust Management Systems	• Uncontrolled generation of respirable crystalline silica (RCS) from dry clay, scraping, sanding and cleaning • Use of clay bodies or powders without safety data sheets (SDS) or ingredient transparency • Dry sweeping or compressed air use spreading fine dust across the studio and adjacent areas • Inadequate cleaning regimes allowing dust accumulation on horizontal surfaces, shelves and ducts • Lack of air monitoring or health surveillance where RCS exposure may exceed safe levels • Inaccurate labelling and storage of clay materials leading to inappropriate handling or mixing	4A	• Develop a clay and silica management procedure in accordance with WHS Regulations for hazardous substances and relevant silica guidance material • Prefer pre-mixed, moist clay products where ...sonably practicable to minimise handling of dry powders • Mandate wet-cleaning or HEPA-filtered va...m syste...or all clay and dust clean-up; explicitly prohibit dry sweeping and compressed air • Implement a scheduled cleaning program targe...g high-risk d... accumulation areas, with responsibilities, methods and ...quencies docume...d • Maintain an SDS regi...r for a...ay bodies, grog, s... and related products and ensure availability at point of use • Implement ...posure risk a...sessme... and ...here indicated, arrange air monitoring and health surveillance fo...orkers re...larly enga...in dusty processes • Ens...ll clay ...ers, reclaim buckets and storage bins are clearly labelled with product names and key ha...nforma...n • Provi...tra...g to w...ers on silica health effects, dust control expectations and correct studio cleaning methods	2M
4. Glaze, Stain and Chemical Management	• Use of glazes, oxides, stains, solvents or additives containing hazardous substances (e.g. lead, barium, manganese, chromium, cobalt) without controls • Inadequate chemi...n inventory and SDS management ...ading to unk...own or unmanaged risk • Improvised container use, poor labelling or decanting practices res...ing in exposure or incompati...tions • Lack of engineering controls (ventilation, extraction) during glaze mixing, spraying and cleaning of spray booths • Inappropriate storage of incompatible chemicals or failure to segregate food and drink from glaze areas • Absence of emergency arrangements for chemical spills, eye splashes or ingestion	4A	[redacted]	2M
5. Kiln and Firing Safety Management	• Inadequate kiln room design and ventilation causing build-up of heat, combustion products or kiln off-gassing	4A	[redacted]	2M

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	• Lack of interlocks, guards or access controls allowing untrained persons to approach hot kilns or electrical components • Improper installation or maintenance of kilns leading to electrical faults, fire or explosion risk • Overloading shelves or poor stacking practices causing structural failure, falling ware or damage to kiln furniture • Inadequate monitoring of firing schedules resulting in thermal shock, over-firing or damage to elements and relays • Storage of combustibles near kilns and inadequate clearances to walls or ceilings		[redacted]	
6. Plant, Equipment and Tool Safety Systems	• Unmanaged risks from powered equipment such as pug mills, slab rollers, mixers and grinders • Missing or defeated guards and emergency stops on rotating or shearing equipment • Use of homemade or modified pottery equipment without engineering assessment • Failure to tag, test and maintain electrical tools, wheels and extension leads • Inadequate systems for defect reporting and removal from service of unsafe equipment • Lack of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for higher-risk plant	3H	[redacted]	2M
7. Manual Handling, Ergonomics and Work Organisation	• Regular lifting and carrying of heavy clay bags, plaster moulds, kiln shelves and large pots without systematic controls • Poor workstation design at wheels, tables and sinks causing awkward postures and repetitive strain	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Lack of trolleys, dollies or mechanical aids for moving ware boards and kiln furniture • Time pressures in production or teaching timetables leading to rushed movements and unsafe lifting behaviours • Insufficient rotation of tasks causing repetitive motion injuries to wrists, shoulders and backs		[redacted]	
8. Electrical and Fire Safety Management	• Overloaded electrical circuits due to multiple kilns, wheels and heaters on shared circuits • Damaged leads, power boards or non-compliant adaptors used in wet or dusty environments • Inadequate number, type or maintenance of fire extinguishers and fire blankets in studio and kiln rooms • Lack of documented emergency procedures for electrical fire, kiln fire or general studio evacuation • Blocked or poorly signposted emergency exits and assembly points	4A	[redacted]	2M
9. Training, Competency and Supervision	• Untrained or inexperienced users operating kilns, pug mills or engaging in glaze mixing without supervision • Inconsistent instructions between different teachers or supervisors leading to confusion about safe practices • Lack of formal competency assessment for high-risk activities (kiln firing, chemical handling, plant operation) • Inadequate supervision ratios during classes, open studio sessions or community workshops • No refresher training, resulting in skill fade and outdated practices	4A	[redacted]	2M

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			[redacted]	
10. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program Management	• Over-reliance on PPE instead of higher order controls for dust, noise, heat and chemicals • Inconsistent provision, selection or maintenance of PPE for pottery-specific exposures (silica, glazes, hot work) • Workers and students using incompatible or non-compliant respiratory protection • No clear rules on when PPE is mandatory (e.g. during sanding, glaze spraying, kiln loading) leading to variable use • Lack of cleaning, storage and replacement systems for shared PPE	3H	[redacted]	2M
11. Health Monitoring, Incident Management and Wellbeing	• Unrecognised chronic exposure to silica dust, metal oxides or solvents leading to long-term health issues • Under-reporting of ne[redacted]s, minor injuries and discomf[redacted] preventing systemic improver[redacted]nts • Psychosocial risk[redacted]uction deadlines, class pressures or conflic[redacted] shared studio spaces • Lack of access to first a[redacted]pment and trained first aiders during pottery activities	3H	[redacted]	2M
12. Contractor, Visitor and Public Access Control	• Contractors (electricians, kiln technicians, cleaners) working in pottery areas without awareness of specific hazards • Members of the public or school groups entering kiln rooms or glaze areas without supervision • Inadequate induction for cleaning staff leading to unsafe dust control or chemical mixing practices	3H	[redacted]	2M

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	• Events, exhibitions or open days increasing occupancy beyond safe levels or obstructing access to exits and equipment		[redacted]	
13. Environmental, Waste and Reclaim Management	• Improper disposal of clay slurries, glaze residues and chemicals to sewer causing environmental harm or plumbing blockages • Uncontrolled reclaim processes generating additional dust or biological contamination (e.g. mould growth in slurry) • Inadequate storage and labelling of waste materials leading to confusion and cross-contamination • Poor management of broken ware, sharp fragments and used kiln furniture increasing cut and puncture risks	3H	[redacted]	2M
14. Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning	• Lack of pottery-specific emergency scenarios in broader site emergency plans (kiln malfunction, chemical spills, burns) • Workers and students unaware of emergency contacts, muster points or shutdown procedures for kilns and plant • Insufficient drills or exercises involving pottery areas, leading to confusion during real events • No provision for after-hours response where kilns may be operating unattended	3H	[redacted]	2M

EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES FOR ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

Queensland & Australian Capital Territory
Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
Legislation QLD: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws
Codes of Practice QLD: https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice
Legislation ACT: https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations
Codes of Practice ACT: https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice

New South Wales
Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2025
Legislation NSW: https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation
Codes of Practice NSW: https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-of-codes-of-practice

Northern Territory
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011
Legislation NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws
Codes of Practice NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/forms-and-resources/codes-of-practice

South Australia
Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)
Legislation for SA: https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation
Codes of Practice for SA: https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs

Tasmania
Work Health and Safety Act 2012
Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012
Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012
Legislation for TAS: https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations
Codes of Practice for TAS: https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.

Victoria
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017
Legislation VIC: https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations
Codes of Practice VIC: https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice

Western Australia
Work Health and Safety Act 2020
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022
Legislation Western Australia: https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation
Codes of Practice WA: https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice

Safe Work Australia Links
Law and Regulation (All States): https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation
Model Codes of Practice: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice

Model Codes of Practice

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work