

Risk Assessments and Safety Checks Policy

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Key messages

The main objective of this policy is to:

- Describe the circumstances in which Risk Assessments will take place at the ICO, who will undertake them, and the process for their review.
- Describe the regular health and safety checks which will take place at our premises, who will undertake them and the frequency with which they will occur.
- Describe the process for taking actions arising from the Risk Assessments and safety checks.
- Document the reporting process for Risk Assessments and Safety Checks so that there is governance oversight of the process to ensure that they are effective.

Does this policy relate to me?

This policy applies to the Facilities and H&S Teams and their practices. It also applies any staff member who may be planning activities or events which involve new or novel elements which may present some element of risk.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Fire Risk Assessment.....	2
3. Regular Activity Risk Assessments.....	3
4. Non-regular Activity	5
5. Safety Checks	5
Feedback on this document.....	6
Version history	6

1. Introduction

- 1.1. It is the policy of the ICO to minimise the risks and hazards involved in working for the organisation or visiting our premises.
- 1.2. We will do this by ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient Risk Assessments completed for all key business as usual activities of the business and our people, and for when we undertake new or one-off activities which may involve some element of risk.
- 1.3. Our Risk Assessments will be proportionate to the needs of the organisation and our people, and ensure that our working practices are safe as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.4. We will also undertake regular safety checks to ensure that our facilities are safe and in a well maintained state. These checks will also provide the opportunity to feedback to departments where improvements in use of the buildings may be required, for example adherence to clear desk policies and safe storage of items.

[Back to Top](#)

2. Fire Risk Assessment

- 2.1 As detailed in the ICO's Fire Policy, a Fire Risk Assessment will be conducted at each of the ICO's premises. They will be reviewed if there are any significant changes that could affect fire risk such as

changes to the structure or layout of the building, changes to the nature of activities taking place or changes to occupancy which could impact on fire safety.

- 2.2 The risk assessment is designed to identify the potential for fire in the premises including the sources of ignition, location of combustible materials, the safety of evacuation routes, and the means of fighting fire.
- 2.3 A key aim of the risk assessment is to identify remedial action which must, should or could be taken to improve fire safety, and to reduce the risk of fire occurring and spreading.
- 2.4 A competent person will be appointed to conduct the risk assessment. If necessary, this may be outsourced to a suitable private contractor. Reviews of the risk assessment will be discussed with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.
- 2.5 The fire risk assessment will be kept in an accessible area of the Electronic Document Record Management system.

3. Regular Activity Risk Assessments

- 3.1. The ICO will undertake Risk Assessments for standard business activities undertaken by staff and risks which may arise in the workplace. These Risk Assessments will be led by the Health and Safety Manager, engaging with relevant stakeholders, and liaising with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee where necessary.
- 3.2 Standard business activities and risks include, but are not limited to, actions such as:
 - Use of Display Screen Equipment
 - Slips, trips and falls
 - Manual Handling
 - First Aid provision
 - Facilities operations
 - Office equipment and systems
 - Business travel
 - Lone Working
 - Workplace stress
 - Pregnancy and new motherhood

- 3.3 The Risk Assessment methodology used will be appropriate to the individual activity/risk. This will typically be based on the HSE model of Risk Assessment, though other assessment formats may be used.
- 3.4 Where risk scoring is used it will be based on the ICO's business risk scoring mechanism, as described in the [Risk and Opportunity Management Procedure](#).

This entails attributing scores of 1 – 5 for the Likelihood of an incident occurring and also for the Impact if it did occur.

The final risk rating is calculated as Likelihood x Impact.

Likelihood /Probability	Impact: Very Low	Impact: Low	Impact: Medium	Impact: High	Impact: Very High
Very High	5	10	15	20	25
High	4	8	12	16	20
Medium	3	6	9	12	15
Low	2	4	6	8	10
Very Low	1	2	3	4	5

- 3.5 The objective will be to eliminate risks or mitigate them as far as is reasonably practicable.
- 3.6 Risk Assessments will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there is material change to the circumstances which have been assessed.

- 3.7 Risk Assessments will be accessible to all staff unless they specifically refer to the needs of named members of staff or contain other sensitive information.

[Back to Top](#)

4. Non-regular Activity

- 4.1. If a new or novel activity is to be undertaken which may have potential for harm, then a Risk Assessment must be undertaken. Examples include, but are not limited to, things like:
- A staff event or off-site away day
 - Business travel which is not covered by a generic Risk Assessment.
 - Use of new equipment which has the potential to cause harm.
- 4.2 If you are unsure whether a new or novel activity may require a Risk Assessment, you **must** liaise with the Health and Safety Manager.
- 4.3 Risk Assessments will be completed by the manager who is responsible for the activity in liaison with the Health and Safety Manager. If appropriate, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee may be engaged or consulted.
- 4.4 The format of the Risk Assessments will be as described above in Section 3, and if scoring is used it will use the mechanism described in Section 3.
- 4.5 These Risk Assessments will be stored on EDRM and will be accessible to staff unless they contain sensitive or personal information.

[Back to Top](#)

5. Safety Checks

- 5.1. In order to ensure that our offices are well maintained, the Facilities Team will undertake regular checks of our premises and facilities. These checks will be recorded.

5.2 The checks to be undertaken, and their minimum frequency, are as set out in the table below. The differences in frequency of checks reflect differences in levels of risk, occupancy levels of the office, and the availability of Facilities Team members.

	Wilmslow	London	Belfast	Cardiff	Edinburgh
Safety checklist	Monthly	Monthly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
First Aid kit check	Monthly	Monthly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly
Fire 'Walk-about'	Monthly	Monthly	Quarterly	Quarterly	N/A
Water temperature	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	Quarterly	N/A

5.3 The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee will be informed of any issues of material concern emerging from these checks, as well as confirmation of the number of checks which have taken place.

5.4 The Health and Safety Manager and Facilities Manager will meet each month to discuss these checks and record updates to other checks which have taken place eg lift operations, gas boiler checks.

[Back to Top](#)

Feedback on this document

If you have any feedback on this document, please [click this link](#) to provide it.

[Back to Top](#)

Version history

Version	Changes made	Date	Made by
1.0	New document created	January 2024	Mike Collins

2.0	Scheduled review of policy	November 2025	Mike Collins

[Back to Top](#)