



University of  
St Andrews

## General Risk Assessment Policy

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## 1.0 Introduction

There is a legal requirement to undertake risk assessments which highlight the risks of particular operations and implement appropriate control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks of the operation as far as is reasonably practicable.

This risk assessment policy has been modified to fit in the the Health and Safety Executives's document 'Managing for Health and Safety' (Document [HSG65](#) ).



Risk assessment is part of the 'Do' section of this management system. This policy document outlines how the University will comply with legislation and also with HSG65 allowing for an auditable system

## 2.0 Policy Commitments

1. The overarching commitments set out in the University's general [Health and Safety Policy](#) apply.
2. For the purposes of this policy, the University recognises the importance of carrying out suitable and sufficient risk assessments where appropriate, in order to maintain the safety and welfare of employees who are exposed to risks while at work, and of others who are exposed to risks arising out of, or in connection with, the University's business. It is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, as well as legislation requiring risk assessments in specific circumstances.

### 3.0 Arrangements

#### 1. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities set out in the University's general [Health and Safety Policy](#) apply.

For the purposes of this policy:

- a) The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken by Schools and Units lies with the Office of the Principal. They will ensure that there are adequate resources and training provided to ensure that risk assessments can be completed to a suitable standard.
- b) The Health and Safety Assurance Group will audit and review the implementation and effectiveness of the management system which could include review of specific risk assessments
- c) Each School or Unit will implement the requirement for suitable and sufficient risk assessments within their area of remit. Such risk assessments will highlight the risks to specific personnel and also the control measures required to eliminate or minimise the risk to these personnel. The Head of School or Unit has overall responsibility for this.
- d) All staff with managerial or supervisory roles are responsible for identifying the need for risk assessments and for carrying them out, in co-operation with the staff member who is exposed to the risk.
- e) All staff should alert their line manager or supervisor if they think they need a new or revised risk assessment. All staff should also be prepared to conduct a dynamic risk assessment if an unforeseen risk arises.
- f) All staff must maintain awareness of the possible risks to students, visitors and members of the public arising from their activities, and conduct suitable risk assessments accordingly.
- g) Risk assessments should be signed by all employees whose roles are specified in the risk assessment and/or are involved in the activity. A signature will indicate that the employee understands, and agrees to abide by, the proposed control measures.
- h) Risk assessments should also be signed by the relevant Supervisor/Manager/Principal Investigator, to indicate their agreement that hazards have been correctly identified and that the control measures are suitable and sufficient to eliminate or minimise risks.

- i) For activities involving a significant risk of serious injury, a nominated person should also sign the risk assessment on behalf of the School or Unit, to indicate that the School believes the risk assessments to be suitable and sufficient. This risk matrix may be used as a guide in determining the level of risk:

Severity	Proability		
		1 Low Probability	3 Medium Probability
1 Low severity	1	3	5
3 Medium Severity	3	9	15
5 High Severity	5	15	25

- Risk with a value of 1-3: signature required only from the Supervisor/Manager/Principal Investigator
  - Risk with a value of 5-9 or above: – signature also required from nominated member of staff on behalf of the School or Unit.
  - A Risk value of greater of 15 or greater will require approval at a University level
  - **Note:** a risk with a value of 25 would not normally be considered acceptable. If the work is essential but no ways have been found to reduce the risk, the Head of School or Unit should discuss the issue with the Director of Environmental, Health and Safety Services in the first instance.
- j) If a staff member refuses to sign the risk assessment, the issue should be referred to the Head of School or Unit for resolution. EHSS can provide advice if required. If no resolution can be found at School or Unit level, the issue should be referred to the Principal's Office.
- k) A paper **or** electronic copy of the risk assessment should be supplied to all signatories, and a copy should held by the School or Unit.
- l) Online training for undertaking risk assessments can be found at [Essential Skillz Training Programme](#) or the [Risk Assessment Moodle site](#) . This should be done as soon as possible after arriving at the University, and thereafter at intervals of no more than two years. If further guidance is needed, they should consult their safety co-ordinator, line manager or EHSS.
- m) EHSS will maintain electronic training module to provide support in identifying risks and writing suitable risk assessments They will also provide face-to-face training on request.
- n) These policy commitments and arrangements relate to all aspects of risk assessment in the University. For most purposes, the general risk assessment form below will suffice. Different forms are available for use in specialised areas such as COSHH, Manual Handling and Work with Lasers etc. Completion of such specialised risk can be found at [Essential Skillz](#)

[Training Programme](#) or at the [EHSS Moodle site](#) but if in doubt, staff should seek assistance from Environmental, Health and Safety Services (EHSS).

- o) Heads of Schools/Units should ensure that all staff and students who undertake such risk assessments have been suitably trained and have sufficient knowledge and experience in undertaking the risk assessments required for their work activity. If there is any concern about this, then the Head or their nominated depute should contact the Director of EHSS
- p) Heads of Schools/Units will be responsible for ensuring that there are adequate processes implemented within their department to ensure the quality of risk assessments. The Director of EHSS will ensure that there are adequate University audit processes will be implemented to ensure the quality of risk assessments within Schools/Units
- q) All inspections of the workplace should review the risk assessments for the work being performed on the day of the inspection.
- r) All Schools/Units should review/audit a proportion of the risk assessments from their School on a regular basis (for example, the School/Unit Safety Committee should review a specific proportion of risk assessments).
- s) Where the work activity significantly changes (eg new procedure, new equipment), then the risk assessment should be reviewed. When there are any alterations, these must be notified to all workers and the risk assessment should be resigned by all workers, supervisor and if necessary the School/Unit.
- t) The Heads of Schools/Units will produce statistics of risk assessments undertaken in their department and send this to the Director of EHSS as part of their annual report

#### **4.0 Legislative and Regulatory Framework**

This policy document has been produced to comply with the following general legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006

There is a lot of specific legislation which requires specialised risk assessments, examples of which include

- Fire Risk Assessments (Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Fire safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006)
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 as amended,
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations as amended 2002,
- the Genetically Modified Organisms Regulations 2014,
- the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017,
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005

There are many other legislative requirements to undertake a risk assessment. Where there is no specific requirement to undertake a risk assessment, then Section 3 of the management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires a risk assessment to be undertaken.

The University Health and Safety Policy requires that risk assessments are required to be undertaken for work within the University. It is the Head of School/Unit who is responsible for ensuring this work is done by managers or Principal Investigators.

All workers must sign risk assessments to show that they have read and understood the risks of the work activity and will implement the control measures identified in the risk assessment.

***4.1 Relationship with existing University policies, procedures and regulations.***

As is noted throughout this policy, compliance with the conditions set out here will on occasion also require compliance with other University policies and procedures. Guidance on other areas which require risk assessment can be found on the [Publications Page of the EHSS Website](#).

# Appendix 1



**Risk Assessment reference number:**  
(School/Unit followed by your own number)

## Risk Assessment Form For: [School/Unit]

See Moodle site for guidance on the completion of this form: <https://moody.st-andrews.ac.uk/moodle/course/view.php?id=3582#section-3>  
Details of the activity to be assessed (e.g. a brief description of the work to be undertaken and how it will be achieved – where, when, how)

**Assess and reduce the risks. A risk matrix (see the Moodle site, above) may be used to estimate the severity and probability of risk if you wish.**

Hazards associated with the activity (e.g. heat, ice, violence, fall from height, harmful chemicals, noise, cuts, burns)	Severity of risk (High, Medium or Low)	Probability of risk occurring (High, Medium or Low)	Control Measures to be implemented to minimise risks

Hazards associated with the activity (e.g. heat, ice, violence, fall from height, harmful chemicals, noise, cuts, burns)	Severity of risk (High, Medium or Low)	Probability of risk occurring (High, Medium or Low)	Control Measures to be implemented to minimise risks

**Signatures of Principal Investigator / Manager and all relevant staff members:**

**Post .....Name ..... Signature ..... Date .....**

**Post .....Name ..... Signature ..... Date .....**

**Proposed review date for this risk assessment: .....**



## Appendix 2 - Inspection/Audit Action Plan

Unique identification mark for remedial action	Failing	Remedial Action	Who is responsible for implementing remedial action	Timescale for remedial action to be completed	Date when remedial action completed

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
v1.0	New document	Approved	Dr Paul Szawlowski	03/08/2021

