

## **Risk Assessment Policy & Guidance**

**December 2023**

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#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all member organisations of the Ambitious about Autism Group.

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## Policy

### 1. Risk Assessment Policy Statement

Ambitious about Autism is committed to ensuring that risk assessments are carried out in respect to all activities, processes, and substances used and that these are regularly reviewed and documented. This responsibility rests with the Executive Leadership Team or their nominated competent staff members as stated in the Health & Safety Policy.

### 2. Legal Framework

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 places duties on the employer to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, work is safe and without risk. This also extends to anyone not at work but who may be affected by their undertakings e.g., service users, visitors, contractors, volunteers, and members of the public.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk should be undertaken of all work that could pose a risk to health. The purpose of this policy is to address the assessment of risk under the regulations.

Other legislation, notably the COSHH Regulations, the Manual Handling Regulations and the Display Screen Equipment Regulations also require risk assessments of specific areas of work. Ambitious about Autism also has a number of policies that cover the duties to assess risk. These include:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid & Health Care Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Driving at Work Policy
- Hybrid Working Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Wellbeing Policy

The purpose of this document, therefore, is to:

- (a) provide guidance to enable Ambitious about Autism to comply with risk assessment duties as required by law.
- (b) introduce a structured, systematic, and pro-active approach to the management of risk.
- (c) outline the five principal steps to risk assessment.

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### 3. Definitions

**Risk Assessment:** A structured and systematic procedure for identifying hazards and evaluating risks, in order to eliminate or control them to an acceptable level.

**Hazard:** Something with the inherent potential to cause harm (personal injury, loss or property damage). This can include activities, substances, machinery and methods of work.

**Risk:** The likelihood of someone being harmed by the hazard and how seriously. The magnitude of the risk is measured in terms of its consequences, frequency, and severity. It can be expressed as:

$$\text{Risk} = \text{Likelihood/Probability of Occurrence} \times \text{Hazard Severity}$$

### 4. Competency

Risk Assessments should be conducted by competent staff nominated by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Assessors should have an understanding of the workplace, an ability to make sound judgements and the knowledge and experience of the best ways to reduce identified risks. Competency does not require a particular level of qualification, but training is recommended.

It is good practice for assessors to be familiar with environments, tasks or activities being undertaken.

### 5. Authority, Approval and Agreement

Authority and approval must be obtained for every risk assessment prior to any activity taking place.

Members of ELT can delegate elements of responsibility to their team members, but only if they are trained or suitably competent to do so.

All risk assessments must be read, understood, and signed by all members of staff completing or carrying out the relevant task or activity.

All risk assessments must be reviewed on each occasion that an activity takes place to ensure that they are fit for purpose and that there are no significant changes.

Each service should establish and maintain a risk assessment approval procedure to ensure new risk assessments are produced and approved in line with this policy.

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## 6. Suitable and Sufficient Assessment

A 'suitable and sufficient assessment' as required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is one that:

- correctly and accurately identifies a hazard.
- disregards minor risks and those risks associated with daily life.
- determines the likelihood of injury or harm arising.
- quantifies the severity of the consequences and the numbers of people who would be affected.
- takes into account any existing control measures.
- identifies any specific legal duty or requirement relating to the hazard.
- will remain valid for a reasonable period of time.
- provides sufficient information to enable ELT to decide upon appropriate control measures.
- enables the organisation to prioritise remedial measures.

## 7. Carrying out a Risk Assessment

### Step 1: Look for the Hazards

Review the workplace or activity to identify any significant hazards. Involve staff, volunteers, and learners as they may be aware of hazards which are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers' instructions, data sheets, check lists and incident/accident records will assist in identifying hazards.

### Step 2: Decide Who Might be Harmed and How

Consider who will be using the area or doing the task e.g., staff, learners, volunteers, contractors, members of the public, cleaners or maintenance staff. Think about how they may be harmed. Pay particular attention to lone workers, young people and those with disabilities as they may be more vulnerable.

### Step 3: Assess the Risks

Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or not.

Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risks remain. Decide for each significant hazard whether this remaining risk is acceptable. Consider whether the existing precautions:

- meet the standards set by legal requirement.
- comply with a recognised industry standard.
- represent good practice.
- reduce risk as far as is reasonably practicable.

If the answer to any of the above is 'NO' then consider what further precautions can be taken to control the risk so that harm is unlikely.

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## Step 4: Record Assessment Findings

An assessment should be supported by accurate record keeping which should contain the following information:

- A description of the process/activity assessed.
- Identification of the significant risks.
- Identification of any staff and learners at particular risk.
- Date of assessment and next review date.
- The name of the person carrying out the assessment.

## Step 5: Assessment Review

An assessment must be kept up to date and reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains valid. Factors that may necessitate an automatic re-assessment include:

- a change in legislation.
- a change in control measures.
- any significant change in the work carried out.
- transfer to new technology.
- any other reason where the original assessment is no longer valid or could be improved.
- a change in the best practice methodologies recognised, adopted, and used within Ambitious About Autism for young people with autism.

## 8. Hazard and Risk Control

Choosing the most appropriate hazard and risk control method is crucial to reducing the risk of injury or ill health. It may be necessary to implement various different measures together to adequately reduce the risk:

- Elimination (e.g. buying ready-sawn timber rather than use a circular saw).
- Substitution by something less hazardous.
- Guarding/segregation of people from the hazard.
- Permit to work systems.
- Reduction of the period of exposure.
- Written procedures that are known and understood by those affected.
- Adequate supervision, training and resources.
- Information/instruction (signs, labels, posters).
- Personal protective equipment (PPE).

PPE should be used as a last resort in the absence of any more reliable or permanent means of control.

All these measures should be considered within the overall context of achieving 'a safe system of work' that reduces the risk to an acceptable level.

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## 9. Evaluating the Risk and Setting Priorities

A risk assessment should enable Ambitious about Autism to prioritise remedial measures. In many cases it will be clear that some risks are more urgent than others. Where there is uncertainty, a risk rating may be attributed to each identified hazard. The factors relating to severity and likelihood of harm are given a numerical value and then multiplied together to give a risk rating.

**Risk Level Diagram**

<b>Likelihood</b>	5	10	15	20	25
	4	8	12	16	20
	3	6	9	12	15
	2	4	6	8	10
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Severity</b>					

**Risk Rating Scale**

Hazard Severity		X	Likelihood/Probability	
10 - 25	Major Injury, Death		10 - 25	Very Likely, Certain
4 - 9	Loss Time Injury, Minor injury		4 - 9	May Happen, Likely
1 - 3	Insignificant Injury, Very Minor Injury		1 - 3	Very Unlikely, Unlikely

$$\text{RISK} = \text{LIKELIHOOD/PROBABILITY OF OCCURRENCE} \times \text{HAZARD SEVERITY}$$

The risk level diagram above can be used to categorise hazards as follows:

- **Green** – low risk. Continue but review periodically to ensure controls remain effective.
- **Amber** - medium risk. Continue but implement additional controls where possible.
- **Red** – high risk. Stop the activity until risks are reduced to low or medium.

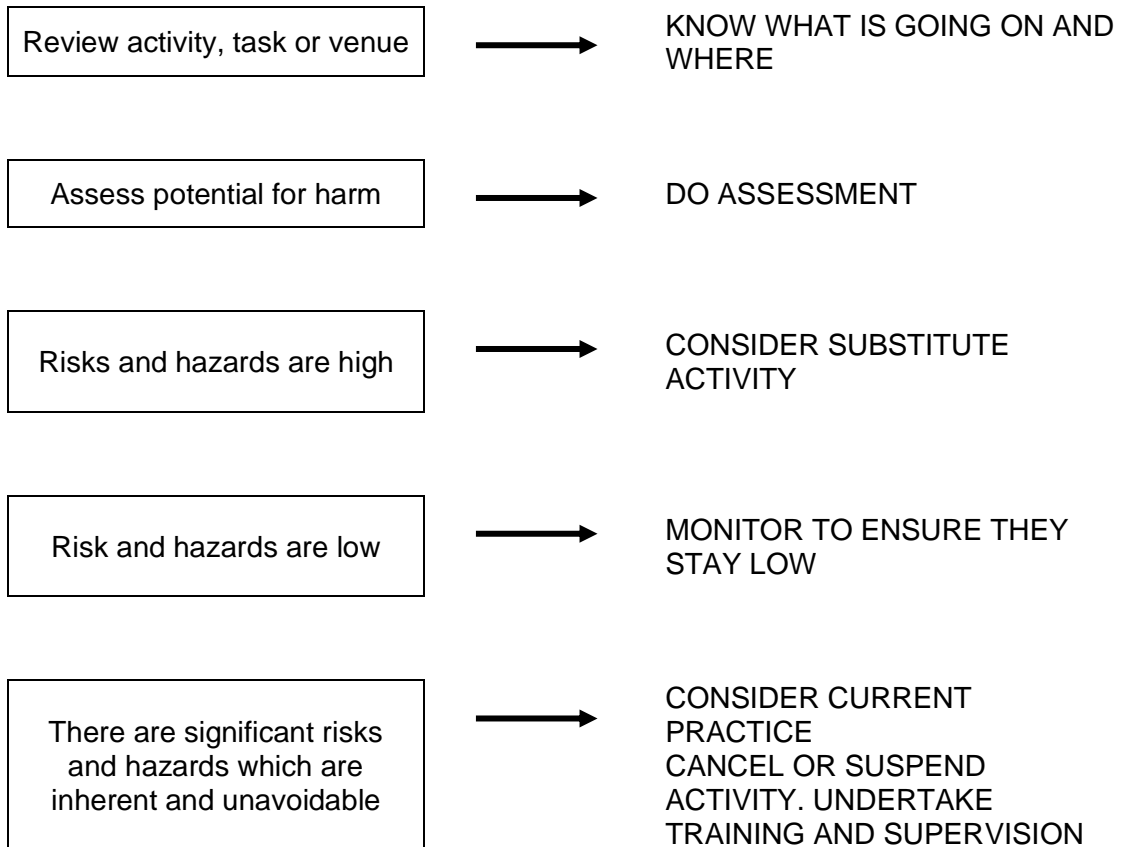
**Severity of Injury and Ill Health Definitions**

Description	Example
Insignificant	Bruising, light abrasion, etc. First Aid
Minor	Burns/scalds/cuts - up to 3 days off work
Moderate	More than 3 days off work – Over-three-day incapacitation is not reportable under RIDDOR. Over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker is reportable under RIDDOR.
Major	Serious injury/damage to health, hospitalisation, permanent disability, loss of sight, amputation, etc. reportable under RIDDOR.
Fatality	Single or multiple

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**Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment Flow Chart**



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Appendix 2 – Sample Risk Assessment Form

RISK ASSESSMENT

Likelihood	5	10	15	20	25
	4	8	12	16	20
	3	6	9	12	15
	2	4	6	8	10
	1	2	3	4	5
Severity					

Operation: TreeHouse Christmas Show	Ref No. 001	Issue No. 001
	Date:	Reviewed by

L - Likelihood: S - Severity: RV - Risk Value L x S: RL - Risk Level: High / Medium / Low

TASK	Step 1 HAZARD	Step 2 WHO IS EXPOSED?	Step 3 EXISTING CONTROLS	Step 4 RISK ASSESS				Step 5 ADDITIONAL CONTROLS	Step 6 RISK ASSESS			
				L	S	RV	RL		L	S	RV	RL
Christmas Show	Manual Handling of equipment	All Staff	Workers to avoid lifting or moving heavy or bulky items where possible. Mechanical aids or two persons to be used where possible.  Avoid steps and steep ramps with heavy loads where possible.  Any large items to be discussed with line manager or organiser in advance and necessary provisions put in place to assist the staff with the equipment.	1	3	3	L	None				
Christmas Show	Slips, trips, and Falls	All Staff	First Aid kit available on site and TH kit available and regularly checked where necessary  Event/show areas tidy and clear of obstructions or objects lying around that may cause person to trip or impede movement	2	2	4	M	Fully qualified First aiders on site  Communication devices available to call emergency services  Manager supervision provided				
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## Appendix 2 – Sample Risk Assessment Form

[illegible]

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## Appendix 2 – Sample Risk Assessment Form

Appendix 2 Sample Risk Assessment Form

			Wet floor signage in place when raining or wet floors  Free standing displays monitored at all times  Staff briefed on protocols and risks e.g. carrying walkie talkies, no pupils in front car park									
Christmas Show	Fire	All Staff	Suitable escape routes in place  Emergency escape plan in place and all staff briefed  Meeting point agreed  Venue staff on site	2	2	4	M	Fire plan in place  Fire marshals in place  Auto Fire brigade call out  Incident controllers in place				
Christmas Show	Environmental	All Staff	Event area is well ventilated  Event area is well lit where necessary  event area has a comfortable temperature  Appropriate clothing worn for internal and external events, taking into account excessive hot and cold temperatures that may require additional items to be taken i.e. sun cream, hat, umbrella etc  All electrical equipment suitably PAT and staff trained on its use	1	2	2	L	None				
Building/Vehicle Security	Theft of TreeHouse documents or equipment	All Staff	TreeHouse Property to be secured where possible  TreeHouse documents and equipment to be secured safely in property	2	2	4	M	Staff on site, secure storage available, doors to sensitive areas secured with access control				

### CAN THE EVENT PROCEED?

(Tick one box)

**X**

Safe using existing control measures

Safe using existing + additional control measures

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Appendix 2 – Sample Risk Assessment Form

			Not safe to proceed
ARE THERE ANY LONG-TERM CONTROLS?		No	
ASSESSED BY:	Name:	Name (Printed)	Date
AUTHORISED BY:	Name	Name (Printed)	Date

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