



### **Initiating the risk assessment process**

Organisations are required under health and safety legislation to protect people as far as is 'reasonably practicable'. In particular, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require organisations to assess the risks in their workplaces and to put plans in place to control the risks.

The Children and Vulnerable Adults Risk Assessment process will be initiated by the following circumstances (although other situations may trigger this procedure if deemed appropriate by the department/institution):

- Recruitment to a new or existing post which involves working with children and/or vulnerable adults;
- The commencement of new activities or events involving or potentially involving children and or vulnerable adults;
- Changes being made to activities or events involving or potentially involving children and or vulnerable adults.

Please note that where there are multiple posts, activities or events of a similar nature, it is unnecessary to complete an individual risk assessment for each of them. Instead, it is possible to complete an overarching assessment for a particular type of post, activity or event and ensure that it manages the relevant risks appropriately.

Once it has been identified that the risk assessment process should be initiated, it is vital that the person responsible for the relevant recruitment campaign, activity or event includes completion of this within his/her planning process and ensures that it is completed.

### **Completing the risk assessment process**

A risk assessment must be completed in advance of the relevant recruitment campaign, activity or event by a competent person (where there are not current, adequate and documented risk management procedures already in place). Risk assessments must be completed by a competent person; that is, is someone who understands the job, activity or event and is aware of the hazards. It is important to note that the Company's insurance may be invalid if a claim is made and no risk assessment is in place.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to enable the responsible person to identify, mitigate and remove any potential risks relating to contact with children or vulnerable adults. This can also be a prompt to consider alternative working practices, such as minimising occasions where an individual is alone with a child or vulnerable adult and considering whether the activity could be supervised or observed by others.

Any actions identified as a result of completing the risk assessment must be completed within the timescales specified on the form.

The risk assessment should:

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- Identify the nature, length and frequency of the contact and if it would be supervised or unsupervised;
- Consider if there will be children and adults who are particularly at risk;
- Consider whether any children or vulnerable adults have allergies, are on medication, have any disabilities (physical or mental), or any behavioural difficulties;
- Identify any potential areas for harm;
- Evaluate the risks;
- Determine actions to prevent harm occurring, which might include consideration of alternative working practices, and prompt individuals to ensure that they are implemented;
- Identify those situations that would require a DBS check or a basic disclosure check.

Completed risk assessments should be retained by departments/institutions whilst and activity/event is ongoing and for five years after it has ceased (or the risk assessment has been superseded). Where an activity is ongoing but unchanged, departments/institutions should review the risk assessment on a regular basis to ensure that the measures put in place are still relevant and appropriate.

It is important for departments/institutions to remember to complete a risk assessment prior to any work experience placement being provided.