

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE



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1 Introduction

The College has a legal duty to carry out risk assessments in compliance with Regulation 3 of the [Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations](#).

They require that a **“suitable and sufficient”** risk assessment is carried out on all activities undertaken at the College.

The aim of the risk assessment is to identify the *hazards of the activity*, *determine the risks* and take steps to *control/minimise those risks* for employees and others who may be affected by the activities.

With five or more employees, where significant risks are identified, they must be recorded in writing along with the steps taken to control/minimise those risk(s).

Where risk assessments are required by specific regulations such as the :

- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations;
- Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR);
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations;
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations, these risk assessments must be carried out by competent personnel (must have attended college Risk Assessment Workshop) as appropriate.

Provided that suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been carried out under the specific regulations, these will meet the requirements of the Management Regulations.

2 Definitions

2.1. Hazard

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. Examples include:

- Handling chemicals: potential for spillages and accidental exposure, causing burns to skin and damage to lungs.
- Working on a roof: potential for falls from height or dropped tools, causing death or serious injury.

2.2. Risk

A risk is the likelihood that the hazard will actually cause harm and the severity of that harm.

- Categories of risk can be high, medium or low.
- If medium or high, different or additional control measures **must** be considered before the work is commenced or continued.

3 Risk Assessment

A risk assessment identifies all the health and safety hazards of the work activity and judges the associated risks if the work is carried out with suitable and sufficient control measures implemented and the planned precautions. If the risks are unacceptably high, the risk assessment also identifies additional steps that need to be taken, when and by whom to reduce and control the risks further.

Risk assessments must consider:

- a) All academic, and support activities.
- b) Work carried out by staff, students, visitors and contractors.
- c) Equipment currently in use and any equipment hired or purchased for use in the future.
- d) Materials and substances used within the College .
- e) The working environment.

The following types of activity must be considered, but the list is not exhaustive:

- Display screen equipment
- Manual handling
- Lone working
- travel
- Placements
- Events
- Stress
- Hazardous substances
- Machinery and equipment
- Fieldwork and other off-campus activities
- Other types of activity, e.g. involving noise, ionising radiation, asbestos

Risk assessments must be “suitable and sufficient”. This means they will:

- a) Identify all the hazards associated with the activity.
- b) Include what is reasonably foreseeable.
- c) Be proportionate to the risks and the nature and duration of the work.
- d) Take account of legislation, guidance and industry good practice.
- e) Evaluate the extent of the associated risks, taking account of existing or planned precautions and their effectiveness.
- f) Identify additional precautions if necessary, with timescales and responsibility for their implementation.
- g) Be kept up to date.

Reasonably practicable

Unless there is a more specific higher legal requirement, usually indicated by ‘*shall*’ or ‘*as far as practicable*’, then most precautions to minimise risk are ‘**so far as is reasonably practicable**’. The term ‘reasonably practicable’ means that the degree of risk in a particular activity should be balanced against the resources (time, effort, cost) and difficulty of taking all the technically possible measures to avoid or minimise the risk. If applying these resources is so disproportionate to the risk that it would be unreasonable to implement them the employer is not obliged to do so.

The risk assessment enables informed planning and decisions on what is needed for the work, including:

- a) Resources – material, equipment, facilities, skilled staff, support and supervision.
- b) Equipment, including necessary testing and maintenance.
- c) Knowledge, skills and experience of those carrying out the work.
- d) Additional training, if necessary.
- e) Personal protective clothing and equipment.
- f) Emergency arrangements.
- g) Provision of suitable and sufficient funding to implement all required control measures identified in the risk assessment.

4 Arrangements for risk assessments

Departments must ensure that they appoint competent risk assessors and that **suitable and sufficient** risk assessments are carried out for all work activities within their area of responsibility and relevant control measures are implemented to manage

the risk and must meet requirements set out in legislation and associated approved codes of practice or best practice guidance as a minimum.

Departments must carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments for all their teaching, research and support activities. Risk assessments should be included in their planning processes and in decisions on resources. Risk assessments should take account of College policies, codes of practice/procedures/guidance on relevant topics and are used to draw up school/service specific local procedures, setting out the control measures to be followed for the activity. They must be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure they are kept up to date.

In general, risk assessments are carried out by designated competent risk assessors appointed by the department who have the day-to-day responsibility for the management of health and safety in their area of responsibility. However, in order to ensure competency and make fully informed judgements and decisions on hazards, risks and precautions, it is required that all designated risk assessors complete the College training.

Risk assessments should be approved by the line manager taking responsibility for the activity and ensuring it will be carried out in accordance with the risk assessment and local code of practice.

Departments must carry out risk assessments for all their teaching, and support activities and risk assessments should be included in their planning processes and in decisions on resources. Risk assessments take account of College procedures on relevant topics and are used to draw up department specific local procedures setting out the control measures to be followed for the activity. They must be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure they are kept up to date.

5 Documentation

College risk assessment template is available on the College health and safety website for downloading and completion. [LINK](#)

Guidance on carrying out the risk assessment and completing the form is in Appendix 2.

These forms are used to record brief details of the task assessed; the significant hazards and those affected; existing control measures; residual risks and further control measures, together with designated persons and timescales for completion where possible. Further detailed risk assessments may be required eg COSHH, DSE, manual handling etc.

Risk assessments should be reviewed at least annually for continuing activities. Where there are **significant changes** eg to materials, frequency, personnel, facilities; where problems are noted; where an accident occurs; or there is a change in relevant legislation, the risk assessment must be reviewed sooner. Where work is re-started after an extended period, the risk assessment must be reviewed at the planning stage. Risk assessments should also be reviewed where new information indicates changes to hazards or risks, or where technological advancements have made improvements possible.

6 Revision

Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated where:

- a) new details need to be recorded
- b) where changes affect hazards and risk
- c) where existing precautions/control measures are no longer adequate
- d) where necessary improvements are recommended
- e) changes in legislation

Changes require to be incorporated into the written record and into any local procedures derived from the risk assessments. Revised local procedures will be disseminated to relevant staff, students and others as necessary.

7 Record Retention

Risk assessments and associated local procedures will be retained by Department and put on the health and safety intranet

8 Monitoring and auditing

The College's arrangements for monitoring and auditing of health and safety management in schools/services will include the periodic sampling of completed risk assessments; and through formal health and safety audits carried. The results of monitoring and auditing will be reported in the COLLEGE annual Health & Safety Report which is presented to the Health & Safety Committee, and the Board of Directors.

9 Responsibilities with regard to risk assessment

9.1 Departments are responsible

- a) Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and kept up to date for department activities.
- b) Local procedures setting out the arrangements and precautions for the work are derived from the risk assessments and are disseminated, reviewed and revised as necessary.
- c) Risk assessments are reviewed for pregnant women, children and young persons.
- d) Ensuring all staff requiring health surveillance attend and receive the relevant health surveillance
- e) Students are referred where there are concerns regarding adverse health or medical effects associated with their studies.

9.2 Managers are responsible for ensuring that :

- a) All their department health and safety risks are assessed and before new work/procedures/safe systems of work are introduced.
- b) Identified precautions are costed, implemented and regularly reviewed and supported by budget holder.
- c) induction of new staff includes necessary health and safety information.

9.3 Tutors are responsible for

- a) Carrying out risk assessments with students on all practical student skills tasks
- b) Advising students on their own risk assessments and procedures for class practicals in consultation with the tutor
- c) Ensuring relevant induction.
- d) Explaining to students the risk assessment process as the basis for precautions in protocols.
- e) Advising and assisting students with their own project risk assessments and safe systems of work.
- f) Scrutinising and approving risk assessments and protocols before project work starts.
- g) Considering risk assessments and safe systems of work in project marking.

9.4 Students should

- a) Be aware of the risk assessment purpose and process.
- b) Be aware of risk assessment as the basis for practical procedures.

9.5 Risk assessors

- a) Departments should appoint suitable and sufficient risk assessors for their area.
- b) All risk assessors must have risk assessment training and information

9.6 The College

- a) Provides departments with competent information, advice and training on carrying out risk assessments.
- b) Carries out periodic sampling of department risk assessments, formal audits and provides advice and recommendations for improvements if necessary.

9.7 Contractors must

- a) Be made aware by of the College 's control of contractor procedures
- b) Assess risks and provide suitable and sufficient risk assessments and all other relevant information to meet statutory requirements on the proposed project/work and agree with the COLLEGE any necessary controls to eliminate or reduce the shared risks.
- c) Provide information to their own employees, and sub-contractors if any, on the shared risks and the agreed controls for the work.
- d) Sign the code of practice and report incidents.
- e) Regular monitoring and review for the duration of the project/work.

9.8 External users of college facilities

Individuals and groups using COLLEGE facilities under contractual agreements, for example for conferences or short-term tenancies, are required to provide the college on request with risk assessments for their proposed activities.

10. Resources

College Health and safety website Link -----

College risk assessment form-----link

College Health and safety policy ---link

Managing risks and risk assessment at work

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

Reference no.

NEWBATTLE ABBEY COLLEGE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

[illegible]

Department	LOCATION:	DATE:
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Description of event/activity: *(Please include as much detail as possible)*

¹ 12 months following any of the following: Accident, Incident, Near-miss, Equipment failure, Change in legislation etc

Review Date ¹ :		Signature:		Job Title:	
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Appendix 2 – Carrying out the risk assessment and completing form

The guidance below sets out the information that should be considered when carrying out a general risk assessment and recorded under each section of the general risk assessment form

Contents:

[Completing main details on top of form](#)

[Hazards identified](#)

[Hazard categories](#)

[Persons at risk](#)

[Control measures](#)

[Sources of information](#)

[Persons completing the assessment](#)

[Review of assessment](#)

General details/description of event activity

Department

Name for which the assessment is being undertaken.

Location

The area, room, or workshop, building in which the activity is taking place.

Description

Give a brief meaningful title of the activity being assessed, for example 'Annual stocktaking and disposal of surplus materials in storeroom 123' rather than 'Stocktaking'.

Give a brief description of what the work will involve, setting out the:

- ☐ Duration and timing of the activity (particularly if it runs outside normal hours or overnight)
- ☐ Frequency of the activity (for example daily, once a year)
- ☐ All stages of the activity being considered in the assessment (preparation, storage, transportation, use, disposal), or the specific stages or portions of the activity if the whole is not under consideration
- ☐ Summary of materials and/or chemicals used
- ☐ Equipment used

- Estimate of quantities used (taking account of the numbers of replicates, and if necessary, the number of students working at the same time)

A protocol or method statement may be attached to the assessment form if it provides the necessary details. A note must be made of any differences between the paper/protocol/method and the proposed work, for example different quantities, materials or equipment.

Hazards identified inherent in the task or process

A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm. Examples include:

- handling chemicals has the potential for spillages and accidental exposure, perhaps causing burns to the skin or damage to the lungs
- working on a roof has the potential for falls from height or dropped tools, perhaps causing death or serious fractures

Hazard categories (which cover the whole range of activities that may need to be assessed)

Personal safety

eg physical or verbal attack; disability or health problems; delayed access to personal or medical assistance; failure of routine or emergency communications; security of accommodation and support; getting lost or stranded by transport; cultural or legal differences

Equipment hazards – storage, handling and use of equipment and materials eg tools; machinery; vehicles; manual handling; noise; work at height; electricity; fire; vacuum; high pressure; high temperature; ultra-violet; laser; vibration

Chemical hazards – storage, handling, use, and disposal of chemical reagents, intermediates, products and waste

eg toxic by inhalation or ingestion; irritant; corrosive; flammable; explosive; oxidising; radioactive

Biological hazards – storage, handling, use, and disposal of biological agents, intermediates, products and waste

‘any micro-organism, cell culture or human endoparasite including any which have been genetically modified, which may cause infection, allergy, toxicity and other hazards to human health’. This includes bacteria, viruses, fungi and parasites.

Natural physical hazards - effects of the natural environment, climate, landscape, plants, animals

eg extreme weather; earthquakes and volcanoes; mountains, cliffs and rock falls; glaciers, crevasses and icefalls; caves, mines and quarries; forests including fire; marshes and quicksand; fresh or sea water; tidal surges

Environmental impact

eg pollution and waste; deposition of rubbish; disturbance of ecosystems; trampling; harm to animals or plants

Any other significant hazards that do not appear to fit into the main categories

Consider the planned activity, where it will be undertaken, by whom and when. List aspects of the work with significant hazards that are inherent (expected or foreseeable) in the context of the work or process that is being undertaken and where it will be done. Give brief details of how foreseeable harm/injuries could occur.

In each relevant hazard category on the assessment form provide brief details of:

- All the hazards that are reasonably foreseeable for those preparing for the activity, doing the work, or clearing up afterwards, for example calibrating equipment; handling heavy loads, exposure to noise or dust, disposal of waste chemicals, repairing equipment.
- All the hazards that are reasonably foreseeable, in the context and location of the activity, for others who are not directly involved, for example work at height in an open access area could mean tools drop on passers-by, using solvents may affect others working elsewhere in the laboratory.
- Which equipment or materials or part of the activity could cause injury or illhealth, for example transport; fixed machinery; analytical equipment; electrical equipment; hand tools, needles.
- How the equipment and materials are normally used, and how the injuries or illhealth could occur, for example routine use of scalpels could cause cuts if the blade slips, spillage of a corrosive liquid could cause burns to the skin.

- How injuries or ill health could occur if something goes wrong, for example there is a power failure, and the fume cupboard fan stops? Or the water fails, and the process overheats due to loss of cooling?
- What the harm would be:
 - Physical – cuts (minor/major), strain (minor strain/major back injury), fracture, burns (minor/severe), eye injury (foreign body/loss of sight), respiratory problems.
 - Mental – distress
 - Environmental – pollution (air, water, land), damage to property, harm to wildlife
- What materials are used or produced
- Intended products, intermediates and waste
- Nature of the materials
- chemical hazard classification; weight, shape or size of heavy or awkward items being handled
- Routes of exposure to liquids, fumes, mists, solids
- Inhalation, skin absorption, ingestion
- Is the harm likely to be instantaneous (acute - e.g. contact with hot surface) or over a longer period (chronic - e.g. exposure to excessive noise)
- What is the level, duration and frequency of exposure?

Person(s) at risk

- Individuals carrying out the activity
- Staff and students doing the practical or research
- Observers or others using the area/equipment, including passers-by
- Maintenance and contractors going into the area or working on the equipment
- Domestic and Security going into the area outside normal hours
- Are extra precautions needed for e.g. pregnant, health problems, inexperience, disabilities?
- Consider the environment – intended product(s), emissions, by-products, wastes, routes of disposal

Precautions (control measures) to be followed

For each significant hazard identified, provide brief details of all the **existing** and **planned precautions (control measures)** that will be in place to minimise the likelihood and severity of any injuries or ill health that may occur for all individuals and groups who may be affected by the hazards identified.

The following points should be addressed:

- Safe working methods and operating procedures
- Where and how the work must be done
- The sequence of steps that must be followed if this is critical
- Do any specific arrangements need to be made, for example periodic delivery of materials to a particular location, arranging access?
- Is there an emergency generator providing power for essentials such as extract ventilation? - Are there any restrictions or prohibitions?
- Can only be done by authorised personnel
- Specific lone working arrangements (NB lone working prohibited for undergraduates in laboratories and workshops)
- Only in particular location(s)
- Timing, for example must always be carried out in normal working hours
- Specific minimum number of people, for example working in pairs to handle heavy loads
- Work can only be done under supervision

Materials and equipment

- Are the materials the safest available for the work?
- Is the equipment suitable?
- Where are specific mechanical aids such as trolleys kept?
- Are there any particular instructions or precautions for use of the equipment?
- Are there arrangements for periodic equipment checking, maintenance, servicing and inspection if necessary?

Competence, information and training, and supervision

- Local, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and/or guidance and instructions are written and kept up to date for the task, available and provided to those carrying out the work
- All personnel involved must be competent to carry out the work or are under competent supervision
- Look at exactly what the people doing this activity will need to know. Will they already have the necessary knowledge and skills, including any practical expertise? Will training be required?
- Does the training need to be a formal course? To a particular standard? By a named provider? A local briefing with a specific fixed content? Delivered by whom? Before the work starts? With periodic refreshers?
- What are the maximum staff/student ratios or work group size?
- Are there arrangements to check that the proper precautions (control measures) are in place and followed?

Advance information and notification to others e.g. cleaners and security personnel if necessary

If out-of-hours working or running of equipment/plant is planned, suitable notifications must be made

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing

- All Personal Protective Equipment and clothing must be of the correct type to protect against the hazard that has been identified.
- It must also be suitable for the individual using or wearing it, for the work activity itself and for the work environment.
- Glasses or goggles or face shields to protect the eyes – are they to protect against impact? (how hard an impact?) Splashes of chemicals? (what kind of chemicals?) Fumes, gases and/or vapours? (what kind?) Will glasses give enough protection? Does the whole face and neck need to be covered?
- Gloves to protect the hands and forearms – are they to protect against chemicals? (what kind?) Cuts? Extremes of temperature? Extra-long? Tight cuffs? What material?
- Respirators to protect the lungs – are they to protect against particles (how small?) Fumes, gases and/or vapours (what kind?) Are face masks good enough or are powered hoods needed?
- Ear defenders or earplugs to protect the ears against noise - How noisy is the area? Will the hands be dirty? (Could lead to infections if using ear plugs) Will the ear defenders interfere with other protection, such as glasses or head protection?
- Hard hats or bump caps to protect against head injuries - what kind of impact? What kind of environment?
- Safety footwear to protect the feet – are they to protect against punctures from items on the ground? Dropped items? Slips?
- Overalls or coats or aprons to protect against spillages? - what kind of materials may be spilled? How much? Do they need to have tight cuffs? High neck?

Emergency arrangements – first aid, firefighting, communications, spillages

- These must be relevant to the type and scale of the work, and the foreseeable accidents.
- What actions will need to be taken if the work does not go according to plan?
- Who will take those actions?
- Is the campus or Department provision of first aiders adequate? Can they enter the area easily and safely? Is specialist knowledge required for the likely type of injury, e.g. chemical burns?
- What should be done if the power or water supply fails? Where can services be isolated? Is there a specific safe sequence of steps?

- Where are the spillage kits kept?

Residual risks if all precautions are followed

The residual risk is judged by considering the likelihood that the harm will occur and the severity of that harm if all the planned methods and all precautions are followed.

- Is the risk high, medium or low?
- Ideally all risks will be low if the right methods and precautions are in place and followed
- If the risk remains medium or high, further actions must be considered before the work commences, continues or takes place again. These may be different or additional precautions (control measures).

Additional precautions required for future work

Different or additional precautions (control measures) must be considered before the work commences, continues or takes place again. If it is reasonably practicable to do so, then they should be introduced before the work goes ahead. Examples may be:

- Replacement of equipment (this may be phased replacement due to cost and time constraints and future budget allocations)
- Improved guarding of machinery
- Revision of existing procedures or Standard Operating Procedures
- Further training for personnel involved
- Provision of better or different PPE

In some cases it is not possible to make the changes immediately, but they can be noted in the assessment for future action by a designated person and with a target completion date:

- Relocation of personnel and/or equipment when facilities available
- Safer equipment when technological progress makes this available

Sources of information used for this assessment

This is the information that was used by the people carrying out the assessment; what their judgements and decisions were based on. These sources should be recorded for future reference, and the version or date, so that they can be monitored for changes and updates in future reviews and revisions:

- Relevant legislation
- Instruction manual(s) and equipment handbooks
- Manufacturers and or suppliers' information (eg service bulletins or Safety Data Sheets)
- Relevant associations' publications
- College H&S web pages or other internet sources
- Current and past workers or operators
- Colleagues

Person(s) completing this assessment

The person who undertakes a risk assessment will be the one carrying out or managing the activity day-to-day, and who made the judgements and decisions on hazards, risks and precautions. That person could be:

- The Tutor, Manager or Supervisor for activity
- A local department staff member advising closely on the assessment
- A Student for their own project
- May be more than one person working together on the assessment

Other persons commenting on the assessment (where required under department arrangements)

Others involved in the decision-making process should be noted in this section if necessary. They may be the line managers or tutors' supervisors responsible for the activity day to day, others carrying out the work, The assessment may also pass through a formal comment stage as part of a project or funding approval.

Person approving this assessment

This is whoever has the overall responsibility for the activity, the decisions on how it will be carried out, and ensuring that it will be done as described. It could be:

- Tutor
- Line manager
- Estates & Facilities Manager

Review of assessment, and revision if necessary

Assessments must be reviewed periodically to check and make sure that all the information is still correct and that the arrangements are still appropriate. Reviews must be carried out:

- When there is a change in relevant legislation, College policy or industry/further education sector good practice
- When there are significant changes to work materials, equipment, methods, location or people involved
- If there are accidents, near misses or complaints associated with the work • If problems are noted
- When restarting work after an extended period
- For each visit in a series

If none of these apply, the assessment must be reviewed at least annually for a continuing activity.

As part of the review, precautions (control measures) should be checked for their suitability and effectiveness by:

- Observation: is the task being carried out safely?
- Obtaining comments and suggestions from those carrying out the task, supervisors and observers
- Noting any complaints
- Reviewing environmental monitoring if being undertaken
- Reviewing health surveillance if being undertaken
- Reviewing accident and near-miss reports
- Checking compliance with latest standards
- Checking the sources of information used in the original assessment or most recent review

All significant revised details need to be annotated in the revised assessment. Include:

- New details about the activity, hazards, persons at risk or precautions
- Changes to the activity that affect hazards and risk
- Changes to existing precautions that are no longer adequate
- Necessary improvements are recommended to maintain good practice - Latest sources of information

Small revisions can be annotated on the original assessment form. Ensure the revision(s) are signed and dated. Where a large number or substantial revisions have been made it will be appropriate to produce a new assessment.

Local Procedures

Once a risk assessment has been carried out, the precautions (control measures) need to be made known to those who will be carrying out and supervising the work. The College's generic term for this is a Safe System of Work, but departments may have their own terminology such as instructions, briefing sheet, method statement, standard operating procedures.

Whatever term is used locally, the risk assessments and controls and operating procedures should be made available on shared drives, notice-boards and included in local staff and student inductions and task training sessions.

They should include the name of the author and the date. When a risk assessment is reviewed, and particularly if it is revised, the accompanying safe systems of work or operating procedures should also be reviewed, revised and re-dated then reissued.

Newbattle Abbey College is committed to the active pursuit of challenging discrimination, advancing equality and celebrating diversity

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

Title:	Risk Assessment Procedure
Lead Officer:	Health and Safety Consultant
Date last reviewed	October 2025
Next Review date:	October 2028
Approved By:	H&S Committee
Date first approved:	2022