

**FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT GUIDE FOR
COLLEGES AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

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What is a Fire Risk Assessment?

A Fire Safety Risk Assessment enables Colleges / Services to determine the likelihood of fire arising as a

Carrying out a Fire Risk Assessment

The principles are the same as any risk assessment and follow 5 . The information can be recorded in the generic College / Service risk assessment, but as explained above, it may be necessary to consider fire safety risks in a specific fire risk assessment or as part of individual activity risk assessments:

- Step 1:** Identify potential fire hazards in the workplace. Include pertinent information gained from the Building Fire Risk Assessment, Material Safety Data Sheets
- Step 2:** Decide who (employees, students, visitors, Fire Service, neighbours) might be in danger, in the event of a fire, in the building or whilst trying to escape from it
- Step 3:** Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether the existing fire precautions and controls are adequate or whether more should be done to eliminate the hazard or to control the risk (e.g. specific training and competence)
- Step 4:** Record the findings of the fire risk assessment and details of the actions undertaken and required. I

Static electricity

Metal impact

Arson

Indications of near misses help to identify potential ignition sources, eg 'scorch' marks on furniture or fittings, discoloured electrical plugs and sockets, circuit boards tripping, smell of burning, cigarette ends near bins.

Fuel Sources: Anything that burns is fuel. The most common fuels found at the University are:

Oxygen Sources: The main source of oxygen is air, whether natural airflow through doors, windows etc; or mechanical air movers, air conditioning or air handling units. However, at the University additional oxygen sources can be found in materials being stored or used eg:

Certain chemicals, oxidising materials

Compressed gas supply, such as oxygen cylinders and piped gas systems

How Fire Spreads

Most people are familiar with outdoor fires, such as a bonfire, which they can move back from with a choice of escape routes not affected by heat or smoke.

Fires in buildings, behave differently. The smoke from the fire gets trapped by the ceiling and then spreads, enveloping the entire room or space, passing through any holes or gaps in the walls, ceiling or floor to eventually encapsulate the workplace. Heat from the fire also gets trapped in the building, increasing the temperature and as smoke is produced, toxic gases may build up.

It is therefore essential fire precautions are suitable so fires can be detected quickly to ensure escape routes are protected. Specific attention should be given to:

Areas, particularly unoccupied ones, where detecting the start of a fire could be delayed or the warning may go unnoticed

Activities with, and / or storage of flammable materials

People who may be unable to react quickly (children, elderly, dren, elderly, dren, elderly gas systems

Controlling

Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres (DSEAR)

DSEAR applies to workplaces where dangerous substances are present, used, or produced.

Dangerous substances are substances or mixtures of substances (called 'preparations' in DSEAR) that could create risks to people's safety from fires and explosions or similar events, such as 'thermal runaway' from chemical reactions.

The following provides examples of dangerous substances (includes liquids, gases, vapours, dusts):

Substances or mixtures of substances classified as explosive, oxidising, extremely flammable, highly flammable, or flammable under the Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulations (CLP).

Any kind of dust that when spread in air to form a cloud (ie form an explosive atmosphere), can explode.

Any other substances, or mixtures of substances, which because of their physical properties and the way in which they are present in the workplace create a risk to safety from fires and explosions, but which may not be covered by CLP. For example high flashpoint liquids present in the workplace at elevated temperatures.

What Action is Required?

If Colleges / Services believe they use a dangerous substance that could create an explosive / dangerous atmosphere they must, in addition to a fire risk assessment:

1. Appoint a competent person(s) to identify where an explosive atmosphere could occur.
2. Ensure the competent person(s) has undertaken a DSEAR Risk Assessment of these areas and confirmed they are safe.
- 3.
4. equipment and protective systems that meet the requirements of the Equipment and Protective Systems Intended for Use in Potentially Explosive Atmospheres Regulations.
5. Issue clothing that does not create an electrostatic discharge.
6. Provide sufficient information, instruction, supervision and training to ensure the safety of staff, students and others when working in these areas.
7. Prepare and communicate suitable emergency procedures for these areas.
8. Review the DSEAR Risk Assessment at regular intervals to ensure suitable.



NOTE: Specialist advice may be required to help assess the potential for explosive atmospheres.

Further Information

Information regarding DSEAR, including a template DSEAR Risk Assessment is available on the Health & Safety Website: <http://www.bangor.ac.uk/hss/inflink/dsear.php>
