

Health and Safety Guidelines

Risk Assessment Process

The Risk Assessment Process

Five steps to risk assessment

Check list

The Risk Assessment Process

‘Risk Assessment is an essential part of Health and Safety management system’

A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to anyone, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. A comprehensive Risk Assessment system considers all tasks, work activities, sites and influencing factors that may involve hazards and risks to staff, students, visitors, volunteers and any member of the general public who comes into contact with any operations.

Different organisations use different approaches to Risk Assessment it is recommended when you either set up new Risk Assessments or are checking existing processes that you follow the Health and Safety Executives guidance on carrying out risk assessment which are contained in a handy document entitled

5 Steps to Risk Assessment

Step 1	Look for the hazards
Step 2	Decide who might be harmed and how
Step 3	Evaluate the risk and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
Step 4	Record your findings
Step 5	Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

Step 1 - Look for the hazards

Hazard – Anything that can cause harm or potential to cause harm. (such as a broken piece of equipment)

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

Harm - caused by hazard. The potential harm is what that hazard may cause. E.g. working at height- Hazard fall from height, then impact with ground will be a harm..

Persons At Risk – those likely to be affected by the hazard

Step 3 - Evaluate the risk and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done

Existing Preventative Measures – what is already in place to prevent that hazard from causing harm, such as, policy and procedure, barriers to prevent access etc. When assessing a hazard if there is already a preventative measures in place calculate the risk of the hazard with this measure in place. Always assessing real hazards.

e.g crossing a bridge with secure hand rails over a stream. **hazard** falling from bridge, because the bridge has secure handrails with small gaps that would be impossible for a child to fall through the likely hood of a fall off the bridge is much less than if the bridge had no hand rails.

Evaluating Risk - is the chance high or low that somebody will be **harmed** by the **hazard**. Use a rating system that suits you to work out the potential risk.

Risk Rating – the **probability** (the likelihood that the hazard will cause harm) multiplied by the **severity** (the seriousness of the incident that may be caused)= a result. Any result with a high score will need to have immediate additional control measures put in place to prevent harm.

The risk can be calculated in different ways your organisation may use a different rating system below are examples of different rating systems:

Example 1 using numbers

This method may be useful if less experienced at doing risk assessments as it breaks each assessment of probability and severity down into its smallest part

PROBABILITY																								
1					2					3					4					5				
<5% chance that it will occur (Very unlikely to occur)					25% chance that it will occur					50% chance that it will occur					75% chance that it will occur					>95% chance that it will occur (Very likely to Occur)				
SEVERITY																								
1					2					3					4					5				
NOT SERIOUS No first aid required					MINOR INJURY Requiring Basic First Aid					INJURY Requiring Non –immediate Professional Medical Attention					SERIOUS INJURY Requiring immediate medical Attention					MAJOR ACCIDENT, Multiple Injuries or Fatality				
RATING = PROBABILITY X SEVERITY																								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25

Example 2 Using Words

This method may be useful if less experienced at doing risk assessments especially if you feel more confident with words than numbers.

	Severity of consequences		
Likelihood	Slight harm	harmful	Extremely harmful
Unlikely	Trivial risk	Slight risk	Moderate risk
Likely	Slight risk	Moderate risk	Substantial risk
Very likely	Moderate risk	Substantial risk	Intolerable risk

Example 3 Low Medium or High

More appropriate for individuals with more experience who can judge the potential and severity and categorise the risk into one of the three categories.

Risk Rating		
Low	Medium	High

As your experience grows you may be able to instantly judge the score but even with experience you are still assessing the likelihood of the hazard causing harm and the level of harm it may cause. If you feel you are not experienced enough to make a judgment on an area outside your expertise you will have to seek guidance from a competent person in that specific field.

Remember what's important

Lots of people get caught up in words and numbers the main aim of going through the evaluating risk process is to consider the potential of a hazard to cause harm it doesn't matter if the person next to you assesses the same hazard as a 5 when you have a 7 or they assess it as a moderate risk and you have a slight risk. The aim is that you have both considered its potential and thought about whether any action needs to be taken.

Step 4 Record your findings

If you have more than five employees, you must record your significant hazards and conclusions and tell your employees about your findings.

Keep your written record for future reference.

As well as recording your findings from Step 1 – 3 it is also helpful to record

Title - what is the risk assessment for

Assessor - who is doing the assessing

Date - assessment completed, **Review date** - the date it needs to be updated

Specific locations – describe exactly where the hazard is if necessary

By Who / Confirmation Of Understanding Or Completion a record of who is responsible for implementing any action relating to the specific hazard.

Step 5_Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

Reviews of Risk Assessments should occur at Regular prescribed periods in the year (every six/twelve months) recorded on the form and if there are any significant changes/accidents/ near misses that occur. If an accident or near miss happens it is important to review the risk assessment and see if any changes need to be made to it and also to any procedures that may have been set up as a result of the risk assessment.

The Risk Assessment Process

As you set up a risk assessment process ensure you have considered the following points

Health and Safety officer needs to be allocated they must be competent and are responsible for ensuring that all policy and procedures follow best practice and are current with any legal changes and requirements.

Risk Assessments are completed in advance of a project starting.

Step 1 - Look for the hazards

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 - Evaluate the risk and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done

Step 4 - Record your findings

Step 5- Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

Store Risk assessments in a safe and secure area and copies/ adapted copies are readily available for staff and clients

Pre activity and daily checks are carried out by Leaders. Any significant changes are recorded. As a result of these changes leaders may need to adapt their session.

Managers /organisations have a responsibility to ensure all leaders are competent and understand the requirements of the risk assessment.

Leaders have a responsibility to ensure they fully understand the risk assessment and will sign to say they have read and understood the Risk Assessment

Staff and volunteers

Staff and volunteers (Leaders, Supporting adults, volunteers) all need to be competent to carry out their duties. A person is deemed to be competent if they have the following:

Skills - Correct skills for the job they are doing

Knowledge - Can access the Knowledge they require to carry out their duties

Attitude - Have a safe conscious attitude

Experience - Have appropriate experience

If an individual is asked to carry out an activity they are not competent at and a serious incident occurs then an investigation will take place.

The person taking on the duties beyond their capabilities had a duty to highlight this to their manager and refuse to take on the duties. The manager who asked them to carry out the duties will also be held responsible for using a member of staff that was not competent for the job.

To coordinate an effective Health and safety system a competent person needs to manage the processes. The appointed Health and Safety officer is responsible for ensuring that all policy and procedures follow best practice and are current with any legal changes and requirements.

Checklist - The Risk Assessment Process	Name	Date
Appoint Health and Safety officer		
Risk Assessments are completed in advance of a project starting.		
Step 1 - Look for the hazards		
Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how		
Step 3 - Evaluate the risk and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done		
Step 4 - Record your findings		
Step 5- Review your assessment and revise it if necessary		
store		
Daily checks		
Leaders have signed to say they have read and understood all risk assessments		