

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO



COMPLETING A STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT





Risk Assessment

COMPLETING A WORKPLACE STRESS RISK ASSESSMENT

CONTENTS

- Getting Started
- Identifying Risks
- Questions to Ask
- Actions to Take

Employers have a legal duty to assess and manage foreseeable risks to employee health, including work-related stress. This includes carrying out a risk assessment and taking appropriate action where risks are identified.

For organisations with fewer than five employees, it is not usually a legal requirement to record the assessment in writing, although doing so is considered good practice.

For businesses with five or more employees, recording the significant findings of the risk assessment is normally a legal requirement.

This guide has been created by Mente to help employers understand how to complete a workplace stress risk assessment.

> GETTING STARTED

STARTING OFF

Your risk assessment should aim to identify, communicate, and manage workplace stress risks within your organisation.

The goal is to identify the causes of work-related stress and outline appropriate measures to address them.

A good stress risk assessment should be evidence-based and reviewed regularly. This may include employee feedback, surveys, absence data, staff turnover, and ongoing consultation with employees.

Employers should also consider the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Management Standards when assessing work-related stress risks.

Tip:
Remember, different roles may have different stressors. Identifying these differences is key to creating an effective action plan.



IDENTIFYING RISKS

You may already have an understanding of the main stressors within your workplace. However, it is important to consult employees to confirm these issues and identify any other factors that may contribute to work-related stress.

Here are some common ways to gather information:

- **Employee Surveys:** Use employee surveys to gather feedback and identify potential stress hotspots within the workplace.
- **Focus Groups:** Hold structured discussions with employees to better understand workplace pressures and experiences.
- **One-to-One Meetings:** Gather feedback through regular check-ins, supervision meetings, or performance reviews.
- **Other Data Sources:** Review absence data, staff turnover, workload concerns, performance trends, grievances, and other relevant workplace indicators.



QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK

Do you have enough time to do your assigned tasks?

Do we offer enough training opportunities?

Do you feel comfortable asking for help with work that you don't understand?

Do you have the skills to do your job?

Can you switch off when you are away from work?

Do we offer enough flexible working options?

Do you feel micromanaged at work?

Are your role, and your responsibilities, clear to you?

Do you have good relationships with managers and colleagues?

Do you know where you can seek wellbeing support if you need it?

Do managers clearly communicate that they care about your wellbeing?

Do you feel like your job is secure?

Do you feel like your job is stable?

Is the office physical space pleasant to work in?

ACTIONS TO TAKE

The following actions align with the six Management Standards for work-related stress identified by the HSE: Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, and Change. These standards provide a framework for identifying and managing workplace factors that may contribute to work-related stress.

GENERAL ACTIONS

- Use realistic job descriptions during recruitment so employees understand the role and expectations.
- Provide managers with appropriate training to support effective people management and avoid harmful management practices.
- Encourage employees to raise concerns and provide regular opportunities for feedback.
- Communicate the organisation's commitment to employee wellbeing and workplace health.

CONTROL

- Consider flexible working requests fairly and consistently.
- Allow employees reasonable flexibility over how they organise their work and breaks where possible.
- Avoid excessive repetition or overly restrictive working practices.
- Involve employees in decisions about how work is planned and completed where appropriate.

DEMANDS

- Use scheduling and workload planning processes that support realistic deadlines and resource allocation.
- Clearly communicate priorities and expectations.
- Encourage employees to take regular breaks, use annual leave, and maintain reasonable working patterns.
- Promote healthy boundaries around out-of-hours work and switching off from work-related communication.
- Ensure managers lead by example in maintaining healthy working practices.
- During high-pressure periods, make additional support and communication available.
- Where possible, balance demanding periods with opportunities for recovery.
- Ensure induction and training processes properly prepare employees for their role.
- Provide additional training and support where required.

ROLE

- Ensure job descriptions and responsibilities are clear and accurate.
- Promote effective communication between managers and employees.
- Provide regular training, supervision, and role-related support.

> ACTIONS TO TAKE

RELATIONSHIPS

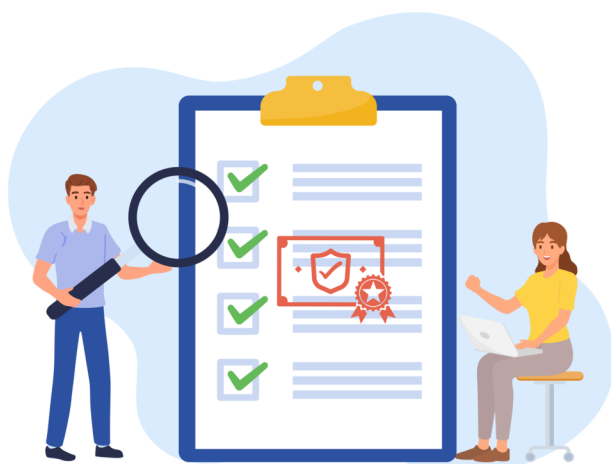
- Maintain clear policies on bullying, harassment, and unacceptable behaviour, and communicate expectations across the organisation.
- Follow organisational procedures consistently when addressing complaints, conflicts, or workplace concerns.
- Encourage positive working relationships and opportunities for team interaction.
- Ensure remote or hybrid workers remain connected and included within the organisation.

SUPPORT

- Ensure managers and HR teams are approachable and available for regular communication and support.
- Provide access to appropriate wellbeing and support services, such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), healthcare support, or wellbeing resources.
- Regularly communicate what support is available and how employees can access it.
- Monitor for signs that employees may be struggling with workload, pressure, or work-related stress.

CHANGE

- Consult employees on significant organisational changes where appropriate.
- Communicate changes clearly, consistently, and at an early stage where possible.
- Provide opportunities for employees to ask questions and raise concerns during periods of change.
- Consider additional support or specialist advice during complex organisational change programmes.



> ACTIONS TO TAKE

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Encourage employees to take regular breaks and spend time away from their workstation where possible.
- Arrange workspaces to minimise overcrowding, excessive noise, and unnecessary distractions.
- Provide suitable workstation options and equipment that support comfort and movement throughout the working day.
- Ensure lighting levels are appropriate and comfortable for the working environment.
- Manage workplace noise to reduce unnecessary stress and disruption.
- Maintain suitable ventilation and air quality within the workplace.
- Ensure workplace temperatures remain comfortable throughout the year where reasonably practicable.
- Consider incorporating natural light, plants, or other environmental features that contribute to a more positive working environment.



CONCLUSION

Completing a stress risk assessment is an important step in protecting employee wellbeing and managing workplace risks effectively.

The aim is not to solve every issue at once, but to create a practical and ongoing process for identifying, managing, and reviewing stress risks over time.

To support this process, the Mente platform includes a built-in stress risk assessment tool designed to help organisations identify, prioritise, and address workplace stressors more efficiently. The platform guides employers through each stage of the process, supporting a more structured and proactive approach to workplace wellbeing and risk management.

Stress Risk Assessment Powered by

