

SCOUT ASSOCIATION – ISLE OF MAN RISK ASSESSMENT

Assessment of: _____ Completed by: _____ Date: _____

Hazard (1)	Who Might Be Harmed? / Risk (2)	Is The Risk Adequately Controlled? (3) Are Further Controls Needed? (4)	Review and Revise (5)
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What is Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment can perhaps best be described as disciplined common sense applied to every day life. Whether descending a twisting staircase, crossing the road, or frying an egg, we all “do” risk assessment or, safety checks in one way or another every day. However, a structured approach makes the task easier and helps us to spot all the potential risks. There are just five steps to a proper risk assessment . . .

1 Look for the hazards

(how can people be hurt or damage caused)

Stand back from the situation, and assess it. Identify all the hazards, and list them, concentrating on the significant ones *e.g.* a slippery floor, a heater, or very hot water.

2 Decide who might be harmed, and how

Think particularly about regular users who might have become accustomed to the presence of the hazard; about visitors who might not know that the hazard is

present; and about young people, especially those with special needs, who simply might not appreciate the hazard.

3 Evaluate the risks (what controls exist already?)

Consider the likelihood of the hazards causing harm to someone. If the heater is already guarded by a securely fixed grill, the risk is clearly low, and no additional precautions may be necessary. If the floor is always slippery, perhaps it needs ‘roughing up’ as a precaution – and certainly it is no place for physically active games! Your responsibility is to do whatever is reasonably practicable to make the situation safe and your aim is to minimise all the risks by maintaining or adding to the precautions as necessary.

4 Record your findings (what additional controls are needed?)

You will always need to tell those involved in the situation what action they should take – and what actions they must not take! Where the situation is one in which Scouting regularly takes place (‘the Scout hut’,

a District camp-site), your record should be a permanent one, such as an instruction sheet or card for users, who should be required to read it before leading a Scouting activity in the particular situation. Regular users should be required to re-read it from time to time.

5 Review and revise

You cannot assume that the hazards, and the risks, will stay the same for all time. So you must review your risk assessment from time to time, and revise it where necessary. This will almost certainly mean a revised record *e.g.* a new instruction sheet. It is good practice to fix a maximum time between reviews (*e.g.* not less than once every year for a Scout meeting place), even if you do not think that a review is actually needed. Of course, it may be necessary to review your assessment in the light of changes to the situation much more frequently than you had originally thought. An out-of-date assessment is a hazard in its own right, because it may misleadingly encourage people to think that all the necessary precautions are in place.

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