

Risk Assessments

Risk assessment means:

- Identification of hazards in the workplace
- Deciding who may be harmed and how severely
- Determining the likelihood that these hazards will cause harm
- Prioritising prevention and control measures.

Hazard: Something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. electricity, hazardous substances, vehicles, working at height.)

Risk: means the *likelihood* that the harm from a particular hazard is realised combined with the *severity* of the potential harm.

Extent of Risk: Covers the population which might be affected by the risk i.e. the number of people who might be exposed and the consequences for them.

NB. Risk therefore reflects both the likelihood that harm will occur and its severity.

The Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) require that the University makes suitable and sufficient assessments, subject to the test of reasonable practicability, of the risks to workers and any other persons who may be affected by their undertaking. The significant findings of these assessments must be recorded in writing.

University Policy Statement [S5/08](#) requires all supervisors who supervise work activities with significant risk to prepare written risk assessments for that work. Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly – at least annually, sooner if the work changes significantly or there has been an accident or incident.

It is important that work having significant risks does not commence until a suitable written risk assessment has been prepared.

General risk assessments of the work area can, and do, show the need for *specific* risk assessments to be made in accordance with specific legislation, including:

- Manual Handling Operations
- Ionising Radiation
- Display Screen Equipment
- Lasers
- Personal Protective equipment
- Working with Asbestos
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Working with Lead
- Noise

Out of Hours and Lone Working

Laboratory or workshop activities involving any risk greater than those of general office duties must only be undertaken with others present or at least within earshot. Please view section 8 of University Policy Statement [S5/08](#), revised June 2008, on Risk Assessment.

New or Expectant Mothers

Female staff and students are requested to inform their supervisor if they are (or become) a new or expectant mother. Relevant risk assessments will be appraised in light of this information and modified if necessary.