

Introduction to Risk Assessment Templates

What is risk assessment?

Risk assessment is something that we do in all aspects of our lives. In the workplace, risk assessment is at the heart of managing safety, health and welfare successfully.

It is a 3-step process:

- **Step 1** Identify the hazard
- **Step 2** Assess the risk in proportion to the hazard
- **Step 3** Identify and implement the appropriate control measures to eliminate the hazard or reduce the risk

How the risk assessment template works

Under safety, health and welfare legislation, employers must complete (in writing) a risk assessment of their workplace. Risk assessment is a key component of the Safety Statement and is carried out using the three steps identified above. A further step 'to review and update' is also necessary – this is an ongoing activity and forms part of the overall review of the safety statement which should take place annually or whenever changes occur, such as the purchase of new machinery or equipment for use in the school.

Part C contains a series of risk assessment templates for many of the routine and non-routine activities in schools. The templates list some of the most common hazards identified in the school environment and their associated risks. It also lists a range of control measures that could be put in place to eliminate hazards or reduce their risks.

- These templates can be used directly by any person carrying out a risk assessment in any part of the school.
- The templates are interactive and can be downloaded from www.hsa.ie/education
- Staff can select the risk assessment templates for the activities they are involved in. Two or more staff members may work together to complete risk assessment templates where they share the use of a classroom or share a similar job.
- The Board of Management/ETB will designate appropriate timescales for the completion of the risk assessments.

Note: the following risk assessment templates contain a non-exhaustive list of all the hazards and risks present in your school. It may therefore be necessary to use the blank template (No. 74) provided at the back of Part C for those hazards not specifically dealt with. These templates should form a good foundation for identifying hazards, assessing risks, and implementing control measures. However, you must also pay close attention to your own school environment and identify and write down other hazards that may be present, and control measures that you have in place or are required to be implemented. It is recommended that every year each teacher carries out a risk assessment of their own classroom taking into account the age and other relevant characteristics of the students using that room during that year.

Getting started

The person carrying out the risk assessment identifies the templates relevant to their particular activities. The ‘Index to Online Risk Assessment Templates’ is used for this task – see page no. 62. For example, a teacher may decide to use the following templates to carry out a risk assessment for a general classroom. Other templates may be required depending on the hazards identified. All of the templates can be downloaded from www.hsa.ie/edcuation, and can be completed manually or electronically.

- Template No. 12 Slips, Trips and Falls
- Template No. 13 Manual Handling
- Template No. 19 Fire (General Classrooms and Offices)
- Template No. 21 First-Aid
- Template No. 48 Student Considerations

Step 1

A walk-through of the area to be risk assessed should be completed, for example, the classroom, office, staff room, school grounds, etc. The purpose of this walk-through is to identify any hazards that may be present. The relevant risk assessment templates should be used to assist with the identification of hazards.

Where a risk assessment template does not address a specific hazard **Template No. 74** can be used to enter this new information. This blank template can also be reproduced for any additional hazards. Remember **the risk assessment templates contain a non-exhaustive list of hazards**. On pages 60-61 you will see a sample risk assessment template completed for manual handling activities in a school.

Step 2

Complete the risk assessment by working through the relevant template, from left to right, taking note of each column heading. Include all relevant information.

- The risk assessment template should be signed and dated by the person who completed the assessment. It should also include all outstanding actions that require attention.
- The risk assessments should then be passed to the principal/designated person/safety committee to be collated so that a school wide plan can be developed for all hazards that are not controlled.

See Diagram 1 on next page for column headings and how to interpret them.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Hazards	Is the hazard present?	What is the risk?	Risk rating H = High M = Medium L = Low	Control measures	Is this control in place?	If no, what actions are required to implement the control?	Person responsible	Date action completed
	Y/N				Y/N			

If there is one or more **High Risk (H)** actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken.
Medium Risk (M) actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. **Low Risk (L)** actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

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Risk Assessment carried out by: _____

Date: / /

- 1 → **Hazards:** A common hazard is listed for this environment
- 2 → **Is the hazard present?** Indicate Yes or No on the form
- 3 → **What is the risk?** This tells you what could happen as a result of the hazard
- 4 → **Risk rating - High, Medium, Low:** This is a suggested rating system for the hazard. It gives a general indication of the severity of the risk (from the hazard) if the control is not in place, and assists you in establishing priorities in applying control measures.

You need to take account of the situation relevant to your own school, for example, does this hazard pose a greater risk if it is combined with other hazards you have identified in a particular work area/classroom? If a particular control measure is not in place in your school you will see the risk rating applied to it. This will help you assess the risk and create a priority action list.

The risk rating is HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW

A High Risk Rating = High priority action

If there are a number of control measures not in place and they have been given a risk rating of, for example, 'High' then the Priority action required is also 'High'. Once the appropriate control measures are in place the risk rating may change to Medium or Low. This signifies that the original hazard has been eliminated or the risks associated with it are significantly reduced.

- 5 → **Control Measures:** These tell you the types of measures that must be implemented to eliminate or reduce the risk.
- 6 → **Is this control in place?** Indicate Yes or No on the form as appropriate.
- 7 → **Actions:** If you answered Yes to the previous question then no further action is required. If you answered No to the previous question, then you must write in what actions are required or proposed.
- 8 → **Person responsible:** Write in the names of the persons responsible for taking the actions. If you have already indicated that control measures are in place that are ongoing throughout the school year, you may still wish to write the name of the person responsible here. For example, a principal may be the person responsible for bringing a specific health and safety policy/procedure to the attention of teachers and students at the start of each school year.
- 9 → **Date action completed:** Completion dates must be inserted by the person carrying out the risk assessment once the action is taken and the control measure is in place.

Step 3

Step 3 is about the control measures. What can be done to improve safety? Can the hazard be eliminated? If not, can the risk be significantly reduced? These are the types of questions that must be asked at this stage of the process. The following points will also help with Step 3.

- Where it is found that a control is not in place, the “**what actions are required to implement the control?**” column must be completed indicating the necessary actions which are required to control the hazard. In the “**Person responsible**” column a person is assigned responsibility for ensuring the control is in place.
- When actions are completed and controls put in place, the “**Date Action Completed**” column should be filled in by the person carrying out the risk assessment or a designated other.
- Where an action cannot be completed (control cannot be implemented) by the person carrying out the risk assessment, it must be brought to the attention of the appropriate person/s, for example, the principal, caretaker, Board of Management etc.
- Some actions may be ongoing. This information can also be included in the “**Date Action Completed**” column.
- If the Board of Management/ETB has designated somebody to manage safety, health and welfare on their behalf, for example the principal, that person manages the risk assessment process. The Board of Management/ETB still has overall responsibility for managing safety and health in schools, and must sign off on the safety statement including the risk assessments. It is also good practice that any action plan arising out of the risk assessment process be presented to the Board of Management/ETB for their information, approval and action, where required.

Sample Risk Assessment Template for Manual Handling (General)

Hazards	Is the hazard present? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H = High M = Medium L = Low	Control measures	Is this control in place? Y/N	If no, what actions are required to implement the control?	Person responsible	Date action completed
Transporting heavy loads, e.g. caretaker transporting a heavy load to stores Ask: Is the load secure? Is the weight too heavy? Is the load too big? Is the shape unwieldy or difficult to grasp?	Y	Back or upper limb injury Over frequent or over prolonged physical effort involving in particular the spine	H	When purchasing stock such as clay, ingredients, wood for woodwork, the guidelines weights are taken into account and small weight items are purchased where possible, e.g. 5 kg bag of clay instead of 12.5 kg bag An appropriate trolley is used to transfer heavy loads and a team lift is used to transfer load to trolley Appropriate instruction is provided to staff on how to lift loads safely on to and off the trolley	Y Y Y	No action required No action required No action required	Catherine Jones (Principal) All relevant staff Catherine Jones (Principal)	
Lifting a heavy load above shoulder height, e.g. lifting cooking utensils from shelves in canteen or Home-Economics room	N	Back or upper limb injury	H	Storage of regularly accessed utensils is arranged so that heavier items are stored on middle shelves not on the floor or above shoulder height No lifting of loads which are too heavy is ensured (Refer to Guideline weights for this - See Template No.13)	Y	No action required	All relevant staff	
Injury sustained due to lack of knowledge, instruction or training to complete manual handling tasks appropriately	N	Back or upper limb injury	H	Risk assessment of tasks prior to manual handling is carried out. Staff receive training from a competent instructor where necessary Appropriate measures are in place to reduce risk factors that contribute to the risk of back injury. These risk factors include excessive force or load weight, awkward posture and poor housekeeping or a work environment with limited space or access	Y	No action required	Catherine Jones (Principal)	

Sample Risk Assessment Template for Manual Handling (General)

Hazards	Is the hazard present? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H = High M = Medium L = Low	Control measures	Is this control in place? Y/N	If no, what actions are required to implement the control?	Person responsible	Date action completed
Poor housekeeping, e.g. cleaner using floor cleaning equipment	Y	Awkward and repetitive bending posture leading to injury	H	The vacuum hose is extended to the appropriate length to eliminate the need for unnecessary awkward bending posture Cleaning equipment is appropriate for the job it is intended for	Y	No action required	All relevant staff Catherine Jones (Principal)	
		Poor suction in the vacuum leading to over frequent physical effort	H	Cleaning equipment is in good working order and repaired or replaced when necessary	Y	No action required	Cleaners/Cleaning staff	
Carrying loads over distances, e.g. storage of classroom supplies such as Art room materials	Y	Back strain, slipped disc, hernia	H	Work areas are organised to ensure materials are stored close to point of use or a handling aid is sourced	Y	No action required	All staff	
Pushing/pulling heavy or awkward items	Y	Back strain, slipped disc, hernia	H	An appropriate trolley is provided for moving items	Y	No action required	Catherine Jones (Principal)	
			H	Items are made lighter or less bulky, where possible		No action required	All staff	
			H	Individuals ask for help when moving heavy items		No action required	All staff	
			H	All potential obstructions are removed		No action required	All staff	
				The safest route for moving items is chosen, particularly where there may be variations in the level of the floor, requiring the load to be manipulated on different levels, e.g. use of ramp		No action required	All staff	

If there is one or more **High Risk (H)** actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken.

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Medium Risk (M) actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. **Low Risk (L)** actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

Risk Assessment carried out by: Catherine Jones, Principal

Date: 05/09/18

Index to Online Risk Assessment Templates

www.hsa.ie/education



Art Room

- No. 1 Art Room (General)
- No. 2 Art (Ceramics)
- No. 3 Art (Use of Knives and Cutters)

Canteen

- No. 4 Canteen (General)
- No. 5 Canteen (Working with Chemical Products)

Cleaning

- No. 6 Cleaning (General)
- No. 7 Cleaning (Hazardous Chemicals and Biological Agents)
- No. 8 Cleaning (Waste Compactor and Baler)
- No. 9 Cleaning (Work at Height – Ladders)
- No. 10 Cleaning (Welfare Provisions – Rest Rooms, Wash Basins, Showers)

Computers (VDU Workstations)

- No. 11 VDU Workstations (General)

General (Whole School)

- No. 12 Slips, Trips and Falls
- No. 13 Manual Handling
- No. 14 General Access/Egress
- No. 15 Work at Height (General)
- No. 16 Platform Lifts
- No. 17 Passenger/Services Lifts
- No. 18 Fire (Specialist Rooms)
- No. 19 Fire (General Classrooms and Offices)
- No. 20 Fire – School Onsite Events (Plays, Musicals, Concerts, Meetings)
- No. 21 First-Aid
- No. 22 Portable Electrical Appliances
- No. 23 Workplace Bullying
- No. 24 Workplace Stress
- No. 25 Car Park and External Areas
- No. 26 Staff Room
- No. 27 Pregnant, Post-Natal and Breastfeeding Women
- No. 28 Noise
- No. 29 Radon
- No. 30 Mould
- No. 31 Asbestos
- No. 32 Legionella
- No. 33 Lone Workers (e.g. caretakers)

Home Economics Room

- No. 34 Home Economics Room (General)
- No. 35 Home Economics (Use of Safety Cutters/Knives)
- No. 36 Home Economics (Portable Electrical Appliances)

Index to Online Risk Assessment Templates cont'd.

Maintenance (Caretaking/Facilities Management, Contractors, etc.)

- No. 37 Maintenance (General)
- No. 38 Construction Contractors
- No. 39 Maintenance (Tractors)
- No. 40 Boiler House and Fuel Tanks
- No. 41 Grass Cutting/Ride-on Mower
- No. 42 Pressure Washers
- No. 43 Strimmers
- No. 44 Waste Compacter and/or Baler
- No. 45 Maintenance (Work at Height - Ladders)

P.E.

- No. 46 Exercise Equipment/Gym Equipment
- No. 47 Goal Posts

Student Considerations

- No. 48 Student Considerations

Science Room/Laboratory

- No. 49 Science (Bunsen burners)
- No. 50 Science (Chemicals)
- No. 51 Science (Glassware)

Technologies

- No. 52 Technologies (Powered Hand Tools)
- No. 53 Technologies (Non-Powered Hand Tools)
- No. 54 Technologies (Hand Fed Table Band Saw)
- No. 55 Technologies (Electric Ovens)
- No. 56 Technologies (Metal Working Centre Lathe (manually operated))
- No. 57 Technologies (Woodworking Bench Circular Saw)
- No. 58 Technologies (Bench/Pedestal Grinder)
- No. 59 Technologies (Hazardous Chemicals - Metal Work, Wood work, etc.)
- No. 60 Technologies (Milling Machine)
- No. 61 Technologies (Morticer)
- No. 62 Technologies (Pedestal Drill (Metal Work))
- No. 63 Technologies (Surface Planing and Thickness Machine)
- No. 64 Technologies (Portable Router)
- No. 65 Technologies (Hand Held Portable Circular Power Saw)
- No. 66 Technologies (Bench Mounted Scroll Saw)
- No. 67 Technologies (Vacuum Former)
- No. 68 Technologies (Wood Lathe)
- No. 69 Technologies (Powered Guillotines)
- No. 70 Technologies (Manual Treadle Operated Metal Cutting Guillotines)

School Offsite Activities

- No. 71 School Offsite Activity (School Excursions - Day Trips, Matches)
- No. 72 School Offsite Activity (Outdoor Adventure Activity)
- No. 73 School Offsite Activity (Work Placements)
- No. 74 Blank Risk Assessment Template



To help you to use these Guidelines, sections 1-12 on the following pages outlines **suggested risk assessment templates** that can be completed for each subject area or work activity. For example, Section 1 shows some templates applicable to an Art room/class. Section 6 shows the suggested templates a person could use when carrying out maintenance activities in a school, e.g. a caretaker.

It is important to note that the 12 sections listed, along with the suggested templates, are non-exhaustive.

Further sections and/or templates may apply to your school.

1. Art

- Art room (General) - Template No. 1
- Art (Ceramics) - Template No. 2
- Art (Use of Knives and Cutters) - Template No. 3
- School Offsite Activity (School Excursions – Day Trips, Matches) - Template No. 71
- Manual Handling - Template No. 13
- Portable Electrical Appliances -Template No. 22
- Slips, Trips and Falls - Template No. 12
- Fire (Specialist Rooms) - Template No. 18
- First-Aid - Template No. 21
- Student Considerations - Template No. 48

1

2. Canteen

- Canteen (General) - Template No. 4
- Canteen (Working with Chemical Products) -Template No. 5
- First-Aid - Template No. 21
- Manual Handling - Template No. 13
- Portable Electrical Appliances - Template No. 22
- Slips, Trips and Falls - Template No. 12
- Fire (General Classroom and Offices) - Template No. 19

2

3. Cleaning

- Cleaning (General) - Template No. 6
- Cleaning (Hazardous Chemicals and Biological Agents) - Template No. 7
- Cleaning (Waste Compactor and Baler) - Template No. 8
- Cleaning (Work at Height - Ladders) - Template No. 9
- Cleaning (Welfare Prouisions - Rest Rooms, Wash Basins, Showers) - Template No. 10
- Slips, Trips and Falls - Template No. 12
- First-Aid - Template No. 21
- Portable Electrical Appliances - Template No. 22

3

4. Computers (Workstations)

- Student Considerations - Template No. 48
- Workstations (General) - Template No. 11
- Portable Electrical Appliances - Template No. 22
- Fire (General Classrooms and Offices) -Template No. 19

4



5. Home Economics

- Home Economics Room (General) –Template No. 34
- Home Economics (Use of Safety Cutters/Knives) – Template No. 35
- Home Economics (Portable Electrical Appliances) – Template No. 36
- Fire (Specialist Rooms) – Template No. 18
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- Slips, Trips and Falls – Template No. 12
- First-Aid – Template No. 21
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

5

6. Maintenance (Caretaking/Facilities Management, Contractors, etc.)

- Maintenance (General) –Template No. 37
- Construction Contractors –Template No. 38
- Maintenance (Tractors) – Template No. 39
- Boiler House and Fuel Tanks – Template No. 40
- Grass Cutting/Ride-on Mower – Template No. 41
- Pressure Washers – Template No. 42
- Strimmers – Template No. 43
- Waste Compactor and/or Baler – Template No. 44
- Maintenance (Work at Height - Ladders) –Template No. 45
- Car Park and External Areas – Template No. 25
- Fire – Templates No. 19 and 20
- First-Aid – Template No. 21
- Technologies (Powered Hand Tools) – Template No. 52
- Technologies (Non-powered Hand Tools) – Template No. 53
- Cleaning (Hazardous Chemicals and Biological Agents) – Template No. 7
- Legionella – Template No. 32
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- Portable Electrical Appliances – Template No. 22
- Lone Workers (e.g. caretakers) – Template No. 33
- Passenger/Services Lifts – Template No. 17

6

7. Physical Education

- Exercise Equipment/Gym Equipment – Template No. 46
- Goal Posts – Template No. 47
- First-Aid – Template No. 21
- Slips, Trips and Falls – Template No. 12
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- School Offsite Activity (School Excursions – Day Trips, Matches) – Template No. 71
- School Offsite Activity (Outdoor Adventure Activity) – Template No. 72
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

7

8. Science

- Science (Bunsen burners) – Template No. 49
- Science (Chemicals) – Template No. 50
- Science (Glassware) – Template No. 51
- Fire (Specialist Rooms) – Template No. 18
- First-Aid – Template No. 21
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- Portable Electrical Appliances – Template No. 22
- Slips, Trips and Falls – Template No. 12
- Pregnant, Post-Natal and Breastfeeding Women – Template No. 27
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

8

9. Technologies

- Technologies (Powered Hand Tools) – Template No. 52
- Technologies (Non-Powered Hand Tools) – Template No. 53
- Technologies (Hand Fed Table Band Saw) – Template No. 54
- Technologies (Electric Ovens) – Template No. 55
- Technologies (Metal Working Centre Lathe) – Template No. 56
- Technologies (Woodworking Bench Circular Saw) – Template No. 57
- Technologies (Bench/Pedestal Grinder) – Template No. 58
- Technologies (Hazardous Chemicals – Metal Work, Wood work, etc.) – Template No. 59
- Technologies (Milling Machine) – Template No. 60
- Technologies (Morticer) – Template No. 61
- Technologies (Pedestal Drill (Metal Work)) – Template No. 62
- Technologies (Surface Planing and Thicknessing Machine) – Template No. 63
- Technologies (Portable Router) – Template No. 64
- Technologies (Hand Held Portable Circular Power Saw) – Template No. 65
- Technologies (Bench Mounted Scroll Saw) – Template No. 66
- Technologies (Vacuum Former) – Template No. 67
- Technologies (Wood Lathe) – Template No. 68
- Technologies (Powered Guillotines) – Template No. 69
- Technologies (Manual Treadle Operated Metal Cutting Guillotines) – Template No. 70
- Fire (Specialist Rooms) – Template No. 18
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

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10. Transition Year

- School Offsite Activity (School Excursions – Day Trips, Matches) – Template No. 71
- School Offsite Activity (Outdoor Adventure Activity) – Template No. 72
- School Offsite Activity (Work Placements) – Template No. 73
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

10



11. Principal

- Maintenance (General) – Template No. 37
- Construction Contractors - Template No. 38
- Fire (General Classrooms and Offices) – Template No. 19
- Slips, Trips and Falls – Template No. 12
- General Access/Egress – Template No. 14
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- Workplace Bullying – Template No. 23
- Workplace Stress – Template No. 24
- First-Aid – Template No. 21
- Legionella – Template No. 32
- School Offsite Activity (School Excursions – Day Trips, Matches) – Template No. 71
- Staff Room – Template No. 26
- School Offsite Activity (Work Placements) – Template No. 73
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48
- Lone Workers (e.g. caretakers) - Template No. 33

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12. Teachers

- Slips, Trips and Falls – Template No. 12
- Manual Handling – Template No. 13
- General Access/Egress – Template No. 14
- Fire (General Classrooms and Offices) – Template No. 19
- Student Considerations – Template No. 48

12

Online Risk Assessment Templates



The contents of the online risk assessment templates are non-exhaustive. The information provided is for guidance purposes and is not intended to be a substitute for the law.

Please note that:

- only the Courts can interpret statutory legislation with any authority
- the information provided is subject to revision, and
- any advice given is not intended to be a definitive guide to, or substitute for, the relevant law.

Independent legal advice should be sought where appropriate.

To access the online risk assessment templates go to

www.hsa.ie/education

