

# Psychosocial Safety tip sheet

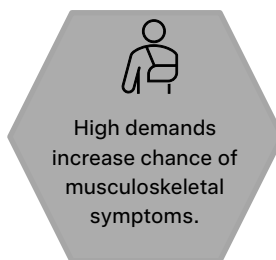
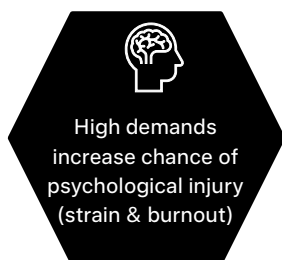
## High or Low Job Demands (Psychosocial Hazard #1)



High job demands are sustained or intense periods of work that include excessive or unreasonable levels of:

- **Physical demands:** long hours, no breaks, physically exhausting work.
- **Mental demands:** continuous very high concentration; continuous rapid learning and re-learning; complex and ambiguous work with an uncertain outcome and time pressure.
- **Emotional demands:** listening to others' experiences of pain or trauma; high levels of emotional control such as masking strong emotions.

Low job demands are prolonged periods of insufficient mental demands such as monotonous and repetitive work.



### Are we OK?

#### Watch out for:

- Persistent & unreasonable time pressure, quick turnaround times, changing and/or unachievable deadlines.
- Routinely working extended hours or without breaks.
- Frequent & persistent interruptions, especially combined with complex work.
- Complex work that exceeds employees' capacities (e.g., continuous problems with no solution, continuous 'reinventing the wheel', inadequate training & support to enable performance).
- Highly emotional work that requires continuous management of strong emotions in self or others.
- Lengthy periods of monotonous, repetitive, and boring work.

#### It looks & sounds like:

- Employees might say they feel overloaded, overwhelmed or that they don't have capacity for more work.
- Reduction in speed, accuracy, or timeliness of employees' work.
- Increase in unplanned absences.
- Irritability, unusual cynicism, less consideration for others than usual.
- Engagement results may indicate concerns with workload.

#### For more info:

- Visit the [Safe Work Australia Website](#)
- Contact the Health & Wellbeing Team via: [heathandwellbeing@griffith.edu.au](mailto:heathandwellbeing@griffith.edu.au)

### Tips for building psychosocial safety:

- Understand your employees' work and the time and effort involved.
- Provide choice where possible about how to do the work - include options for uninterrupted time (eg, working from home, meeting-free days) to complete complex or large tasks.
- Proactively remove unnecessary tasks, non-essential process steps and barriers wherever possible.
- Critically consider timeframes and spread these out as much as possible.
- Set an example around: taking breaks, not sending emails outside of hours, saying no to requests that are unreasonable or outside your remit.
- Ensure support is available for employees managing high emotional demands (eg, strong and supportive team environment, opportunity to debrief with you and/or colleagues).