Liverpool John Moores University

Health and Safety Code of Practice

SCP18 Risk Assessment

Responsibility for Policy:	Registrar and Chief Operating Officer
Relevant to:	University staff, students, users of and visitors to the University
Approved by:	ELT on 1 June 2020
Responsibility for Document Review:	Head of Safety, Health and Environment
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RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Five steps to risk assessment (Health and Safety Executive)

RELATED POLICIES & DOCUMENTS

- Liverpool John Moores University Health and Safety Policy Statement
- MCP1 Organisation for the Implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- MCP2 Arrangements for the Implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- SCP2 Fire Precautions
- SCP6 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- SCP8 Noise at Work
- SCP11 Out of Hours Working
- SCP14 Fieldwork, Visits, Expeditions and Adventurous Activities off University Premises
- SCP16 Ionising Radiation
- SCP17 Manual Handling
- SCP20 Display Screen Equipment
- SCP23 Placement of Students for Work Experience
- SCP24 Travel and Working Overseas
- SCP29 Asbestos
- SCP30 First Aid
- SCP33 New and Expectant Mothers
- SCP35 Work related Stress
- SCP39 Vibration at Work
- SCP42 Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres

THIS CODE OF PRACTICE FORMS PART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND REPLACES ALL PREVIOUS ISSUES

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APPENDIX

Standard generic risk assessment form – this is located on the Safety, Health and Environment Department website alongside this Code of Practice, as a Word document.

1.   OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Code of Practice is to assist those who supervise or direct activities to carry out risk assessments as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

2.   INTRODUCTION

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting staff, students, visitors and therefore the University, as well as complying with the law. It will help to focus on the risks that really matter – those with the potential to cause real harm.

The law does not expect the University to eliminate all risks, but to protect people as far as is reasonably practicable. This Code of Practice will help to achieve this, by utilising the approach in the Health and Safety Executive's 'Five steps to risk assessment'.

3.   DEFINITIONS OF HAZARD AND RISK

Hazard – is anything that may cause harm. For example, chemicals, electricity, and working from ladders etc.

Risk – is the chance (high or low) that somebody could be harmed by the hazards identified, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

4.   RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in the work we undertake, could cause harm to people, so that we can evaluate whether enough precautions have been taken – or if more should be done to prevent harm. Staff, students and visitors have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures.

4.1   Responsibility for undertaking risk assessments

In every case, the risk assessment is the responsibility of the person who supervises or directs the activity. The task may be delegated but the responsibility remains entirely with the supervising person. Responsibility for ensuring that supervisors take account of Health and Safety Regulations rests with their Line Manager.

Examples include academic staff taking practical sessions, technical staff providing equipment and support to teaching activities and Supervisors directing the work of domestic staff. Visiting academics should be provided with information, so they are familiar with emergency arrangements and understand their responsibilities with regard to evacuating students they are supervising.

4.2   Evening and weekend work and activities

It is anticipated that, in the risk assessment, emergency arrangements for the following may need special consideration outside normal working hours:

- Fire evacuation and personal emergency evacuation plans
- First Aid
- Lone Working

Refer to SCP11 Out of Hours Working:
https://policies.ljmu.ac.uk/UserHome/Policies/PolicyView.aspx?c=5

'Normal working hours' may be different for different groups of staff and building opening hours are not all the same and vary throughout the year.

Those working outside the normal building opening hours will need to take account of the lack of other staff for support. They must identify appropriate control measures within their own risk assessment to formulate an appropriate safe system of work that takes account of lone working, fire emergencies, first aid and accident reporting.

All work and activities, outside of routine low risk office/classroom/lecture room type based teaching, involving for example: recruitment, promotional, community/social events, sporting activities, JM Students' Union society/club meetings/activities, School society meetings/activities, artistic performances and symposium type events, particularly with non-University audiences, will all require a suitable risk assessment in place. Refer to SCP12 visitors and Use of University Premises: https://policies.ljmu.ac.uk/UserHome/Policies/PolicyView.aspx?c=5

It must identify the arrangements for the provision of emergency aid and emergency evacuation. The risk assessment must also consider the time of day/night, the number of people involved, including children if they are part of the invited group (please see SCP36 Children on University Premises and the University's Safeguarding Policy).

Consideration must also be given to the building type and ease of egress for those who may require assistance in an emergency, if more than the ground floor is in use. The visitors on site must be fully aware of the evacuation arrangements and adequate numbers of staff should be available to manage them.

Reference should be made to SCP2 Evacuation Procedures, SCP37 Assisted Evacuation and SCP 30 First Aid when undertaking the risk assessment, to ensure that it is suitable and sufficient.

All bookings by/on behalf of external organisations will be considered an activity and the University (including the Students' Union) contact will be responsible for ensuring they are aware of all emergency procedures and provided with the appropriate information, before using the premises.

Visiting academics should be provided with information, so they are familiar with emergency arrangements and understand their responsibilities for evacuating students they are supervising.

Visitors to activities will be under the direction of the organiser/supervisor of the activity for the purpose of fire evacuation.

When booking a room, the suitability of that room must be considered in the risk assessment. For example, cooking as part of an activity in a room that is not a bespoke laboratory or kitchen would not be permitted as suitable, in most rooms. This is due to the risk of fire and the potential for accidentally activating the extensive fire detection equipment and the location of the room, in relation to welfare facilities. Not all rooms will have accessible toilets nearby, if required. It is, therefore, very important that University contacts are clear about the requirements for room bookings for use by external organisations.

4.2.1 Approval for work performed outside normal working hours, which may pose a higher risk to individuals due to the reduced availability of emergency assistance

Where the risk assessment has indicated that there is a higher risk of harm to individuals when the work is performed outside normal working hours (due to the lack of emergency assistance), the first consideration must be whether in fact that work needs to take place outside normal working hours.

If such work needs to be undertaken outside normal working hours, it is necessary for approval to be obtained at Director level.

4.2.2 Urgent and/or unplanned working outside normal working hours

There are occasions where staff need to stay behind, or come in, to complete work when unforeseen circumstances have arisen. This is not in itself problematic, where the work is low risk (for example working at a p.c.), providing the individual is aware of first aid, accident reporting procedures and evacuation arrangements.

An element of judgement is called for. A person in this situation should contact the Security Centre on 2083, giving details of where and for how long they are working. This procedure should be followed for all buildings, not just those with 24/7 opening.

4.3 Training for risk assessors

The Safety, Health and Environment Department provides training to enable staff to identify the risks associated with an activity and how to implement measures to reduce the risk of harm to people or to property.

Please consult the training planner on the Safety, Health and Environment Department's website: https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/hsu/training

5. THE FIVE STEPS TO ASSESSING RISKS IN THE WORKPLACE

In all cases, staff or their representatives should be consulted during the risk assessment process. Local Health and Safety Officers can provide valuable information too. Local adverse event reports can also indicate where problems may lie.

The standard generic risk assessment form, appended to this Code of Practice as a Word document on the Safety, Health and Environment Department website, should be used to record the findings of the risk assessment. There are some more specialised risk assessments, which may be carried out by staff other than supervisors, using different forms. Further information is given in Section 6 of this Code of Practice.

The Health and Safety Executive's guidance is that five steps should be taken to assess risks. They are outlined as follows:

- **Step 1** Identify the hazards
- **Step 2** Decide who might be harmed and how
- **Step 3** Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- **Step 4** Record your findings and implement them
- **Step 5** Review your assessment and update if needed

5.1 Step 1 - Identify the hazards

First, you need to work out how people could be harmed. When you work in a place every day it is easy to overlook some hazards, so here are some ways in which you can identify the ones that matter:

- Walk around your workplace and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm
- Ask employees or their representatives what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious to you
- Visit the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk). HSE publishes practical guidance on where hazards occur and how to control them. There is much information here on the hazards that might affect your work
- Visit the Safety, Health and Environment Department's website https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/staff/hsu/training
- Alternatively, call HSE Infoline (Tel: 0845 345 0055), who will identify publications that can help you, or contact Workplace Health Connect (Tel: 0845 609 6006), a free service providing practical advice on workplace health and safety

- Check manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals and equipment, as they can be very helpful in spelling out the hazards and putting them in their true perspective. This is dealt with in more detail in SCP6 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Review your adverse event and ill-health records – these often help to identify the less obvious hazards
- Remember to think about long-term hazards to health (e.g. high levels of noise or exposure to harmful substances) as well as safety hazards

5.2 Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard, you need to be clear about <u>who</u> might be harmed; it will help you identify the best way of managing the risk. That does not mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people (e.g. 'students working in the laboratory').

In each case, identify how they might be harmed, i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur. For example, 'cleaners may suffer back injury from repeated lifting of boxes'.

Remember:

- Some staff and students have particular requirements – e.g. new and young staff, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities may be at particular risk. Extra thought will be needed for some hazards
- Cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers etc. who may not be in the workplace all the time
- Members of the public, if they could be hurt by your activities
- If you share your workplace, you will need to think about how your work affects others present, as well as how their work affects your staff – talk to them
- Ask your staff if they can think of anyone you may have missed

5.2.1 Women of childbearing age

All risk assessments must include consideration towards women of childbearing age. Certain activities may have an effect on a foetus or a woman's reproductive system. Once a female member of staff or student is aware that she is pregnant, she must inform the following: line manager/tutor, HR Business Partner (staff member only).

A separate New and Expectant Mothers risk assessment will be undertaken locally. Further details are contained in SCP33 New and Expectant Mothers.

5.2.3 Young persons

The University must ensure that young persons it employs are protected at work from any risks to their health or safety that are a consequence of their lack of experience, or absence of awareness of existing or potential risks or the fact that young persons have not yet fully matured. "Young person" is defined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 as being any person who has not attained the age of eighteen.

Therefore, the University is prohibited from employing a young person for work:

- which is beyond his/her level of responsibility

- involving harmful exposure to agents which are toxic or carcinogenic, cause heritable genetic damage or harm to the unborn child or which in any other way chronically affect human health

- involving harmful exposure to radiation

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- involving the risk of accidents which it may reasonably be assumed cannot be recognised or avoided by young persons, owing to their insufficient attention to safety or lack of experience or training; or

- in which there is a risk to health from extreme cold or heat, noise or vibration

In determining whether work will involve the harm or risks mentioned above, regard shall be given to the results of the assessment. However, nothing contained in the points above should prevent the employment of a young person who is no longer a child (defined as being not over compulsory school age) for work:

- where it is necessary for his/her training

- where the young person will be supervised by a competent person; and

- where any risk will be reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable

No child (young worker under the compulsory school age) can be employed to do this work at the University.

5.3   Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Having spotted the hazards, you then have to decide what to do about them. The law requires you to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. You can work this out for yourself, but the easiest way is to compare what you are doing with good practice.

So first, look at what you are already doing, think about what controls you have in place and how the work is organised. Then compare this with the good practice and see if there is more you should be doing to bring yourself up to standard. In asking yourself this, consider:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

5.3.1   Heirarchy of control

When controlling risks apply the principles below, if possible, in the following order:

- Try a less risky option (e.g. switch to using a less hazardous chemical)
- Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding)
- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard (e.g. put barriers between pedestrians and traffic)
- Issue personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc.)
- Provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination).

Involve staff, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice and will not introduce any new hazards.

5.4   Step 4 – Record your findings and implement them

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after people and the University. Writing down the results of your risk assessment, and sharing them with your staff, encourages you to do this.

When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example 'Tripping over rubbish: bins provided, staff instructed, weekly housekeeping checks', or 'Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation used and regularly checked'.

For the risk assessment to be suitable and sufficient, you will need to demonstrate that:

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- A proper check was made
- You asked who might be affected
- You dealt with all the significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low
- You involved your staff or their representatives in the process

If there are many improvements that could be made, make a plan of action to deal with the most important things first. A good plan of action often includes a mixture of different things such as:

- A few cheap or easy improvements that can be done quickly, perhaps as a temporary solution until more reliable controls are in place
- Long-term solutions to those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health
- Long-term solutions to those risks with the worst potential consequences
- Arrangements for training employees on the main remaining risks and how they are to be controlled
- Regular checks to make sure that the control measures stay in place
- Clear responsibilities – who will lead on what action, and by when; who has responsibility to ensure that the control measures are in place and maintained

Remember, prioritise and tackle the most important things first. As you complete each action, tick it off your plan.

Keep the assessment readily available at the workplace. For example, wall-mounted risk assessment holders are used in higher risk areas of the University in order that staff and students can constantly acquaint themselves with the hazards and protective measures that are either are in place or required.

5.5 Step 5 - Review your risk assessment and update if needed

Few workplaces stay the same. Eventually, new equipment will be brought in, as could new substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense, therefore, to review what is being done on an ongoing basis. Every twelve months formally review where you are, to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back. There is room on the risk assessment proforma for the review date.

Look at your risk assessment. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements you still need to make? Have your staff in your area spotted a problem? Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

During the year, if there is significant change, please do not wait. Check your risk assessment and, where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you are planning your change – that way you leave yourself more flexibility.

If an accident happens during the year, this will require a review of the risk assessment.

6. "SPECIALISED" RISK ASSESSMENTS

As well as the generic risk assessments referred to in this Code of Practice, a number of more specialised risk assessments require to be undertaken. The information relating to these can be found in the associated Codes of Practice, which are indicated below:

Assessment type	Refer to
Fire Precautions	SCP2
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health	SCP6 and Guidance
Noise at Work	SCP8
Fieldwork, Visits, Expeditions and	SCP14

Adventurous Activities off University Premises	
Ionising Radiation	SCP16
Manual Handling	SCP17
Display Screen Equipment	SCP20
Placement of Students for Work Experience	SCP23
Travel and Working Overseas	SCP24
Team Wellbeing	A-Z Staff Policies and Guidelines *(People and Organisational Development)* and SCP35
Asbestos	SCP 29
First Aid	SCP30
New and Expectant Mothers	SCP33
Vibration at Work	SCP39
Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres	SCP42