



## CALLINGTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE (FOUNDATION SCHOOL)

# RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

### Why use risk assessment?

The main reason for conducting risk assessments is to minimise the incidents of illness or injury to users of the college site resulting from hazards within the site.

Additionally risk assessments are an important tool needed to help meet our legal obligations.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations<sup>7</sup> 1999 (Regulation 3) states the following:

“Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of:

the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and

the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking”

**In summary this means that the risks to the health and safety of employees, students and anyone else as a result of college activities must be risk assessed.**

In addition to the legal requirements there are a number of other very good reasons why Callington Community College should use risk assessment, some of these reasons include:

- reduction in accidents, injuries, ill health and fatalities; • safety of students;
- increases in quality standards, efficiency and productivity;
- reduction of costs of injuries and ill health;
- improved targeting of resources;
- good management practice.

### What is Risk Assessment?

The risk assessment process is nothing more than a careful examination of what in your work, could cause harm to people (staff, students, members of the public, contractors etc.). This enables you to decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives, and impede the effective operation of the college.

It is important to decide whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have covered it by

satisfactory precautions so that the risk associated with the hazard is small. People often confuse the terms “hazard” and “risk” and their meanings are frequently transposed.

- Hazard: is something having the potential to cause harm, (e.g. chemical, working from ladders, electricity, etc).
- Risk: is the probability or likelihood, great or small that injury will result from the hazard.

## **Assessing the risks in the college workplace**

It is important not to overcomplicate the risk assessment process. In a lot of cases the hazards are few and simple. Checking them is nothing more than common sense.

As a college we maintain a safe learning and working environment. All risks are regularly assessed and either made safe or managed appropriately as part of the daily routine of the college or in the process of learning. When an event or action is unusual in that it is not part of the usual activity of the college then a separate, specific risk assessment may be required to be completed.

Risks are assessed and managed in the following ways:

- On-going by teachers and other staff as part of their everyday activities.
- By senior staff and the site team during daily walks around the site.
- A monthly health and safety meeting discusses risks and their management.
- All staff are requested to complete a termly risk management and hazard survey to highlight risks and hazards in their main place of work in the college.
- There are regular, set health and safety procedures often utilizing outside specialists used to manage particular risks.
- Specific and unusual activities in college are assessed individually and a management plan put into place.

## **Risk Assessment and Management Procedure:**

- In many cases you will probably already know what you have present in the workplace that could cause harm. If so:
  - check that you have taken what reasonable precautions you can to avoid injury.
  - ensure that you have built in to your lesson planning an assessment and management of any risks.
- Please consider if a hazard being realised is ‘reasonably foreseeable’ or not. Could we reasonably have expected it to happen? If we can then it needs to be addressed. Some hazards identified may require a further more specialised risk assessment carried out, for example, chemicals, fire, manual handling/lifting etc. These details need to be carefully recorded in the subject specialist area.
- If a hazard cannot be managed immediately or through your teaching or work style then it must be immediately reported to the site office by the FRONTER sticky system. Please use your judgment as to whether the hazard needs to be immediately controlled or closed off before the site staff attend to the hazard.

- If you are doing an activity out of the ordinary that may carry risks that are not part of your regular risk assessment you must complete the risk management form that is available on-line on FRONTER or in the staff room. This risk assessment process is relatively straightforward and includes the following steps:
  - list the hazards (Hazard description)
  - list those at risk
  - evaluate the risk (Initial assessment)
  - control measures
  - residual risk
  - further action required

\* This process is based around the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance - Five steps to risk assessment, however the College procedure is a six- stage process as the assessment looks at both the initial risk and the risk when all existing controls have been taken into account (Residual Risk). Further information on risk assessment can be viewed on the HSE web site: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

\*The risk assessment process is a requirement under a number of other pieces of Health and Safety legislation, some of which include the following:

- COSHH Regulations 1994
- Noise at Work Regulations 1989
- Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 1987 as amended
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992
- The Health and Safety (Young Persons) Regulations 1997
- The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- The Ionising Radiations Regulations 1985
- The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

## **Assessing the risk outside of the College**

There are well documented and thorough procedures and policies for the risk assessment of out-of-college activities. These must be followed by all staff. Details are to be found in the Staff Room on FRONTER.

## **Annex Guidance**

### ***COMPLETING THE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM***

(A step-by-step guide to completing the risk assessment form REMEMBER this form must be

completed for any activity conducted on the college site which is outside of the 'usual' activity - Annex A)

1. Identify the activity and location.
2. List the hazards (Hazard Description). Walk around your workplace and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards, which could result in serious harm or affect several people. Ask your colleagues what they think. They may have noticed things, which are not immediately obvious. It is also advisable to consult with manufacturers' instructions or hazard data sheets to help you spot hazards and put the risks in their true perspective. Use the following examples as a guide:
  - mechanical hazards (e.g. crushing, shearing, cutting, falling objects entanglement)
  - electrical hazards (e.g. short circuit, direct contact, indirect contact, source of ignition)
  - radiation hazards (e.g. lasers, electro-magnetic effects, ionising/ non-ionising radiation)
  - hazardous substances (e.g. toxic gas/mist/fumes/dust, flammable fluids, biological substances)
  - work activity hazards (e.g. highly repetitive actions, mental overload/stress, poor workplace design, lifting and handling)
  - work environment hazards (e.g. noise, vibration, heating, lighting, ventilation)

This list is not a comprehensive list of hazards, it is to be used as a guide.

3. List those at risk (people at risk). It is important to consider who may be affected by the risks present. The individuals most likely to be at risk are those that spend the most time in the workplace. However, it is equally important to think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time, e.g. cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance personnel, students etc. It is also important to include members of the public and people you may share your workplace with, if there is a chance they could be hurt by your activities. Some categories of workers may require a more detailed assessment because of their condition, including expectant and nursing mothers, the disabled and young persons or lone workers.
4. Evaluate the risks (Initial Assessment). The next stage of the assessment, once the hazards and people at risk have been identified is to establish the level of risk before any control measures have been put into place. The process is as follows:
  - Rate the likely Severity (S) of any hazard being realised on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 is Negligible, 4 is Extreme or Fatal).
  - Establish the Likelihood (L) of the hazard being realised, this is again on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 is Improbable, 4 is Probable or expected to occur).
  - Multiply the Severity and the Likelihood to give the Risk Factor (R), for example a Severity of 3 and a Likelihood of 2 would give a risk factor of 6.
  - Assess if the level of risk is acceptable or not.

It is important to remember at this stage you are assessing the Risk Factor without any control measures put in place, this will happen when the section on Residual Risks is completed.

5. Control Measures (in assessing the control measures it may be advisable to involve a member of the site team in the assessment).

After evaluating the initial risks it is then important to review what existing controls are already or are being put in place. When looking at control measures the most important starting point is always to implement the 'Hierarchy of Control' (see below), this will assess the different ways a hazard can be reduced or removed. This process also highlights the point that whilst providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a consideration, as a control measure it should always be down the list of options.

### ***The Hierarchy of Control***

- a) elimination or avoidance (i.e. does the process/activity etc. have to be carried out?)
- b) substitution (i.e. what alternatives can be used, for example, chemicals, processes, equipment) controlling risks at source (i.e. can the hazards be designed out?)
- c) a separation and isolation (i.e. physically separating or isolating the process/activity)
- d) safe working procedures (i.e. are these in place and known to individuals taking part?)
- e) training, instruction and supervision (e.g. are all staff competent to carry out their duties? are students competent to work with the hazardous item?)
- f) personal protection equipment — PPE (the last resort but also to supplement some of the other controls)
- g) other considerations
- h) welfare facilities
- i) first aid facilities
- j) emergency procedures

The 'Hierarchy of Control' should always be used in the order it appears on the list, this means starting with whether or not you can eliminate or avoid the hazard. Risk Assessors should then work down the list and introduce the most appropriate means of controlling the risk. Once again it must be stressed that simply issuing PPE is not the first option, in fact it is almost the last thing that should be considered. The best form of control is usually to implement the most appropriate measures from a) to d) and then also introduce the measures from e) to k) to re-enforce the controls.

6. The Residual Risk (Once again, this may be best done in consultation with a member of the site team).

Once all of the control measures have been put in place the remaining or residual risk must then be assessed. This will follow the same process as the 'Initial Assessment' with the result being a Risk Factor (R) score.

Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risks remain. What has to be decided for each significant hazard is whether the remaining risk is very high, high, medium or low. This will determine whether any further controls are still necessary in order to make the process as safe as is reasonably practicable. It is also important at this point that the risk assessment is an honest one, for example, you must not give a risk a deliberately low score in order for there to be no further action required. Remember if the process is hazardous, giving

it a low score on an assessment form will not make the process any safer, this has to be done through acting upon the findings of your initial assessment.

## 7. Further Action Required

Once the Residual Risk Factor (R) has been established there may still be further actions or controls that need to be put in place. This may still mean the elimination or substitution of a process/substance etc., or it may simply be a need for the introduction of safe systems of working or additional training, instruction or information to employees.

What is important, is that when any Actions/Comments are identified, there must be responsibility for carrying these actions out given to an individual or group of individuals. This is important as ownership has to be taken for different parts of the risk assessment process and where individuals have been given specific responsibilities they should be informed of what is expected of them and by when. Setting a date for implementing any remedial actions is also vitally important and should be a realistic target of when things can be achieved.

## 8. Record your findings - significant risks

You must record the significant findings of your assessment. This means writing down the more significant hazards and recording the most important conclusions - for example:

“Electrical installations: installation and earthing checked and found sound” or

“Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked”.

You must also inform the site team about your findings.

## **Risk Assessment — Good practice and responsibilities**

In order for risk assessment to be an effective process there are some areas of good practice that should be included in the process, these are:

- Try to undertake risk assessment as a group activity;
- Always involve those at risk and those in control;
- Should be based on principles of ALARP\*;
- Should be an ongoing process of continuous improvement/risk reduction;
- Reviews should be undertaken when:
  - Two years has elapsed with no incident
  - An incident/accident or near miss occurs
  - There is a change in process, or method
  - There are new personnel involved in the task
  - There is a change in location or office

(\* ALARP is as low as is reasonably practicable)

This highlights the importance of the risk assessment being a live document, it is not simply a piece of paper that is completed once and then sits in a file. It is the responsibility of the College Governing Body and the Headteacher to ensure that the risk assessments required by the aforementioned regulations are carried out within the College.

Training in Safety Risk Assessment, COSHH, etc is provided through Staff Development. Training may also be possible to arrange upon request to meet the needs of individuals and Departments.