**how to do a risk assessment**

**Why do Risk Assessments matter?**

If you’re an elected member of a society or club committee you have a **Duty of Care** in law to ensure the safety of your members and any other individuals who might be affected by the activities or events that you run. Because of this, you need to take the necessary precautions to minimise risk and ensure that the events and activities you run are safe.

**What is Duty of Care?**

The definition of **Duty of Care** is “You must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour”. This means that you must not actively do something that would injure another person and that you must not be negligent when running an activity or event. Negligence is the failure to take reasonable actions to minimise risks associated with your event. Because of this, it’s important to think about what the risks could be and how to deal with them. The risk assessment gives you an opportunity to think things through and provide solutions to likely problems. You can never completely remove the chance that accidents could happen, but successfully filling out a risk assessment shows that you did everything you could to make your event as safe as possible and upheld your **Duty of Care.**

**What is Public Liability Insurance?**

Your group’s core activities (the things that we were told your group would do when it was founded) are covered by the Students’ Union third party Public Liability Insurance. For example, the Chess club would be covered by it if they were at a chess tournament, but they wouldn’t if they started drift racing through the streets of Egham. This means that your members will be protected if they are injured or their property is damaged due to the negligence of the Students’ Union or another group member. It does not provide protection from personal accidents or injuries, which makes it vital that those are minimised as much as possible.

**Exemptions – What isn’t covered by our insurance?**

These are some of the main things not covered by our insurance. This is not an exhaustive list.

* Activities that aren’t your groups core activities (Things that your group was not ratified to do)
* Volunteering abroad
* Providing welfare advice or counselling
* Any activity involving motor mechanics or mechanised parts
* Volunteering with under-18s/vulnerable adults (unless approved by the Students’ Union).
* Specific high risk activities (The Union will highlight these if you propose to do them).

**When do you need to do a Risk Assessment?**

You need to fill out a risk assessment if you are:

* Proposing to do a new one off event which is open to non-group members or is notably different from a standard group meeting. Examples of these could be:
  + Large events
  + Trips (Either in the UK or abroad)
  + Competitions
  + Sports events
  + Any activity with a notably enhanced risk
* Proposing to do a recurring activity with a greater risk then a normal members meeting. Only one risk assessment needs to be done for a recurring activity per year. Examples of this could be:
  + Training sessions
  + Regular fixtures
  + Shows & rehearsals
  + Regular community events
  + Any recurring activity with a notably enhanced risk

You can always get in contact with a member of the activities department (alex.vince@su.rhul.ac.uk) to get advice on risk assessments. When you send an assessment in for approval you’ll be sent it back with notes on any areas where amendments need to be made.

**How do I actually do a risk assessment?**

A risk assessment is a checklist of all potential risks, as well as your solutions. It should be used to show that you know where the risks are, as well as keep track of who’s in charge of solving them and when solutions need to be in place by.

First, fill out all the boxes on the first page. This collects the details we need to contact you, tells us who you are and tells us what the event is. In the summary box give us a brief run through of the event. This doesn’t need to go into a great amount of detail, but should give us enough information that we can identify what generic risks are likely to be attached to the event.

The second page is where you actually list the risks.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Hazard | Who’s at Risk?  EXAMPLE | Current Risk Matrix Level | Control measures | New Risk Matrix Level | Who’s responsible? | When does it need to be done by? |
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**Name of Hazard:** What is causing the risk?

**Who’s at Risk:** Are **Students**, **Staff** or **Community members** at risk? Will there be **Young People** (under 18) or **Vulnerable Adults** at risk from the hazard?

**Current Risk Matrix Level:** Go to page 7 and look at the **Risk Matrix**. Work out where this risk is on the **Matrix** by looking at how likely it is to hurt people and how serious the damage is likely to be. The risk will either be **Low**, **Moderate**, **High** or **EXTREME**.

**Control Measures:** What will you do to control the risks? This is where you put any actions that need to be done to counteract and control any hazards at your event.

**New Risk Matrix Level:** After you’ve controlled the risk, revisit the **Matrix** and work out a new risk level. Ideally you should be able to show that whatever control measures you’ve introduced has reduced the overall risk of the hazard.

**Who’s responsible:** Which person working on the event is responsible for the specific control measure?

**When does it need to be done by:** If something needs to be done before the event to control the risk, when does it need to be done by? This should help you identify if things aren’t being done in time.

Identify any reasonable risks and fill out a row for each of them.

**Examples:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Hazard | Who’s at Risk? | Current Risk Matrix Level | Control measures | New Risk Matrix Level | Who’s responsible? | When does it need to be done by? |
| Waterlogged fields | Students | Moderate | Training will not take place on waterlogged fields. | Low | Ben Gizzard (Captain) | N/A |
| Large amounts of electrical equipment | Students | Moderate | Any students using equipment will have been briefed on appropriate usage. | Low | Gillian Billiards (Tech Officer) | Start of event |
| Hygiene of baked goods stall | Students | Low | People serving homemade backed goods will wear gloves. | Low | Benetta Jones (Events Sec) | Start of event |
| Handling Money | Students | Moderate | All money collected will be placed in a secure container and taken to the helpdesk at the next available time to deposit. | Low | Jack Howing (Treasurer) | ASAP after event |
| Transport | Students/ Driver/ Public | Moderate | The driver has passed the SU test to drive a minibus. Ensure all seatbelts worn. | Low | Benetta Jones (Events Sec)/ Driver | Start of event |
| Intoxication | Students | Moderate | Ensure responsible drinking. Be aware of the safety of all members. | Low | Benetta Jones (Events Sec) | Start of event |
| Allergic Reaction | Students | Moderate | Ensure a list of ingredients is available for all food being sold. | Low | Henry Jefferson (Charity Sec) | Start of event |

Send completed assessments to [studentopportunities@su.rhul.ac.uk](mailto:studentopportunities@su.rhul.ac.uk)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student Group Risk Assessment | | | | | |
| Group Name: |  | Completed by:  (Name/Position) |  | Date of Risk Assessment: |  |
| Event/Activity: |  | Location: |  | Date of Event/Activity: |  |
| Telephone Number: |  | Email Address: |  |  |  |
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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Hazard  (What could cause harm?) | Who’s at Risk?  (Who might be harmed by it?) | Current Risk Matrix Level  (Check the Risk Matrix) | Control Measures  (What will you do minimise the risk?) | New Risk Matrix Level  (How risky will it be after you control it?) | Who’s Responsible?  (Who is putting the control measure in place) | When does it need to be done by?  (What date does it need to be done by?) |
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| Reviewed By: | | Comments: |
| Responsible person (Coordinator): | Date: |  |
| SURHUL H&S manager (where applicable): | Date: |  |

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| **The Risk Matrix** | | | | | |
| **Likelihood** | **Severity** | | | | |
| **Insignificant** | **Minor** | **Moderate** | **Major** | **Severe** |
| **Almost Certain** | **Moderate** | **High** | **High** | **EXTREME** | **EXTREME** |
| **Likely** | **Moderate** | **Moderate** | **High** | **High** | **EXTREME** |
| **Possible** | **Low** | **Moderate** | **Moderate** | **High** | **EXTREME** |
| **Unlikely** | **Low** | **Moderate** | **Moderate** | **Moderate** | **High** |
| **Rare** | **Low** | **Low** | **Moderate** | **Moderate** | **High** |

The Risk Matrix allows you to work out how dangerous any given risk is likely to be. When you first identify a risk, work out where it sits in the matrix. Once you’ve worked out what you’ll do deal with the risk you can then work out where its new position is.

The risk assessment must be signed off by a relevant coordinator after all actions on it are completed. Any time something is identified as high risk *after* control measures are put in place, you need to get your risk assessment signed off by both the relevant coordinator and the health and safety manager.

Once the assessment has been reviewed and signed off, it is officially done and you are ready to proceed with your event.

Have fun!