

# Risk Assessments: All you need to know

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Run Time: Approx 50 mins

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# Today We Will Cover

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- What a risk assessment is and why we have an obligation to carry them out
- The 5 step approach to completing a risk assessment
- Common challenges

# Did you know...

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- In 2024/25, 1.7 million working people suffered from illnesses they believed were caused or made worse by their work.
- 148.9 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury in 2024.
- Of all main industry sectors, agriculture, forestry and fishing continues to have the highest rate of fatal injury per 100,000 workers followed by waste and recycling.

# What is a Risk Assessment?

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- A process which enables the identification of the hazards in the workplace and the evaluation of the risks associated with those hazards, taking into account any existing control measures.
- Key aspects include:
  - Identifying Hazards
  - Evaluating Risks
  - Implementing Control Measures
  - Reviewing and Updating



# Terminology

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- Hazard – Anything that may cause harm, e.g. chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, noise etc.
- Risk – The chance, high or low, of somebody being harmed by the hazard, and how serious the harm could be.



# Examples of different Risk Assessments

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- Fire Risk Assessment
- Manual Handling Risk Assessment
- Working at Height Risk Assessments
- Cybersecurity Risk Assessment
- Dynamic Risk Assessments
- Machinery Risk Assessment
- Asbestos Risk Assessment
- Lone Working Risk Assessment
- Food Preparation Risk Assessment



# Why carry out a Risk Assessment

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- As an employer, this is a legal duty to protect people from harm:
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
  - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Failing to conduct risk assessments can expose a business to a range of negative consequences:
  - Increased Risk of Accidents and Injuries
  - Reputational Damage
  - Legal and Financial Repercussions
  - Operational Disruptions
  - Increased Insurance Costs



# Case Study– South West Water

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- The HSE found that South West Water did not identify the risk of drowning associated with a maintenance activity.
- The company failed to conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment for the specific task.
- South West Water was found guilty of breaching the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The company was fined £1.8 million and ordered to pay £41,607.71 in costs.



# How To Complete a Risk Assessment

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# Identify Hazards

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- Recognising anything that could potentially cause harm in the workplace (Hazards).
- Consider the following:
  - How people work and how plant and equipment are used
  - What chemicals and substances are used
  - What safe or unsafe work practices exist
  - The general state of your premises



# Assess The Risks

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- How likely is it that someone will be harmed by the identified hazard?
- How serious could the harm be because of the identified hazard?
- Who is likely to be harmed? This could include employees, visitors, contractors, or the public.
- Think about how each group might be harmed and the specific situations where they might be exposed to the hazard.
- What is already being done to mitigate risk, and what further action is required to control the risks .



# Control The Risks

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- Identify and implement control measures to eliminate or minimise the identified risks.
- Ensure that control measures are reasonably practicable, balancing the risk against the time, cost, and effort.
- Consider different types of control measures:
  - elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment (PPE)



# Record Your Findings

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- Record the identified hazards, the assessed risks, and the implemented control measures
- This documentation serves as evidence of the risk assessment process and can be used for future reference and reviews.
- Do not rely purely on paperwork as your main priority should be to control the risks in practice.



# Monitor & Review

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- Control measures must be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure they are still reducing the risk of harm
- Reviews should take place on control measures when:
  - they may no longer be effective
  - there are changes in the workplace that could lead to new risks such as changes to:
    - staff
    - a process
    - the substances or equipment used
- Record any changes made to the risk assessment, including the date of review and any new control measures implemented.



# Common Challenges

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- Hazard Identification
- Data Quality and Availability
- Subjectivity
- Resource Constraints
- Stakeholder Engagement



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# In Summary

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- Risk assessments help pinpoint potential dangers in the workplace, such as unsafe equipment, hazardous materials, or ergonomic issues.
- By understanding risks, businesses can implement measures to protect employees from injury or illness and safeguard company assets from damage or loss.
- Risk assessments help businesses take proactive steps to prevent accidents and injuries, reducing the likelihood of costly incidents and potential legal liabilities.

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# Next Weeks Session

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Practical strategies to support Employee Wellbeing  
23/7/25 2:30pm



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# Thank you!

Any questions

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