

School of GeoSciences

Risk Assessments and Responsible Persons (January 2006)

One objective of the Management (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations (1992) is to recognise and eliminate, so far as is reasonably practicable, hazards in the workplace and to assess and control those risks which remain in a way which is appropriate and cost effective.

It is an absolute duty under the Management Regulations for the University to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments in all areas of the workplace. Failure to do so is a breach of the regulations which could result in a criminal prosecution and/or a civil claim of negligence. In either case the University and School must be able to **prove** compliance by producing documentary evidence. If this does not exist the courts can impose a fine, imprisonment, and/or award compensation to any injured party.

Risk assessment involves:

1. Hazard identification
2. Identifying who is at risk and how they might be harmed
3. Risk evaluation (severity and probability of occurrence)
4. Examination of existing controls
5. Recommendations for improvement or avoidance of risk
6. Record assessment and action to be taken
7. Implement, monitor, review, and revise

It will cover:

1. General aspects of the workplace, including housekeeping, fire, and electrical safety
2. The equipment, substances, and materials used
3. The work carried out and the procedures followed
4. Information, instruction, training, and supervision

Hazards fall into two categories:

1. Generic, ie common to all areas of the Department (eg fire safety)
2. Specific, ie relevant to particular areas, substances, and procedures

Generic hazards will normally be assessed by the Health & Safety Adviser. Specific hazards will be assessed by the designated Responsible Person assisted by the Health & Safety Adviser if necessary.

All areas of the School will be attributed to a Responsible Person

The duties of the Responsible Person are to:

1. Evaluate tasks
2. Define safe methods
3. Devise, implement, and monitor Safe Systems of Work
4. Be satisfied as to competence of those working in the area
5. Communicate Safe Systems of Work to those working in the area
6. Cooperate with the University and Institute so that statutory obligations are fulfilled

Note: 1 to 5 must be carried out before any new work or procedure is started, before any change is made to existing procedures, or when any event occurs or action is taken which may compromise health and safety.