



1. What is a Fire Risk Assessment?

A Fire Risk Assessment is an organised inspection of your workplace to ascertain if there are any fire hazards that could cause harm, and estimating the level of risk for those hazards. The aim is to remove those hazards and risk or reduce them to an acceptable level.

A Fire Risk Assessment is a legal requirement under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

2. What is a Fire Hazard?

A fire hazard is simply, any source of ignition with the potential to result in a fire (i.e. faulty electrical wiring).

3. What is a Fire Risk?

A fire risk is the likelihood of a fire occurring and the consequences of that fire should one occur.

4. Who is responsible for the Fire Risk Assessment?

The legally defined Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; who must arrange for a Fire Risk Assessment to be carried out, identify any possible fire risks and deal with them.

5. Who is the Responsible Person?

The Responsible Person will be someone who has control over the premises. This could be:

- The owner or occupier of a premises
- The owner or managing agent for shared parts of the premises such as shared means of escape, or shared fire safety equipment such as fire warning systems and sprinklers
- The occupier, such as self-employed people or voluntary organisations if they have any control
- Any other person who has some control over a part of the premises

6. What are the duties of the Responsible Person?

The Responsible Person is someone who has control over premises or fire safety systems within premises. If you are the Responsible Person, you must make sure that everyone who uses your premises can escape if there is a fire. The people you need to think about include anyone who might be on your premises, including employees, visitors or members of the public. You need to pay particular attention to those who may need special help, such as elderly or disabled people or children. You must:

- Carry out a Fire Risk Assessment and identify possible dangers and risks
- Think about who might be particularly at risk - you may have disabled employees, or people who work with hazardous chemicals
- Remove or reduce the risk from fire, as far as reasonably possible
- Put in place fire safety measures to deal with any risks that remain
- Make sure there is protection if you use or store flammable or explosive materials
- Have a plan to deal with emergencies
- Record your findings and review them periodically

7. Has the Responsible Person got to carry out the Fire Risk Assessment?

No. The Responsible Person can designate this duty, but the person designated must be a 'Competent Person'. However the Responsible Person will still be responsible, in law, for meeting the order.

8. Who is regarded as a Competent Person?

Someone who has fire safety education, training and experience.

9. What happens if there is more than one person responsible for a premise?

Then they must:

- Co-operate with the other responsible persons, so far as is necessary to comply with the regulations
- Share information with each other

10. What are the contents of a Fire Risk Assessment?

The Responsible Person or his/her designated Competent Person must:

1. Identify the hazards:
 - Anything that can start a fire, such as naked flames, heaters or commercial processes such as cookers or hot-air dryers
 - Anything that can burn in a fire, including piles of waste, display materials, textiles or other flammable products
 - Oxygen sources such as air conditioning, medical products or commercial oxygen supplies which might intensify a fire
2. Identify people at risk:
 - People who work close to or with fire hazards
 - People who work alone, or in isolated areas such as storerooms
 - Children or parents with babies
 - Elderly people
 - Disabled people
3. Evaluate, remove or reduce the risk:
 - Where possible, remove the fire hazards you identified – e.g. remove build-ups of waste - and reduce any hazards you can't remove entirely
 - Replace highly flammable materials with less flammable ones
 - Keep anything that can start a fire away from flammable materials Once you've reduced the risk as far as practical, you need to look at any risk that can't be removed and decide what fire safety measures to provide

11. What other fire safety measures must be included in the Fire Risk Assessment?

Fire detection and warning system You must have an appropriate fire-detection and warning system. Whatever system you have, it must be able to warn all people in the building in all circumstances. You need to decide which type of fire warning system is suitable for your premises. This will depend on the size and layout of your premises. **Means of escape** The arrangements to evacuate your premises form an important part of your emergency plan. You should:

- Make sure the escape route is as short as possible
- Consider how many people are going to be using the escape route
- Consider the impact if one of the means of escape has been blocked
- Ensure there is a clear passageway to all escape routes
- Ensure escape routes are kept free of any obstructions, e.g. they are not used for storing stock
- Make arrangements for the evacuation of elderly or disabled people. You must also consider other less able bodied people who may have access to the building, taking into account both physical and mental impairment
- Inform and train all employees in how to escape from the building
- Emergency lighting system
- Identify all escape routes with appropriate signs

Fire fighting equipment Where necessary, the Responsible Person must ensure that the premises are equipped with the appropriate fire fighting equipment.

12. Is it necessary to carry out fire drills?

Yes. Fire drills must be carried out at least once a year. It is good practice not to announce fire drills so you get a realistic idea of how effective your fire evacuations plans are. Everyone must participate in the fire drill. You should record the result of each fire drill in your fire log book.

13. Is there a need for staff training?

Yes. The Responsible Person must provide all employees with instruction and training so that they know what to do in the event of a fire. Everyone must know:

- How to raise the alarm if they discover a fire
- How to contact the fire brigade
- How to use the fire fighting equipment
- How and where to evacuate the building
- Where to assemble and who to report to

14. Who enforces the Fire Risk Assessment?

The Fire Authority. They must be satisfied with your fire safety measures, if not, they will tell you what you need to do. If they find major problems they can restrict the use of your premises or close them altogether until you deal with the problems they find.