Scope

1. This standard applies to risk assessment of work activities undertaken by UCL employees, i.e. staff and post-graduate students. Specifically it details the arrangements Departments must have in place to ensure that both the process of assessment and the assessments themselves are suitable and sufficient.

2. It does not cover the process of assessment itself – guidance on this can be found at http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/risk_assessment/index.htm

Legal requirements

3. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require UCL to assess risks to the health and safety of anyone that may be affected by our activities – staff, students and others eg visitors, contractors - so as to identify the measures needed to prevent and/or control harm.

4. Other health and safety regulations also require assessment of specific risks and/or types of work. They may vary in the detail eg whether they cover non-employees but the essentially the process of assessment is the same. NB: this does not necessarily mean an assessment has to be carried out more than once for the purpose of different regulations. The Management Regulations are broad in scope and cover all risks with the more specific regulations setting out in more detail what needs to be considered as part of the assessment.

Definitions

5. **Hazard** is anything that has the potential to cause harm.

6. **Harm** is usually considered to be injury or ill-health but it could also include damage to property, equipment or the environment. It could also include damage to reputation either personally or to the group you work with or to UCL in general.

7. **Risk** is the chance that harm could be caused by hazards together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Departmental arrangements

8. All work activities that pose a significant risk must be assessed. Insignificant risks need not be assessed or else those associated with life in general, unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks. Assessments should be clear as to what is covered but also clear as to any exclusions.

9. Assessments can be broad in scope or else address a particular hazard arising from a work activity; this is particularly the case for certain hazards that require a specific approach to assessment and/or detailed information not relevant in more routine activity assessments for example work with ionising radiation. The use of the RiskNET risk assessment module allows for recording of different types of activity assessment under one overarching title eg covering a whole research project.

10. The level of detail needed in any assessment should be in proportion to the risk associated with the work activity ie with more hazardous activities needing more detail and/or more sophisticated/formalised approaches to assessment eg HAZOPs.

11. Local arrangements for assessment must be documented and approved by the Head of Department and must address the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Considerations</th>
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<td><strong>Who can carry out assessments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Peer review</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Training requirements</strong></td>
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Review and revision

All assessments must be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect they are no longer valid if there has been a significant change to the work (see [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/risk_assessment/review/index.htm](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/estates/safetynet/guidance/risk_assessment/review/index.htm)).

Although there is no defined legal period for review, it is good practice to set a review period to ensure that assessments (and controls) remain valid over time. The frequency of review could be linked to the overall risk of the activity; with assessments for higher risk activities being reviewed more frequently than low risk ones. NB: Risknet automatically sets a review date of 12 months which can be changed if needed.

The means for recording revisions of assessments should be documented including whether changes require re-authorisation and by who.

Assurance and monitoring

The means by which departments ensure that there are suitable and sufficient assessments in place for all departmental activities should be identified. This could range from a simple check of presence/absence of assessments for sample activities to a more detailed check on the quality of assessments and whether controls identified have been implemented.

References