

Risk Assessment Policy

Risk assessment will be carried out in the school to determine the risks associated with working operations. The assessment is required to identify risks both to employees, pupils and to any other persons who may be affected.

Risk Assessments are updated normally and the responsibility for administering the completion of these lies with the Assistant Health & Safety officer.

C.O.S.H.H. regulations 1988 place a statutory duty on employees to make an assessment of the potential health risks to employees arising from work involving the use of hazardous substances.

C.O.S.H.H. also requires that except in very limited circumstances a written record must be maintained.

General assessments of risk are best carried out by staff in the curriculum areas concerned.

Risk Assessment Procedure

Introduction

It is a general legal requirement of the Management of Health & Safety at Work regulations (1999) to carry out risk assessments. There are also specific requirements under other regulations to carry out specialised assessments, for example, manual handling, the use of chemicals, noise, machinery etc.

The following procedure should be adopted for general risk assessment of an area or a job/task. It is based on the HSE guidance "Five Steps to Risk Assessment".

Risk assessment should be undertaken systematically so as to ensure that all significant hazards and risks are identified and, where appropriate, controls are put in place to either eliminate the risk or reduce it "as far as reasonably practicable".

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a careful examination of how people may be harmed from a particular activity or situation. The assessment will help you to identify the likelihood of harm and whether you can reduce the risk to a reasonable level, through the introduction of control measures.

Hazard: A hazard is defined as something with the potential to cause harm.

Risk: A risk is the likelihood of potential harm from the hazard being realised. This is usually evaluated by considering the likelihood of the harm occurring and the potential severity of the harm.

Hazard & Risk

An examination of the workplace should be undertaken and should include identification of the following:

- Hazards - identify anything in the workplace that could cause harm. Common workplace hazards include:

Chemicals

Display _____ Screen _____ Equipment

Dust _____ / _____ Fumes

Electricity

Fire

Machinery

Manual _____ Handling

Noise

Poor _____ lighting

Slipping _____ / _____ Tripping _____ hazards

Vehicles

Working at height

Generic Risk Assessments

These generic risk assessments have been produced to assist school with risk assessment, and provide a basis for individual sites to consider their specific circumstances. Some assessments may not be relevant to school, others may need customising to suit specific location and/or work activity and others may not need changing at all.

The forms are only partially completed and will need to be adapted by admin officer from the school, who can complete the rest of the form having considered the generic hazards, risks and control measures listed on the form and add any site specific items identified.

The assessments require the risk to be evaluated before and after the suggested controls are in place. This will help identify the urgency of control measures and whether, following the introduction of controls, the risk can be reduced sufficiently. The following matrix may help to determine your risk rating.

Risk Matrix:

Severity Likelihood	Slightly harmful (e.g. Superficial injury or temporary discomfort or distress)	Harmful (e.g. Sprains, minor fractures, ill health leading to disability)	Extremely harmful (e.g. major fractures, amputations, fatality, life shortening illnesses)
Highly unlikely	LOW (L)	LOW (L)	MEDIUM (M)
Unlikely	LOW (L)	MEDIUM (M)	HIGH (H)
Likely	MEDIUM (M)	HIGH (H)	VERY HIGH (VH)

It is unlikely that all risks can be reduced to low levels. Table 1 will help you to determine action that needs to be taken.

Table 1:

Risk Rating	Action required	
	Initial risk rating	Residual risk rating
Very High (VH)	May only take place if good control measures can be implemented.	Must not take place. You will need to identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
High (H)	May only take place if good control measures can be implemented.	Seek further advice
Medium (M)	If it is not possible to lower risk further, you will need to consider the risk against the benefit.	
Low (L)	No further action required.	

The completed generic assessments will need to be signed off by the admin officer completing the assessment and monitored by the principal. They will then need to be reviewed and if necessary updated, at least annually. A review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, or there are significant changes to the premises, staff or procedures.

Records

The assessment should be recorded on the standard Risk Assessment Form and should be kept in a visible/accessible folder identified for this purpose in the work area in question. The form also acts as an improvement action plan and should be used for tracking implementation of control measures. The findings should be made known to the staff it affects and information/training must be given.

Review

A risk assessment must be reviewed if there is any significant change to the area/ job/task or if there is any other reason to suspect it is no longer valid. Risk assessments should be reviewed after accidents/incidents involving the task assessed. In any event, it is good practice to review assessments regularly to ensure they are still accurate and controls remain in place.