

POLICY TITLE:	Risk Assessment (including Safe Systems of Work)
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Author:	Health & Safety team
Ratified by:	Lyn Madgwick, Group Health & Safety Manager
Responsible signatory:	David Watts, Director of Risk Management
Outcome:	<p>This policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory requirements are fulfilled within each unit, to carry out and record general risk assessments. • General risk assessments include the identification of specific risk assessments. • Actions identified through risk assessment are implemented. • The compilation of risk assessments at local level is as consistent as possible through the adaptation of generic risk assessments. • A standard tool is used across Priory Group for carrying out task specific assessments, as required.
Cross Reference:	<p>H35 Clinical Risk Assessment & Management H&S09 Control Of Contractors H&S11 Display Screen Equipment H&S13 Fire Safety H&S17 Hazardous Substances H&S26 Manual Handling (Including People Handling) H&S27 New and Expectant Mothers at Work H&S32 Personal Protective Equipment H&S36 Safety of Disabled and Temporarily Disabled Staff H&S45 Prevention and Management of Violence at Work H&S50 Working Alone H&S52 Young People at Work H&S67 Buildings and Maintenance HR04.9 Induction</p>

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Priory Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect

In order to ensure that this policy is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, email LegalandComplianceHelpdesk@priorygroup.com

RISK ASSESSMENT (INCLUDING SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK)

1 KEY POINTS CHECKLIST

- 1.1 Legal requirements and safe business practice demand that organisations understand and control the risks to health and safety which arise as a result of their activities.
- 1.2 Risk assessments should be undertaken and documented to cover the significant risks arising at each location. This should commence with the completion of **H&S Form: 28 Site Primary Generic Risk Assessment** for each site. This may not identify all of the hazards at the site and these will therefore require additional review and assessment.
 - 1.2.1 Additionally, a generic risk assessment should be conducted for each department (at larger sites). A number of H&S Form 28 series generic risk assessment templates are available to assist with this process.
- 1.3 Risk Assessments can also apply to a specific individual, covering such areas as moving and handling, risk of physical harm (such as choking, falling or self-harm), security risks (such as absconding) or use of display screen equipment (for further details refer to Divisional and Operational policies).
- 1.4 Generic risk assessments should identify when a more detailed 'site specific' risk assessment is required or where specific risk assessments are required to meet the requirements in the areas of noise, moving and handling, display screen equipment, violence, work equipment or hazardous substances. Some standardised risk assessments have been produced centrally which can be adapted to the circumstance. These are available from Priory Intranet Safety pages.
- 1.5 Risk assessments in place must be kept readily available and those affected informed of the outcomes of risk assessments. Colleagues should be consulted during the risk assessment process and always where their areas of working are being assessed. All risk assessments pertaining to the site should be shared with colleagues working at the site.
- 1.6 Where the need for significant action has been identified through risk assessment, measures to lower or control the risk should be undertaken within a suitable timescale.
- 1.7 Systems should be put in place locally to ensure that risk assessments are reviewed at least annually; when they are no longer valid, when significant changes occur, or in the event of a serious accident or incident.
- 1.8 General legal duties placed on employers also require that safe systems of work (SSOW) are adopted in the workplace. Priory Group often additionally uses 'Standard Operating Procedures' or 'SOP's' as part of a safe system of working.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 For effective safety management it is essential there is a system to identify and manage work activities that constitute a significant health and safety risk.
- 2.2 Section 3 of this policy explains what we mean by 'risk', highlights the importance of the physical and procedural controls put in place to help manage risk and provides the tools to enable local managers to record risk assessments.

3 WHAT IS RISK?

- 3.1 **Hazard** - When considering 'risk' one must first refer to the term 'hazard'. A 'hazard' is something with the potential to cause harm, loss or damage. Electricity, for example, is essential to modern living, but it has the potential to cause death, injury or fire.
- 3.2 **Risk** - is the likelihood or probability that a hazard will actually result in harm or loss in the circumstances in which we encounter it. Thus, the risk of harm from electricity on, say, a building site, where temporary cables are subject to wear and damage, and conditions are wet, is far greater than in a well-managed and maintained office building.
- 3.3 **Risk Controls** - are the measures put in place to ensure that although the hazard remains, the likelihood of it resulting in an accident is either eliminated, or reduced to an acceptable level. These measures may be physical (such as circuit protection devices to prevent electric shock) or procedural (such as regular recorded tests by electricians).
- 3.4 All areas of the Priory Group have to manage a range of risks in their day-to-day activities and it is helpful to be able to prioritise risk into categories – such as High, Medium, Low and Minor.
- 3.5 **Risk Categories** - The size or category of a 'risk' is determined by considering and aggregating three features:
- (a) **Probability** - the likelihood of something going wrong.
 - (b) **Severity** - of the outcome or consequences.
 - (c) **Exposure** - this considers how frequently the risk occurs and how many people are exposed to it.
- 3.5.1 Whilst a baseline can be established for each risk activity carried out at a Priory Group premises it must be remembered that special circumstances might temporarily increase risk. Thus, 'probability' may well increase when contractors are on site. Exposure will increase if large numbers attend an Open Day or similar event.
- 3.5.2 Such situations require review of the baseline controls and may warrant additional precautions.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Risk assessment is the process by which managers:
- (a) Identify the hazards in their area of management control, and the risks that may be present.
 - (b) Identify who could be harmed, including anyone especially at risk
 - (c) Identify the control measures needed to minimise risk and comply with any relevant legal requirement
 - (d) Implement the control measures.
 - (e) Review regularly or when change occurs.
- 4.2 Risk assessments are themselves a legal requirement and in most cases it is necessary to keep a written record of the assessment. This policy explains the Priory Group system for dealing with this important process.

5 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 The main legal requirement for risk assessment is contained within The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations in the UK, which requires employers:

"...to undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking, for the purposes of identifying the measures he needs to comply

with the requirements and prohibitions imposed upon him by or under the relevant statutory provisions...”

- 5.2 There is further legislation which covers specific hazards and these specific risk assessment requirements are addressed in other Priory Group Health and Safety policies and are referenced in Section 8 of this policy.

6 PRIORY STRATEGY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Clearly many intrinsic hazards are common to all Priory premises and the risk potential, unless there are special circumstances, will also be broadly similar. It is therefore both possible and sensible to produce a **generic risk assessment** for each of these common activities, or risks, noting the organisational and site control measures required with the intention that these assessments are put in place, adapted as necessary and signed and kept under review at all premises.
- 6.2 All generic risk assessments are available on the Priory Intranet Health and Safety pages for adaptation and use at sites. Where a specific risk assessment is required, this should be generated using the most appropriate risk assessment tool. Please contact the Central H&S Team for further advice and guidance where necessary.
- 6.3 Site/Service Leaders are required to put in place local arrangements that ensure that:
- (a) The generic assessments relevant to the premises are identified and completed suitably
 - (b) The control measures are determined, put in place and recorded.
 - (c) Any necessary improvement plan is prioritised and resourced.
 - (d) The risk assessment for the site is signed by themselves and shared with staff.
 - (e) The ongoing status of control measures is periodically reviewed.
 - (f) Where necessary, safe systems of work (SSOW) are completed and made available.
- 6.4 **Department Managers** are responsible for ensuring that generic and specific risk assessments are in place to cover the activities of their department. This will usually include Housekeeping, Maintenance and Catering Departments at larger sites as examples.
- 6.5 Departmental risk assessments do not duplicate the overall site risk assessment (the Primary site generic document). Instead they should build on the overall risk assessment by providing detail about how the department manages particular hazards. For example, whereas the generic risk assessment for the Site would indicate how slipping and tripping hazards are managed in general, the department risk assessment might identify particular layout issues within the department's work area. It is especially important that specific activities unique to the department are addressed, for example if there were particular risks of violence due to the type of work undertaken.
- 6.5.1 **H&S Forms: 28A, B, C, D, F, G, H and (SL)** have been designed to provide a generic risk assessment for specific departments. Each department lead/manager is responsible for ensuring these are completed, and regularly reviewed. Where necessary, additional H&S Forms in this generic series may be introduced where hazards are similar across the Priory Group.
- 6.6 Within generic risk assessments at departmental and Unit level, some specific activities will be identified which require a more detailed risk assessment (indicated in bold). These require a **specific activity risk assessment** to be carried out often using **H&S Form: 29**.
- 6.6.1 In addition, for larger sites, a register is required using **H&S Form: 29A Register of Risk Assessments** to detail each specific activity risk assessment completed for the site. This would be held in the Primary Evidence File.
- 6.7 **Specific Activity Risk Assessments and Core Risk Assessments** examine the hazards of the activity in detail. For example, within a kitchen, one of these assessments would usually be completed for the use of each type of hazardous equipment such as deep fat fryers.

Standardised assessments have been produced for commonly used equipment. These can be found on the intranet: [Policies & Forms/Health & Safety/Core Risk Assessments](#).

- 6.8 However, where the hazardous activity is required to be covered in much more specific detail, such as a COSHH assessment (**H&S Form: 45**) manual handling assessment (**H&S Forms: 10 or 11**), display screen assessment (**H&S Form: 04**), Potential for Violence & Aggression (**H&S Form: 33**) and so on, then the relevant specific form should be used instead.
- 6.9 For New and Expectant Mothers, a specific risk assessment is to be completed using **H&S Form 73 Checklist and Risk Assessment for New and Expectant Mothers**. This must be undertaken as soon as the colleague informs their line manager they are pregnant and reviewed at monthly intervals as a minimum review. Some generic examples are also available to assist with completion for different colleague roles.
- 6.10 **Safe Systems of Work** are required where a significant risk remains, despite the application of other risk control measures and the only way to adequately control the risk involves those carrying out the work, following a safe methodology. Specialist skills, equipment and other aspects as identified may also be required. **H&S Form: 47** is to be used to record all 'safe systems of work'.
- 6.10.1 Standard Operating Procedures or SOP's may also be produced to create a consistent, safe and compliant approach to an activity or circumstance. These may apply to the Division or Group-wide and all sites must work to the control measures detailed.
- 6.11 **H&S Form: 29 Specific Activity Risk Assessment** is to be used for documenting specific activity risk assessments.
H&S Form: 56 Service User Activity Risk Assessment is to be used to document service user activities,
H&S Form: 56A Off Site Activity Group List and Seating Plan should also be completed. (H&S Form: 56A is only required where a risk is identified).
Prior to undertaking adventurous activities, **H&S Form: 57 School Visit Adventurous Activities and Proposal Form** must be completed and authorised by the School/College Principal.
- 6.12 **Summary of Overall Approach to Risk Assessment within Units** - Generic risk assessments in place covering risks present in all the units, such as electricity, along with departmental risk assessments referring to a specific working area, such as a Catering Department. Further individual site risk assessments should be in place for specific activities, equipment, or processes. As previously noted, high risk activities may also require a safe system of work in place.
- 6.13 Site specific hazards can be identified at any time and must be appropriately risk assessed to ensure control measures to mitigate the risk are in place. Pre-populated risk assessment templates will not be available for every identified hazard and sites should use the most appropriate risk assessment form or seek advice from the Central H&S Team.
- 6.14 Risk assessments are an important tool in the effective management of health and safety. They must be made readily available for reference by colleagues and managers and should therefore be available within the departments to which they are relevant.

7 TRAINING

- 7.1 Training to enable persons to carry out risk assessment should be sourced via Priory Learning and Development. Assistance and guidance can also be provided by the Central H&S Team and Intranet Safety pages.

8 ASSOCIATED HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSESSMENTS

- 8.1 In addition to the risk assessments discussed in this policy, several health and safety regulations require specific types of assessment. These include:
- (a) **COSHH assessments** - relating to substances hazardous to health (see H&S17 and **H&S Form: 45** and **H&S Form: 45A**)
 - (b) **Manual handling assessment** - relating to risks associated with lifting or moving people or objects (see H&S26 and **H&S Forms: 10** and **11**)
 - (c) **Noise assessments** - relating to very noisy workplaces (see H&S67)
 - (d) **Display screen equipment assessments** - relating to computer workstations (see H&S11 and **H&S Form: 04** and **H&S Form: 04A Register**)
 - (e) **Fire risk assessments** - (see H&S13)
 - (f) **Young people** - relating to the employment of, or work experience placements by under 18 year olds (see H&S52) See also (**H&S Form: 94 Work Experience Risk Assessment**)
 - (g) **New and expectant mothers** - relating to individual pregnant and nursing mothers (see H&S27 and **H&S Form: 73**)
 - (h) **Violence** - a specific risk assessment tool for locations and functions where there is an identified risk of violence towards colleagues. (see H&S45 and **H&S Form: 33**)
 - (i) **Safe System of Work** - additional methodology covering high risk activities (**H&S Form: 47**)

9 VISITING WORKERS AND CONTRACTORS

- 9.1 Priory Group recognises its duty to put in place arrangements for the assessment and management of risk to its service users, employees, visitors and assets. Similarly, the Company expects its contractors to have in place suitable arrangements for managing risk when working at Priory establishments. Contractors risk assessment should take in to account the special safety and security considerations essential to the wellbeing of people in the care of Priory. Priory Contractor Control, and where appropriate, permit to work procedures, should be followed (see H&S09).
- 9.2 Those responsible for contract work need to ensure that Priory risk assessments are reviewed to take account of the changes and additional hazards which may be introduced as a result of contract work.

10 REVIEW

- 10.1 Systems must be put in place locally to ensure that risk assessments are regularly reviewed (no less than annually), whenever there has been a significant change, always after an incident/accident and at times of organisational change. It is almost certain that health and safety enforcement inspectors will request to examine risk assessments during any inspection visit.
- 10.2 There is no statutory time limit for the maximum period between reviews of risk assessments; however, within Priory Group the usual standard expected will be annual, unless changes have occurred.

11 RECORD KEEPING

- 11.1 Risk assessments must be accessible to those who may need to reference them. Where generic risk assessments have been documented for particular departments, these should be kept within the relevant departmental evidence file.

- 11.2 There is no legal requirement to keep a risk assessment once it has been replaced by a more recent version; however, it is advisable to retain previous risk assessments as they may be needed in a defence against civil proceedings, or for information purposes.

12 REFERENCES

12.1 Legislation

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000

Associated Forms:

H&S Form: 04	Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Assessment (including the use of laptops)
H&S Form: 04A	Register of DSE Users
H&S Form: 10	Manual Handling Assessment
H&S Form: 11	Moving & Handling Risk Assessment – Service User Assessment
H&S Form: 28	Site Primary Generic Risk Assessment Tool
H&S Form: 28(1)	Risk Rating Tables
H&S Form: 28A	Administrators/Reception Colleague Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28B	Domestic Compliance Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28C	Catering Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28D	Housekeeping and Laundry Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28F	Maintenance Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28G	Education Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28H	(WBC) Wellbeing Centres Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 28(SL)	Supporting You Primary Generic Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 29	Specific Health & Safety Activity Risk Assessment Tool
H&S Form: 29A	Register of Individual Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 33	Potential Violence Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 45	COSHH and DSEAR Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 45A	Register of Hazardous Substances
H&S Form: 47	Safe Systems of Work
H&S Form: 56	Service User Activity Risk Assessment
H&S Form: 56A	Off Site Group Activity List and Seating Plan
H&S Form: 57	School Visit Adventure Activities Proposal Form
H&S Form: 73	Checklist and Risk Assessment for New and Expectant Mothers
RA00	Blank Core Risk Assessment