

A rep guide to H&S Risk Assessments

A simple 5 step guide to the risk assessment process. If the risk assessments process is followed correctly, hazards will be identified and removed or considerably reduced.

1. Examine

Examine the workplace to identify hazards.

Take a walk around the workplace and think about any potential hazards.

What is it about the activities, processes or substances used that could injure workers or harm their health?

Remember to think about long-term hazards to health (for example musculoskeletal disorders or exposure to high stress work environments).



2. Assess

Assess the risks associated with the hazards you've identified.

Think how workers (or others who may be present such as contractors or visitors) might be harmed or put at risk. This will help you identify the best way of controlling the risk.

Ask others – managers and colleagues – what they think the risks are, as they may notice things that are not obvious to you and may have some good ideas about how to control the risks.



3. Decide

Decide on prevention and control measures.

You shouldn't expect to eliminate all risks. What you want to see is that they are managed responsibly.

Generally, an employer needs to do everything 'reasonably practicable'. This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble. Actions that are disproportionate are not required.



4. Implement

Get the manager to implement preventative control measures.

For those risks you've decided are significant, you might consider getting the manager to try to reduce the risk.

This could involve reorganising work to reduce exposure to the hazard, provide training, or distribute safety information or clear safety signage.



5. Review

Review and update the risk assessment.

Few workplaces stay the same. Sooner or later, there will be new equipment, procedures or other changes that could lead to new hazards. So it makes sense to review your risk assessment on an ongoing basis. Don't forget to check that any actions that have been agreed have been implemented.



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