



Creating a risk assessment for clubs and organisations

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What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a simple and effective tool that clubs and delivery organisations can use to ensure that all of their activities, equipment and facilities are as safe as possible.

Having a risk assessment in place is a way of controlling the risk of accidents or injuries to everyone involved in your activities, from participants and volunteers to visitors.

The risk assessment process can be used to record, identify, and assess risks in order to develop safe practices or flag further actions needed to help control and manage those risks.



Why do you need a risk assessment?

Carrying out a risk assessment is necessary in order to comply with health and safety law and is usually a requirement of your national governing body (NGB) and insurance provider.

A risk assessment also tends to form part of your club or organisation's [health and safety](#) responsibility to your members, participants, volunteers, staff and visitors whilst demonstrating a commitment and duty of care to them.

The main purposes of a risk assessment are to:

- Identify any health and safety risks associated with all of your club or organisation's activities (don't forget to include any events and excursions), equipment and facilities.
- Evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of existing control measures.
- Ensure additional controls and safe practices are developed to help mitigate and manage against any identified risks.
- Prioritise further resources or training needed to ensure all club or organisation activities are facilities are safe.
- Provide your club or organisation with a record of all known risks and the mitigating actions. This can be used to ensure transparency, which is vitally important if a member, volunteer or visitor suffers serious injury or illness whilst undertaking activity with your club/organisation or using your equipment or facilities.



Step by step guidance

Developing a risk assessment is a straightforward process.

The step by step guidance to completing a risk assessment set out below has been adapted from the information written by the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#). It offers some advice and suggestions through each step.

Step 1 – Create a risk assessment team: It's important to involve key people from your club or organisation in the development of your risk assessment.

It's advisable to involve all of your club or organisations committee members or trustees, as well as trusted senior individuals or those with relevant or applicable experience.

This will help to ensure that risks across all aspects of your operations have been considered and will also encourage a collective approach to owning and managing risk.

Step 2 – Identify the risks: Review your activity offer and look at your facilities and equipment to identify any risks.

You're also advised to review any previous accidents or incidents at your club or organisation, the general condition of the facilities and equipment your organisation uses, and whether any unsafe working practices exist.

Useful Links

[Health and Safety and Insurance](#)

[Insurance](#)

[Health and Safety Executive RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences](#)

[Health and Safety Executive – Legionella and Legionnaires Disease](#)

[Health Safety Executive Risk Assessment Template](#)

[Defibrillator Guidance](#)

[Reopening Toolkit for Community Clubs and Organisations](#)

[Reopening Toolkit for Commercial and Leisure Providers](#)

Step 3 – Assess the risks:

Once you have identified any possible risks, the next step is to consider the likelihood of someone being harmed as a result of each identified risk and the potential severity of this.

It's important to outline who is most at risk (e.g. participants, coaches, visitors etc.) and how they might be harmed.

Step 4 – Control the risks:

Evaluate the risks that you have identified and decide whether the precautions that you have in place are adequate or if additional control measures and actions are required.

Consider whether you can remove the risk altogether or, if not, how the risk can be controlled so that harm is unlikely. Further controls and mitigating actions could include:

- Researching and applying good practice.
- Embedding clear policies and procedures.
- Arranging further training for volunteers/staff.
- Inductions for members/participants.
- Ongoing maintenance.
- Purchasing additional safety equipment etc.

The HSE acknowledges that *'You're not expected to eliminate all risks, but you need to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm'*. Further information can be found [here](#).

As part of the process of controlling risk, you should appoint the most appropriate person to monitor each individual risk.

This person will be responsible for continually assessing the risk, identifying and implementing mitigating actions and providing updates to the committee/trustees and senior individuals as appropriate.

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Step 5 – Recording risks:

It is important that you record the details of each risk including the key findings from assessing the risk, the actions and practices you have in place to control the risk and the risk owner.

Keeping a written risk assessment document can help protect your club or organisation with regards to liability and demonstrates that you have taken the necessary steps to protect your members, participants, volunteers, staff and visitors.

Your risk assessment should be communicated clearly to all relevant people within your club or organisation. It should also be easily accessible.

Step 6 – Review your risk assessment:

Your risk assessment should be a live and up-to-date document.

You should regularly review the risks identified to ensure that:

The controls you have in place are still effective and continue to mitigate against identified risks

You are aware of any changes within your club or organisation that could lead to new or increased risks.

Changes could be linked to activities, practices, facilities or equipment.

All equipment is being used correctly.

You are aware of any accidents, incidents or near misses that are related to new or existing risks.

Whilst your NGB may recommend what is best for your sport or activity it is good practice to carry out routine checks at each training or competitive session.

Things to consider when developing a risk assessment

All clubs and organisations will have slightly different risks depending on their activity offer and the facilities and equipment they use.

It's important that your risk assessment considers both generic risks and any specific risks associated with your operations.

Right are some general headings to help you but this list is not exhaustive so be sure to include everything that affects the unique nature of your club/organisation.

Don't forget, your NGB may be able to provide specific guidance for your sport(s).

Template risk assessment

The Health and Safety Executive have developed a template risk assessment which can be accessed [here](#).

Risks to Consider

- Slips, trips and falls
- Dangerous objects or materials
- Grounds maintenance
- Cleaning
- Use of machinery, maintenance equipment and chemicals
- Condition of facilities and equipment
- Changing facilities, showers and toilets
- Kitchen and bar areas
- Activities offered
- Use of equipment (Inc. safety equipment)
- Fire
- First Aid
- Personal protective equipment.
- Accidents and injuries.
- Illness and diseases.
- Recording and reporting of injuries and incidents
- Trips, tours and excursions
- Competitions
- Sporting and other events
- Availability of coaches, instructors and session leaders
- Participant and coach / instructor ratios
- Vandalism or theft of facilities and/or equipment.
- Insurance requirements



Should you have a separate Covid-19 risk assessment?

Before re-opening and encouraging your members, volunteers and staff to return, it's beneficial to complete a risk assessment that covers the specific considerations linked to the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

This can help you to ensure that your facilities and activities are restarted as safely as possible. The process for developing a Covid-19 risk assessment is the same as the process outlined above, but is focussed on only considering the risks related to re-opening and restarting your activities as lockdown restrictions ease, and the mitigating actions and practices required to keep people safe.

A number of generic risks associated with returning to activity and re-opening your facility have been listed below for you to consider in your Covid-19 risk assessment.

However, this is not an exhaustive list and we recommend that you complete a full assessment considering any unique risks associated with your club or organisation and the facilities and equipment you use.

Risks

Activity offer – consider the activities that your club/organisation plans to offer. Identify the risks, then develop controls that can be put in place to ensure that activities take place in a safe environment and adhere to [government guidelines](#). Your activity offer should be inclusive which may require different approaches for different age groups and abilities.

Access to facilities and equipment – it's important to consider the risks associated with opening and accessing different areas of your facilities (both indoor and outdoor facilities) and sharing equipment and cleaning

Facilities – consider the risks associated with any lack of maintenance that may have affected your facilities including electrical installations, gas and heating systems, kitchen equipment, air conditioning and air handling systems, alarms, and escape routes.

Social distancing – consider the risks associated with being able to maintain the Government guidance on social distancing whilst at visiting the club/organisation and undertaking activity. You will need to consider how users arrive, queue, pay, move around your facilities, equipment layout, access to toilets and the maximum number of users that you will be able to accommodate at once.

Quality of playing surfaces or spaces – assess the quality of all of your playing areas, it is possible that limited maintenance of playing pitches and spaces has created or increased risks which may result in injury to users. For details on playing surfaces visit the [GMA](#) or [SAPCA](#).

Risk of transmission – identify actions to control the risk of transmission of Covid-19 amongst members, participants, visitors, volunteers and staff. Ensure that Public Health advice is followed should there be an outbreak, or somebody is symptomatic at your club or organisation.



Cleanliness and hygiene – think about how you can ensure that touch points, equipment and busy areas are regularly cleaned, sufficient handwashing facilities are provided, enhanced cleaning protocols and new cleaning schedules are adhered to, and there is access to cleaning/hygiene supplies and equipment. This will help minimise the risk of the Coronavirus being spread within the facilities you use.

Personal protective equipment – identify any PPE required to safely run activities at your club/organisation and consider the risks associated with not providing this and why this might happen, such as not having the required levels of stock.

Legionella and legionnaires disease – if your water systems have been dormant for prolonged periods of time, make sure you get a suitably qualified professional to [review them and check they are safe](#).

Lack of personnel and volunteers – consider whether you have enough suitable, qualified and DBS checked people to support your safe delivery of activity, and the risks associated with personnel/volunteers being unable to attend.

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