

Health and Safety Risk Register Guidance

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1. Overview

Health and Safety risk management is the process by which hazards are identified, and risks are assessed, evaluated, and eliminated or controlled adequately.

The assessment and management of risk are initially recorded and monitored using a risk assessment (see also [Risk Management & Assessments | Health & Safety | University of Greenwich](#)). The Risk Register is a prioritised list of the risks identified during risk assessment.

This guidance document sets out the requirements for, and provides direction in collating, Health and Safety Risk Registers for all levels throughout the University.

A Health and Safety Risk Register is a ‘live’ document which seeks to capture the main significant risks that could inhibit achievement of the corporate and organisational key objectives, and it identifies the actions necessary to eliminate hazards or minimise those risks. It forms part of the wider University Risk Management framework which reflects the changing risk situation throughout the year and provides the health and safety link to the [University of Greenwich Risk Management Policy](#). Additionally, it will be an annex in the University Health and Safety Strategy.

2. Definitions

“**Hazard**” – Anything with the potential to cause harm (ill health or injury)

“**HSSWB**” - Health, Safety, Safeguarding and Wellbeing Board

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Senior leadership

Faculty Operating Officers / Directors of Service will work with their Health and Safety Manager to ensure that a local Health and Safety Risk Register is compiled, using the [HS_063 H&S Risk Register template](#), and discussed at their local Health and safety committee, as per [Faculty / Directorate H&S Committee Terms of Reference](#).

In addition, they will be required to report on their local Health and Safety Risk register at HSSWB.

3.2. Health and Safety Managers

The Health and Safety Manager will work with the Senior Leadership to ensure that a local Health and Safety Risk Register is compiled, using the risk register template.

As the competent advisor to the Faculty / Directorate, they will also:

- Ensure that measures to control the risks to an acceptable level are put in place and effective.
- Monitor and review these control measures, to ensure that they remain effective.
- Ensure the Health and Safety Risk Register is reviewed in line the University wide risk management policy and framework.
- Ensure the latest copy of the Risk Register is made available to the Associate Director of Health and Safety, for consideration against the Corporate Health and Safety risk register.

3.3. Associate Director of Health and Safety

The Associate Director of Health and Safety will formulate, develop, and regularly monitor the University Health and Safety Risk Register. This will indicate the University top risks, derived from the Health and Safety Risk Registers received from all Faculties/Directorates.

This register of significant strategic risks⁽¹⁾, and how they are to be managed, will be presented to, and monitored by the HSSWB, and may be escalated to the Vice Chancellors Executive as and when required. Additionally, the University H&S Risk Register will be presented annually, as part of the annual Health and Safety report, to the Governing Body.

⁽¹⁾ Those which score above the tolerance level proscribed by the Governing Body. For health and safety risks, this is any items attracting a score of 10 or above.

4. Guidance

The Health and Safety Risk Register pro-forma should be completed, with the Faculty/Directorate top risk profiles, as identified from local risk assessments, listed in order of priority and submitted to the Associate Director of Health and Safety.

The following should be included in the Health and Safety Risk Register:

- **Risk ID** – this should be a unique reference code for the risk. This is essential to ensure that no risks are missed, and the risks are not confused with one another.
- **Description of hazard/cause/effects/who may be harmed** – this should describe the nature of the hazard, how harm could arise and what the outcome of that harm could be.
- **Assessment of inherent risk** – this provides a means of initially measuring the level of risk before measures to control the risk are taken into account.
- **Control measures to mitigate risk** – the current and ongoing action(s) taken and procedures to reduce the likelihood of the harm occurring or the impact.
- **Residual risk** – An assessment of overall risk with controls applied. This should be used to identify where further action is required and enables priorities to be set. The appropriate risk category colour will automatically insert itself in the residual risk rating column.
- **Further actions to be undertaken** - the description of any additional measures that can, and will, be introduced to reduce the risk rating to as low as reasonably practicable. These should be SMART (**S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime bound)
- **Actions to be taken by whom/when** – the person(s) with the responsibility for ensuring that the further actions are undertaken, the risk is monitored and when and, where appropriate, effectively managed.

4.1. Assessment of Risk – Risk scores, Risk categories and Priorities for Further Action

The risk rating will be obtained by multiplying together the likelihood and impact scores.

Risk score = likelihood of the hazard to cause harm x impact

The inherent risk is the risk of something happening before any controls or safeguards are applied to mitigate the likelihood and/or impact. Measures to control the risk should be in place for each risk and re-assessed to determine the residual risk score which should mitigate the risk to as low as reasonably practicable until it is at a tolerable level.

A one to five scoring mechanism will be used to provide a position on a five by five (5 x 5) matrix. The score result will range from 1 to 25 (being the highest) which should then be placed in the appropriate risk category colour using the high, medium and low criteria.

The following table sets out the matrix:

SEVERITY or IMPACT	5 CATASTROPHIC	5	10	15	20	25
	4 MAJOR	4	8	12	16	20
	3 SERIOUS	3	6	9	12	15
	2 MODERATE	2	4	6	8	10
	1 MINOR	1	2	3	4	5
		1 RARE	2 UNLIKELY	3 POSSIBLE	4 LIKELY	5 ALMOST CERTAIN
		LIKELIHOOD				

The following table sets out the descriptions used for the impact categories:

Impact Descriptor	Impact Guide
1 (Insignificant)	Financial loss of less than 0.5% of university turnover (Less than £1.5m) or 0.5% of local budget
2 (Minor)	Financial loss of less than 1.5% of university turnover (Less than £4.5m) or less than 2% of local budget. No regulatory consequent No impact outside of local process or product Minor irreversible injury Internal adverse publicity
3 (Moderate)	Financial loss of less than 3% of university turnover (Less than £9m) or less than 5% of local budget Limited regulatory consequence Impact on other processes or products Major reversible injury Local adverse publicity
4 (Major)	Financial loss of less than 10% of university turnover (Less than £30m) or less than 20% of local budget Significant regulatory consequence Impact on many other processes or products Irreversible injury Death National adverse publicity
5 (Catastrophic)	Financial loss of more than 10% of university turnover (more than £30m) or more than 20% of local budget (Faculties/Directorates: more than 20% of budget) Substantial regulatory consequence Impact at strategic operational level Irreversible multiple injury Multiple deaths International adverse publicity Closure of business

The following table sets out the descriptions used for the likelihood categories:

Likelihood Descriptor	Likelihood Guide
1 Rare	1-5% likely to happen, for example once in the next 100 years
2 Unlikely	6-20% likely to happen, for example, once in the next 20 years
3 Possible	21-50% likely to happen, for example, once in the next two to five years
4 Likely	51-75% likely to happen, for example at least twice in the next two years
5 Almost certain	>90% likely to happen, for example, regularly in the next 12 months

The following table sets out the risk categories:

High (Red) Rating 15 or more	Medium (Amber) Rating 5 - 12	Low (Green) Rating 1 – 4
Immediate action is required to control and/or lower the level of risk. Exposure to the identified hazard is prohibited or severely restricted.	Continue to review the equipment, activities and system of work, with the aim of lowering the risk to the lowest possible level. Scores below 9 are considered tolerable, as per current University Risk appetite	Usually, no further action will be required except for monitoring to ensure the risk does not change and controls remain in place. However, if it is possible to reduce the risk levels still further, by using controls that are “reasonably practicable”, then this should be done.

The residual risk scores should be used to rank the top risk profiles (in particular, any related as High), identify the priorities for further actions to be taken to reduce the risks, and the most appropriate course of action.

Where the residual impact of risk is considered major or the likelihood is considered almost certain, these will be submitted to the Vice Chancellor’s Executive for review and acceptance. These Risks appear amber or red in the traffic lights system used in the Health and Safety Risk Register.

Where the impact of risk is considered fatal, these will be submitted to the Governing Body for review and acceptance. These risks appear red in the traffic light system used in the institutional risk register.

5. Further information

5.1. Related HSE Guidance:

Further general guidance on conducting risk assessments can be found on Health and Safety Executive (HSE) web pages; [Risk assessment: More detail on managing risk - HSE](#)

5.2. Related University documents:

- [HS_044 Risk Assessment Guidance](#)
- [HS_063 Risk Register Template](#)
- [University of Greenwich Risk Management Policy](#)
- [University of Greenwich H&S Strategy](#)

6. Document History

This document will be reviewed at least annually.

Details of previous reviews are as follows:

Review Date	Reviewer	Summary of Review
29/06/2023	Vikki Wood (AD H&S)	Updated to include revised corporate risk matrix
25/02/2025	Vikki Wood (AD H&S)	Transferred to new document template and branding / web accessibility review

09/04/2025	Vikki Wood (AD H&S)	Updated to reflect reporting of all over-tolerance items on the University risk register, not just the top 10.
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