

Risk Assessment

Children's and Adults Services

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Scope

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Risk assessment is a legal requirement and the fundamental tool in assessing and improving health and safety performance. Risk assessment enables managers to identify and assess potential health and safety risks in the workplace and ensure control measures are implemented to reduce risks as low as reasonably practicable.

From the general risk assessments it is possible to identify hazards that require further assessment in the form of specific and individual assessments.

Specific assessments are required for specific hazards in the workplace, which include Display screen equipment, Manual handling, Noise, Stress, Violence and Aggression, Lone working, Fire and Workplace equipment.

Individual assessments are required for the following: New and expectant mothers, Young persons, and employees with a medical condition or disability. Specific risk assessments are also required for service users.

The divisional head and their management team will designate person/s to conduct risk assessments. The person/s will be trained in risk assessment and have attended the risk assessment course provided by organisational development.

Bespoke training and risk assessment workshops can be arranged by contacting organisational development or the health and safety team. Competent advice is available from the health and safety team and further guidance is available in the Southwark safety reference manual and Health and Safety Executive website.

Risk assessments must be undertaken

- On all activities/tasks in a business area
- Following accidents or incidents
- When there are changes in workplace processes.
- When there is a change in the physical structure of the workplace.
- In the absence of the above, reviewed two years from the date of original assessment.

Risk assessments must be completed using the risk assessment form and must be recorded and maintained in the team health and safety file/shared drive. Staff involved in the work activity must be

informed of the risk assessment and planned action. This procedure should be read in conjunction with Safety directive 301 and Guidance note 301 of the Southwark safety reference manual.

Risk Assessment Procedure

Identify hazards

- Hazards are anything with the potential to cause harm
- Consider all hazards. To help identify hazards, they can be grouped under 5 headings. Physical, Chemical, Biological, Ergonomic and Human behaviour hazards. Some examples are listed in the following table:

Physical hazards	Chemical hazards	Biological hazards	Ergonomic hazards	Human behaviour hazards
Manual handling	Use and storage of hazardous substances	Hepatitis	Inadequate workstations	Violence and aggression
Electricity		HIV	Insufficient workspace	Stress
Noise	Asbestos	Tuberculosis		
Vehicles	Latex	Tetanus	Poorly designed equipment	
Lifting Equipment	Dust	Legionellosis		
Fire				
Trailing wires				
Poor lighting				
Moving parts of machinery				

- Legislation, associated guidance, national and industry standards and manufacturers instructions are valuable tools in the process of hazard identification
- Address the actual work practices. Find out what actually happens and consider non-routine operations i.e. maintenance operations, loading and unloading, changes in workload
- Take account of human factors, which may arise, such as lapses of attention, mistaken actions, misperceptions
- Remember that the work place extends past the immediate work area, travel to other sites and home visits are all considered workplaces. Consider hazards within the location itself.
- Involve staff and safety representatives in the risk assessment process
- Specific assessments must be undertaken for some hazards. These include Display screen equipment, Manual handling, Noise, Stress, Violence and Aggression, Lone working, Workplace equipment. Further guidance is available in the Southwark safety reference manual or by contacting the departmental health and safety team.

- Risk assessments must be undertaken in the planning stage of all organised trips, outings and group activities. Particular attention should be paid to

Hazards identified in the venue and the activity
 Special needs of service users/staff/participants
 Competence/training/experience of staff
 Ratio of staff to participants
 Emergency arrangements
 Transport arrangements

- Follow the requirements of the Off site visits policy.
- Where complex assessments are required it may be necessary to use special techniques such as hazardous operability studies and fault tree analysis. Contact the health and safety team for advice/guidance

Identify who is at risk

- Employees, agency workers, support workers, students, service users, volunteers, visitors, contractors and where applicable others such as carers, family members and friends
- Particular attention should be paid to people who may be at greater risk including new or expectant mothers, young workers, inexperienced staff, people with disabilities, lone workers, night workers, visitors and contractors. Individual assessments for service users must be undertaken and regularly reviewed.
- Individual assessments are required for some categories of employees' i.e. New and expectant mothers, young persons, and employees with a medical condition or disability
- It is also important to identify how many people are exposed to the risk

Identify existing control measures

- Consider what control measures are already in place to control the risk i.e. procedures, assessments, training, personal protective equipment
- Existing controls should be taken in to account when considering the likelihood of an injury, the more effective and appropriate controls that exist, the less likely an injury will occur
- Any control measures must take into account the legal minimum requirements which establish the minimum levels of risk control

Evaluate the Severity

- Assess the level of injury most likely to occur using the following values
 - ❖ 1- Slightly harmful – Cuts, abrasions and bruising
 - ❖ 2- Harmful – Fractures, dislocations
 - ❖ 3- Extremely Harmful – Fatality, long term injuries / illness

Evaluate the likelihood

- Assess the likelihood of injury occurring using the following values

- ❖ 1- Highly Unlikely – has not occurred before
- ❖ 2- Unlikely – has occurred previously
- ❖ 3- Likely – Is likely to occur

Evaluate the risk

- Risk is the likelihood that the harm from a hazard will be realised
- Evaluate the risk by multiplying the Severity with the Likelihood using the risk level estimator.

i.e. Risk = Severity x Likelihood

Risk Level Estimator	Slightly Harmful	Harmful	Extremely Harmful
Highly Unlikely	Trivial Risk (1)	Tolerable Risk (2)	Moderate Risk (3)
Unlikely	Tolerable Risk (2)	Moderate Risk (4)	Substantial Risk (6)
Likely	Moderate Risk (3)	Substantial Risk (6)	Intolerable Risk (9)

Develop a Risk control action plan

RISK LEVEL	ACTION AND TIMESCALE
TRIVIAL (1)	No action required. Does not need to be recorded
TOLERABLE (2)	No additional controls are required, however additional control measures may be introduced to improve safety
MODERATE (3-4)	Action is needed within 6 months to reduce the risk
SUBSTANTIAL (6)	Work should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Action should be taken immediately where the risk involves work in progress
INTOLERABLE (9)	Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced

- Additional controls should be implemented and maintained to further reduce the risk. In applying control measures make sure that all options are assessed. Consideration should be given to best practice and the use of up to date technology (It is critical that the actions identified are practical and cost effective). Action plans should be appended to the assessment form and actions signed off by the responsible person, as they are implemented/completed.
- Use the hierarchy of controls when considering techniques for reducing the hazards.

1. Elimination- Remove the hazard

2. Substitution-Replace the process or chemical with a less harmful one
3. Isolation- Use barriers or segregation
4. Safe systems of work- Procedures
5. Training
6. Signage and information
7. Personal protective equipment-as a last resort

- Risk assessments will be used to determine the level of training and instruction given to for each task or activity
- Risk control measures will be integrated into operational plans and work instructions.
- Where the full implementation cannot be achieved in time, temporary measures should be implemented to reduce the risk to a significant/acceptable level
- All assessments and control measures are to be recorded with a date for review

Record and review

- Record any significant findings.
- Inform staff of risk assessment for their activities and controls and actions to be taken
- Store copy on the health and safety file/shared drive
- Monitor the implementation of control measures
- Review the risk assessment every two years or following a major accident/incident or after changes in workplace processes or structure

Specific and Individual Assessments

The general risk assessment will identify hazards that require further assessment in the form of specific and individual assessments.

Specific assessments are required for the following hazards that may be present in the workplace.

- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Manual Handling
- Noise
- Fire
- Violence and Aggression
- Lone working
- Occupational Stress
- Workplace Equipment

Individual risk assessments are required in the event of the following circumstances

- New and expectant mothers
- Young persons. A young person is legally defined as person who is under the age of 18 and above the age of 16, the current minimum school leaving age. A Young person's risk assessment is a legal duty and is required before they can commence work
- Staff with a medical condition or disability

Individual risk assessments are required for service users in relation to their specific needs and the activities they are undertaking, including transport operations, moving and handling and the potential for violence and aggression.

Specific and Individual Assessments

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Display screen equipment (DSE) assessments are required for users of Display screen equipment. The general risk assessment will identify DSE users and the need for DSE assessments. Display screen equipment refers to the whole workstation, job process and work environment as well as to the display screen, keyboard and other equipment. The Divisional Head and their management team will designate DSE assessor/s who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct DSE assessments.

DSE assessments are to be conducted / reviewed

- When identified by the general risk assessment
- When a new employee commences
- When an employee changes workstation
- When there is a change in workstation design
- There is a change in work practices
- Following a recommendation of an accident / incident investigation
- 2 years from the date of the original assessment

The DSE assessment is to be completed using the Display screen assessment form.

The DSE assessment is to be kept on the Health and Safety file/shared drive and a copy given to the person assessed and his or her manager.

For further information on DSE assessment refer to the Departmental DSE procedure and guidance and the Southwark safety reference manual:

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

COSHH assessments are required for any work, which is liable to expose employees to any substances hazardous to health. Hazardous substances are chemicals, biological agents e.g. Hepatitis B, Tuberculosis, dust, mists and gases.

The general risk assessment will identify any hazardous substances in the workplace and the need to conduct a COSHH assessment.

The Divisional Head and their management team will designate COSHH assessor/s, who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct COSHH assessments.

COSHH assessments are to be conducted / reviewed

- A hazardous substance is introduced into the workplace.
- There is a change in workplace process involving hazardous substances
- Following a recommendation of an accident / incident investigation
- After lapse of the review period set at the initial assessment but not exceeding 5 years

COSHH assessments are to be recorded and maintained in the Health and safety file/shared drive.

For further guidance on COSHH and COSHH assessments refer to the Departmental COSHH procedure and the Southwark safety reference manual

Manual Handling

Manual handling operations subject to risk assessment include any transporting or supporting of a load by hand or by bodily force, including:

- Lifting.
- Pulling.
- Pushing.
- Putting down.

- Carrying or moving.

The general risk assessment will identify any manual handling hazards in the workplace and the need to conduct a manual handling assessment.

The Divisional Head and their management team will designate manual handling assessor/s who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct manual handling assessments.

Manual Handling assessments are to be conducted / reviewed:

- When identified by the general risk assessment
- Following a recommendation of an accident / incident investigation
- 2 years from the date of the original assessment

Manual handling assessments are to be completed using the Initial Manual Handling Assessment Form and the Detailed Manual Handling Assessment Form

Manual handling assessments are to be kept on the Health and Safety file/shared drive. For further information on Manual Handling Assessment refer to the Departmental manual handling procedure and the Southwark safety reference manual:

Noise

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005) specifies measures employers must take if employees' personal noise exposure is not to exceed defined legal action level. It is unlikely that Children's and Adults employees will be exposed to excessive workplace noise.

A noise assessment is to be conducted / reviewed

- When identified by the general risk assessment
- When employees raise concern over noise levels
- Reviewed after 2 years

The Divisional Head and their management team will arrange for noise level assessments to be undertaken as necessary.

For further guidance on exposure to noise and the assessment of noise refer to the departmental health and safety manager and the Southwark safety reference manual

Fire Risk Assessments

Fire risk assessments are to be conducted in accordance with the Southwark Safety reference manual and The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The assessments will be conducted / reviewed

- 2 years from the original date of assessment
- Following a recommendation of an accident / incident investigation
- When there is a structural modification to the premises.

Fire risk assessments of some Children's and Adults workplaces are co-ordinated by CFM. In those buildings that are not included in the corporate fire risk assessment programme, local responsible manager/headteachers must ensure that fire risk assessments are conducted by competent persons and kept under regular review. Fire risk assessments are to be recorded and stored on the Health and Safety files/shared drive

Managers should contact the departmental safety team regarding arrangements at their workplace.

Further information is available in the Departmental fire safety policy and the Southwark safety reference manual.

Workplace Violence and Lone Working

Violence, aggressive behaviour or harassment as defined by Southwark Council is, 'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'

Children's and Adults employees may be exposed to workplace violence, working 'on' or 'off site'.

On-site working is any work that occurs on council premises i.e. reception duties, interviewing service users.

Off-site working duties are undertaken away from council premises i.e. Home visits to service users.

Divisions will undertake general risk assessment of all the activities within their area and identify as appropriate the potential risk of violence on-site and off-site.

Risk assessments must also be conducted if the need for lone working cannot be avoided.

The divisional Head and their management team will designate assessor/s, who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct lone working /workplace violence assessments.

Workplace Violence and Lone working assessments are to be conducted/ reviewed

- When identified by the general risk assessment
- When there are new /changes in workplace practices
- Following an incident / accident, involving violence or lone working
- 2 years from the date of the original assessment

The risk assessment is to be completed using the risk assessment form.

Workplace violence and lone working assessments are to be recorded and maintained on the Health and Safety file/shared drive.

For further information and guidance refer to the council's policy and departmental guidance on violence in the workplace and lone working.

Occupational Stress

Children's and Adults Services recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

The divisional head and their management team will designate assessor/s, who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct stress risk assessments and ensure that suitable and suitable arrangements are in place to identify all workplace stressors. Stress risk assessments are to be conducted for all job roles and reviewed

- When there are new /changes in workplace practices
- Following accident/incident or period of stress related absence
- 2 years from the date of the original assessment

The risk assessment is to be completed using the stress risk assessment form and are to be recorded and maintained on the Health and Safety file/shared drive

For further information and guidance refer to the council's stress policy and departmental guidance on managing occupational stress.

Workplace Equipment

Children's and Adults services have a legal duty to ensure that all equipment provided at work meets the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

The Divisional Head and their management team will designate workplace equipment assessor/s, who are experienced and trained in risk assessment to conduct the workplace equipment assessments.

Each piece of equipment needs to be assessed to determine what controls i.e. testing and maintenance schedules if any are appropriate. This should be done at the time of purchase and prior to installation. In practice, most individual items of equipment are likely to be provided with appropriate controls when supplied.

The assessment is to be conducted using the risk assessment form.

The assessments are to be kept on the health and safety file/shared drive.

For further guidance on workplace equipment refer to the Health and Safety manager and the Southwark safety reference manual:

New and Expectant Mothers

Managers have a legal duty to conduct risk assessments for employees, who have informed them they are pregnant, have given birth during the previous 6 months, or who are breast-feeding.

The assessment is to be based on a review of the general risk assessment and to take into any account the risks posed by the individual's condition. The assessment is to be reviewed on a periodical basis and to be conducted using the risk assessment form

The assessment is to be recorded and maintained on the health and safety file/individual personnel file.

For further guidance refer to new and expectant mothers procedure, human resources, health and safety team.

Young Persons

A young person is legally defined as person who is under the age of 18 and above the age of 16, the current minimum school leaving age. A young person's risk assessment is a legal duty and is required before they can commence work.

The young person's risk assessment is based on a review of the general risk assessment taking into account the physical and mental maturity of the individual.

The Young person assessment is to be conducted using the risk assessment form.

The results of the assessment are to be conveyed / explained to the young person by the business unit manager and shared with parents/guardians prior to the commencement of work.

The assessment is to be recorded and maintained on the Health and Safety file/shared drive and a copy is to be given to the young person.

For further information refer to the departmental health and safety team.

N.B. An individual assessment is required for work experience trainees under the minimum school leaving age. A copy of the risk assessment for work experience trainees is to be given to the parent or guardian prior to commencement of work.

Medical Condition or Disability

Individual risk assessments must be conducted when an employee has a disability or medical condition, to determine whether additional controls not identified by the general risk assessment are required e.g. adjustments to the workplace, equipment or tasks.

This may include temporary circumstances such as an employee returning from long term sickness, students on temporary placements

The assessment is to be conducted using the risk assessment form.

The return to work risk assessment is to be placed on the individual's personnel file.

For further guidance refer to the Occupational health service provider, Human resources, Health and safety team or the Business manager's handbook, sickness absence management procedure.