

PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AT WORK

Kaimahi Quick Guide

Practical Overview for Kaimahi

for more detailed information, please visit [Total Worker Health & Wellbeing Support Guide](#)

What Are Psychosocial Factors/Hazards?

Psychosocial hazards are aspects of work that may negatively affect psychological or physical wellbeing.

These can include:

- Excessive workload or time pressure
- Unclear expectations
- Poor communication
- Conflict within teams
- Lack of support
- Bullying or harassment
- Poorly managed organisational change

Psychosocial risks are related to how work is designed, organised, and managed — they are not personal weaknesses.

When Concerns Arise

Identify Early

Early conversations often prevent issues from escalating.

If you are experiencing strain or concern related to work, consider:

- Speaking with your line manager
- Seeking support from HR where appropriate
- Accessing Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Raising concerns through appropriate University processes
- Discussing possible workload or work adjustments early

Examples of concerns that may benefit from early discussion:

- Ongoing workload pressure



- Difficulty managing competing priorities
- Communication or team concerns
- Stress related to organisational change
- Feeling unsupported at work

What You Can Expect

When psychosocial concerns are raised, the University may:

- Review workload or work design factors
- Clarify expectations and priorities
- Explore practical adjustments or supports
- Facilitate conversations where appropriate
- Seek additional advice from HR, Health & Safety, or Occupational Health

The focus should remain on improving work systems and reducing risk where reasonably practicable.

Shared Responsibilities

Kaimahi

- Raise concerns early where possible
- Participate in respectful conversations
- Engage with agreed support strategies
- Use available support services

Leaders

- Provide safe and respectful work environments
- Review workload and work design concerns
- Address issues early
- Seek support from HR or Health & Safety where appropriate

Human Resources

- Support employment-related processes
- Provide guidance on workplace concerns
- Support mediation and formal processes where required

Health, Safety & Occupational Health

- Support psychosocial risk management processes
- Provide advice regarding psychosocial hazards
- Support prevention-focused approaches

When to Use Vault

Vault may be appropriate when:

- There are ongoing health and safety concerns
- A psychosocial hazard may be affecting multiple people or the wider work environment
- Concerns have not improved despite local discussions

Many workplace concerns can initially be addressed through early conversations with leaders and/or HR.

Sensitive Event Reporting

Sensitive Event Reporting in Vault allows kaimahi to raise concerns about **serious** workplace issues that may affect health, safety, or wellbeing and a more confidential pathway is required. For more information please ask your DHRM, H&S advisor/officer and/or write to harassment@otago.ac.nz.

This may include concerns relating to:

- Bullying, harassment or discrimination
- Unsafe behaviour
- Serious workplace conflict
- Psychosocial hazards affecting multiple people or the wider work environment

Key Principles

- Wellbeing is a shared responsibility
- Early conversations reduce escalation
- Psychosocial risks should be addressed respectfully and fairly
- Prevention and good work design matter
- Support should focus on both people and systems

For further support:

- Speak with your line manager
- Contact your Divisional HR Manager
- Contact Occupational Health
- Access EAP support services

Related Documents and Resources:

- [Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Total Worker Health & Wellbeing Support Guide](#)
- [Staff Wellbeing at Otago University](#)

- [EAP](#)
- Occupational Health Team, ohn@otago.ac.nz
- Human Resources, <https://www.otago.ac.nz/humanresources/contacts/staff>