Risk Assessment Guide

What is a risk assessment?

You complete a risk assessment before doing an activity/event. Its primary focus is to ensure what we do is done safely. It helps you to consider what can cause harm (a hazard) and to assess the potential for this to happen (risk). Having done this, you can then identify the control measures (mitigations) that you need to put in place to carry out the activity/event safely.

The idea isn't to stop activities/events or to cause extra hassle (promise) but to ensure that you've thought about ways to minimise any existing or potential risks and have thought about what you would do if an accident did happen.

You are not required to eradicate all risk entirely – that is not always possible (e.g. we can never guarantee that an accident won't happen) but the assessment is there to make sure we can say we have done all we can as a group or organisation to reduce the chances of things happening and then, if they do, to deal with them effectively.

Why should I follow a risk Assessment?

As a committee you hold a responsibility for ensuring the safety and wellbeing towards your participants/attendees. You need to identify potential hazards to participants/attendees and put controls in place to reduce the likelihood of those hazards causing harm to an acceptable level. This then gives you what is called the risk rating of the activity. This will either be Low, Medium or High. If anything is Medium or High, obviously, you need to think about them more carefully and what support the SU can provide you with – we are here to help you!

In the event of an incident, a risk assessment can be used to show that you did everything you could reasonably be expected to do to make your activity safe. If there is a serious accident the SU will be asked to evidence your risk assessment on your behalf. If things go wrong unexpectedly, we need to be able to demonstrate that we've put all the measures

in place that we could reasonably have been expected to do and that we have filled in and followed the risk assessment for the activity.

The Students' Union insurance, also, requires that

a) The Students' Union are notified of all events taking place
b) A Risk Assessment is completed before an event takes place

or you will not be covered. For some more high-risk activities additional insurance cover may be required and the SU can liaise with Endsleigh, our insurers, about this. If either of these points are not covered then you are potentially leaving yourself exposed to further action being taken should an accident occur.

You can produce a generic risk assessment to cover your main activity, such as regular training activities, classes, practice sessions, productions, or meetings, at the beginning of the year. Any groups using UW sport facilities will be expected to complete a risk assessment as part of their SLA (Service Level Agreement) with your group.

You will then need to produce specific risk assessments for any additional activities you organise or if you change your main activity, e.g. trips to different locations, practicing at a different venue, fundraising activities etc. They must be submitted with your Event Request form and Trip Request form, no later than **2 weeks** before the event/activity is due to take place.

What about external venue/supplier and external events?

If you are taking part in an event or activity that is externally organised (i.e. outside your normal activity venue) you must check that they have appropriate risk assessments in place. If you are using an external provider/supplier as part of your activity e.g. catering, you should ask for a copy of their risk assessments and send them to us.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all elements of your event are covered by risk assessments, and you must be aware that even when using external companies you may

still need to carry out your own risk assessment(s) e.g. for a trip to Alton Towers you will need to carry out a risk assessment for travel and group safety but your activity at the theme park will be covered by Alton Towers. Again, we are here to help you with this.

External risk assessments should be submitted alongside your event/trip request form and your own activity risk assessment(s).

Sharing the Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be submitted to us for all events/activities/trips that your society/club offers. These will typically be sent alongside the Event or Trip Request Form. If you have any problems or questions when completing your risk assessment or around external risk assessment(s) contact the below SU staff members who will be happy to help you.

- **Sports:** Sophie (sophie.smith2@worc.ac.uk) or BUCS Sport Administrator (email)
- **Societies and Fundraising:** Hannah (email TBC)
- **Networks and Volunteering:** Student Communities Coordinator (email)

If an accident or incident does occur, please remember that you must complete an incident/accident report form as soon as possible afterwards.

How to complete a Risk Assessment?

There are 6 key steps to follow to complete the risk assessment.

1. What are the hazards?
2. Who might be at risk?
3. What harm might occur?
4. What are the current control methods (mitigations)?
5. Evaluate the risk
6. What additional control methods are required?

You will then review the assessment and update when required.

Start your risk assessment by completing the first section of the risk assessment, providing details of the activity/event being assessed, location, date it is occurring and who has filled out the risk assessment.

Note:				
Brief description of the activity being assessed (include dates of event, and likely number of attendees)				
Location:		Risk Assessor (name/committee position):		
Student Group:		Date of Assessment:		
Risk Assessment Reference & Version		Date of Review		
Other people (s) commenting on this assessment (where required)	Name Date	Approved by Date		
Process of communicating to relevant persons				

First Column - What are the hazards?

Use the hazard checklist (found in the Committee Resource Hub under Health and Safety), to help you to identify any of the potential hazards relating to your event/activity. You are not limited to the items on the checklist; a hazard is anything that might cause harm to participants. (E.g. food hygiene) .

People often get confused as to what a hazard is. A common mistake is to put that a 'slip, trip or fall', is a hazard. It's not – it's an outcome. The hazard is the thing that might cause the trip e.g. 'potential obstacles on the route' (say, of a Colour Run). Or a hazard may be hot weather in the summer or cold weather in the winter.

Second and third column - Who might be at risk and what harm might occur?

Once you have identified what the hazards are you need to think about who may be harmed. This would typically include your members or students at the university, but may also include staff members, coaches, volunteers and external visitors. This will impact everyone not your just members.

Example:

Hazards (A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, car, DSE,	People at Risk (Students, Staff, Visitors, Contractors, Other)	What harm might occur, (Slips Trips, Falls, Breaks, Sprains etc…)
Uneven surfaces and obstacles	Students, staff and volunteers	Trips, slip or fall from the surface could cause bruises, sprains, strains or breaks

Fourth column - What are the control measures already in place?

Identifying the existing control measures should be simple, as you just state what is in place now – what you normally do. This could include wearing correct footwear, ensuring protective gear is worn, equipment checks before the activity or providing allergen information if food is involved.

Example:

Hazards (A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, car, DSE,	People at Risk (Students, Staff, Visitors, Contractors, Other)	What harm might occur, (Slips Trips, Falls, Breaks, Sprains etc…)	Control Measures already in place (Control measures include actions that can be taken to reduce the potential of exposure to the hazard).
Uneven surfaces and obstacles	Students, staff and volunteers	Trips, slip or fall from the surface could cause bruises, sprains, strains or breaks	• Route planned in advance to avoid any obstacles • Staff will review the route on the day to ensure there are no new obstacles • Marshalls will be place around the route and in areas that may be more dangerous (e.g. corners) to slow participants down if required

Fifth column - Evaluate the risk

When evaluating the risks, you are only expected to anticipate foreseeable risks. You only need to consider things that might go wrong or become a problem in regular situations.

You are not expected to think of every possible eventuality as that would be impossible! Be realistic and consider what the likelihood of it happening is.

You then decide the **risk rating** of the hazard.

Severity or Impact	Criteria
Catastrophic	Death
Major	Multiple major injuries
Serious	Major injury
Moderate	Minor injury
Minor	Discomfort or minor illness

Risk Rating

High	Stop the task/activity until controls can be put into place to reduce the risk to a tolerable level - Additional Control Measures will be required
Medium	Determine if further controls are required to reduce risk to as low as is reasonably practicable - Additional Control Measures may be required
Low	No further action, however, controls should be kept under review

Colours on the severity or impact will reflect the outcome of the Risk Rating – For Example:

Minor Severity could result in a low-Risk Rating, (green and green)

Moderate Severity could result in a medium Risk Rating (yellow and yellow or yellow and green)

Catastrophic, Major, or Serious could result in a higher-risk rating depending upon the control measures implemented (red and red or red and yellow)

Example:

| Hazards

(A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, car, DSE, | People at Risk

(Students, Staff, Visitors, Contractors, Other) | What harm might occur,

(Slips Trips, Falls, Breaks, Sprains etc…) | Control Measures already in place

(Control measures include actions that can be taken to reduce the potential of exposure to the hazard). | Evaluate the Risk

(Having identified the hazards and controls, decide how likely it is that harm will occur), |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Uneven surfaces and obstacles | Students, staff and volunteers | Trips, slip or fall from the surface could cause bruises, sprains, strains or breaks | • Route planned in advance to avoid any obstacles
• Staff will review the route on the day to ensure there are no new obstacles
• Marshalls will be place around the route and in areas that may be more dangerous (e.g. corners) to slow participants down if required | Medium |

Sixth column – What additional control methods are required?

If one of your identified hazards has a medium risk rating than the next steps is to look at implementing further controls. If the hazard has a high-risk rating, then you **must** identify additional control measures. Please speak to us if you are not sure.

The next step is to state any control measures that you will implement to reduce the risk rating. You need to identify who is responsible for each control measure. You then

evaluate the risk and complete the last column. This is then the risk that will remain after the control measures are put in place.

Example:

Hazards (A hazard is something that can cause harm, e.g. electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, car, DSE)	People at Risk (Students, Staff, Visitors, Contractors, Other)	What harm might occur, (Slips Trips, Falls, Breaks, Sprains etc…)	Control Measures already in place (Control measures include actions that can be taken to reduce the potential of exposure to the hazard).	Evaluate the Risk (Having identified the hazards and controls, decide how likely it is that harm will occur),	Additional Control Measures (Only necessary when additional controls are required. These controls form part of the standard control measures when implemented.)	Revaluate the risk By adding the additional controls, has the rating changed?
Uneven surfaces and obstacles	Students, staff and volunteers	Trips, slip or fall from the surface could cause bruises, sprains, strains or breaks	• Route planned in advance to avoid any obstacles • Staff will review the route on the day to ensure there are no new obstacles • Marshalls will be place around the route and in areas that may be more dangerous (e.g. corners) to slow participants down if required	Medium	• First aiders stationed around the route with radios so they can be called if needed	Medium

In this example, the additional control measure has reduced the impact which makes the event safer but there is still medium risk. As mentioned above, activities will always carry some risk; it's about minimising those risks as much as possible.

Not all hazards require additional measures e.g. if it is low risk, or a medium risk where you already have existing control measures. For hazards that have no additional control measures, the risk rating will remain the same. If there are now additional measures, you can put this statement in the box "No further measure required – monitor and review". Example:

Evaluate the Risk (Having identified the hazards and controls, decide how likely it is that harm will occur),	Additional Control Measures (Only necessary when additional controls are required. These controls form part of the standard control measures when implemented.)	Revaluate the risk By adding the additional controls, has the rating changed?
Low	• No further measure required – monitor and review	Low

Actions Required

From your existing and additional control measures you will create actions that need to be in place to prevent the hazard occurring. These are to be recorded in the "Action required" section at the end of the template. Note what needs to be done, identify who will be doing this and when this should be completed by.

Action Ref	Action required	Who is responsible?	By when?	Date completed / Comments
01	Plan route to avoid obstacles	Dan and Sophie	31/08/21	23/08/21
02	Review route on the day	Dan and Sophie	On the day	
03	Arrange marshals for the route	Meg	06/09/21	06/09/21
04	Sort first aid cover and radios	Dan	06/09/21	05/09/21

Review the assessment and update when required.

Don't forget that if you have completed a risk assessment for a similar or exactly the same event/trip you can simply review your previous assessment, making sure that you are accounting for any changes and resubmit to the SU.

We are here to help

If you have any questions about the risk assessment process, just ask us – that's what we're here for!

Reviewed: June 2022
Next Review: June 2023