

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting everyone who is affected by our activities, including our athletes, volunteers, employees, member organisations and the sport, as well as complying with the law. It helps us to focus on the risks that really matter – the ones with the potential to cause significant harm.

In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks, for example ensuring that storage areas are kept clear and not overloaded, work areas are kept tidy so that people do not trip. In the most part this means simple, cheap and effective measures so that our most valuable asset, our people, are protected.

The law does not expect us to eliminate all risk, but we are required to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. This guide will help you to achieve this with a minimum of fuss.

What is risk assessment?

A risk assessment, which must be carried out by a person who has a good understanding of the 5 basic steps to conducting a **Risk Assessment***, is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Workers and others have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to implement reasonable control measures.

** If you are in a role that requires that you conduct a risk assessment(s) in the first instance visit the ["Five Steps to Risk Assessment" page of the Health & Safety Executive website](#).*

How to do a Risk Assessment – 10 Top Tips

1. Ensure that the person carrying out the risk assessment is competent to do so
2. Think of a risk assessment as a checklist of how safe your event/activities are
3. Check the [insurance cover section](#) of the UKA website to ensure that your activities are covered by UKA insurance. If in doubt please contact [Stephen Long](#)
4. For new Risk Assessments use the new RA template that can be found on the UKA website
5. Don't get bogged down in minor details but think about the main risks your activities could pose
6. Do your risk assessment as a group as part of club/event planning meeting
7. Make sure that you fully complete ALL sections of the template
8. Keep a hard copy of all completed risk assessments on file
9. Circulate your completed risk assessments to key partners (e.g. local authority/facility operator)
10. Update your risk assessment on the review date (suggest every 2years) or when something changes

NB. For good practice and Health & Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on risk assessments visit the Risk Management section of the HSE website. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk>

Why Bother?

We all have a civil duty of care (in law) to make sure our events and activities are as safe as possible and prevent accidents happening. A risk assessment isn't just a piece of paper but a useful checklist of what could go wrong and how you can take appropriate measures to reduce risks.

.....And guess what is the first thing that will be looked at if there is an accident... your risk assessment!

Public Liability Insurance – what's that?

UKA and organisations affiliated to UKA for the express purpose of promoting / organising athletic activities/events are automatically provided with Public Liability and Third Party insurance cover. This means that UKA and its members and member organisations, are protected if they are injured or their property is damaged due to negligence.

Personal accidents and injuries are not covered (e.g. if an athlete trips over their own shoelaces and breaks an arm, there is no automatic compensation). So, the most effective way to minimise genuine accidents is by identifying potential risks and working out a way to prevent them.....time to do a risk assessment!

Risk assessments provide you with a defence in the event of an incident to show that you have taken all reasonable precautions to prevent injury or damage.

Exemptions – What is covered by UKA Insurance?

The insurance section of the UKA website provides comprehensive details of the insurance cover that is provided. <http://www.britishathletics.org.uk/governance/insurance>

Risk Assessment Jargon Buster

You only need to understand three terms to do a risk assessment:

1. Hazard, something with the potential to cause harm, i.e. a danger (e.g. trailing electric cable)
2. Risk how the hazard could harm people (e.g. trip)
3. Control Measure how you are going to minimise the risk (e.g. use cable ties or a cable protector to prevent tripping)



So, to use a real-life example:

- Hazard: Wet indoor athletics track
- Risk: Injury from slips/trips
- Control Measure: Sweep and dry the floor before every training session, no drinks in the Hall

...Simple!

Completing the Risk Assessment template

Risks need to be evaluated as high, medium or low on the template risk assessment form before and after the control measure is put in place. This can help decide if existing control measures are adequate or whether more should be done.

Likelihood/Severity

For example, the likelihood of falling off a cliff during a walk in Cornwall in the fog with no real leadership or planning is high and a resulting injury would be very severe (high) resulting in an intolerable risk rating (red).

But... if control measures were introduced to only walk on designated coastal paths in good weather with an experienced leader, the likelihood could be brought down to acceptable/moderate levels.

Action Plan

If you have identified that more needs to be done to reduce the risk likelihood and/ or severity this must be recorded in the action column and include the name of the responsible person and a target completion date. Once completed the date should be entered into the last column of the risk assessment.

Risk Rating Tool to be used with Risk Assessment template

Key:

Risk level: (L) Low; (M) Medium; (H) High

		Severity		
		Slight L	Medium M	Major H
Likelihood	Seldom L	L	L	M
	Occasionally M	L	M	H
	Frequently H	M	H	H

Risk level	Action and Timescale
Trivial	No action is required to deal with trivial risks, and no documentary records need be kept (insignificant risk).
Acceptable	No further preventative action is necessary, but consideration should be given to cost-effective improvements. Monitoring is required to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that the controls are maintained.
Moderate	Efforts should be made to reduce the risk, but the costs of prevention should be carefully considered. Risk reduction measures should normally be implemented as soon as is practicable.
Substantial	Activity should not be started until the risk has been reduced. Significant resources may have to be allocated to reduce the risk. Where the risk involves work in progress, the problem should be remedied as quickly as possible.
Intolerable	Activity should not be started or continued until the risk level has been reduced. While the control measures should be cost-effective, the legal duty to reduce the risk so far as reasonably practicable is absolute.