

Risk Assessment Policy

(Reviewer: Health and Safety Manager March 2022, SMT March 2022)

1. Introduction

The Risk Assessment Policy outlines the risk assessment process. It does not refer to or include the Corporate Risk Register but does make reference to the Risk Assessment Register.

The college has a responsibility under Sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its employees, students, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by work activities and to effectively implement any actions identified to promote the welfare of those affected at the school.

The college will undertake risk assessments for all non-trivial work activities and identify the measure to be implemented in order to comply with our duties under all applicable health and safety legislation and to ensure and promote a safe working environment.

In addition, it has more specific responsibilities under the following pieces of legislation:

- Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) imposes a further, more specific duty to undertake suitable and sufficient assessment of all risks to the health and safety of employees, students, visitors, contractors and others, arising from work activities.
- Article 9 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) requires the Responsible Person to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment identifying general fire precautions and to record the findings of the assessment along with any persons noted as being at particular risk. The Fire Risk Management Policy contains further information.
- Regulation 6 of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) requires the college to ensure that employees are not exposed to hazardous substances unless an assessment of the risks to health and the steps that needs to be taken to meet the requirements have been actioned. The COSHH Policy contains further information.
- Regulation 4 of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHO) require the college to avoid the need for manual handling operations which may result in the staff being injured by taking steps to reduce the likelihood of injury to the lowest level as far as is reasonably practicable. The Manual Handling Policy contains further information.
- Regulation 2 of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (DSE) states that every employer shall perform a suitable and sufficient analysis of workstations for the purpose of assessing the health and safety risks to which the staff who use the workstations, are exposed to. The Display Screen Equipment Policy contains further information.

Policy Statement

It is College Policy to ensure that in addition to complying with all legal requirements, non-trivial hazards are risk assessed and appropriate control measures are implemented.

Risk assessments are reviewed at the minimum every 2 years or when there is a significant change or event which requires a review of the risk assessment.

2. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a recorded method of:

- looking for and listing the hazards (things that can cause harm or go wrong) of a task/process/trip;

- identifying who might be harmed (staff, pupils, contractors or visitors);
- looking how likely it is that they could suffer harm (risk);
- evaluating whether existing controls are adequate and suggesting alternatives if they are not.

It should be completed by someone who is familiar with the process/task (competent person).

The best way to carry out a risk assessment is to start at the beginning of the task/process or visit/trip being undertaken then break it down in a chronological sequence of events identifying the significant hazards which exist in each sequence, who will be affected by them, what control measures exist and whether they are effective, put forth recommendations if needed and a date in which they must be carried out by.

The risk assessment needs to be signed and dated with the full date, i.e. date/month/year with the exception of science experiment specifics which will be reviewed as and when experiments are updated or equipment is changed.

It must be suitable and sufficient.

Above all, it must be remembered that a risk assessment is a means to an end, not an end in itself; it is a way of identifying hazards and who will be affected by them so preventative action can be planned such as eliminating the hazards and creating a Safe System of Work.

This is a crucial and difficult part of the process.

The usefulness of risk assessment findings can be severely limited if the information is not able to be linked to our staff, students, contractors or other visitors.

At the end of the process, everyone involved should be able to find out:

- what significant hazards he/she is exposed to whilst at work
- what measures the college has implemented to mitigate these hazards

Risk Assessments which exist within the college include:

- Visits and trips electronic risk assessment
- Display screen equipment (DSE) risk assessment
- Fire risk assessment
- Control of Substance Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Risk Assessment
- Manual handling risk assessment
- Lone working

Competent Person

A competent person is defined by the MHSWR in regulation 7 as a person who has sufficient training, experience and knowledge and other relevant qualities to do the assessment. Therefore, a knowledge of both the subject of assessment and risk assessment would be required.

When defining competence, the acronym S. K. A. T. E. can be used:

- Skills
- Knowledge
- Attitude
- Training
- Experience

Combined, satisfaction of the above criteria is a reasonable method of gauging competence which is why it is important to ensure evidence of competency is held by Human Resources.

Suitable and Sufficient

For the risk assessment to be suitable and sufficient, it should:

- Correctly and accurately identify the significant hazards arising out of the work activity;
- Disregard inconsequential risks;
- Identify the number and type of people who may be affected by the work activity;
- Take into account the suitability of the current control measures;
- Determine the probability of harm occurring;
- Identify and prioritise the measures that need to be taken to comply with the relevant statutory provisions;
- Be appropriate to the nature of the work;
- Be such that it remains valid for a reasonable period of time.

The time and effort spent on a risk assessment should therefore be in approximate proportion to the nature and seriousness of the risk.

It is not necessary to produce extensive paperwork to confirm the limited extent of an unlikely and inconsequential event.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of all staff regarding risk assessments are included in section 3 of the Health and Safety Policy but ultimately it is the responsibility Head of Department to ensure that all hazardous activities or processes within their department are risk assessed after proper risk assessment training from HS Manager, and appropriate action is undertaken to reduce the risks which are identified.

Training

The HS Manager will undertake Risk Assessment training for any member of staff who requests it. The person requesting training must ensure that a room has a multi-media projector and screen. The theory training takes approximately an hour.

There is a “Hurst Risk Assessment Training” PowerPoint presentation located on the Hurst Health and Safety Online.

Appendix 1 are guidance notes.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Health and Safety Manager or when there is a requirement, if sooner. Any changes will be discussed with the Health and Safety Committee and will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Amendments to the policy will be reviewed by the SMT prior to the updated version being published online in the Staff Handbook.

3. Appendix 1

Guidance Notes on completing a Risk Assessment

The following points must be considered when carrying out a risk assessment.

Step 1 – Identify the Hazards

- Identify how people could be harmed
- Walk around the workplace & look at what could cause harm.
- Consult staff.
- Check manufacturer’s instructions & Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- Review accident and incident records and data.
- Seek advice and guidance from the Health and Safety Manager

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed and how

- For each hazard identified, be clear about who might be harmed
- Some workers may have particular requirements including New and young workers, new or expectant (including breast feeding) mothers, people with physical and mental impairments may be at particular risk.
- Students, cleaners, visitors, contractors or parents and other members of the public.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures

- Having identified the hazards, consider what controls are in place and what additional controls are needed.
- Evaluate the findings and consider the control measures necessary to manage the risk
- Avoiding the risk.
- Evaluate the risk which cannot be avoided.
- Manage the risk at source.
- Adapt the work activity or process to the individual taking into account workplace design and selection of work equipment.
- Substitute the dangerous for less dangerous.
- Prioritise collective protective measures.
- Provide appropriate instruction, information, training and supervision.

The above should be considered as part of a Safe System of Work (SSoW). PPE should normally be regarded as an interim, last resort measure, pending a reduction of risk by more reliable and permanent means.

Step 4 – Record the findings and implement control

- The assessment must be suitable and sufficient and should demonstrate the following:
- An appropriate check has been undertaken.
- Individuals and people at risk have been identified.
- Significant hazards have been identified and the appropriate controls implemented.
- An evaluation of risk has been undertaken.

Step 5 – Communicate the assessment to those at risk

- Agree the assessment and communicate the findings to those involved in the work activity or process including those who might be exposed or at risk.

Step 6 – Monitor control measures and review

The assessment must be kept up to date to remain valid. If during the period following the introduction of the assessment there is a significant change then the assessment must be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Significant changes include:

- A change in legislation.
- A change in control measures.
- Changes in the way the work activity is undertaken.
- The introduction of new people, equipment or technology.
- Following an accident or incident.
- Any other reason that may affect the validity of the assessment.

Risk assessment is a dynamic process and therefore needs to be regularly reviewed.

Sample questions that should be asked when there are new pupils, new pieces of equipment, the layout to an area or even when reviewing the risk assessments as part of a planned process include:

- Have we implemented the control measures?

- Have manageable risk levels been achieved?
- Have new hazards arisen or been created?
- Are the control measures still relevant or valid?
- Have any changes been communicated?
- Have the implemented control measures been used in practice?
- Have new employees been informed of the process, its findings and the control measures?
- Is the risk assessment still valid?