

Rhondda Cynon Taf Council

Risk Assessment (RA)

A Guide for Managers

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg
This document is available in Welsh



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Risk Assessment

Introduction

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, require the Council to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks presented by work activities to the health and safety of its employees and other persons. In other words, you are required to examine what in your work could cause harm (a HAZARD), together with an indication of how likely and serious the harm could be (the RISK). The assessment process should help you to decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to meet what the law says you must do.

The law does not expect you to eliminate all risks, but you are required to protect people as far as is reasonably practicable.

Sometimes the difference between a HAZARD and a RISK can be confusing, so it's worthwhile remembering that;

A HAZARD is "something with the potential to cause harm".

A RISK is the "likelihood that somebody could be harmed by the hazard along with an indication of how serious or severe the harm could be".

To keep it simple we suggest you use a "low" "medium" or "high" scale to help you determine what RISK a person is at in relation to the HAZARD.

A common myth that risk assessments are cumbersome, bureaucratic and often unnecessary is rarely the case. Most of us are already aware of the risks involved in carrying out the many tasks involved in the course of a normal day. Don't over complicate the process. In many organisations, the hazards and risks are well known and the necessary control measures are easy to apply.



This guide describes a method that can be used for identifying and suitably addressing the potential hazards and risks to the health and safety of employees and any other person who may be affected by the Council's activities. It does not and cannot cover all possibilities, but it should enable you to apply your own knowledge and experience (together with that of your employees) and any industry specific guidance to complete a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks.

Further guidance on the risk assessment process can be obtained from the Corporate Health and Safety Team. The Council also have 26 Health and Safety Policies which are available on the intranet. Further guidance on the 5 steps to risk assessment can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive website: www.hse.gov.uk

The Health and Safety Executive have outlined the basic steps to risk assessment and the principle of which will apply to all organisations. The five steps identified in their guidance are:



Responsibilities

Ultimate responsibility for the implementation and effectiveness of the risk assessment process rests with the relevant Group Director.

The responsibility for the undertaking of risk assessments rests with managers and supervisory level staff. Responsibility for record retention rests with managers and supervisory staff carrying out the assessment.

Senior managers are responsible for regularly monitoring the risk assessment process in areas under their control to ensure hazards are identified, assessments of the risk are appropriate with suitable control measures implemented.



Procedure

Before starting, you will need to determine the most appropriate personnel to be involved. It is likely that those managers, supervisors and employees who have direct responsibility for service provision or who undertake the activity will be the most appropriate people to be involved. These people will know more about the way the work activity is **actually** carried out than an outsider.

Therefore, wherever possible, the undertaking of risk assessments should be a team exercise involving different levels of personnel as this will help ensure that all aspects of the work activity are considered. It will also reinforce the feeling of ownership by those involved.

On the occasions that specialised and/or technical knowledge is required for particular activities, additional persons should be called upon to assist in the assessment process.

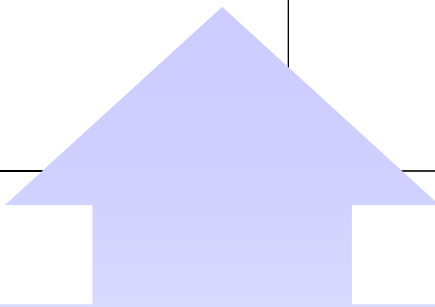
Where required the following documents can be used within the risk assessment process. Generally, most managers will only need to use RA/03, RA/04 & RA/05.

RA/01	Schedule of Work Activities (If required)
RA/02	Hazard Identification Form (If required)
RA/03	Risk Assessment Form
RA/04	Risk Assessment - Action Plan
RA/05	Risk Assessment Summary Sheet

The following forms are **examples** that you may use to undertake a risk assessment. Managers may find an alternative form more appropriate for their own circumstances.

Risk Assessment - Step 3

RA Ref:	Work Activity Risk Assessment				Form RA/03		
Assessment Date	Work Activity being assessed:				Assessors:		
Review Date							
Item No.	Main Hazards (Something with the potential to cause harm)	Risk [H,M,L]	Reason (Explain the reasons why you have decided on either a H,M,L risk rating in the previous column. Include the person(s) at risk and the seriousness of the injuries they may sustain)	Current Control Measures (What are you doing already to control the hazard and risk? These controls must be in place and working effectively)	Residual Risk [H,M,L]	Further Action Required	
						Yes	No



Safe to proceed	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step 3 – Risk Assessment Form RA/03

The third step is to take forward to the Work Activity **Risk Assessment Form RA/03** those hazards that are likely to cause harm identified on your **RA/02**. Here you will analyse them to consider the associated risks and determine if current control measures are adequate. It is at this stage that you may need to research and determine the relevant safety guidance and industry standards as they apply to the activity. This will help you determine if further controls are required and if you are complying with best practice and/or legal requirements. Where it is determined that it is unsafe to proceed with the activity (taking into account the current control measures), then the activity should be stopped until further controls are identified and implemented using the **Risk Assessment Action Plan - RA/04**.

(Note - Where the activity is high risk or complex then it is likely that further more detailed control measures will be required and could include the development of a formalised Safe Method of Work).

Risk Assessment - Step 4

RA Ref:	Risk Assessment - Action Plan			Form RA/04	
Responsible		Work Activity:		Date:	
Designation:					
Item No.	Main Hazards	Action Required	Date Action to be taken by	By Whom	Date Completed

Safe to proceed	Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Step 4 – Risk Assessment – Action Plan RA/04

The **RA/04** will be used to indicate what further action is required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. You will also include the timescales and names and designations of those responsible for the actions.

Risk Assessment - Step 5

Step 5 – Risk Assessment Summary Sheet – RA/05

The **Risk Assessment Summary (RA/05)** can be used to inform employees of the findings of the risk assessment and the relevant control measures to be adopted. You may use this to provide information stating the minimum safety requirements for the activity, including any additional precautions taking into account specific local conditions, working practices etc.

RISK ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (A closer look at the more hazardous areas of concern)		Form RA/05	
Ref. No. _____	Work activity:		
Service area:		Section:	
Assessor/s:		Date of risk assessment:	
Description of work activity:			
Description of main hazards and harm	Control Measures		
Who could be harmed?			
Additional control measures for this work activity			
Where the activity is complex in nature, or requires further understanding, managers should consider developing a Safe Method of Work to support this Risk Assessment.			

Recording

A file of risk assessments and associated risk assessment summary sheets must be retained and regularly reviewed and updated by Managers and Supervisors.

Review of the risk assessment

There are few workplaces or activities that stay the same. Sooner or later, you will bring in new equipment, substances, and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense to review what you are doing on a regular basis. You should review your risk assessment:

- after an accident, incident or significant near miss;
- after any significant changes have been made, e.g. change of staff, new working method or equipment;
- any changes in the relevant legislation;
- at least annually.

Risk Assessment (RA)

Examples of Completed Forms

Schedule of Work Activities		Form RA/01		
Service Area: Estates Management		Assessor/s: Janice Bloggs (Manager), John Smith (Supervisor), Dai Greenfinger (Gardener)		
Section: Maintenance		Date: 20.11.2022		
RA Ref No.	List of Work Activities	Do known hazards exist?		
		Yes	Unsure	No
EM/01	Use of petrol strimmer	✓		
EM/02	Cleaning rainwater gutters and downpipes around property	✓		
EM/03	Use of petrol mower	✓		
EM/04	Delivery of materials & supplies		✓	

Remember a hazard is "something with the potential to cause harm".

If no, go no further with the risk assessment process for this particular activity.

This form is nothing more than your A4 'scrap of paper'. You may wish to use this to make a list of your activities in priority order. At this point you can also make a judgement about whether there is a potential for harm (the hazard) or not; if not leave the activity where it is.

Hazard Identification	Form RA/02
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RA Ref No. EM/01 <small>(Use your own ref.numbers)</small>	Work Activity: Use of petrol strimmer	Date: 20.11.2022
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Item No.	Hazards associated with activity	Is the hazard:		Degree of harm		
		Likely	Unlikely	H	M	L
01	Contact with machinery/cutting cord		✓		✓	
02	Ejection of debris from machinery	✓			✓	
03	Fire & explosion; use of petrol		✓	✓		
04	Falling objects (Conkers)		✓			✓
05	Uneven or slippery ground	✓				✓
06	Noise & Vibration	✓				✓

This is another form you may wish to use to replace your 'scrap of paper'. For those tasks that you have previously said a hazard exists, bring the most important over first so that you and your team can list all the potentials for harm - **your hazards**.

Use these columns to help you decide on the risk factor - if something is **unlikely** to happen and has a **low** degree of harm, again, leave it where it is. Ignore the trivial and focus on the significant. For example, the likelihood of a conker falling on your head when strimming is **unlikely** with a **low** degree of harm.

Use the 'risk factor' key to assist you in deciding the level and degree of risk.

'Low' risk - unlikely, resulting in minor injury e.g. cut/bruise.

'Medium' risk - likely, resulting in more serious injury e.g. serious wounds, fractures, strain/sprains, dislocation.

'High' risk - likely, resulting in fatalities, major injury, severed limbs, loss of consciousness, loss of sight.

Key to risk factor	Risk Factor
Likely to occur x High degree of harm	H
Unlikely to occur x High degree of harm	M
Likely to occur x Medium degree of harm	M
Unlikely to occur x Medium degree of harm	M
Likely to occur x Low degree of harm	L
Unlikely to occur x Low degree of harm (insignificant/trivial)	L

Work Activity Risk Assessment				Form RA/03		
RA Ref: EM/01		Assessors: Janice Bloggs (Manager), John Smith (Supervisor), Dai Greenfinger (Gardener)				
Work Activity being assessed:		The RA/03 is used to analyse your hazards and determine if current control measures are adequate.				
Assessment Date		Use of petrol strimmer				
Review Date						
Item No.	Main Hazards (Something with the potential to cause harm)	Risk [H,M,L]	Reason (Explain the reasons why you have decided on either a H,M,L risk rating in the previous column. Include the person(s) at risk and the seriousness of the injuries they may sustain)	Current Control Measures (What are you doing already to control the hazard and risk? These controls must be in place and working effectively)	Residual Risk [H,M,L]	Further Action Required
01	Contact with machinery/cutting cord	M	Operative may come into contact with machinery, cutting cord during strimming activities causing wounds/lacerations. Members of public also at risk when grass is being cut in a public area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strimmer fitted with guarding to prevent contact. Operatives fully trained in safe operation & guided through manufacturers handbook. Operatives trained & instructed to inspect equipment prior to use and to report any defects. 	L	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
02	Ejection of debris from machinery	M	Strimming grassed area may throw up debris such as glass, stones which may be ejected at high speed. Causing wounds/cuts to operative, team members and public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strimmer fitted with guarding to prevent ejection of debris. Minimum 15m safe operating distance observed. Operatives wear appropriate PPE - face visor, leather gloves, safety shoes with non slip soles, hearing protection, shin guards. 	L	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Risk is the chance (high, medium, low) that someone will be harmed. Use the Risk Factor from RA02 (if required) to decide the level of risk. Remember, you don't need to bring an unlikely and low harm to this page.</p>		<p>The 'residual risk' is the level of risk remaining after the current control measures have been taken into account.</p> <p>Even a low residual risk may need further action.</p>				
<p>If after all current control measures are in place the hazards are not adequately controlled, then it may not be 'Safe to proceed'. You may need to cease the activity or introduce further controls.</p>		<p>Safe to proceed</p>				

RA Ref: EM/01		Risk Assessment - Action Plan			Form RA/04	
Resp. Person:		Janice Bloggs				
Designation:		Manager				
Work Activity:		Use of petrol strimmer				
Item No.	Main Hazards	Action Required	Date Action to be taken by	By Whom	Date Completed	
02	Ejection of debris from machinery	Instruct & train operatives instructed to inspect work area prior to strimming and remove obvious pieces of debris such as glass and stones.	20.04.11	Manager (Janice Bloggs)	25.04.11	
		Revised RA/05 – recirculate to all Gardener/Handyman.	15.05.11	Manager (Janice Bloggs)	20.05.11	

The RA04 is to be used to indicate what further action is required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

These should only be the hazards that have been identified as requiring further action on the RA/03.

If you have identified that further action is required in your risk assessment (RA03), then use this section to detail the action.

Ask yourself, can I eliminate the hazard by doing things differently, if not, what is the best way of managing the hazard so that the risk of harm becomes unlikely.

Identify who is to do what and by when.

If you have determined it is unsafe to proceed at RA/03, is it now safe to proceed after putting further actions in place?

Safe to proceed	
Yes	No

RISK ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (A closer look at the more hazardous areas of concern)			Form RA/05
Ref. No. EM/01	Work activity: Use of petrol strimmer		
Service area:	Estates Management	Section:	Maintenance
Assessor/s:	Janice Bloggs (Manager), John Smith (Supervisor), Dai Greenfinger (Gardener)	Date of risk assessment:	20.11.2022
Description of work activity:	Use of petrol strimmer to cut back overgrowth and general garden maintenance.		
Description of main hazards and harm	Control Measures		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact with cutting cord on strimmer – likely to cause laceration. Ejection of debris from strimmer – Impact injuries, cuts/lacerations, eye injuries Fire/explosion – Use of petrol, may cause fire resulting in burns Noise/Vibration – Prolonged exposure to noise can result in ill health (hearing loss/VWF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all guards are fitted and in good condition. Machines fitted with cut out switches Ensure there is a sweep of the area prior to strimming to remove larger pieces of debris. Ensure you maintain the safe operating distance between your colleagues and members of the public (15m). PPE must be worn – Face visor, leather gloves, safety boots, shin guards, ear defenders, hi viz vests when working on the highway. 		
Who could be harmed? Operatives using strimmer Colleagues in close proximity Members of public in vicinity			
Additional control measures for this work activity			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only trained operators to use strimming equipment. Strimming equipment must be inspected prior to each occasion of use and any defects noted must be reported. Ensure regular breaks are taken to minimize the effects of vibration. Ensure harness is worn to support weight of strimmer and reduce handling injuries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Machines must never be left unattended when working in public areas. Ensure regular breaks during hot weather; cover up or apply sunscreen to protect against effects of the sun. Refueling must be carried out in a well ventilated area. Smoking is prohibited during work activity and when refueling. 		
Where the activity is complex in nature, or requires further understanding, managers should consider developing a Safe Method of Work to support this Risk Assessment.			

RA05 is intended to inform employees of the main hazards and the relevant control measures to be adopted.