



Risk Assessment Policy

Version 4.0

1.0 Purpose:

This corporate topic-based health and safety policy details the specific responsibilities for the management and control of significant health, safety and wellbeing risks within Warwickshire County Council (WCC) activities. This Policy therefore does not duplicate the general health and safety requirements as stated within the corporate WCC health and safety policy. To access this policy please refer to the health and safety intranet or school document library (refer to section 9 for details).

2.0 Objective:

The objective is to identify what control measures need to be taken to control and manage significant occupational health, safety and wellbeing risks to as low a level as is practically possible.

3.0 Warwickshire County Council Commitments:

- WCC complies with relevant statutory requirements and best practice where appropriate;
- Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken, documented and circulated in compliance with our statutory requirements.
- Adequate control measures are in place to prevent/reduce accidents, injuries and ill health at work.
- Risk assessors are competent.
- All risk assessments are monitored and appropriately reviewed.
- An assessment of risks is undertaken and documented where 'significant risks' have been identified. This is in accordance with the Health and Safety Executives 'Sensible risk' campaign.

4.0 Scope

The Policy is applicable to all areas and activities of Warwickshire County Council.

5.0 Definitions

The key terms used within this Policy are outlined below:

5.1 Risk Assessment - WCC has adopted the HSE definition, risk assessment 'is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm'.

5.2 Hazard - is anything that has the potential to cause harm; this can include, for example, hazardous substances, machinery, etc.

5.3 Risk - 'is the likelihood that harm will occur'. This is the chance, high, medium or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how severe the harm could be.

5.4 Harm - is the impact of a work hazard (i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur). Harm is therefore a common consequence of an accident/ incident.

5.5 Significant risk - those, which have the potential to cause real harm and suffering. Risks, which are significant, are those that are not trivial in nature and are capable of creating a real risk to health and safety which any reasonable person would appreciate and would take steps to guard against.'

The HSE states 'insignificant risks can usually be ignored, as can risks arising from routine activities associated with life in general, unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks'. Risk assessment should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know – you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

5.6 Risk level - Is identifying whether a risk is low, medium or high using the WCC risk matrix and following the WCC risk assessment process.

5.7 Competent Person - Employees who are responsible for undertaking risk assessments should be competent to do so. This is defined as having a good understanding of the risk assessment process and knowledge of the activities being assessed.

5.8 Reasonably practicable - Generally, you need to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble and available technology. However, you do not need to take action if it would be grossly disproportionate to the level of risk.

5.9 Suitable & Sufficient - To be acceptable a risk assessment must be suitable (that is, appropriate to the situation) and sufficient (that is, enough to manage the risk). The level of information must therefore be proportionate to the risk(s). To demonstrate 'suitable and sufficient' show that: a) a proper check was made; b) you asked who might be affected; c) you dealt with all the significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved; d) the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low as

practically possible; and e) you involved your employees or their representatives in the process.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities for Risk Assessment

The arrangement section of this Policy provides more detail on how these roles and responsibilities can be implemented.

6.1 Managers (Head teachers, line managers, supervisors etc.) must ensure that:

- all work activities, processes, and operations under their control are risk assessed and appropriate control measures are implemented and followed in accordance with this Policy.
- the level of detail in a risk assessment is proportionate to the risk and appropriate to the nature of the work (i.e. focus on foreseeable significant risk(s))
- a risk assessment is undertaken prior to the introduction of new processes, new equipment or changes in working practices.
- risk assessments are undertaken by a 'competent person'.
- risk assessments are recorded on the WCC risk assessment template form or other designated WCC template employees are involved in the risk assessment process to ensure inclusion of their practical knowledge.
- the findings of the risk assessment are communicated to employees and others who are likely to be affected by the activity/ process/ operation risk(s).
- risk assessments are accessible to all employees and others for whom they apply.
- they plan, co-ordinate and monitor how their risk assessments are implemented and managed locally (i.e. is the risk assessment being implemented as planned? Is it achieving the desired results? Etc.).
- current risk assessments are recorded in an electronically or hardcopy
- risk assessments are reviewed at least annually or sooner following an accident or significant change, change in legislation or approved practice or in accordance with any Group specific requirements (as advised by the relevant Senior Health and Safety Advisor for that Group).

6.2 Employees must:

- co-operate with and engage in the risk assessment process.
- be familiar with the risk assessments and understand the control measures detailed within the risk assessments as relevant to their role and the activities/ processes/ and operations they are involved in.
- comply with any control measures implemented to ensure their own health and safety and the health and safety of others.
- speak to their manager immediately if they have any concerns with the risk assessment or identify or become aware of any further hazards or risks during their work activities.

6.3 Health Safety & Wellbeing Service will:

- provide the WCC risk assessment workshop training as part of the corporate learning and development offerings.
- provide support, guidance, advice and assistance, where necessary to Managers on undertaking risk assessments.

7.0 Organisational Arrangements

7.1 Training and Competency

7.1.1 For undertaking risk assessments

To gain an understanding of the risk assessment process, those persons involved in undertaking risk assessments should attend a WCC health and safety risk assessment workshop training course as a minimum. Those persons must also have sufficient knowledge, experience and understanding of the work activities/ processes/ operations that are being assessed. For further guidance contact your Group Senior Health & Safety Advisor

7.1.2 Identification of information, instruction and training.

Employees must be competent for the work activities they are undertaking. Necessary information, instruction and training requirements for undertaking a work activity / service must be identified as part of the risk assessment process (i.e. control measures).

7.2 Risk Assessments

A WCC template has been provided to record risk assessments and any actions as required.

Undertaking risk assessments is a pro-active and systematic process for identifying hazards and associated significant risks that will arise from an activity/ process/ or operation; and implementing suitable and sufficient measures to manage and control them to reduce the risk to the lowest possible level.

Risk assessments identify significant hazards and risks associated with:

- a work related activity or process or operation (which should include workplace hazards)
- work equipment, plant or substances used
- the condition of the workplace (internal and external areas of the premise)
- human behaviour, capabilities, groups who may be at a particular risk, and other human factors
- activities outside the workplace capable of adversely affecting WCC employees

The risk assessment form is used to record the current arrangements (i.e. control measures) that are in place to prevent/reduce the risk. The risk level is then evaluated to

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Policy Owner	Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager	Page 4 of 5
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identify whether more should be done to control the risk further. The form therefore encompasses a 'further action column', which should only be used if there is additional 'action' (i.e. control measures) required to reduce the risk.

There are three types of risk assessment that can be used dependent on the requirement. They are generic, specific and dynamic. Please refer to the risk assessment guidance for further detail.

8.0 Equality and Accessibility Information

- If this information is difficult to understand, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service can provide it in another format, for example Braille, in large print, on audiotape or another language.
- A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this Policy.

9.0 Contact Information

All health, safety and wellbeing information is available on the intranet. Go to Intranet > HR > Health, Safety and Wellbeing.

For Schools, refer to the health and safety document library on www.warwickshire.gov.uk/SchoolHSdocs

Alternatively you can contact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service on healthandsafety@warwickshire.gov.uk or telephone 01926 476803.