

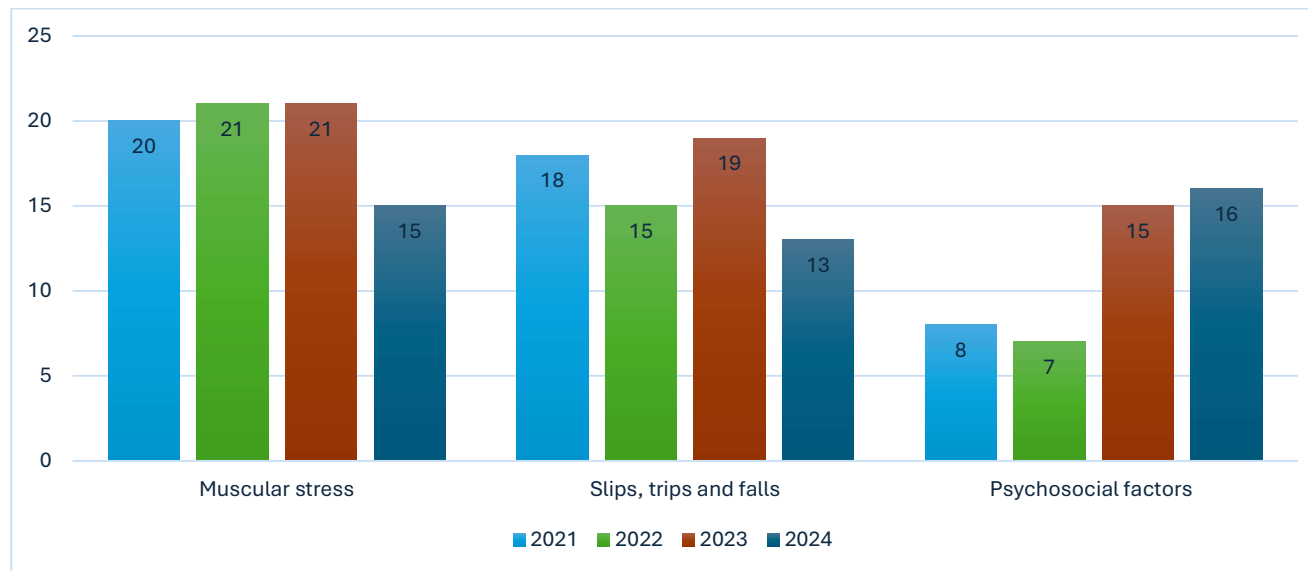
1.1 WHY IS PSYCHOSOCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT IMPORTANT TO JCU:

A psychosocial hazard is a “hazard that arises from, or relates to, the design or management of work, a work environment, plant at a workplace or workplace interactions and behaviours and may cause psychological harm”. Psychosocial risk is the likelihood of psychological harm of a worker or other person from a psychosocial hazard. Psychological health occurs on a continuum of responses which workers may experience, with harm occurring at one end of this continuum. Risks to psychological health are known as psychosocial risks<sup>1</sup>.

Psychosocial hazards have been identified as the third highest **mechanism of injury** (this does not directly relate to accepted WorkCover claims) for JCU staff between 2021-2024, as reported through RiskWare (*Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024 Table 1*). Psychosocial factors were the only mechanism that increased in 2024 in RiskWare. This increase in reporting correlates with a heightened awareness of psychosocial factors. For further details on JCU injury trends, refer to the *Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024*.

To ensure that JCU meets its duty of care to the JCU community, this psychosocial risk assessment has been developed to identify and assess the current controls for the psychosocial hazard groups as outlined in the *Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards Code of Practice, Queensland*.

**Chart 1 - Number of injuries (not including first aid injuries) sustained by JCU Staff in the top three mechanisms of injury across 2021-2024** (Extracts from Trends report):



<sup>1</sup> Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work: Code of Practice, 2022

## 1.2 RISK ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

### 1.2.1 IDENTIFY HAZARDS:

A psychosocial hazard is anything that could cause psychological harm (e.g. harm someone's mental health). Common psychosocial hazards at work include:

- job demands
- low job control
- poor support
- lack of role clarity
- poor organisational change management
- inadequate reward and recognition
- poor organisational justice
- traumatic events or material
- remote or isolated work
- poor physical environment
- violence and aggression
- bullying
- harassment, including sexual and gender-based harassment, and
- conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions

To identify the psychosocial hazards at JCU, five key data sources were reviewed:

- Employee experience survey (required in depth analysis - The questions were organised according to the COP psychosocial hazards, and the data was analysed by department)
- Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024
- Work Health and Safety Due Diligence Report (01 October 2024 – 31 December 2024)
- Staff Learning Hub
- HR complaints/grievance reporting

Some consistent themes have been identified across the data sources in relation to the types of psychosocial hazards that may be prevalent at JCU. These hazards are:

- Conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions
- Job demands
- Poor support (organisational wide level, not an immediate team perspective)
- Inadequate reward and recognition

Of the 16 psychosocial injuries where psychosocial factors were reported in 2024, five related to workplace conflict, eight to job demands and three to experiencing or witnessing traumatic events. Poor support and inadequate reward and recognition were not identified as the main psychosocial factor in any of the psychosocial injuries reported in 2024.

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### 1.2.2 ASSESS RISKS:

Using the risk matrix from [JCU risk management framework and plan](#) the likelihood and consequence were analysed for each hazard area of the psychosocial risk assessment.

- **Consequence:** Using the data from the Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024 & incident/hazard reporting the severity for each key hazard was assessed.
- **Likelihood:** Using the data from the Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024 and incident/hazard statistics and based on the consequence identified, the likelihood was assessment.
- **Risk rating:** Using the risk matrix these 2 parameters were used to rate each risk in the risk assessment below.

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### 1.2.3 CONTROL RISKS:

Where the risk rating was medium or above, an additional controls table has been included.

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### 1.2.4 REVIEW CONTROL MEASURES:

Using the above data, reassess the risk ratings at a defined timeframe to determine the effectiveness of controls. Modification to current controls or the addition of new controls may result from this review.

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## 1.3 DATA ANALYSIS:

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### 1.3.1 DATA LIMITATIONS.

The following limitations on data should be noted:

- Employee Experience Survey:
  - a. Designed for a different purpose, assessing engagement. It was not designed to contribute to psychosocial risk analysis.
  - b. Limited information available regarding some of the categories of psychosocial hazards. Therefore, not all categories of psychosocial hazard can be analysed using this data.
  - c. A significant amount of work is required to analyse, classify, and compare data for use in psychosocial risk analysis.
  - d. Low response rate (45%), impacting on validity when using the data at a College/Institute/Directorate level.
- Due Diligence Report:
  - a. Limited in the types of hazards targeted. Not all psychosocial hazard types are captured through this data source.
  - b. Limited due to the breakdown of data. Not comparable to the employee experience survey. Not comparable with other sections within the due diligence report. E.g. if all data was broken down to colleges, hot spots could be identified for specific psychosocial hazards.
- Trend Analysis – Injury Workcover
  - a. A good data source for reported injuries.
  - b. Bullying and harassment data does not include contributory factors. It is well known that bullying can be an outcome of the interaction of other psychosocial hazards. For example, poor role clarity combined with high workload and inconsistent expectations on workplace behaviour can lead to bullying behaviours.

## 1.4 RISK ASSESSMENT:

### 1.4.1 POOR WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Psychosocial Hazards	Findings (data)	Existing Controls	Current Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
<p><b>Poor workplace relationships<sup>2</sup> including interpersonal conflict</b></p> <p>This hazard does not include bullying, harassment or violence however, if not addressed can lead to these more damaging interactions.</p> <p>NOTE: The current data sources are unable to assess the risk of workplace relationships for students. Therefore, the finding in the section relate only to JCU staff members.</p>	<p><b>Anecdotal information:</b> The Human Resources team has identified that the primary psychosocial hazard faced by the team is associated with managing workplace relationships (raising workplace grievances and bullying and harassment concerns).</p> <p><b>Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The psychosocial factors breakdown in this report does not directly align with 'poor workplace relationships'.</li> <li>For the purpose of this risk assessment, the 'mental stress' breakdown factor has been used to measure this hazard.</li> <li>Table 1 shows a downward trend since 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>Due Diligence Report:</b> According to the due diligence report, in 2024 HR received 5 formal grievances related to workplace relationships. While no cases were assessed as meeting the bullying threshold, HR also received 3 complaints which were assessed under the Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Procedure. This shows that only a small percentage of workplace relationship conflicts progressed to grievances or other formal complaint processes.</p> <p><b>Staff Learning Hub:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to chart 2 and chart 3 below for completion rates.</li> <li>Results not included for JCU Respect and WHS Work Health and Safety Essentials for Managers/Supervisors</li> <li>Low completion rates observed</li> </ul> <p><b>Employee Experience Survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six questions from the survey were used to measure workplace relationships.</li> <li>When compared to the other psychosocial hazard categories. Workplace Relationships experiences provided some of the highest satisfaction rates.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policies &amp; Procedures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resolution of Grievances Procedure</li> <li>Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy</li> <li>Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure for Staff and Affiliates</li> <li>Staff Code of Conduct</li> <li>Diversity and Inclusion Policy</li> <li>Improving and Managing Underperformance Procedure</li> <li>Performance, Development and Planning Procedure</li> <li>WHS Risk Management Procedure</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <p>Mandatory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JCU Respect</li> <li>The updated Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention online training is in course development stage. This training will be Mandatory.</li> </ul> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace</li> <li>Work Health and Safety Essentials for Managers/Supervisors</li> <li>Staff Code of Conduct (deployed as mandatory for all Continuing and Fixed Term Staff on 2 June 2025)</li> <li>Leading a Performance Development and Planning Conversation</li> <li>Participating in a Performance Development and Planning Conversation</li> <li>Culture Transformation: Embedding our Values</li> <li>Developing your Team Values Statement</li> <li>Equal Opportunity Online for Supervisors</li> <li>Wellbeing for Leaders</li> <li>Wellbeing for Staff</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Reporting and Complaints Portal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Consequence = Minor</b> This consequence level is based on the past injury and grievance handling data specific to JCU.</p> <p><b>Likelihood = Possible</b> This likelihood level is based on the likelihood of issues reaching a minor consequence level as defined by the JCU Risk Management Framework and Plan.</p> <p><b>Risk rating = Medium (8)</b></p>

<sup>2</sup> *Definition:* Poor relationships or conflict between workers, managers, supervisors, coworkers or others with whom workers are required to interact. Frequent or excessive disagreements, disparaging or rude comments, either from one person or multiple people. (Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022, Queensland)

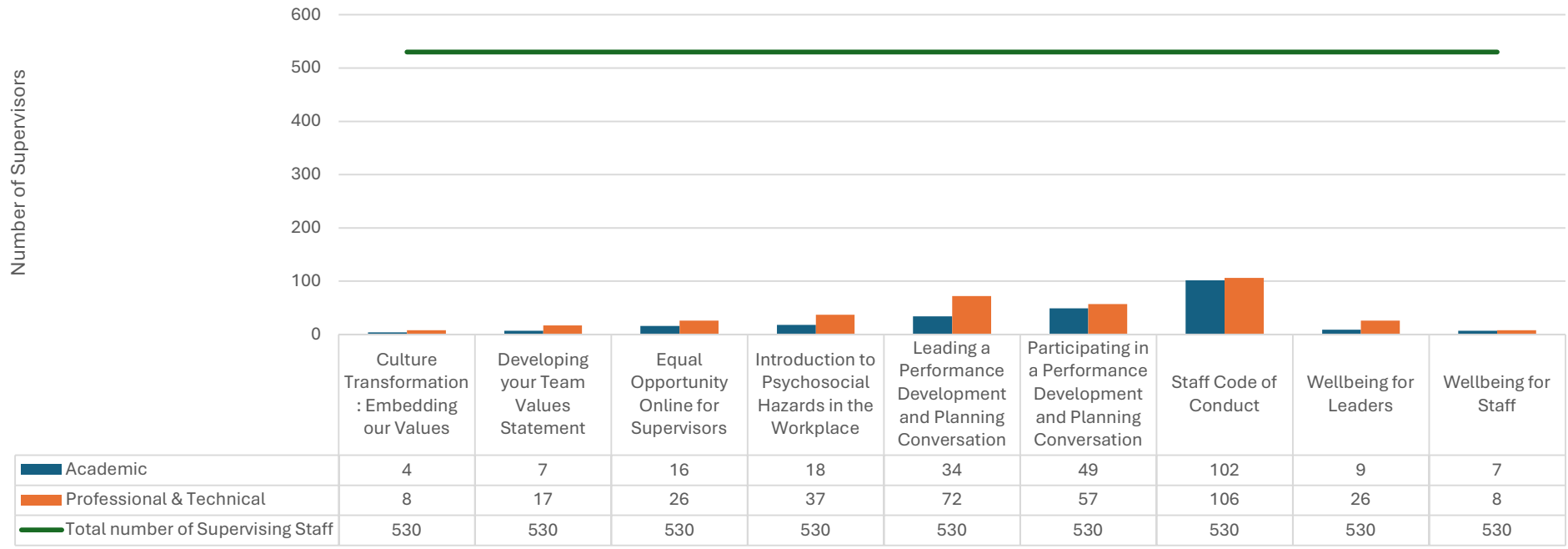
Psychosocial Hazards	Findings (data)	Existing Controls	Current Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Table 1 for a list of questions used in this hazard group.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Reporting and Complaints Portal - SharePoint Page</li> <li>JCU Enterprise Agreement</li> <li>Employee Assistance Program (EAP)</li> <li>Telus Health Manager Toolkit</li> <li>Team Values Statement</li> <li>Managing Flexible Working Arrangements (coming soon)</li> <li>Understanding Hours of Work (coming soon)</li> <li>PDP Templates and Guides</li> <li>Equity Contact Officers (ECO) network</li> </ul>	

#### Additional Controls Action Plan – Workplace Relationship

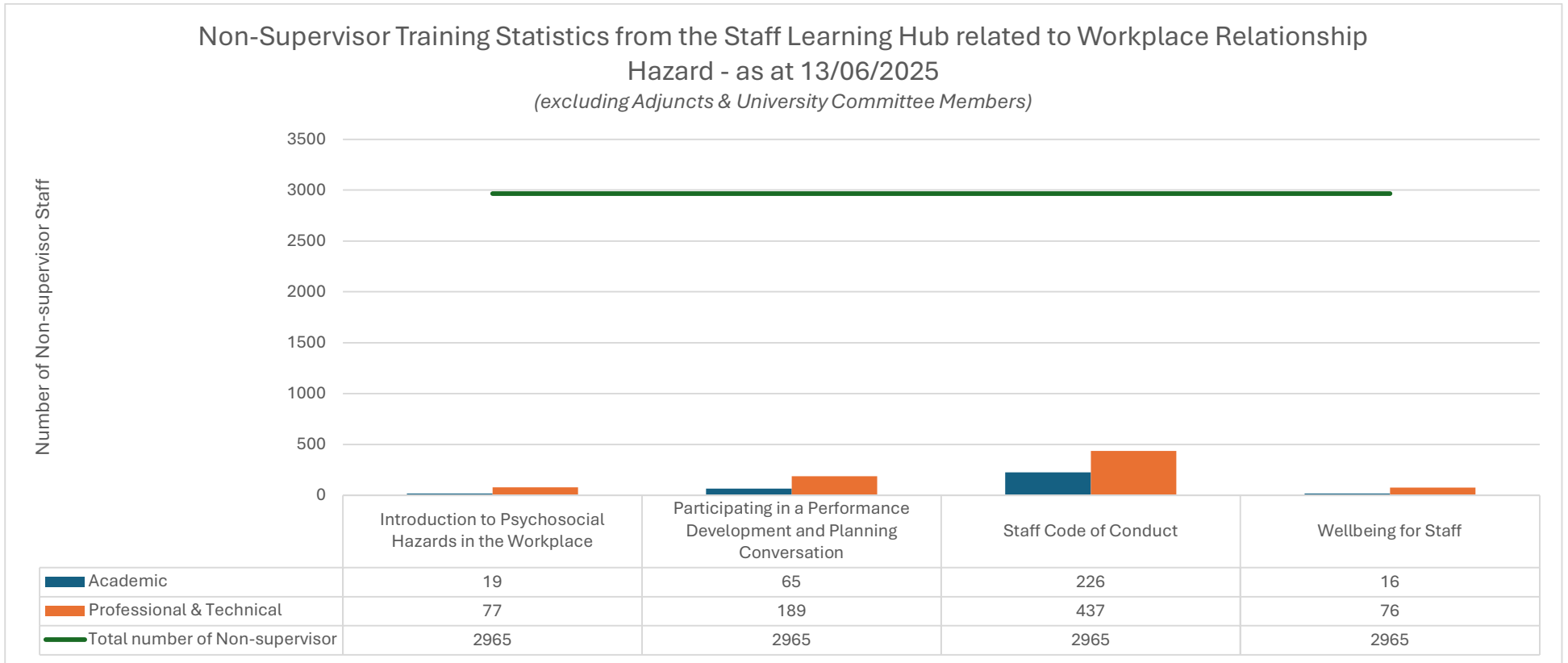
Proposed risk controls	Responsible Person	Proposed Completion Date
Investigate other data sources for measuring psychosocial risks.		
Improve training completion rates.		
Mandatory Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment Prevention training – All Continuing and Fixed Term Staff (under construction)		
Mandatory Staff Code of Conduct, and Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention training content to be refined and courses developed/deployed for Casual Staff (by end of 2025)		

**Chart 2 - Supervisor Training Completion Rates – Workplace Relationships**

Supervisor Training Statistics for Staff Learning Hub Training related to Workplace Relationship Hazard  
 - as at 13/03/2025  
 (excluding Adjuncts & University Committee Members)



**Chart 3 - Non-Supervisor Training Completion Rates – Workplace Relationships**



**Table 1. Workplace Relationships Questions used from the Employee Experience Survey**

Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilised
I feel I am part of a team
We have good working relationships among people in my team
We genuinely care about each team member's wellbeing
At James Cook University, we hold ourselves and our team members accountable for results
Other departments at James Cook University collaborate well with us to get the job done

1.4.2 JOB DEMANDS

Psychosocial Hazards	Data	Existing controls	Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
<p><b>Job Demands</b></p> <p>NOTE: The current data sources are unable to assess the risk of work demands for students. Therefore, the finding in the section relate only to JCU staff members.</p>	<p><b>Work-related injury trends report, 2021-2024:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work demands was the second most reported mechanisms of injury within the psychosocial factors.</li> <li>• Work demand related injuries at JCU can be both physical and psychologically related. Work demand injuries at JCU were found to cause injuries can be divided into these 2 categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Musculoskeletal 64%</li> <li>- Psychological 27%</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>DD report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR Case Management – There have been no workload disputes raised under the current Enterprise Agreement.</li> <li>• HR Exit Surveys – found the second top contributory factor for resigning for 2024 - with 9 resignations being directly related to workload/resourcing (from a total of 42 completed surveys).</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff Learning Hub:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JCU WHS Induction training statistics 78% (as at 13/6/25) completion rate. Note, this is the only mandatory training requirement for this hazard.</li> <li>• Refer to chart 1 and chart 2 for completion rates. Low completion rates observed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Employee experience survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When compared to the other psychosocial hazard categories. Work demand questions rated as the 3rd lowest experience in the experience survey</li> </ul>	<p><b>Policies and Procedures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Health Engagement Procedure</li> <li>• Probation Review and PDP Guides</li> <li>• Resolving Workplace Grievances and Complaints Procedure</li> </ul> <p><b>Training:</b></p> <p>Mandatory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JCU WHS Induction</li> </ul> <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leading a PDP Conversation</li> <li>• Participating in a PDP Conversation</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JCU Enterprise Agreement</li> <li>• Employee Assistance Program (EAP)</li> <li>• Injury management team</li> <li>• Performance and Development Plan (PDP) Reviews with Manager</li> <li>• HR</li> <li>• Supervisor Hub</li> <li>• Flexible working arrangements</li> </ul> <p><b>Process:</b></p> <p>Where a staff member wishes to raise a concern with high and/or low job demands, they should first raise this with their supervisor. A staff member may also wish to engage with their Head of Work Unit where this position is not their supervisor. It may be appropriate for the staff member and supervisor to conduct a risk assessment if the hazard/s cannot be eliminated. A staff member can be supported or represented in these discussions should they so wish. A staff member may also wish to seek further advice from WHS and/or the HR Business Partnering Team prior to these discussions.</p> <p>It may also be appropriate for the staff member and supervisor to discuss the role and expectations formally through a PDP/probation review. If the high and/or low job demands do not change, the staff member should raise this with their Head of Work Unit. Academic Staff members may wish to request a Workload Allocation Review as per Clause 15.7 of the James Cook University Enterprise Agreement.</p> <p>A Staff member may elect to log the concern through RiskWare. Where this occurs, and where appropriate, a WHS staff member will contact the staff member and supervisor to assist to eliminate and/or mitigate the demand e.g. in the case of a potentially hazardous manual task. WHS may refer the matter to Human Resources for other types of job demands. A staff member</p>	<p><b>Consequence = Moderate</b></p> <p>This consequence level is based on the past injury claim data specific to JCU.</p> <p><b>Likelihood = Likely</b></p> <p>This likelihood level is based on the likelihood of issues reaching a moderate consequence level as defined by the JCU Risk Management Framework and Plan.</p> <p><b>Risk Rating = High (17)</b></p>

Psychosocial Hazards	Data	Existing controls	Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two questions from the employee experience survey were used to measure workload concerns (see table 2 below).</li> </ul>	may elect to resolve their concerns utilising the resolving workplace grievances and complaints procedure.	

#### Additional Controls Action Plan – Job Demands

Proposed risk controls	Responsible Person	Proposed Completion Date
Investigate other data sources for measuring psychosocial risks.		
Improve training completion rates.		

**Table 2. Job Demands Questions from the Employee Experience Survey**

Generally, I believe my workload is reasonable for my role
Most days, I can accomplish all I need to during my normal working hours.

#### 1.4.3 POOR SUPPORT

Psychosocial Hazards	Findings (data)	Existing Controls	Current Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
<p><b>Poor Support (organisation wide)</b></p> <p>This category captures employee confidence in JCU’s leadership (above the level of a line manager), resource allocation, commitment to employee wellbeing and equality, as well as effective communication and consultation among staff as defined by the results of specific questions from the</p>	<p><b>Employee Experience survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When compared to the other psychosocial hazard categories. Support (organisation wide) questions rated as the lowest in the experience survey.</li> <li>9 questions from the employee experience survey were used to measure support (organisation wide) concerns, they can be found in table 3 below.</li> </ul> <p><b>DD report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EAP usage from 2021-2024 is trending upwards</li> <li>Personal stress is the primary driver for contact with EAP</li> <li>EAP % of work-related usage when compared to non-work related usage has increased indicating that more staff members are seeking support to manage work-related psychological concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The University Executive have committed to the following actions in response to survey feedback, VC has committed to undertaking a focused Communication and Engagement Plan that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>clarify our vision and direction:</b> ensure consistent communication of the University’s vision and strategic goals, using real-life examples of success;</li> <li><b>increase transparency:</b> provide regular updates on key initiatives and decisions in order to build trust and confidence; and</li> <li><b>encourage two-way communication:</b> continue the VC visits and provide opportunities for open dialogue and feedback forums with senior leadership, expanding the staff mingles to the Townsville Campus.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Staff page has been redesigned to provide staff with the information they need to feel connected. The redesign used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>insights from past practices;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Consequence = Minor</b></p> <p>As organisational support has a lower direct impact on an individual as compared to Line Manager support, has been assessed as minor</p> <p><b>Likelihood = Likely</b></p> <p>From the survey results, it is possible that staff will be leaving or seeking medical attention as a result of impact of organisational support.</p> <p><b>Risk rating = Medium (12)</b></p>

Psychosocial Hazards	Findings (data)	Existing Controls	Current Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
Employee Experience Survey. The survey questions used to rate this hazard group can be found in table 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The highest category of work-related EAP usage has been identified as stress</li> </ul> <p><b>Other data sources:</b> Other data sources do not provide information relating to the performance of support (organisation wide) that can be used for the purpose of this risk assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a heat map to identify the most frequently accessed information;</li> <li>feedback from the Employee Experience Survey.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership commitment to a mentally healthy workplace <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Included in policy documents</li> <li>DD &amp; COP training for executives by external lawyers</li> <li>Annual officer training</li> <li>JCU Mental Health and Wellness Strategy led by Chief of Staff</li> <li>Flexible workplace practices</li> <li>EAP</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

#### Additional Controls Action Plan – Poor support (organisation wide)

Proposed risk controls	Responsible Person	Proposed Completion Date
No additional controls. Employee experience survey actions items capture the identified risks in this category.		

**Table 3. Organisational Wide Support Questions used from the Employee Experience Survey**

James Cook University effectively directs resources (funding, people and effort) towards our goals
I have confidence in the leaders at James Cook University
The leaders here demonstrate that employee wellbeing is important
I believe employee wellbeing is a priority at James Cook University
People from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to succeed at James Cook University
I believe action will take place as a result of this survey
The leaders at James Cook University keep people informed about what is happening
At James Cook University there is open and honest two-way communication
Most people here make a good effort to consult other staff where appropriate

1.4.4 REWARD AND RECOGNITION

Psychosocial Hazards	Findings (data)	Existing Controls	Current Risk Rating <a href="#">JCU risk management framework and plan</a>
<b>Reward and Recognition</b>	<p><b>Employee experience survey:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When compared to the other psychosocial hazard categories. Reward and recognition questions rated as the 2nd lowest in the experience survey</li> <li>2 questions from the employee experience survey were used to measure reward and recognition concerns (see table 4 below)</li> </ul> <p><b>Other data sources:</b> Other data sources do not provide information relating to the performance of reward and recognition that can be used for the purpose of this risk assessment.</p>	<p><b>Policy &amp; Procedures:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance, Development and Recognition Policy - Policy                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic Performance and Development Framework</li> </ul> </li> <li>Academic Promotion Procedure</li> </ul> <p><b>Other:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JCU Enterprise Agreement</li> <li>Employee Assistance Program (EAP)</li> <li>JCU Mental Health and Wellness Strategy (2022-2026)</li> <li>Performance and Development Plan (PDP) Reviews with Manager</li> </ul> <p><b>Process:</b> Where a staff member wishes to raise a concern with inadequate reward and recognition, they must first raise this with their supervisor. They may wish to discuss formally with a review PDP and review the Academic Promotion Procedure.</p>	<p><b>Consequence = Insignificant</b> Insignificant (no incident report / hazard reports related to low recognition / reward). General dissatisfaction as found by the survey.</p> <p><b>Likelihood = Likely</b> From survey results, reward &amp; recognition resulted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest area of satisfaction.</p> <p><b>Risk rating = Low (7)</b></p>

**Additional Controls Action Plan – Reward and Recognition**

Proposed risk controls	Responsible Person	Proposed Completion Date

**Table 4. Reward and Recognition Questions used from the Employee Experience Survey**

We acknowledge people who deliver outstanding service here
I receive appropriate recognition for good work at JCU.