

# Stress Risk Assessment

[](https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://safetyculture.com/wp-content/media/2018/11/hse-stress-risk-assessment-feature-image.png&imgrefurl=https://safetyculture.com/checklists/hse-stress-risk-assessment/&tbnid=xluDBNM3_gxpZM&vet=10CJUBEDMorAFqFwoTCOCxvNOG3uoCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAC..i&docid=hPtna12q86VMnM&w=426&h=238&q=stress%20risk%20assessment&ved=0CJUBEDMorAFqFwoTCOCxvNOG3uoCFQAAAAAdAAAAABAC)

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## Introduction

* 1. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place specific legal requirements, duties and responsibilities on an organisation to assess the risk of stress-related ill health arising from work activities. The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to take measures to control that risk.
  2. Employers therefore have a legal duty to protect employees from stress at work by doing a [risk assessment](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/risk-assessment.htm) and acting on it.
  3. There are six main areas of work design which can effect stress levels. You should manage these properly. They are demands, control, support, relationships, role and change. This is known as the Stress Management Standard. Employers should assess the risks in these areas to manage stress in the workplace
  4. A stress risk assessment is required if a staff member has advised or is showing signs of work related stress. Slough Borough Council uses their own Stress Risk Assessment template which is based upon HSE guidance [HSE stress webpage](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)/
  5. The stress risk assessment can be conducted by the manager and/or one of the Health and Safety Advisors. Contact [\_healthandsafety@slough.gov.uk](mailto:_healthandsafety@slough.gov.uk) if you would like assistance.
  6. This Code of Practice provides managers with guidance on how to conduct a Stress Risk Assessment.

## Training

* 1. Managers and supervisors should have sufficient experience or training to be able to identify stress, and be able to put in place measures to prevent work related stress.
  2. Any employee who is required to carry out stress risk assessments should as a minimum have attended the Stress Risk Assessment training.

## Procedure

* 1. The stress risk assessment should be conducted by anyone who has been trained to conduct stress risk assessments, or by the health and safety team who are trained in this process. They will arrange a meeting with the individual either via teams or in person and work through the different elements of the Stress Management Standard. If it is not appropriate for the manager to complete the assessment e.g. as requested by the individual or because they have not undergone the training then the health and safety team will conduct the stress risk assessment. In some circumstances the risk assessor should have discussions with HR e.g. if there is an ongoing issue with the individual in relation to absence.
  2. During the stress risk assessment procedure, the following steps need to occur:
     1. **Step 1 - Identify potential work related stressors**

The potential work related stressors are what can cause work related stress e.g. change from working environment to working from home, increased workload, organisational change, etc.

Look for any stressors that could result in significant harm and list them in the first column of the stress risk assessment form.

* + 1. **Step 2 - Evaluate the risk**

Risk is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the work related stressors. Consider how likely it is that the stressor could cause harm using the Stress Risk Factor Calculation Sheet and Stress Risk Calculation Matrix (see section 5 additional information).

* + 1. **Step 3 – Enter existing control measures**

Identify whether you have already taken precautions against stressors that have been identified. The aim is to eliminate or reduce stress by putting in place suitable precautions.

Record all of the control measures currently in place within the column entitled ‘Existing Control measures’.

* + 1. **Step 4 – Further control measures required**

Identify any further control measures required.

If the residual stress, is not considered acceptable and/or further controls are required, these should be recorded in the in column entitled ‘Further Control Measures Required.

These should have a target date for implementation.

* + 1. **Step 5 - Review the Action Plan**

The stress risk assessment must be recorded and periodically reviewed. All actions should be reviewed to ensure completion and implementation.

For further information please review the Health & Safety Executive website: [Stress Risk Assessment](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/risk-assessment.htm).

* 1. ***Once the stress risk assessment is complete the draft version is sent to the individual and manager who have the right to change the completed assessment.***
  2. ***The final document is held on the health and safety teams shared drive which has access limited to the health and safety team.***

## The Management Standards

* 1. The stress risk assessment follows the HSE Management Standards approach which helps employers to comply with the law in relation to stress.
  2. The Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health, lower productivity and increased accident and sickness absence rates. The Management Standards are:
     1. [Demands](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/demands.htm) – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment. Examples of questions asked would be does the organisation provide employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work and do people's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands. Control measures would include training to match the job demands, discussions in team meetings and ensuring this is discussed at one to one meetings.
     2. [Control](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/control.htm) – how much say the person has in the way they do their work. Examples of questions include does the staff have control of their workload and are staff encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work. Control measures would include making decisions at team level and management supporting staff to use their skills and initiative.
     3. [Support](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/support.htm) – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues. Examples of questions asked would be asking if systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support staff and are systems in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues. Control measures would include providing resources (e.g. personnel) to support high workload and encouraging employees to support each other e.g. during and outside of team meetings
     4. [Relationships](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/relationships.htm) – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Examples of questions include do employees share information relevant to their work and systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Examples of control measures is for team members to provide updates in team meetings and policies in place to deal with unacceptable behaviour e.g. whistleblowing and grievance procedures.
     5. [Role](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/role.htm) – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles Examples of questions asked would be are systems in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities and the organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities. Examples of control measures include a manager ensuring they have an open door policy to discuss any issues and ensuring roles are clearly defined in job role specification.
     6. [Change](https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/change.htm) – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation Examples of questions include does the organisation ensure adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals and are employees are aware of timetables for changes. Examples of control measures include setting up workshops to discuss organisation change for all employees and providing information online and via employee communications of the timeline of changes proposed.

SBC expects managers to use these standards when conducting a stress risk assessment and they should ensure they fully understand the standards by attending the Stress Risk Assessment Training and follow the [HSE Management Standards Workbook](https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wbk01.htm).

## Additional Information

### Stress Risk Factor Calculation Sheet

**Identify a Stressor. Decide on the chance of it happening. Use the scale below:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Likelihood | Risk band |
| 1. A highly improbable occurrence (not known) | Low |
| 1. A remotely possible (may have happened) | Low |
| 1. An occasional occurrence (known) | Med |
| 1. A frequent occurrence (happens) | Med |
| 1. Almost a certainty (immediate ACTION required) | High |

**Now decide how SEVERE the illness could be. Use the scale below**:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Severity | Risk band |
| 1. Negligible illness | Low |
| 1. Minor illness | Low |
| 1. Major illness (RIDDOR?) | Med |
| 1. Serious illness | Med |
| 1. Multiple illness | High |

Likelihood x Severity = Risk Rating

e.g. 3 (an occasional occurrence) x 2 (minor illness) = 6

#### **Stress Risk Assessment Calculation Matrix**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **1** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| **2** | **2** | **4** | **6** | **8** | **10** |
| **3** | **3** | **6** | **9** | **12** | **15** |
| **4** | **4** | **8** | **12** | **16** | **20** |
| **5** | **5** | **10** | **15** | **20** | **25** |

#### **Risk Assessment Score**

**1 – 6** LOW RISK Good but may need further action

**8 – 12**  MEDIUM RISK Acceptable but clear need for further action

**15 – 25** HIGH RISK Of concern, early action needed

### Stress Risk Assessment Action Plan: Work Related Stress

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Job/ Department Assessed | Number of people covered by assessment | Responsible Manager | Assessor | Date of assessment | Signature |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Use this Key to understand relevant columns in each section**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Current Status | Key |
| **R** | **Of concern, early action needed** |
| **A** | **Acceptable but clear need for further action** |
| **G** | **Good but may need further action** |

#### **Demands of the job**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### **Control**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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#### **Role**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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#### **D. Support**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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#### **E. Relationships**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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#### **F. Change**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Potential work related stressors identified | R | A | G | Existing Control measures | Further Control Measures Required | Target date for implementation  and person responsible | Review Date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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A. Demands of the job

* The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work.
* People’s skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
* Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and
* Employees’ concerns about their work environment are addressed.

B. Control

* Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work;
* Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;
* If possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;
* The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills;
* Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
* Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

C. Role

* The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible;
* The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities;
* The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear; and
* Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

D. Support

* The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees;
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues;
* Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it;
* Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job; and
* Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

E. Relationships

* The organisation promotes positive behaviors at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
* Employees share information relevant to their work;
* The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behavior;
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behavior; and
* Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behavior

F. Change

* The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
* The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
* Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
* Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
* Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

## Document Control

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