

University of Sussex
School of Media, Arts and Humanities
Risk Assessment Policy

1. Introduction

The University has a legal duty to carry out risk assessments in compliance with Regulation 3 of the [Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations](#). These require that a “**suitable and sufficient**” risk assessment is carried out on all activities undertaken at the University.

The aim of the risk assessment is to identify the *hazards of the activity, determine the risks* and take steps to *control/minimise those risks* for employees and others who may be affected by the activities.

2. Definitions

Hazard

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. Examples include:

- Trailing cables: potential for slips and trips, causing injury
- Overloaded electrical sockets: potential to cause fire, damage and injury

Risk

A risk is the likelihood that the hazard will actually cause harm and the severity of that harm.

- Categories of risk can be high, medium or low.
- If medium or high, different or additional control measures **must** be considered before the work commences or continues.

3. Risk assessment

A risk assessment identifies all the health and safety hazards of the work activity and judges the associated risks if the work is carried out with suitable and sufficient control measures implemented and the planned precautions.

Risk assessments must consider:

- All academic, research and support activities
- Work carried out by staff, students, visitors and contractors
- Equipment currently in use and any equipment hired or purchased for use in the future
- Materials and substances used within the University
- The working environment

4. Arrangements for risk assessments

The Dean must ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all teaching, research and support activities within their area of responsibility and that relevant control measures are implemented.

Risk assessments should be approved by the manager taking responsibility for the activity. The manager must ensure that the activity will be carried out in accordance with the risk assessment and local code of practice. Those signing off risk assessments do not need specific training in risk assessments, but must fully understand the activities involved before approving them.

Risk assessments should be included in planning processes and in decisions on resources. They must be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure they are kept up to date.

If further information and advice is required, this should be sought from the Health and Safety team, the School Health and Safety Coordinators and from those carrying out the activity.

5. Documentation

A risk assessment form and guidance is available on the University website at:- <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/specialist/riskass>

Risk assessments should be reviewed at least annually for continuing activities. Where there are **significant changes** e.g. to materials, frequency, personnel, facilities; where problems are noted; where an accident occurs; or there is a change in relevant legislation, the risk assessment must be reviewed sooner. Where work is re-started after an extended period, the risk assessment must be reviewed at the planning stage. Risk assessments should also be reviewed where new information indicates changes to hazards or risks, or where technological advancements have made improvements possible.

6. Revision

Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated where:

- new details need to be recorded
- changes affect hazards and risk
- existing precautions/control measures are no longer adequate
- necessary improvements are recommended
- there are changes in legislation

Changes should be incorporated into the written record and into any local procedures derived from the risk assessments. Revised local procedures will be disseminated to relevant staff, students and others as necessary.

7. Monitoring and auditing

The University's arrangements for monitoring and auditing of health and safety management in Schools/services will include periodic sampling of completed risk assessments and through formal health and safety audits carried out by the Health & Safety Team. The results of monitoring and auditing will be presented to the Health & Safety Committee.

8. Responsibilities with respect to risk assessment

Heads of School/Deans are responsible for ensuring that:

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and kept up to date for School/service activities
- Local procedures setting out the arrangements and precautions for the work are derived from the risk assessments and are disseminated, reviewed and revised as necessary
- Risk assessments are reviewed for pregnant women, children and young persons.
- Ensuring all staff requiring health surveillance attend and receive the relevant health surveillance from the University's occupational provider (HR line manager referral)
- Students are referred to Student Life Centre where there are concerns

regarding adverse health or medical effects associated with their studies

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- All their school/service health and safety risks are assessed and before new work/ procedures/safe systems of work are introduced
- Identified precautions are costed, implemented and regularly reviewed (in liaison with School/Service Health & Safety Co-ordinators) and supported by budget holder
- School/Service induction of new staff includes necessary health and safety information.

Project leaders (e.g. module convenors, Subject Heads, research grant holders) are responsible for ensuring that:

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and kept up to date for all research activities
- Local procedures setting out the arrangements and precautions for the work are derived from the risk assessments and are disseminated, reviewed and revised as necessary
- Ensuring all staff requiring health surveillance attend and receive the relevant health surveillance from the university's occupational provider (HR line manager referral).
- Ensuring relevant induction
- Ensuring that the necessary protective equipment and safe procedures are included in funding applications and protocols.
- Reviewing the adequacy of precautions when significant changes occur in the project or following an accident

Research supervisors are responsible for:

- Advising on postgraduates' own risk assessments and procedures
Ensuring relevant induction
- Advising and assisting students with their own project risk assessments for undergraduate final year projects
- Advising and assisting students with their own project risk assessments and safe systems of work
- Scrutinising and approving risk assessments and protocols before project work starts
- Considering risk assessments and safe systems of work in project marking

Postgraduate taught and research students are responsible for:

- Drawing up their own risk assessment and safe systems of work, advised by their academic supervisor
- Identifying resources required for the project

Undergraduate students should:

- Be aware of the risk assessment purpose and process
- Be aware of risk assessment as the basis for practical procedures
- Draw up their own risk assessment and safe systems of work for their projects, advised and assisted by their academic supervisor

School Health and Safety Coordinators

The School Health and Safety Coordinators advise on risk assessment of academic, research and support activities, drawing up of local procedures and keeping appropriate records.

The University Health and Safety team

- Provides Schools with competent information, advice and training on carrying out risk assessments
- Carries out periodic sampling of risk assessments, formal audits and provides advice and recommendations for improvements if necessary

9. Resources

University Health and Safety website – <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/>

Health and Safety Policies - http://www.sussex.ac.uk/hso/policies/subject_areas/general

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/>

MAH Technical Services Health & Safety information - [Health and Safety : Technical Services : ... : School of Media, Arts and Humanities internal : University of Sussex](#)

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April 2021