



## Managing Operational Risks

### Decision-making under pressure

In the current crisis, organisations may find themselves forced to take urgent decisions under pressure. Occasionally this will require a major service review. However, it is more likely to be about adapting to lockdown and finding different ways to deliver existing services, which is the focus of this guidance.

Wherever possible, you should ensure that you have appropriate policies in place, and that you are following those policies. At the very least, you should carry out a simple risk assessment every time you change something.

### Risk assessments: operational or strategic?

All risk assessments employ similar logic, but operational and strategic assessments tend to look at problems through opposite ends of the telescope.

A strategic risk assessment might review the overall risks associated with field trips, for example. The focus is on stepping back and seeing the bigger picture. This sort of risk is covered in our [Managing Risk resources](https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/support-groups/managing-risk). <https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/support-groups/managing-risk>

An operational risk assessment might review the specific risks associated with a youth trip to Beachy Head. Or running the annual trip with unvetted helpers due to staff absences.

### Basic Operational Risk Assessment

The key questions you need to ask are:

- A. Who is potentially at risk?
- Staff members and volunteers?
  - Service users?
  - Members of the service user's household?
  - Members of the general public, e.g. passers-by?



B. For each of these affected groups:

- What is the nature of the risk?
- How serious is it?
- What can and should be done to mitigate (i.e. reduce) the risk?
- If things do go wrong, do we know what to do?

C. However briefly, you should make a written record of the risk assessment you have just carried out, showing:

- Brief description of the activity, e.g. the field trip to Beachy Head
- The risks that you identified as needing to be addressed, e.g. cliff-top falls, abuse of trust
- The action you agreed to mitigate those risks, e.g. extra marshals, keep together as one group
- Contingency plan – action to be taken if things do go wrong - this could be as simple as having an emergency contact.
- Name of person carrying out the risk assessment
- Date

See template overleaf



## Operational Risk Assessment Template

Groups Potentially Affected	Potential Risks
Staff and volunteers	•
Service users	•
	•
	•
	•

Nature of Risk	Level <sup>1</sup>	Mitigation	Contingency Plan

Name:

Date:

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<sup>1</sup> HIGH; MED; LOW.