

## Example risk assessment for an office-based business

The company has 18 staff, with one being a wheelchair user. The offices contain a kitchen where staff can make drinks and heat food – there are toilet and washing facilities on each floor. The offices are cleaned every evening by contractors, who store the cleaning chemicals in a locked cupboard. The office block is locked from 9 pm to 6 am Monday to Friday and at the weekends. The building also has 24 hour/7 days a week security cover.

### How was the risk assessment done?

The manager followed the advice at [www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/). To identify the hazards, they:

- walked around the office, noting things that might pose a risk;
- checked the HSE advice on employees with disabilities: [www.hse.gov.uk/disability/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/disability/);
- talked to supervisors and staff, including the wheelchair user, to learn from their experience and listen to their concerns;
- talked to the office cleaning contractors, to make sure the cleaning activities did not pose a risk to office staff;
- looked at the accident book to see how previous accidents had occurred.

They noted what was already being done to control the risks and recorded any further actions required. They pinned a copy of the findings on a noticeboard in the tearoom to encourage staff to help put the actions into practice.

The manager will review the risk assessment whenever there are any significant changes such as new work equipment, work activities or workers.

**Do not just copy this example and put your company name to it as that would not satisfy the law and would not protect your employees. You must think about the specific hazards and controls your business needs.**

The HSE site has a [template and other examples](#) to help you produce your own assessment.

# Risk assessment

Company name: Smith's Consultants

Assessment carried out by: J Smith (Manager)

Date assessment carried out: 12 September 2019

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Slips and trips	Staff and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General good housekeeping.</li> <li>• All areas well lit, including stairs.</li> <li>• No trailing leads or cables.</li> <li>• Staff keep work areas clear, eg no boxes left in walkways, deliveries stored immediately.</li> <li>• Offices cleaned every evening.</li> </ul>	Better housekeeping in staff kitchen needed, eg on spills.	All staff, supervisors to monitor	7/10/19	5/10/19
			Arrange for loose carpet tile on second floor to be repaired/replaced.	Manager	7/10/19	5/10/19
Manual handling of paper, office equipment etc	Staff risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy/bulky objects, eg deliveries of paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trolley used to transport boxes of paper and other heavy items when collecting deliveries etc.</li> <li>• High shelves for light objects only.</li> </ul>	Remind staff that they should not try to lift objects that look or appear too heavy to handle.	Manager	4/10/19	4/10/19

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<b>Display screen equipment</b>	Staff risk posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries, eg to their hands/ arms, from overuse or improper use or from poorly designed workstations or work environments. Headaches or sore eyes can also occur, eg if the lighting is poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSE training and assessments of workstation carried out by all new starters. Actions carried out asap.</li> <li>• Reassessment to be carried out at any change to work feature, eg equipment, furniture or the work environment such as lighting.</li> <li>• Workstation and equipment set to ensure good posture and to avoid glare and reflections on the screen.</li> <li>• Shared workstations are assessed for all users.</li> <li>• Work planned to include regular breaks or change of activity.</li> <li>• Lighting and temperature suitably controlled.</li> <li>• Adjustable blinds at window to control natural light on screen</li> <li>• Noise levels controlled.</li> <li>• Eye tests provided when needed, dutyholder to pay for basic spectacles specific for regular users of visual displays..</li> <li>• Laptop users trained to carry out own DSE assessment for use away from office. When used at office, laptop should be used with docking station, screen, keyboard and mouse.</li> </ul>	Supervisors to monitor to ensure staff continue to get breaks away from the computer.	Supervisors	4/10/19	4/10/19
			Check that identified actions from self-assessments are followed up ASAP.	Manager	21/10/19	4/10/19
			Tell staff that they are to inform their manager of any pain they have that may be linked to computer use.	All staff	21/10/19	21/10/19
			Broken window blind near accounts section – letter to landlord.	Company secretary	4/10/19	2/10/19
			Remind laptop users to carry out regular DSE assessment to avoid problems and identify any issues.	Manager	4/10/19	4/10/19
<b>Working at height</b> Filing on top shelves, putting up decorations etc	Falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff stand on chair to file on high shelves, put up decorations etc.</li> <li>• Internal windows cleaned by contractor using a stepladder.</li> </ul>	Chairs are too unstable. Buy appropriate stepladder and show staff how to use it safely.	Manager	4/10/19	3/10/19

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<b>Stress</b>	All staff could be affected by factors such as lack of job control, bullying, not knowing their role etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff understand what their duties and responsibilities are.</li> <li>• Staff can talk to supervisors or manager if they are feeling unwell or at ease about things at work.</li> <li>• 'No bullying' policy.</li> </ul>	Remind staff they can speak confidentially to their manager or supervisors if they are feeling unwell or or ill at ease because of work.	Manager	4/10/19	3/10/19
<b>Electrical</b>	Staff could get electrical shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment. Electrical faults can also lead to fires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff trained to spot and report (to office administrator) any defective plugs, discoloured sockets or damaged cable/equipment.</li> <li>• Defective equipment taken out of use safely and promptly replaced.</li> <li>• Staff told not to bring in their own appliances, toasters, fans etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask landlord when the next electrical installation safety check is due.</li> <li>• Confirm the system with landlord for making safe any damage to building installation electrics, eg broken light switches or sockets.</li> </ul>	Office administrator	4/10/19	4/10/19
<b>Asbestos</b> Asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) are present in some partition walls	Staff carrying out normal activities at very low risk. Asbestos only a risk if fibres are released into air and inhaled. Maintenance workers most at risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems in place to inform contractors and others who might disturb the asbestos, where it is and to ensure safe working.</li> <li>• Partition walls in good condition and asbestos unlikely to be disturbed during normal activities.</li> <li>• 'Danger, asbestos, do not disturb' signs posted at partition walls.</li> <li>• Staff told to report any accidental damage immediately.</li> <li>• Condition of partition walls checked periodically.</li> </ul>	At next staff meeting, remind staff that the asbestos must not be disturbed and to report any accidental damage to the partition walls immediately.	Manager	4/10/19	4/10/19

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<b>Fire</b>	If trapped, staff could suffer fatal injuries from smoke inhalation/ burns.	Working with landlord, fire risk assessment done, see <a href="http://www.fire.gov.uk/workplace+safety/">www.fire.gov.uk/workplace+safety/</a> and necessary action taken.	Ensure the actions identified as necessary by the fire risk assessment are done.	Manager	From now on	
<b>Lone working</b>	Staff could suffer injury or ill health while out of toffice, eg visiting clients' offices, or while working alone in the office.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff write visit details in office diary and give a contact number.</li> <li>• Staff not returning to the office after a visit call in to report this.</li> <li>• Security staff check all areas, including toilets, before locking up at night.</li> </ul>	Whereabouts of staff 'out of the office' to be monitored by office-based staff.	Office admin team	From now on	