University of the Sunshine Coast

Accident Research (USCAR)

The Risk Assessment Process

From 'ticking the box' to an empowering and inclusive aspect in your overall risk management strategy

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Aims

- Implications of the OHS Act for outdoor programs
- Compliance and achievement of meaningful outcomes
- Risk assessment process underpinned by contemporary systems thinking

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The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Victoria)

1. …highest level of protection against risks to their health and safety that is reasonably practicable
2. …responsible for eliminating or reducing those risks so far as is reasonably practicable…
3. …proactive, and take all reasonably practicable measures…
4. Employers and employees should exchange information…
5. Employees…represented in relation to health and safety issues.

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Hazards and risks?

- “A hazard is anything in the workplace that has the **potential to harm** people.

- A risk arises when it’s possible that a hazard will actually cause harm. The level of risk will depend on factors such as **how often** the job is done, the **number of workers** involved and **how serious** any injuries that result could be.”

(WorkSafe Victoria)

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“so far as reasonable practicable”

- Likelihood
- Degree of harm
- Knowledge
- Availability
- Costs

(Safe Work Australia)

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What does this mean for me?

Risk identification and control are required to meet your obligations under the OHS Act

Some questions:

What is the role of a risk assessment in your organisation?

Are there any issues that confuse you when conducting a risk assessment?

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Risk Assessment

1. Address compliance requirements **(priority on safety, proactive, comprehensive, collaborative)**; and

2. Focus on meaningful outcomes that align and compliment the desired aims of the program.

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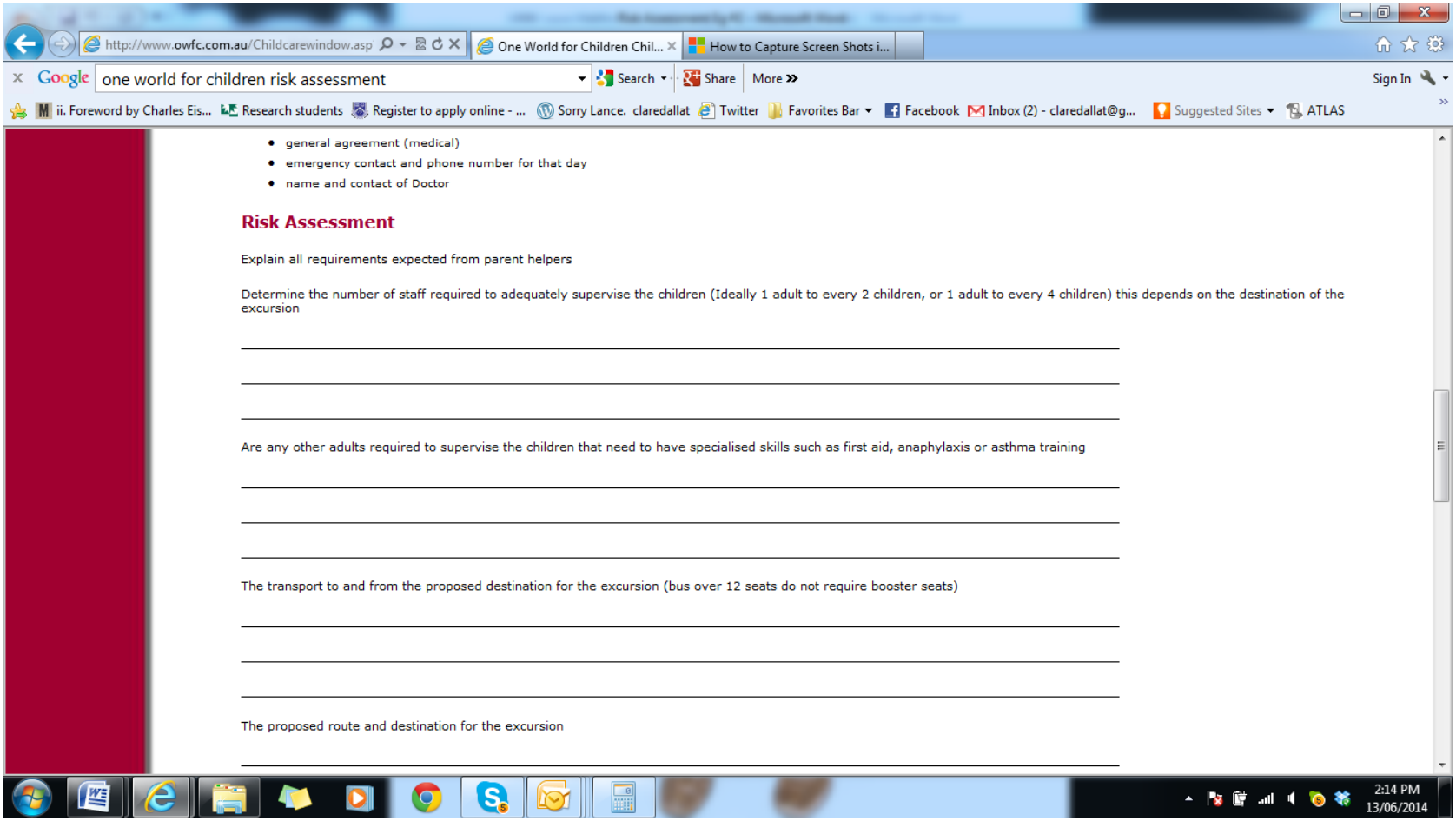
Example 1…



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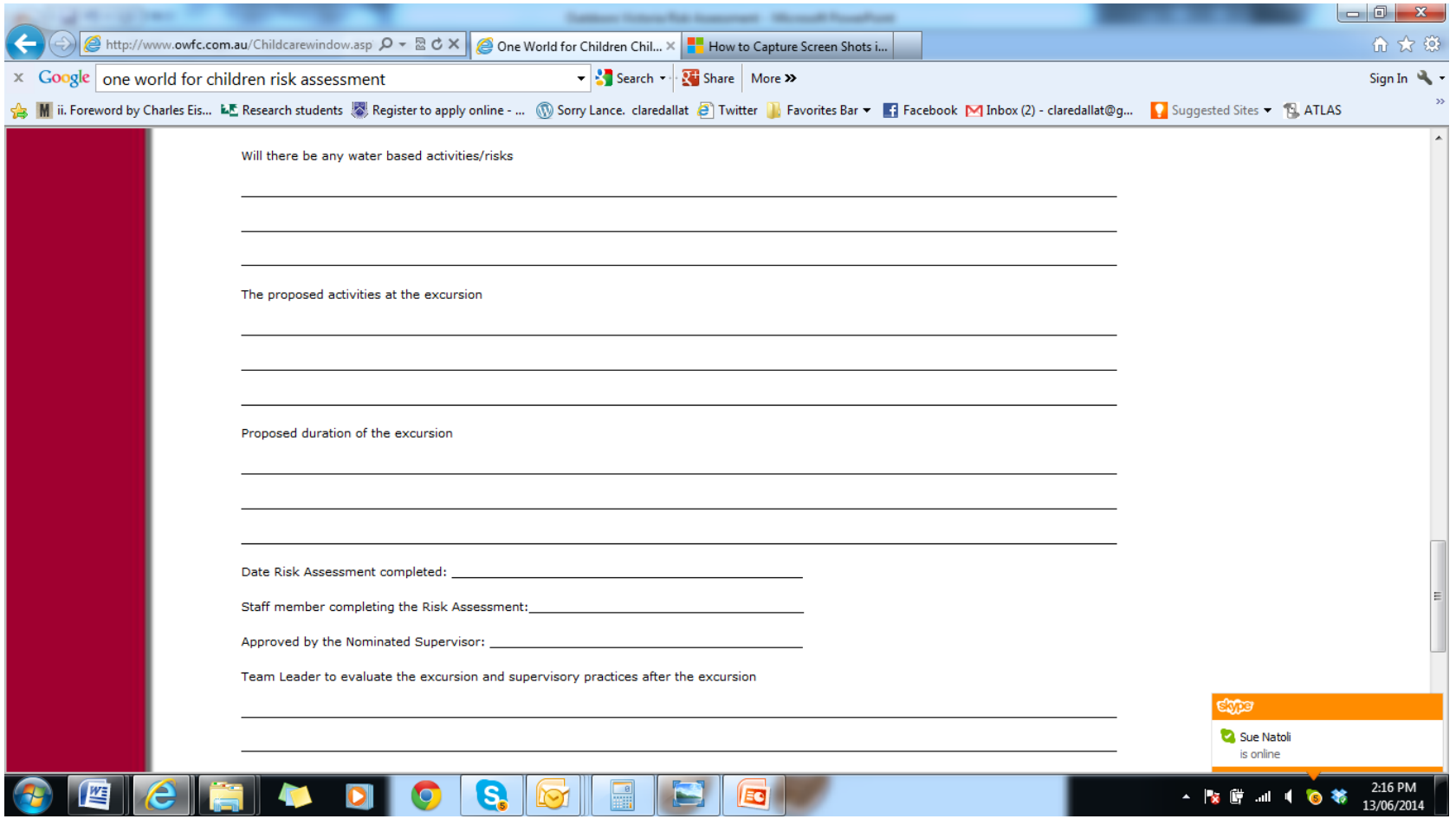
Example 1 cont'd.



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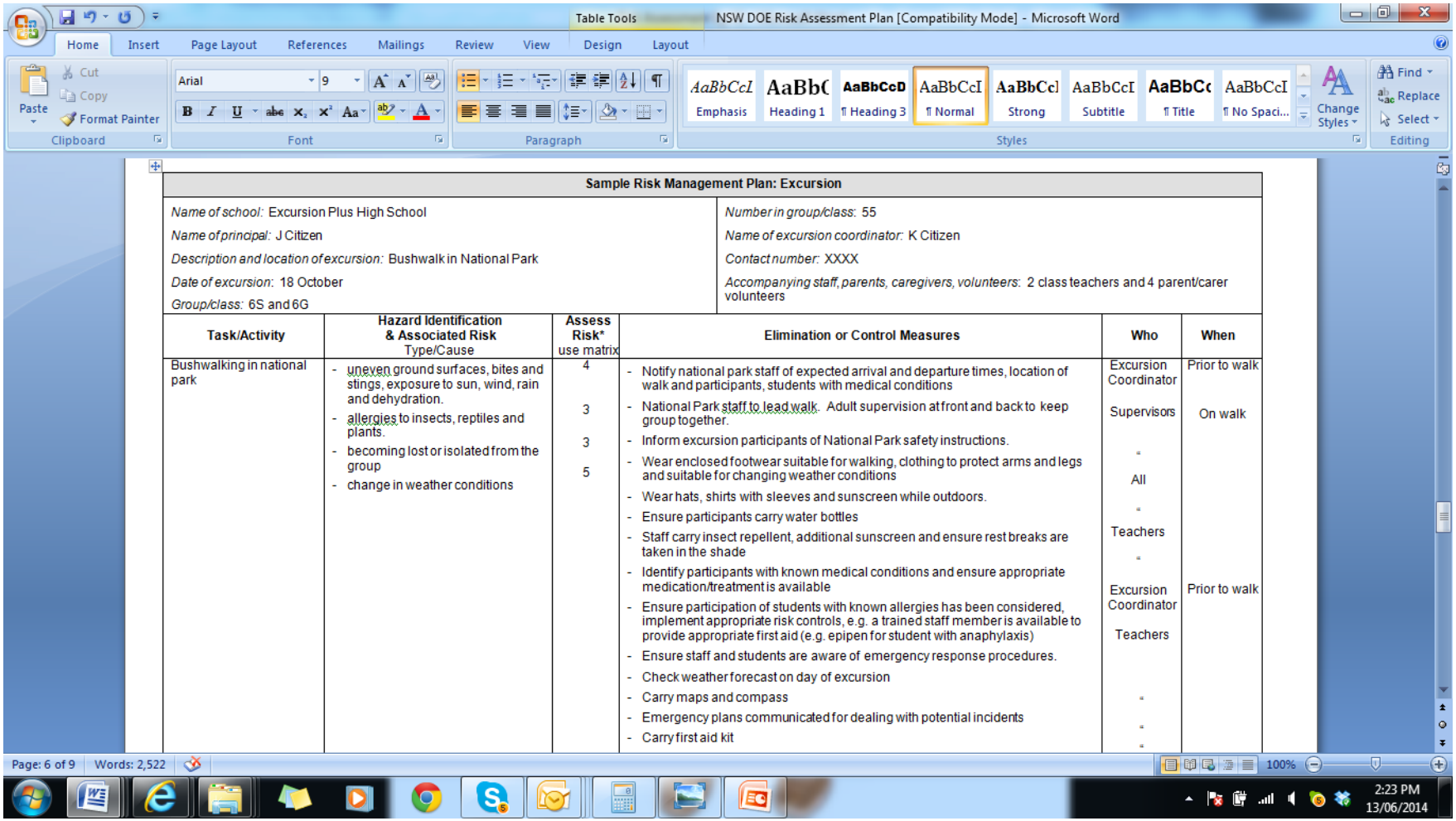
Example 2…



NSW DOE Risk Assessment Plan [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Word

Sample Risk Management Plan: Excursion

Name of school: Excursion Plus High School
Name of principal: J Citizen
Description and location of excursion: Bushwalk in National Park
Date of excursion: 18 October
Group/class: 6S and 6G
Number in group/class: 55
Name of excursion coordinator: K Citizen
Contact number: XXXX
Accompanying staff, parents, caregivers, volunteers: 2 class teachers and 4 parent/carer volunteers

Task/Activity	Hazard Identification & Associated Risk Type/Cause	Assess Risk* use matrix	Elimination or Control Measures	Who	When
Bushwalking in national park	- uneven ground surfaces, bites and stings, exposure to sun, wind, rain and dehydration. - allergies to insects, reptiles and plants. - becoming lost or isolated from the group - change in weather conditions	4 3 3 5	- Notify national park staff of expected arrival and departure times, location of walk and participants, students with medical conditions - National Park staff to lead walk. Adult supervision at front and back to keep group together. - Inform excursion participants of National Park safety instructions. - Wear enclosed footwear suitable for walking, clothing to protect arms and legs and suitable for changing weather conditions - Wear hats, shirts with sleeves and sunscreen while outdoors. - Ensure participants carry water bottles - Staff carry insect repellent, additional sunscreen and ensure rest breaks are taken in the shade - Identify participants with known medical conditions and ensure appropriate medication/treatment is available - Ensure participation of students with known allergies has been considered, implement appropriate risk controls, e.g. a trained staff member is available to provide appropriate first aid (e.g. epipen for student with anaphylaxis) - Ensure staff and students are aware of emergency response procedures. - Check weather forecast on day of excursion - Carry maps and compass - Emergency plans communicated for dealing with potential incidents - Carry first aid kit	Excursion Coordinator Supervisors " All " Teachers " Excursion Coordinator Teachers " " "	Prior to walk On walk Prior to walk

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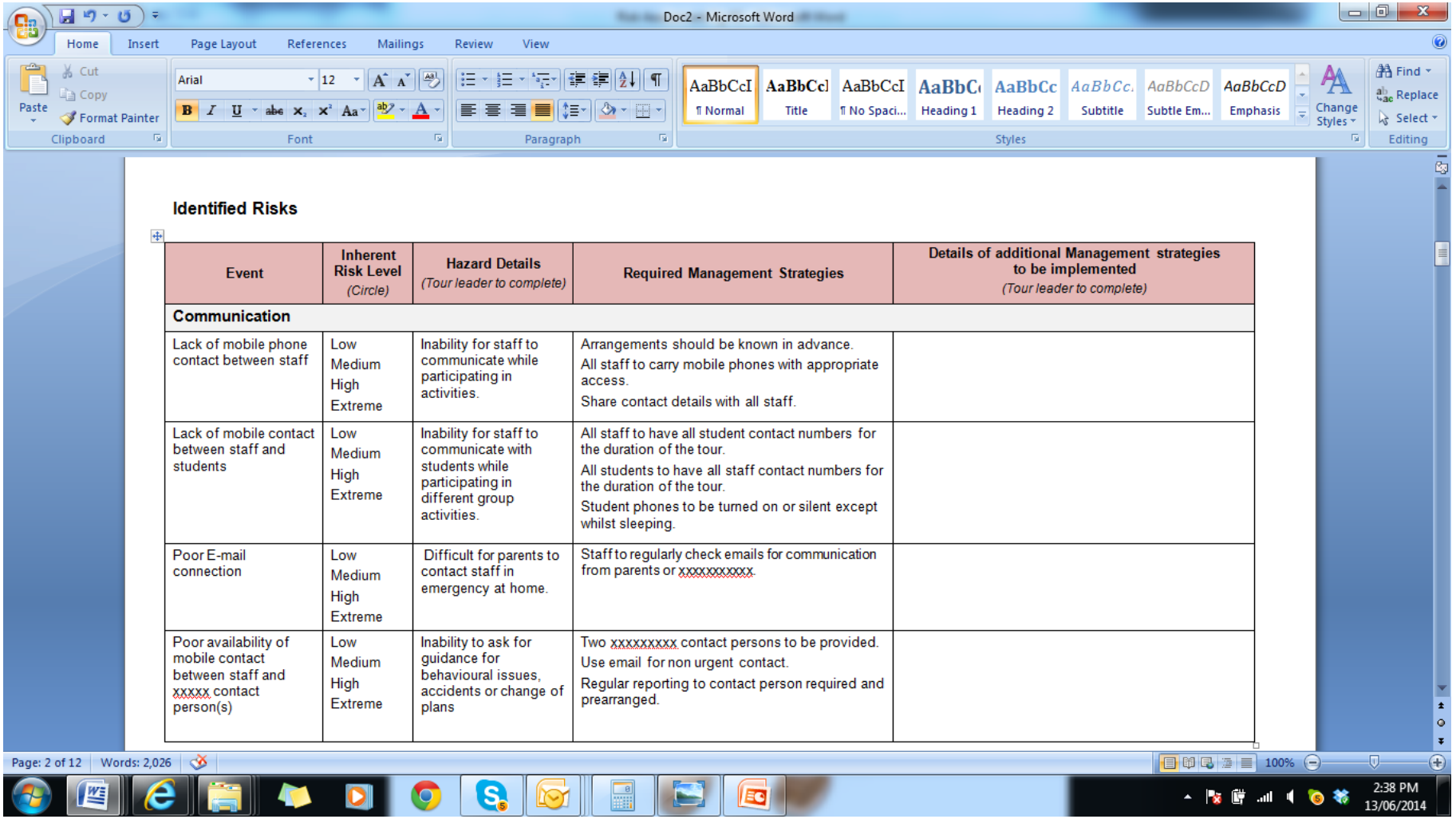
Example 3



Identified Risks

Event	Inherent Risk Level *(Circle)*	Hazard Details *(Tour leader to complete)*	Required Management Strategies	Details of additional Management strategies to be implemented *(Tour leader to complete)*
Communication				
Lack of mobile phone contact between staff	Low Medium High Extreme	Inability for staff to communicate while participating in activities.	Arrangements should be known in advance. All staff to carry mobile phones with appropriate access. Share contact details with all staff.	
Lack of mobile contact between staff and students	Low Medium High Extreme	Inability for staff to communicate with students while participating in different group activities.	All staff to have all student contact numbers for the duration of the tour. All students to have all staff contact numbers for the duration of the tour. Student phones to be turned on or silent except whilst sleeping.	
Poor E-mail connection	Low Medium High Extreme	Difficult for parents to contact staff in emergency at home.	Staff to regularly check emails for communication from parents or xxxxxxxxxx.	
Poor availability of mobile contact between staff and xxxxx contact person(s)	Low Medium High Extreme	Inability to ask for guidance for behavioural issues, accidents or change of plans	Two xxxxxxxxx contact persons to be provided. Use email for non urgent contact. Regular reporting to contact person required and prearranged.	

Summary of main issues

- Missing key hazards
- Focussing on high risk but low likelihood OR high likelihood but low risk
- Not program specific
- Non-specific controls
- Flexible vs. rigid
- Top-down approach vs. collaborative
- How detailed should a risk assessment be?
- How do you find out what the key hazards are?

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Some guiding theories…

- UPLOADS Accident Analysis Framework (what hazards exist)

- Sociotechnical systems theory (how to identify those hazards)

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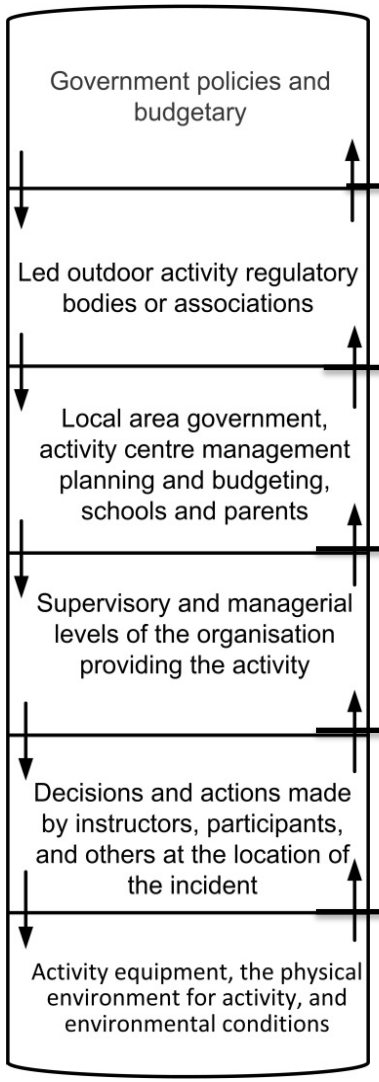
UPLOADS Accident Analysis Framework (what hazards exist)



State and Federal Government (8)

Regulatory bodies and professional associations (8)

Higher-level Management (11) **Schools** (8) **Parents/Carers** (6) **Local Area Government** (6)

Supervisor/Field Managers (10)

Activity Leader (9) **Activity Participants** (8) **Other People in Activity Group** (9) **Group Factors** (8) **Other People in Activity Environment** (8)

Activity Environment (6) **Activity Equipment and Resources** (5)

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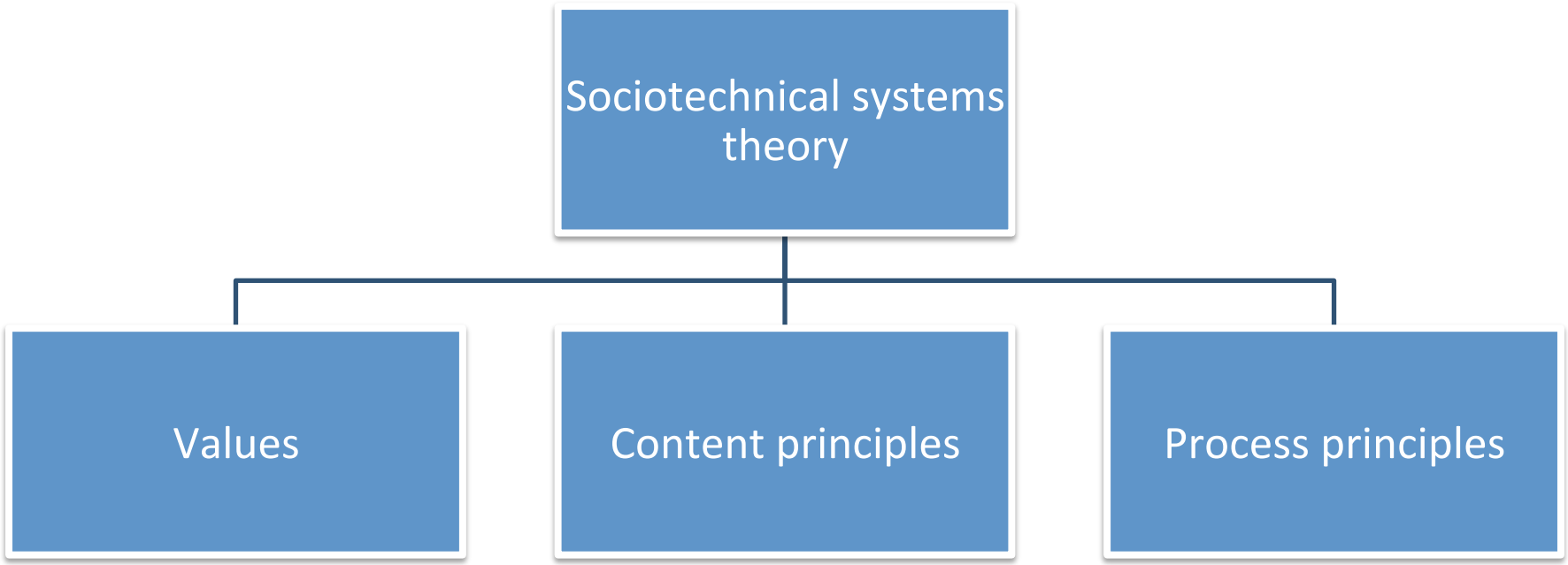
Sociotechnical systems theory (how to identify those hazards)



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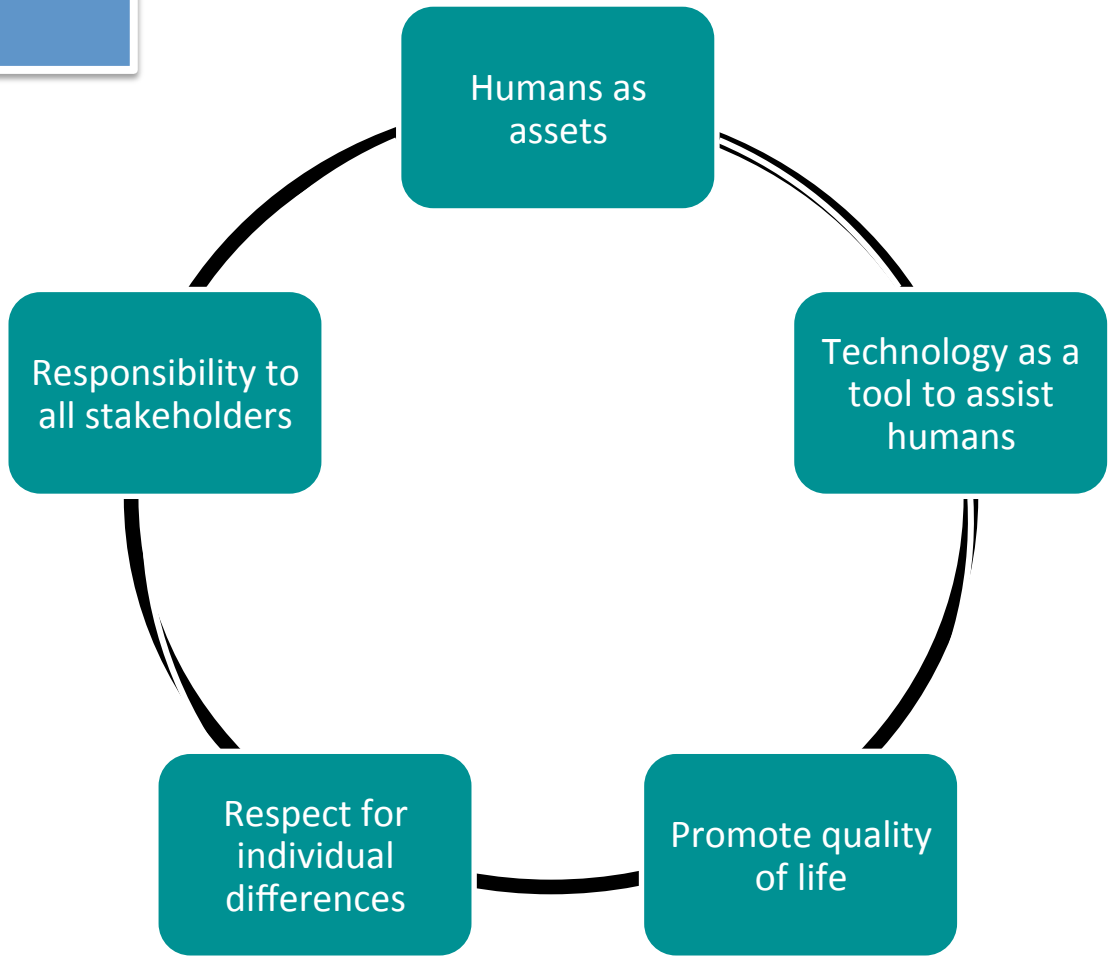
Values



(Cherns, 1987)

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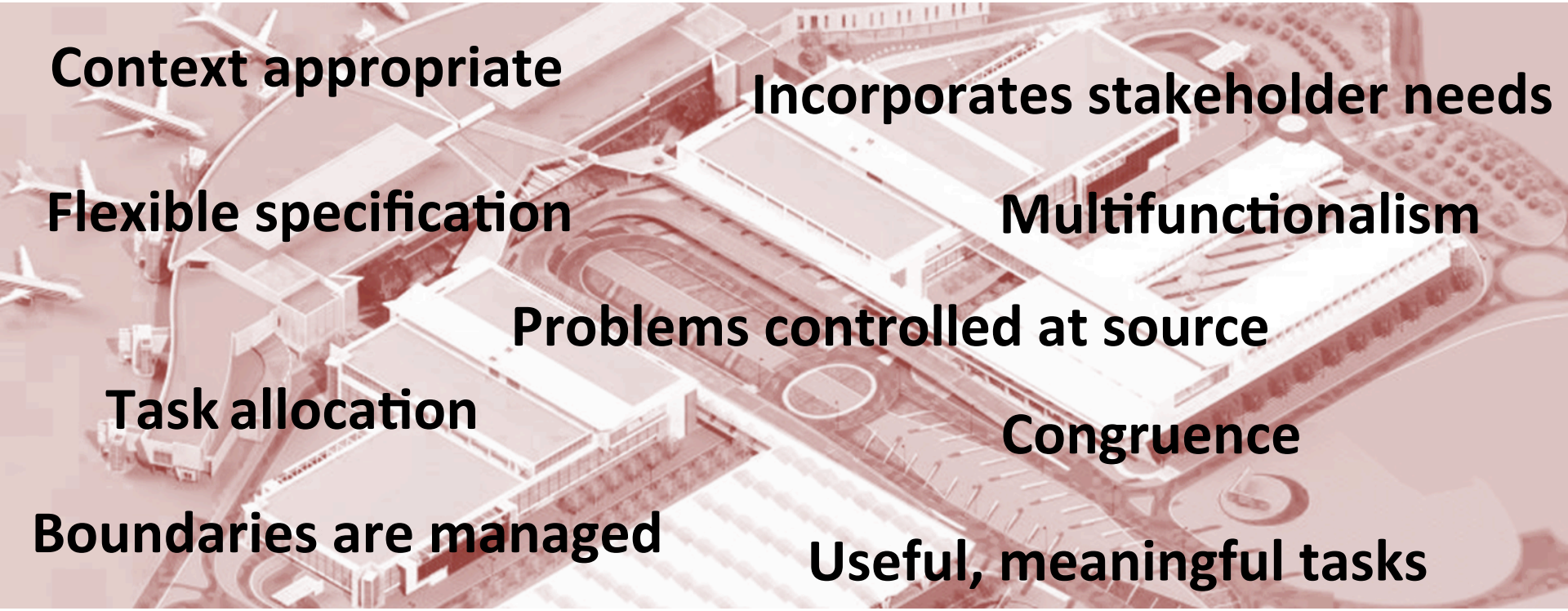
Content principles



(Cherns, 1976; Cherns 1987; Clegg, 2000; Davis, 1982; Walker et al, 2009)

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Process principles

Agree values

Joint design

Multidisciplinary learning

Resources & support

Planning for transition

User participation

Constraints questioned

Planning for ongoing re-design

Political debate

1982; Walker et al, 2009)

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In practice…one example

- HIRA – Program, Venue and Participant specific
- All staff involved from design to delivery involved
- Initially impracticable and therefore didn't work
- Role of technology to support process
- Resistance initially
- Continual challenge to make it 'living' and improvements needed
- Risk controls relationship ➲ program aims ➲ overall risk tolerance

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Thank you!

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