

Risk Assessment Procedure

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Review Cycle	Two yearly
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This procedure will be reviewed on or before 1st September 2026. Evaluat

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Introduction

Risk assessment is a process that identifies potential hazards in an activity, assesses the level of risk and then puts in place safe practices to control that risk. In other words, recognising anything that could realistically cause harm and taking all reasonable steps to reduce the likelihood of harm or injury occurring.

Although we may not always be aware of it risk assessment is something that we make use of throughout our daily lives. When we cross the road, for example, we assess a number of factors including the nature of the road and the speed and density of traffic and then we use the results to decide on the most appropriate and safest action, i.e. whether to cross immediately, wait for conditions to change or find a pedestrian crossing.

While Health and Safety legislation places a requirement on all employers to carry out the relevant risk assessments, Shropshire Gateway Education Trust (SGET) will ensure that it follows these legal requirements and completes relevant risk assessments that are reviewed regularly through each department head/headteacher and keeps a record of any findings and remedial action. The intention of this is to provide all staff with a safe system of work and provide evidence should the school become involved in any civil liability action.

Anyone who carries out a risk assessment must have a comprehensive knowledge of the activity they are assessing as well an understanding of health and safety. Thus it is essential that each school department, do not rely solely on a risk assessment carried out by another Authority or other facility operator, but also ensure that those with the relevant knowledge are engaged in this process.

For all staff at SGET, the process of identifying potential hazards, judging the level of risk, and putting in safe practices to control the risk is one they are routinely familiar with in daily life and within their professional field.

A risk assessment enables you to:

- Tell whether you are doing enough to protect your students/workforce or visitors eg through training, information, PPE or health surveillance
- meet your legal requirements under the Health and Safety at Work Regs 1999
- Demonstrate good business practice and improve business performance – understanding the risk that face SGET will enable us to better manage potential cost savings, reduce insurance premiums, enhance reputation

WHAT ARE THE FIVE STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT

The five steps are as follows –

Step 1: Identify hazards, i.e. anything that may cause harm.

Employers have a duty to assess the health and safety risks faced by their workers/students. Your employer must systematically check for possible physical, mental, chemical and biological hazards.

- Physical: e.g. lifting, awkward postures, slips and trips, noise, dust, machinery, computer equipment, etc.
- Mental: e.g. excess workload, long hours, working with high-need students, bullying, etc. These are also called 'psychosocial' hazards, affecting mental health and occurring within working relationships.
- Chemical: e.g. asbestos, cleaning fluids, aerosols, etc.
- Biological: including tuberculosis, hepatitis and other infectious diseases faced by healthcare workers, home care staff and other healthcare professionals.
- Physical location layout, vehicles and transport, computer workstations, heights, noise etc

Step 2: Decide who may be harmed, and how.

Identifying who is at risk starts with SGET's own full- and part-time employees and students. Employers must also assess risks faced by agency and contract staff, visitors, clients and other members of the public on their premises.

Employers must review work routines in all the different locations and situations where their staff are employed. For example:

- Teaching staff must take due care of their students/ staff personal in the workplace, and ensure safe working practices are followed considering condition, types of footwear, lighting environment, trip hazards, etc
- Site staff, hazards are found in the repetitive tasks in lifting loads, and in slips and trips from spillages and obstacles in the school and plantrooms. Staff face the risk of violence from intruders, especially in the evenings.
- In offices, workstation equipment (i.e. desk, screen, keyboard and chair) must be adjusted to suit each employee.
- Employers have special [duties](#) towards the health and safety of young workers, disabled employees, [nightworkers](#), shiftworkers, and pregnant or breastfeeding women.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and take action.

This means employers must consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. This will determine whether or not your employer should reduce the level of risk. Even after all precautions have been taken, some risk usually remains. Employers must decide for each remaining hazard whether the risk remains high, medium or low.

Step 4: Make a record of the findings.

Employers with five or more staff are required to record in writing the main findings of the risk assessment. This record should include details of any hazards noted in the risk assessment, and action taken to reduce or eliminate risk.

This record provides proof that the assessment was carried out, and is used as the basis for a later review of working practices. The risk assessment is a working document. You should be able to read it. It should not be locked away in a cupboard.

Step 5: Review the risk assessment.

A risk assessment must be kept under review in order to:

- ensure that agreed safe working practices continue to be applied (e.g. that management's safety instructions are respected by supervisors and line managers); and
- take account of any new working practices, new machinery or more demanding work targets.

HOW SHOULD MY EMPLOYER DEAL WITH HAZARDS?

The basic rule is that employers must adapt the work to the worker. The key aims of risk assessment are to:

- prioritise the risks – i.e. rank them in order of seriousness; and
- make all risks small – the two main options here are to:
- eliminate the hazard altogether; or
- if this is not possible, control the risks so that harm is unlikely.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 set out safety management guidance for employers for tackling risks, which you can find in schedule 1 (General Principles of Prevention). The basic approach is also known as a 'hierarchy of control' because it sets out the order in which employers must approach risk management:

1. Substitution (i.e. try a risk-free or less risky option).
2. Prevention (e.g. erect a machine guard, or add a non-slip surface to a pathway).
3. Reorganise work to reduce exposure to a risk. A basic rule is to adapt the work to the worker. In an office, ensure chairs and display screen equipment (DSE) are adjustable to the individual, and plan all work involving a computer to include regular breaks. For monotonous or routine work, introduce work variety and greater control over work. In call centres, introduce work variety by providing work off the phones and varying the type of calls handled.
4. As a last resort, issue personal protective equipment (PPE) to all staff at risk, and make sure they are trained in when and how to use this equipment, such as appropriate eye protection, gloves, special clothing, footwear.
5. Provide training in safe working systems.
6. Provide information on likely hazards and how to avoid them.
7. Provide social and welfare facilities, such as washing facilities for the removal of contamination, or a rest room.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD A RISK ASSESSMENT TAKE PLACE?


The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) says risk should be assessed "every time there are new machines, substances and procedures, which could lead to new hazards."

An employer should carry out a risk assessment:

- whenever a new job brings in significant new hazards. If there is high staff turnover, then the way new staff do their work should be checked against the risk assessment, and training provided in safe working practices if necessary;
- whenever something happens to alert the employer to the presence of a hazard – for example, an unusual volume of sickness absence, complaints of stress and bullying, or unusually high staff turnover;
- in response to particular changes to the level of risk to individual employees – for example, where an employee returns to work after a period of long-term sickness absence; or

- Where an employee is pregnant or breastfeeding and her work might involve a risk to her or her unborn child's health and safety. (Regulation 16, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999).

While SGET Schools may provide training opportunities or courses to carry out activities in a safe manner, the school and each department head must ensure anyone carrying out activities has been suitably instructed (either orally or in writing) and has where appropriate, received appropriate induction and training. Each department will also need to ensure that each safe system of work is monitored to ensure that it is properly applied and remains effective.

Risk Assessment Number:		Date of Assessment:		Additional Information check sheet/risk assessments required.								
Task / Work Activity / Work Area Assessed:		Assessment carried out by:		Substances Hazardous to Health: <input type="checkbox"/> Manual Handling: <input type="checkbox"/> Display Screen Equipment: <input type="checkbox"/> New and Expectant Mothers: <input type="checkbox"/> Young Persons: <input type="checkbox"/>								
Reason for Assessment	Initial		Periodic Review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change of Risk		Following Accident	an		Other		
Persons Considered to be at risk	Employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Students	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Public		Contractors		Visitors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Worst Case Outcome					Likelihood					Risk Rating (Outcome x Likelihood)		
5	4	3	2	1	5	4	3	2	1	High	Medium	Low
Fatality	Severe Injury	Lost time Injury	Minor Injury	No Injury	Certain	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Remote	13-25	5-12	1-4
Persons affected by the Activity	Identified Hazards		Control Measures Already in Place				Worst Case Outcome	Likelihood	Risk Rating	Further action required? Yes/No		

Further Control Measures	Further Control Measures Follow up		
	Allocated to (name)	Target date	Date completed
Risk Assessment Reviews			

Suggested Review Date (either after significant changes, actions completed, or annually):		Nov 24 or annually.	
Risk Assessment Reviewed by (name):		Risk Assessment Reviewed by (name):	
Date:		Date:	
Comments:		Comments:	
Next Suggested Review Date:		Next Suggested Review Date:	
Risk Assessment Reviewed by (name):		Risk Assessment Reviewed by (name):	
Date:		Date:	
Comments:		Comments:	
Next Suggested Review Date:		Next Suggested Review Date:	