Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures

January 2015

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1. Introduction

The purpose of risk assessment is to identify hazards and evaluate any associated risks to health and safety arising from the Foundation's activities, enabling informed decisions to be taken to eliminate or minimise any risk of harm to those who may be affected.

Risk assessment is also a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. In addition, topic specific risk assessments are required by associated legislation for: fire, manual handling, computer use, substances hazardous to health, noise, young persons, new and expectant mothers, provision and use of work equipment, asbestos, lead, school activities including lessons, radiation and pesticides.

Risk assessments do not have to be complicated; the level of detail contained in them should be relevant to the level of the risks involved with the activity. In many cases a risk assessment will lead to the clarification and documenting of local team protocols and procedures that are often already in place. The analytical process involved with risk assessment and control can also result in efficiencies in existing processes being identified.

Risk assessments can also assist in the identification of requirements for, and levels of, instruction, information, training and supervision that may be required for the activity.

2. Responsibilities

The following posts have responsibilities:

Employees are responsible for:

- Assisting with and participating in the process of preparing risk assessments.

Heads of Department (or equivalent line managers) are responsible for:

- Undertaking risk assessments, monitoring, identifying, and implementing control measures, effectively communicating the outcomes to employees and others as appropriate.

- Reviewing the risk assessments as required when changes are made or at least annually, filing of completed risk assessments and checking risk assessments completed by their staff.

SLT members are responsible for:

- Allocating resources in response to risk assessments completed within Departments and determining a course of action should it be identified that a risk cannot be suitably controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.

- Setting up frameworks for decision making and corporate strategies which incorporate risk assessment principles. This will ensure that decisions made take into account relevant risk factors.

The Head is responsible for:

- Ensuring risk assessments for activities are undertaken, control measures identified and implemented, and the outcomes communicated to employees and others, as appropriate.

- Ensuring that those who are tasked with completing risk assessments within Departments are suitably trained to do so.

- Ensuring that a suitable mechanism exists to communicate the safe systems of work identified as part of the risk assessment procedures.

- Making suitable representation to Senior Managers if risk assessments identify an outstanding need which cannot be resourced within existing departmental resources.

The Estates and Contracts Manager is responsible for:

- Ensuring risk assessments for activities are undertaken within the Estates Department, control measures are identified and implemented, and the outcomes are communicated to employees and others as appropriate.

- Ensuring that those who are tasked with completing risk assessments within Estates are suitably trained to do so.

- Ensuring that a suitable mechanism exists to communicate the safe systems of work identified as part of the risk assessment procedures.

- Maintaining the central register for school risk assessments for events and trips that have been submitted.

3. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

Hazard: Something with the potential to cause harm

Hazardous Outcome: A description of how someone could be hurt or damage could occur as a result of interacting with the hazard

Risk Rating: The overall judgement of the level of risk which may arise from the hazard, based upon the likelihood of the event occurring and the potential severity of the consequence

Control Measures: Method used to reduce or control risks arising from identified hazards

4. Hazard Identification

- List the activities undertaken in the area of responsibility

- Establish a program (based on risk) to undertake the risk assessments

- Undertake the risk assessments

- Line managers are responsible for making themselves aware of all routine and non-routine work activities (including any foreseeable emergencies) undertaken in their areas of responsibility. Once this exercise is complete it will be possible to describe activities in a meaningful way for the purposes of risk assessment to avoid unnecessary paperwork and repetition e.g. if the activity of using Bunsen burners is identified during a number of

activities it may be possible to group these activities under one risk assessment, rather than producing a number of very similar documents.

- A process for carrying out risk assessments based on a broad judgement of the overall risk involved with each activity should be established and implemented.

- Whenever possible line managers should adopt a team approach to risk assessment and involve employees who have practical experience of the activity being assessed, as they often have the best awareness and understanding of the hazards involved with the activity and know how the activity is actually carried out.

- Identify the hazards, who may be harmed and how

- Identify existing control measures & assess the risk

- Assess whether the risk is adequately controlled

All hazards associated with each activity and all groups of persons which may be exposed to those hazards must be identified. Hazards can arise from the use of materials, substances, equipment and the location that the activity is carried out in.

To assist in hazard identification:

- Observe the task to be assessed and the environment that it is to be carried out in to identify what actually occurs.

- Speak to and involve the employees who undertake the task and trade union safety representatives.

- Refer to any existing risk assessments.

- Review incident and ill-health records relevant to the activity.

- Refer to legislation, supporting approved codes of practice and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance documents, British standards, industry / trade association guidance, manufacturers / supplier information (see also Section 10). These references should also be included in the final documentation as appropriate.

- Refer to colleagues in other schools who undertake the same tasks, if necessary

Groups of persons which may be exposed to the hazards can include staff, pupils and visitors. Groups that may be more vulnerable, such as people with disabilities or existing medical considerations, new or expectant mothers should be highlighted as they require individual assessment.

In a school environment it is especially important to consider pupils as part of the risk assessment process and the potential impact of activities upon them with a view to the supervision arrangements to be put in place to ensure their health and safety.

The risk associated with hazards such as 'inadequate supervision' and/or 'lone working' should also be closely considered as part of any risk assessment for employees. Foundation activities are often conducted after school hours rather than confined to the standard working day found within many other organisations. This fact should be evident in risk assessment documentation where appropriate.

5. Risk Evaluation

Once hazards associated with activities have been identified, it becomes necessary to establish what the potential hazardous outcomes or events could be associated with the hazard.

Consider: **Who** could be harmed?
How could they be harmed?
What could harm them?

The next stage is to examine the **likelihood** of a hazardous event occurring. Infrequently occurring hazards present less risk than frequently occurring hazards.

Once the likelihood has been determined then the probable **severity** of the hazardous event should be considered. Consequences can be considered in terms of severity of potential injury (e.g. is it probable that a person would die or sustain minor injuries?) Consequence can also be considered in broader terms, including reputational consequences.

A three point model is used by the Foundation for risk assessments as per the table below.

Likelihood	Severity
3-Extermely Likely	3-Possible Fatalities
2-Likely to occur	2-Injury / Possible disability
1-Slight chance of occurring	1-Minor injury

The risk evaluation process helps to determine the significance of the risks associated with the hazards. The number of people who may be affected by a hazard is a relevant consideration during risk estimation.

Risk assessment is the overall judgement of the level of risk arising from the hazard, based upon the **likelihood** of the hazard occurring and the potential **severity**, taking into account existing risk control measures that are already established to be in place to reduce/mitigate/control the risk. The level of risk should be assessed to identify the **risk rating** by multiplying the two factors together, resulting in a score from 1 to 9. Any score of 6 and above will require further control measures and you should inform your line manager for further advice.

Likelihood	Description
Extremely Likely	Expected to occur in most circumstances.
Likely to occur	Might occur at some time.
Slight chance of occurring	Not expected but conceivable, could occur sometime.
Severity	**Description**
Fatality	Fatality or multiple fatalities due to injuries. Severe illness which may prove fatal.
Injury / Possible Disability	Possible injury resulting in over 5 days' absence from work/school. Temporary disability such as a broken bone. May affect more than one person. Could have reputational implications. Limited damage to property.

Minor injury	Injury resulting in no absence from work/school or being unable to undertake normal duties for <1 day. Slight damage to property.

Risk Rating	Descriptor	Acceptable?	Actions
9	Prohibited	Unacceptable	Work should not be started or continued until the risk has been reduced. Additional risk control measures required.
6	Medium	Could be Acceptable	Medium level risks may are likely to be acceptable, if suitable controls are in place.
1-4	Low	Likely to be Acceptable	Low risks are acceptable unless there are low cost solutions which removes the risk and improves the working environment.

6. Risk Control

Suitable and sufficient risk control measures will be identified and implemented to ensure that all risks are appropriately controlled and meet legal requirements as a minimum. All risk control measures will follow the hierarchy of risk control stated in this procedure.

Risk control measures are methods used which reduce/control risks arising from the hazard.

Control measures must take into account any relevant legal requirements which establish the minimum levels of risk control. Where additional control measures are required to reduce the risk, they should be considered according to the order in the following hierarchy of risk control.

Hierarchy of risk control

- **Eliminate the risk**
  Avoid the risk altogether by removing the hazard or no longer undertaking the activity.

- **Substitute the risk**
  Reduce the risk by replacing the hazard or activity with one which entails a lower risk.

- **Control the risk (Physical)**
  Control the risk by physical isolation or separation of people from the hazard.

- **Control the risk (Procedural)**

  Control the risk by procedural methods which are understood and effectively implemented; e.g. safe systems of work, standard operating procedure additional information, training, instruction, supervision,

- **Protect the individual**
  Protect the individual by the provision of personal protective equipment.

When considering additional control measures it should be ensured that they will not introduce any new hazards.

When the control measures have been identified and agreed they must be prioritised, placed into an action plan and implemented. The action plan needs to be clear about exactly what needs to be done, when and by whom. Where full implementation of the control measures identified cannot be achieved rapidly, adequate steps may need to be taken in the interim to minimise the risk.

The implementation of the action plan must be monitored and subsequently reviewed to ensure that the remedial actions identified have been, and continue to be, adequate, appropriate and implemented.

7. Communication

Relevant information identified in the risk assessment regarding the hazards, their associated risks to health and safety and the appropriate risk control measures must be effectively communicated, and be readily accessible to, employees and others as appropriate.

Record the findings and communicate information

Retain records; monitor and review as appropriate

Where significant risks are identified, the risk assessment must be recorded on the Foundation risk assessment form, and be readily accessible to the employees undertaking the activities and others as appropriate.

The risk assessment form is available on the schools' shared drive in the Health & Safety folder. Also available are a set of generic risk assessments which can be adapted by managers to meet their needs along with further HSE guidance.

Managers need to ensure that the findings of the risk assessments and the precautions to be taken are effectively communicated to, understood by and implemented by those persons covered in the assessment.

8. Record Keeping

Record and communicate information

Retain records

Monitor and review as appropriate at least annually

Risk assessments and associated documents must be kept for a minimum period of 5 years from the date which they are superseded as they may be required in the event of a litigation claim for compensation (note that claims for compensation can, generally, be made up to 3 years from the date of the incident occurring). It should be noted that risk assessments which relate to the use of substances may need to be kept for 40 years, in order to trace exposure to substances which are known to have ill health effects e.g. asbestos.

9. Monitoring and Review

The risk assessment and control process is not a one-off activity but part of the process for continuous improvement and should be reviewed and revised as appropriate.

Risk assessments must be reviewed

- if there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates
- if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid
- at least annually

10. Further reading

As mentioned in the introduction there are a number of supplementary regulations which include a specific requirement for risk assessment.

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH).
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (Testing and Inspection of Portable Electrical Equipment)
- First Aid at Work Regulations 1981
- Fire Safety Reform Order 2005
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006
- Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999

A separate health and safety policy has not been produced for every set of regulations which requires a risk assessment to be in place. In most instances the requirements of specific legislation can be incorporated into one risk assessment document. However, it may be necessary to consult specific approved codes of practice in some cases.

The Estates Office will be able to assist in the interpretation of specific legislation and should be contacted for advice, should the above hazards be identified.

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or at an earlier date if changes are required due to risk assessment review or changes in government advice.

Review History
Policy written   March 2015   D Butterfield
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