**UCSU Risk Assessments Procedure**

This document is to help you conduct a Risk assessment of the Activity or Event you are planning to carry out. This will take you through a step by step guide to ensure that all aspects of the assessment are carried out to the fullest. This procedure will help you to identify potential hazards and the people affected by them.

A Risk Assessment is the systematic on-going process of analysing hazards and existing control measures to ascertain the likelihood of harm occurring and then monitoring and reviewing the findings in order to eliminate or reduce risk.

**Step One**

Will be to identify the Activities or the type of event that will be taking place and to see if a Risk Assessment has already been completed (the complete file of up to date risk assessments can be found either on the “s” drive or in the file located in the Administration Office)

If your activity has not already been covered you will have to complete a risk assessment before you carry out the activity.

Your first action should be to complete the UCSU General Risk Assessment – Stage 1 Initial Assessment form. This is basically a tick sheet where you will identify potential hazards, the people who will be at risk, possible controls and whether a specialist Risk Assessment will need to be carried out (working at height etc).

*So what is a Hazard?*

A Hazard is something with the potential to cause harm to the individual, group or surroundings when conducting a particular activity. They can be Physical, chemical, biological or ergonomical. Examples of potential hazards are:

* Slipping/ Tripping hazards
* Fire
* Vehicles
* Electricity
* Chemicals
* Moving parts of machinery
* Dust or Fumes
* Manual Handling
* Noise
* Poor Lighting
* Temperature
* Working at height
* Pressure Systems

*Who might be harmed by the activity?*

You have to take careful consideration over who you think may be affected by your activity. They may not be directly involved but may be affected as a by product or after effect of your activity. For example you may hold a charity event where some one gets covered in gunge in order to raise money, if the gunge is not contained properly then there could be an impact on the environment, ingestion by wildlife or it could create a slip hazard once you have left the area.

People who may be harmed include:

* Office Staff
* Students on campus
* University Staff
* Contractors
* Visitors to campus
* Operators
* Volunteers
* Cleaners
* Members of the public
* Consideration should be given to:
  + Staff/Students/Visitors with disabilities
  + Visitors
  + Inexperienced staff/students
  + Lone workers

**Step 2**

Once you have assessed the potential risks you will need to complete Stage 2 – Assessing the Risks. This is your opportunity to explain the potential risks, the danger they may pose and how you aim to reduce the risks.

The key thing to remember is that you are trying to make the activity as safe as is possible but sometimes there will always be an element of danger, for example rock climbing, but you would reduce these risks by using the correct equipment, ensuring the equipment is in excellent condition and that either everyone partaking the activity is trained to a suitable standard or that coaches with adequate qualifications are leading the activity.

*How do I control the Risk?*

The best way to control risk is to eliminate it entirely, ask yourself do we really need to do this in order for the activity to succeed? If the answer is yes then you will need to factor this risk into your planning so you are best able to control the risk posed. For example if you were to use a water hose to fill up a pool, does the hose have any leaks? If so then are you in a position to replace the hose for a new one with no leaks? Thus eliminating the risk. If not, are you able to repair the hose? Again eliminating the risk? If the hose cannot be repaired is there an alternative solution, such as using a bucket? Can you have someone on hand to clean the spilt water straight away and to place signage around the water thus informing everyone of the potential slip hazard.

The stages of controlling the risks posed are as follows:

1. Design
2. Eliminate
3. Substitute
4. Isolate
5. Reduce
6. Enclose
7. Safe System of Work
8. Housekeeping
9. Information, Instruction, Training and Supervision
10. Personal Protective Equipment

Once you have completed stage 2 you will need your Risk Assessment to be reviewed by the Union Health and Safety Coordinator. This is really the final check and a fresh pair of eyes to ensure that all of the hazards have been correctly identified and that any controls measures that need to be implemented are bought to the attention of those responsible. Once they have signed off your Assessment you are then free to carry out the activity safe in the knowledge that you have done all that is reasonably practical to ensure that your activity is safe and incident free.