

Essex Blades Risk Assessment Guidance 2026-7



What is a Risk Assessment?

Risk assessments are a legal document required under Health and Safety law.

It is a document that evaluates the potential risks that may be involved in an activity

- 1) Thinking about what might harm people
- 2) Identifying any necessary steps to keep people safe



Why do I need to complete a Risk Assessment?

- A core risk assessment is a requirement for each sports club to have in order to proceed with room bookings and your activity.
- Sports clubs are required to complete, understand and adhere to your risk assessment to ensure your sports club is covered on our insurance policy.
- This process shows that your sports club has put controls in place to ensure the safety of your members and participants and anyone else around your event and that you have taken reasonable steps to make your activity safe for all involved.



DEFINITIONS

Hazard (H)

something that has the potential to cause harm

Hazardous event (HE)

takes place when someone or something interacts with the hazard and allows it to cause harm.

Consequence (C)

known as harm, associated with that event

Risk

The likelihood of that hazard causing harm



HAZARD

A **HAZARD** is something that has the potential to harm you



RISK

RISK is the likelihood of a hazard causing harm



Why do we carry out Risk Assessments?

- To identify what risks there are
- To determine how the risks arise and the impact on those affected.
- To aid decisions on how to manage the risk.
- To ensure that action taken is proportionate to the risk.



What is a core Risk Assessment?

- Assesses the risks of your regular activity as a sports club
- **You only need to complete this once for the year** (unless your activity significantly changes)
- This saves you having to complete numerous documents throughout the year
- **Compulsory for each sports club to complete**

Deadline is: Friday 2nd October to submit to your sports club's core risk assessment to blades@essex.ac.uk.



5 Steps to complete a Risk Assessment

1. Identify the hazard
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks.
4. Record your findings and implement any control measures.
5. Review and update when necessary.



1) Identify the hazards

Common examples include:

- Manual handling (lifting/moving equipment)
- Electronic equipment
- Wires (trip hazards)
- Crowds
- Food poisoning
- Food allergy
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Slips, trips and falls
- Equipment (e.g. broken tables or chairs)
- Dancing or sports activities
- Aggressive behaviour
- Offensive or sensitive content
- Face paint
- Henna
- Travel
- Safeguarding concerns
- Fire



2) Decide who might be harmed and how

- Consider where your event is taking place e.g. is this a closed space or public setting?
- Consider when your training session/match/social/stall is taking place e.g. if lunchtime on squares there will be lots more people around
- Review who might be affected by each hazard you have listed.

An activity may impact only members/participants, or it could affect a wider audience and members of the public.

For example, a training session may only impact the participants that attend the session, whereas a match held on the pitches/sports arena/sports hall could impact students, staff or members of the public.



3) Evaluate the risks

Identify whether each hazard is a low, medium or high risk based on the likelihood and severity of any given risk.

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Likelihood} \times \text{Severity}$$

How likely is it that the hazard might cause harm?

How severe are the implications if the hazard does occur?



Evaluating the Risk - Likelihood

Likelihood - How likely is it that the hazard might cause harm?

Use the scoring matrix below to decide on a score for likelihood (1-7):

When evaluating the risk, it's important to remember this is the likelihood of the hazard causing harm without any control measures.

L i k e l i h o o d	1 - Effectively Impossible
	2 - Unlikely
	3 - Plausible
	4 - Possible
	5 - Probable
	6 - Very Likely
	7 - Almost Certain



Likelihood example

Hazard: Trailing cable

Likelihood score pre-control measure: 6

Control measure: place a cable cover over the cable to secure it and make this visible to participants with hazard tape.

New likelihood score post control measure: 2

By putting control measures in place, the hazard is still there, but the likelihood of it causing harm has been reduced.

L i k e l i h o o d	1 - Effectively Impossible
	2 - Unlikely
	3 - Plausible
	4 - Possible
	5 - Probable
	6 - Very Likely
	7 - Almost Certain



Evaluating the Risk - Severity

Severity - How severe are the implications if the hazard does occur?

Use the scoring matrix below to decide on a score for severity (1-7):

Severity						
1 - No harm	2 - Discomfort	3 - First Aid	4 - Minor Injury/Illness	5 - Hospital Admission	6 - Permanent Harm	7 - Fatality



Severity Example

Severity						
1 - No harm	2 - Discomfort	3 - First Aid	4 - Minor Injury/Illness	5 - Hospital Admission	6 - Permanent Harm	7 - Fatality

Hazard: Fire

Severity score pre-control measure: 7

Control measures: Fire exits will be clearly marked, fire detection system regularly checked, fire extinguishers in the venues.

Severity score post-control measure: 7

Most often the control measures will reduce the likelihood of the hazard causing harm, but the severity won't change.

In this example, despite all measures, if there is a fire and someone got trapped the outcome/severity of the incident would still be the same, but the chance of them getting trapped has been reduced.



Evaluating the Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES

		Severity						
		1 - No harm	2 - Discomfort	3 - First Aid	4 - Minor Injury/Illness	5 - Hospital Admission	6 - Permanent Harm	7 - Fatality
Likelihood	1 - Effectively Impossible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	2 - Unlikely	2	4	6	8	10	12	14
	3 - Plausible	3	6	9	12	15	18	21
	4 - Possible	4	8	12	16	20	24	28
	5 - Probable	5	10	15	20	25	30	35
	6 - Very Likely	6	12	18	24	30	36	42
	7 - Almost Certain	7	14	21	28	35	42	49

Key	Action
Low Priority	Take reasonable precautions where possible
Medium Priority	Put in place control measures to mitigate risk
Urgent Priority	Put in place control measures to mitigate risk
High Priority	Thorough evaluation of whole event must take place and all possible mitigations must be employed to reduce risk

The colour signifies the action required

Use this matrix grid to work out the overall risk of that hazard.

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Likelihood} \times \text{Severity}$$

Example: likelihood of 4 and severity of 3 = a risk score of 12 (3 x 4 = 12)

3) Evaluate the risks

Risk is part of everyday life and you won't be able to eliminate all hazards, but the aim is to reduce them where possible.

Identify any significant risks using the scoring matrix (those scoring red or blue need urgent attention) and review control measures to reduce those risks.



4) Record and implement control measures

Record the steps you will take to reduce the risk of hazards to the lowest level possible.

Consider the following:

- Can the hazard be removed?
- Can the hazard be isolated?
- Are participants experienced/trained?
- Emergency procedures in place e.g. knowing the contact details for security to call them for first aid emergencies



Recording the Assessment

The record should show the significant findings of the assessment and should lead you to taking action to correct the situation.

The significant findings of the assessment that need to be recorded are:

- The control measures that are in place
- Further action that is needed
- Proof that a suitable and sufficient assessment has been made



How to fill out a risk assessment



Club core risk assessment template

[insert club]

Location:	Enter the locations where your activity typically takes place e.g. teaching spaces
Assessor:	Insert exec
People at risk:	List those at risk e.g. members, participants,
Other persons at risk:	List others who could be harmed e.g. university staff, security staff, volunteers, students, general public

RISK ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES

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Pre-control measures we have evaluated that slips, trips and falls for this event would be a risk score of 12.

After putting control measures in place, re-evaluate the likelihood score and severity.

Now the risk score has been reduced to 8 as the likelihood of tripping has now been reduced by making sure personal belongings are out the way.

Hazard (H) Hazardous Event (HE) Consequence (C)	Pre-Control Risk Rating			Control Measures	Post Control Risk Ratings			Comments
	L	S	Risk Score		L	S	Risk Score	
H-Racket HE-Person waiting to play gets too close to people playing/ fall/collision. C- Bleeding/cut/concussion/Member gets hit by racket	3	5	15	Ensure all equipment is set up correctly and safely. Remind members to maintain a safe distance of at least 1 metre from any player who is actively playing. Ensure all players have sufficient grip on rackets; players informed to keep hold of rackets at all times. All participants new to tennis will be taught how to safely swing a racket, as well as any associated risks.	2	5	10	



Risk scores

- After control measures are in place, the risk score should reduce. The aim is to always have a lower risk score post control measures.
- However, just because the risk score has changed, it does not mean that the risk category (colour of risk) has changed. That's okay and the colour won't always change.

Example, the risk score could drop from a 16 (yellow) to 12 (yellow), but the most important thing is the risk has reduced.

- Risk scores should not be red post control measures

		RISK ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES						
		Severity						
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How to fill out a risk assessment

At the end of the document, two different execs need to sign off the risk assessment

The person signing this assessment must check the information above to ensure it is relevant to this operation on this site. Additionally, any additional controls measures deemed necessary must be included.		
Signed Author	Insert staff member who is leading the stall	Date:
Signed Checked By	A different staff member must sign off	Date:

Action Plan

Hazard No.	Details of Action to be Taken	Action by who	Target Date	Completion Date	Signature
1					
2					
3					

Action plan is optional to allocate tasks. For example, Vice President to ensure all electrical equipment has been PAT tested before the start of term.



What is an additional Risk Assessment?

- This is for anything that isn't covered in your core risk assessment and regular activity.
- An additional risk assessment is necessary to cover any one off events you organise, and is specific to the space you wish to hold this.



Examples of additional Risk Assessments

Depending on your regular activity, additional risk assessments may be required for the following:

- 1) Travel (transport to matches)
- 2) Events on squares that aren't stall bookings, such as performances during fresher's week
- 3) Bake sales



Electrical items

PAT (portable appliance testing) is the examination of portable electrical equipment to ensure they are safe to use.



Portable electrical devices (anything with a plug and lead) must be tested every year.

The only exception is brand new equipment, which doesn't need to be tested until it's 12months old (from purchase).

If you sports club owns any electrical items, please get in touch and we can arrange a time for one of our PAT testers at the SU to inspect and test the equipment before you need to use this. Items must have an up to date PAT sticker to be used.



Food hygiene certification



- If you wish to have homemade food at your event, you will need to have at least a Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate and provide a copy of this to us before you hold your event.
- Each sports club can sign an exec member up for the short course for FREE. Follow this link to register your interest in completing this course. <https://essexsu.typeform.com/to/GudabCmg> Once completed, we will send you an access code to complete the course.
- All homemade and shop bought food items **must** be labelled with their ingredients, any possible allergens and if they are vegetarian, vegan or gluten free items (Natasha's Law.)



Thank you!

For any questions about completing a risk assessment please contact blades@essex.ac.uk.

