

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is an examination of the possible risks and hazards that could occur and cause harm. Once potential dangers have been identified it is essential to put measures in place to minimise the risk of them happening, and plan what to do if any of them should occur.

Sports organisations have a duty of care to their paid staff, volunteers and athletes. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also places a duty on employers to assess risk to those who may be affected by their activities which includes staff and volunteers.

Conducting a Risk Assessment

When conducting a risk assessment for a trip or a competition you may need to break the activity down. You may choose to do an assessment for each part of the trip or you may choose to assess each venue – which ever you chose is fine.

Five Steps to Risk Assessments (HSE)

1. **Identify** the hazards.
2. **Decide** who might be harmed and how.
3. **Evaluate** the risks and decide on precautions to take.
4. **Record** your significant findings, take action and communicate to those at risk.
5. **Review** the assessment and update as necessary.

Risk assessments need to be kept up to date as situations will change. It is important to set a date on which to review the assessment. For example you could set this for the day after the event or a couple of months prior to the next event.

For every risk there is a range of preventative measures that maybe suitable:

- Providing information – putting up signs, advertising who the first aiders are and how they can be contacted.
- Training – providing additional training for people involved that could minimise or deal with the risk.
- Change or avoid the activity – either modify the activity or how it is done, or if the risk factor is too high you may have to consider avoiding it altogether.

Over the page we have put together an Example Risk Assessment and a Risk Assessment Template, you may have an alternative format which you may want to use which is fine. The important thing is that you have a written record to acknowledge you have recognised the risks involved and have processes in place to minimise the risk to those involved.

Example Risk Assessment

Potential Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	Existing control measures – what are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Preventative measures – do you need to do anything to control the risk	Action by when?	Responsibility of
Lack of preparation	All participants	-Ensure the activity is well coordinated and that all involved are aware of their responsibilities -Check detailed arrangements with the promoter	High	-Take responsibility for coordination -Ensure you have contact details and medical notes available. -Ensure enough adult support is available. -Ensure any special disability needs are catered for. -Ensure all details are communicated to all.		Team Manager Coach
Coach fails to arrive at designated point	All participants	-Ensure a copy of booking form is available. -Obtain emergency numbers for coach company.	Medium	-Check booking in advance. -Phone to confirm time and pick up point. -Obtain mobile number for the allocated driver.		Team Manager
Potential safety hazards on journey	All participants	-Use general disciplinary methods. -No standing, walking or obstructing aisles. -Use seat belts.	Medium	-Ensure someone takes control. -Use boot or coach storage for longer bags. -Enforce the use of seatbelts.		Team Staff
Transfer from coach to pool and vice versa	All participants	-Assess safety issues on arrival after the coach has parked e.g. roads to cross	Medium	-Ensure safe transit by designated route. -Disembark when access to the pool is available. -Control and potential danger points. -Agree pick up point and time with the driver. -Establish rules for anyone not returning on coach.		Team Manager

Risk Assessment Template

Potential Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	Existing control measures – what are you already doing?	Risk Rating	Preventative measures – do you need to do anything to control the risk	Action by when?	Responsibility of

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How Many Risk Assessments do I need to do?

A: Each activity you run as an organisation should have its own risk assessment, for example as a club running both pool training sessions and land training sessions there should be a separate assessment for each activity. Similarly if you are taking a team on a trip each area should be assessed appropriately such as the travelling to and from along with the sessions which are included.

Q: How often should Risk Assessments be updated or changed?

A: Your Risk Assessment as a rule should be reviewed on a yearly basis. However if a problem had occurred in a session and this is something which hadn't been previously flagged it is good practice to reassess the risks.

Q: What format should the risk Assessment be kept in?

A: You can complete a risk assessment electronically and it can be stored this way for people to access, however there should also be paper copies available for those who are unable to access the electronic version. For example if you are running an event and the Lead Coach is not able to access the electronic version then a paper copy should be available for their use.

Q: Who should the Risk Assessment cover?

A: The Risk Assessment should cover anyone who could be harmed by risks associated with that particular session or event. For example a Risk Assessment of a pool training session should cover the Coach, Swimmers and any others present at that session.

Q: Who is responsible for completing the Risk Assessment?

A: Your club is responsible for completing an appropriate Risk Assessment; whoever completes this needs to be competent to do so – this means they have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety. They need to involve anyone who maybe in the situation in the process and also understand when specialist help might be needed.

Q: Where can I get further information and guidance on this?

Swim England – SwimMark Portal

HSE - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/faq.htm>