

Health & Safety Support

Risk Assessment Guide for UK Businesses

This step-by-step guide walks you through the full process, using terminology and expectations aligned with UK regulators such as the HSE. You can use this as a practical reference or pair it with your own **risk assessment template UK** to streamline documentation.

1. Identify the Hazards

Start by walking around the workplace and observing activities, equipment, substances, and behaviours.

Consider:

- Physical hazards (machinery, slips, trips, manual handling)
- Chemical hazards (cleaning products, fumes, COSHH substances)
- Biological hazards (bodily fluids, bacteria, mould)
- Psychosocial hazards (stress, fatigue, lone working)
- Environmental hazards (noise, temperature, lighting)

2. Decide who might be harmed and how

A compliant UK risk assessment must specify *who* is at risk. This includes:

- Employees
- Contractors
- Visitors
- Members of the public
- Young workers, new starters, pregnant workers, or anyone with additional needs

Describe *how* harm could occur — for example: “Employees may suffer musculoskeletal injuries from repetitive lifting.”

3. Evaluate the risks and decide on controls

This is where you assess the likelihood and severity of harm, then decide on suitable control measures. Use the hierarchy of control:

1. **Eliminate** the hazard
2. **Substitute** with something safer
3. **Engineering controls**
4. **Administrative controls**
5. **PPE** (last resort)

For example:

- Replace a hazardous cleaning chemical with a safer alternative
- Install guarding on machinery
- Introduce training and safe-system-of-work procedures

A **risk assessment template UK** usually includes a scoring matrix (e.g., 1–5 for likelihood and severity) to calculate risk levels before and after controls.



4. Record your Findings

If you employ five or more people, you must record your assessment. Even if you don't, written evidence is strongly recommended.

Your record should include:

- The hazards
- Who may be harmed
- Existing controls
- Additional actions required
- Responsible persons
- Timescales
- Residual risk rating

This is where a structured **risk assessment template UK** helps maintain consistency and audit readiness.

5. Implement the Control Measures

A risk assessment is only effective if the actions are completed. Ensure:

- Staff receive training
- Procedures are updated
- Equipment is installed or maintained
- Supervisors monitor compliance

Assign responsibilities clearly and set realistic deadlines.

6. Review and Update Regularly

Risk assessments must be reviewed:

- Annually (best practice)
- After an incident or near miss
- When new equipment, processes, or chemicals are introduced
- When staffing or layout changes
- If legislation or guidance changes

Regular reviews ensure your assessment remains accurate and defensible.

8. Downloadable Template Available

[Contact us to receive an emailed Risk Assessment template](#)



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If you require tailored support, professional risk assessments or competent person services, please contact us at simon@kissafetyservices.co.uk

