



Risk Assessing Compliance Code

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Annex A – General Purpose Risk Assessment Form

1. Introduction

The risk assessment process is the cornerstone of health and safety management. It helps you focus on the work-related risks that really matter.

A risk assessment is an examination of what, in your workplace, could cause harm and to evaluate what measures are required to control it (Control Measures). Significant findings must be recorded as this is a legal requirement.

Control measures are the measures in place to reduce the risk to suitable level and as such are to be implemented and followed. It is therefore necessary that all staff have access to risk assessments and that the contents is shared. Operating other than in accordance with the control measures identified can expose the individual, others and the organisation to undue risk and as such should be dealt with as a disciplinary measure.

This compliance code describes the processes involved in carrying out the types of risk assessment so that managers can complete suitable assessments for activities under their control.

2. Responsibilities for managing risk

All managers are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken following the process and intent outlined in this Compliance Code. Managers must ensure that those undertaking the risk assessments are suitably competent to do so.

It is highly recommended that those required to conduct risk assessing complete a suitable training course.

They should ensure that risk assessments are:

- Created involving those undertaking the work to which an assessment relates or their peer representatives, e.g., union reps
- Regularly reviewed and kept up to date
- Shared with and understood by relevant employees
- Appropriately stored and easily accessible.

3. What to assess?

Schools are inherently low risk environments but there are departments, roles and areas that are exposed to an increased level of risk due to the hazards involved. For example, Site teams are required to carry out maintenance so will be required to work at height or operate power tools, Design and Technology has access to machinery that is used by both staff and students, Science has access to numerous chemicals that are used by both staff and students etc.

It is only possible to assess foreseeable risks and these are identified through experience of doing the job or working within the role. Therefore, risk assessing tends to be conducted by managers who have a greater understanding of the role requirements. However, some aspects require Subject Matter Expertise (SME) to ensure regulations are complied with. These areas include aspects such as Fire and Legionella. Therefore, suitable contractors are commissioned to provide comprehensive Risk Assessments in these areas.

For potential hazards associated with the sites in general, WNAT utilise a Site General Risk Assessment. This captures hazards such as slips, trips, working at height, hazardous substances, lighting, etc.

Heads of departments are responsible for the completion and management of Curriculum Risk Assessments associated with their respective departments as these will tend to consider the involvement of student safety more closely. There is often access to model Risk Assessments for known hazards (For example, CLEAPSS) and departments should follow the guidance provided in their respective WNAT Compliance Code.

Therefore, most hazards associated with WNAT sites are identified and a management process is in place.

However, this compliance code provides information that will assist those responsible for risk assessing within their respective department on how to conduct a Risk Assessment. This will also assist in reviewing assessments to ensure the risk is suitably and sufficiently controlled. A template risk assessment form is provided at Annex A to this compliance code to enable risk to be assessed and captured for areas or events not covered in the Site General Risk Assessment or Department Curriculum Risk Assessments (For Example – Performance risk assessments in Drama)

4. What is a suitable and sufficient risk assessment?

The risk assessment should show that:

- All foreseeable hazards have been considered
- Consideration of who could be injured and how has been completed
- A Risk Rating has been calculated for the hazard using the likelihood of an event occurring x the consequence of the event occurring whilst considering the current in place control measures.
- An assessment of the calculated Risk Rating confirms that the risk is As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP)
- Where the risk is not ALARP additional control measures have been identified that will further reduce the risk. Where there is a potential delay in implementation due to cost or operational impact, have interim measures been implemented to mitigate the current risk level. E.g. The activity has been temporarily suspended.
- Staff, Students and Visitors are made aware of the current risk, the control measures and any additional requirements.

5. Communication

Once completed, you must communicate the findings of the risk assessment and the safe systems of work you intend to put in place - this can be 'on the job' via prestart briefing and/or during induction/development/regular, routine meetings.

Employees and contractors need to know what the hazards are, and the controls required to undertake the work safely. How you do this will depend on who you need to communicate with and the most effective means of communication for those people, for example, this may be through team meetings, email, providing a physical copy on site etc.

Risk assessments relevant to the premises should be made available to contractors, visiting staff, temporary workers etc.

6. Record keeping and Review

Risk assessment records must be maintained and kept for inspection and audit. It is highly recommended that copies be held electronically to allow files to be easily shared amongst staff.

It is important that risk assessments are subject to regular review and retained to ensure that incidents and liability claims can be suitably investigated.

The review period is informed by:

- The level of risk (High risk should be reviewed more regularly than low risk)
- If there is doubt that your control measures remain effective e.g., following an incident investigation
- There is the likelihood of better work methods or equipment becoming available
- If compliance codes set a mandatory minimum review period

7. West Norfolk Academies Trusts approach to risk assessment

Step 1 – Identify the hazard

A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm. Whether this be physical, mental, reputational or financial.

Hazards are often more easily identified by those employed within or having experience of the role. For example, a Technology teacher is more likely to have an awareness of the hazards associated with operating a drill than a Drama teacher. Therefore, when conducting a Risk Assessment, it is necessary to discuss the process with a suitable point of contact.

Example Scenario

Hazard – Working at height due to a requirement to conduct maintenance on a flat roof.

Step 2 – Who can be Harmed and How?

It is necessary to identify all those who can be injured when conducting the task and how they may be injured. Often there is more than one individual and consideration should also be given to those not involved such as visitors. Note – The HSE identify students as visitors in the context of H&S at Work requirements as they are not employed.

Example Scenario

Who can be injured? – Caretaker, Other staff and visitors walking below the area of the activity

How can injury occur? – Caretaker can fall from height whilst climbing the ladder, transitioning from the ladder to the roof or by stepping off the edge of the roof. Others could be injured by impact from the individual falling or dropped tools

Step 3 – What are the current control measures?

A current control measure is something in place at the time of the assessment. It is not something that will be done in the future.

Current control measures could include the use of safe systems of work, use of suitable equipment, training, assessment of individual competence and experience, number of times the activity is conducted. To protect others the control measure could be to cordon the area to prevent people walking below the ladder or roof.

Example Scenario

What are the current Control Measures? - Access to the roof is only permitted using a ladder of sufficient length, the ladder is to be footed to prevent slipping, the ladder is to be inspected before use, the area is to be cordoned off to prevent unauthorised access, only one person is allowed to access the roof at any one time, no access is permitted during inclement weather conditions etc.

Step 4 – Calculate the risk rating considering the current control measures

Risk Rating is calculated by multiplying the likelihood of an event occurring by the consequence of the event. Therefore, to enable a calculation both aspects require quantifying. Table 1 and 2 provide information

Likelihood X Consequence

To assess the likelihood the current control measures should be reviewed to ascertain if they are sufficient to prevent the potential incident from occurring. Other aspects should be considered such as different staff conducting the activity and their associated skill set.

Example Scenario

Likelihood assessment – In the example scenario it is evident that the most dangerous element of the task is transitioning from the ladder to the roof and falling from the roof edge. Assuming the activity is conducted weekly to clear debris from blocked downpipes it is acceptable to state that the likelihood of a fall occurring is POSSIBLE (3)

Table 1 – Likelihood

Score	Descriptor	Definition
1	Rare	The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances e.g., <10% chance
2	Unlikely	The event is not expected to occur e.g., 10% to 25% chance
3	Possible	The event may possibly occur at some time e.g., >25% to 50% chance
4	Likely	The event will most probably occur in most circumstances, e.g., >50% to 80% chance
5	Almost Certain	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances, e.g., >80% chance

Consequence assessment – Any fall from height can lead to serious injury and even death. Therefore, it is to be assumed that falling from the height of a first floor roof the result would be EXTREME (5)

Table 2 – Consequence

Score	Descriptor	Definition
1	Insignificant	No injury
2	Minor	Minor injury
3	Moderate	Threat of serious injury or ill health requiring medical attention
4	Major	Extensive or multiple injuries or significant ill health
5	Extreme	Fatality or multiple major injuries

Risk rating calculation for this scenario would therefore be as per Table 3

$$\text{Likelihood (3)} \times \text{Consequence (5)} = \text{Risk Rating (15)}$$

Table 3 - Risk Rating

Likelihood	5 Almost Certain	5	10	15	20	25
	4 Likely	4	8	12	16	20
	3 Possible	3	6	9	12	15
	2 Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10
	1 Rare	1	2	3	4	5
		1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Extreme
	Impact					

Step 5 – Confirming the Risk is As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP)

Headteachers hold the ultimate responsibility for H&S at their respective sites and as such the risk held should be confirmed with them as acceptable. Table 4 provides information on the action required for the risk rating calculated.

Example Scenario

Risk rating assessment – The risk rating considering the control measures and periodicity of the task is TOLERABLE (15)

As Table 4 states, whilst the risk is tolerable, further improvements should be implemented to reduce the risk. The headteacher would need to confirm that a tolerable risk is acceptable until further control measures can be introduced. Consideration would need to be given to timescales for improvement, cost and impact to the operation of the site.

Table 4 - Current Risk Tolerance Classification and Action

Risk value	Classification	Action
16 to 25	HIGH (Unacceptable)	The activity must be stopped immediately. The area or equipment to be secured out of use until appropriate arrangements have been made to make it safe. Controls

		need to be in place to mitigate any potential incident.
6 to 15	MEDIUM (Tolerable)	This situation is considered tolerable. Additional controls must be implemented to reduce the risk further where this is reasonably practicable, i.e., the additional reduction in risk is achieved without disproportionate additional cost.
1 to 5	LOW (Acceptable)	This situation is acceptable without the need for further controls (unless they can be implemented in a cost-effective manner). Ensure controls are maintained and both periodically and formally reviewed.

Step 6 – Identify additional control measures and reassess the risk rating (If necessary)

Additional control measures are measures not yet in use. Their implementation would assist in lowering the risk rating to a more suitable level if required.

In regards to the scenario further improvements could be the addition of a fall prevention barrier to the edge of the roof with a caged access ladder mounted to the building. Obviously, there would be a cost implication and timeline involved. Another potential control measure would be the installation of a fall arrest system. Again, there would be a cost implication and, in this case, additional training and PPE (Harnesses).

Therefore, some additional control measures are easier to implement than others. It may be that the head is content to carry the risk as tolerable but this should only ever be a short-term requirement where there is potential impact to the site. In this case blocked downpipes could lead to roof flooding and potential water ingress. Therefore, for additional control measures it is important to set timelines and to nominate a responsible person.

Providing a reviewed risk rating can assist in securing funding for the improvements required.

Example Scenario

Additional controls – Install suitable fall protection barriers and secure ladder within 6 months

Step 7 – Reassess the risk rating considering new likelihood versus consequence.

Whilst the installation of a fall barrier and secure ladder would lower the likelihood of a fall occurring it should be evident that the consequence of a fall, should it occur, would still be extreme as the height of the fall would not change.

Therefore, Likelihood could now be assessed (Table1) as – RARE (1)

Likelihood (1) x Consequence (5) = New Risk Rating (5)

As per table 4 the new risk rating would be ACCEPTABLE (ALARP)

Annex A – WNAT Risk Assessing Compliance Code

General Purpose Risk Assessment Form

Department: Location: Reason for Risk Assessment:						Date of Assessment: Date of Review: Date of Next Review: Name of Assessor:					
What are the Hazards?	Who can be harmed and how?	What are the current control measures in place?	What is the current Risk Rating (L x C = RR)			Are there further controls that could reduce the risk? What are they?	What is the New Risk Rating (L x C = NRR)			Further control measure to be actioned by who and when?	Date complete
			L	C	RR		L	C	NRR		

(L) Likelihood x (C) Consequence = Risk Rating

When completing the General-Purpose Risk Assessment the WNAT Risk Assessing compliance Code must be followed.