

# Risk Assessment

The aim of this section is to help you to be able to assess the risks in the workplace and therefore provide a safe environment for both staff and clients.

## What is risk assessment?

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what in your workplace has the potential to cause harm to your staff and clients. This will enable you to see if you have taken enough precaution or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill as a consequence. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and can affect your business if production is lost or slowed down, equipment gets damaged and there is the insurance implications to be taken into account or if you are taken to court.

The important things you need to decide is whether a hazard is significant and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precaution to that the risk is minimised or completely removed. You need to check this when you assess the risks. For instance, electricity can kill but the risk of it doing so in an office environment is removed, provided that 'live' components are insulated and metal casings properly earthed.

If you are a small firm and you are confident you understand what's involved, you can do the assessment yourself (you don't have to be a health and safety expert!).

## What are Hazards/ Risks?

Hazard means anything that can cause harm (e.g. electricity, working from ladders, etc). Risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.

You can assess the risks in your workplace by following the HSE's 5 Steps to Risk Assessments.

Step 1	Look for the hazards
Step 2	Decide who might be harmed and how
Step 3	Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
Step 4	Record your findings
Step 5	Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

## Risk Assessment Form

Date of assessment:	
Assessor Name:	
Name of organisation:	
Address of Organisation:	
Location/ Area:	
Description of Activities:	

Details of Hazard	Persons at Risk (see code)	Details of risks:	Existing controls:	Level of Risk (see Code)	Actions required:
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
Persons at Risk Staff – S Visitor – V Patient – P Contractor – C Other - O			Level of risk: <b>H=High</b> – Action immediately <b>M=Medium</b> – Action within 28 days <b>L=Low</b> – Action within 6 months <b>N=No</b> appropriate action		