

# Safeguarding and Risk Assessment in the learning and skills sector

Phil Barnett

LSIS Associate



# Aim

## **Aim:**

To explore and apply a model of risk assessment to a safeguarding challenge

## Objectives

- To consider specific situations that should be subject to a risk assessment process
- To identify appropriate interventions that can be applied in order to mitigate against risk
- To review current organisational practice and identify how these can be further improved

## Definitions

### Risk Management

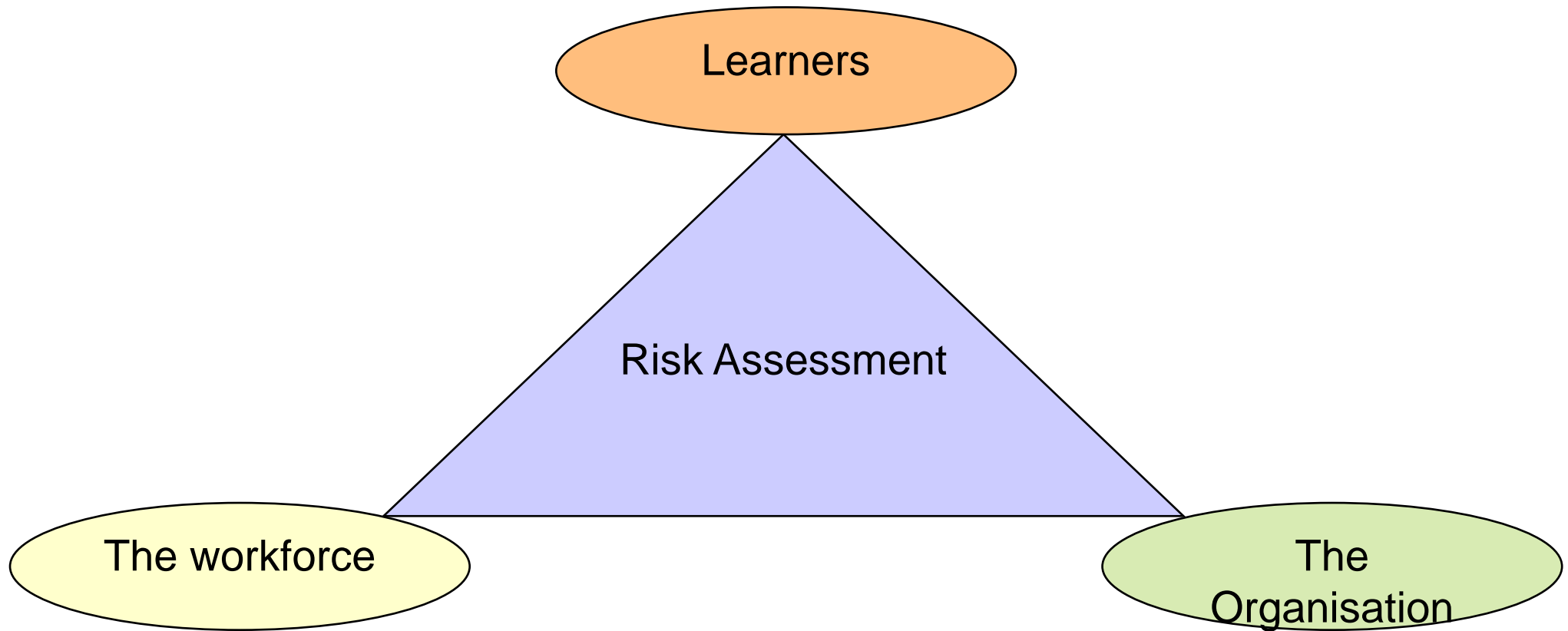
Risk management is a central part of any organisation's strategic management. It is the process whereby organisations methodically address the risks attached to their activities with the goal of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the portfolio of all activities.

The focus of a good risk management process is the identification and treatment of these risks.

*Source: Institute of Risk Management (IRM) Risk Management Standard*

# Risk Assessment

Who/what is at risk?



## What is risk assessment?

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your organisations context, could cause harm. You can then decide whether you have taken enough precautions or should you do more to prevent harm.

*Adapted from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)  
Risk Assessment Information sheet*

## Definitions

- **Child or young person:** up to their 18th birthday (UN convention of the Rights of the Child)
- **Vulnerable adult:** a person who has attained the age of 18, and:
  - Is receiving any form of health care
  - Is receiving a service or participating in an activity which is specifically targeted at people with age-related needs, disabilities or prescribed physical or mental health conditions or expectant or nursing mothers living in residential care
  - Age-related needs includes needs associated with frailty, illness, disability or mental capacity

For more details see Section 59 of Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

**What are we safeguarding  
learners from?**

## Safeguarding learners from

- Sexual abuse or inappropriate relationships
- Grooming
- Physical and emotional abuse or neglect
- Domestic violence
- Inappropriate parenting
- Inappropriate supervision by staff/volunteers i.e. 'bad practice'
- Bullying, cyber-bullying
- Self-harm, risky behaviour
- Unsafe activities and environments

And...

- Accidents e.g. road, home
- Crime
- Fear of crime
- Exploitation including financial abuse, sexual exploitation, forced marriage
- Immigration issues
- Potentially unsafe environments e.g. parks, sports grounds
- Homelessness and unsuitable housing
- Victimisation due to race, sexuality, faith, gender, disability and so on

Identifying the potential safeguarding risks:

### Group Activity:

With these definitions in mind and from your experience identify a range of safeguarding situations that are subject to a risk management and assessment process.

These might apply to learners, staff, visitors, the organisation

When the list is complete prioritise them to low, medium and high risk situations

## Safeguarding and Risk Assessment

The following areas may be covered by your Risk Assessment process:

- Trips
- Work placements
- Certain workshop/practical activity
- Lone Working
- Other Learners (where applicable)
- Home visits
- Mixed age groups within one learning cohort
- Multiple sites
- Travel between sites .....

# The Five Steps to a Safeguarding Risk Assessment



Identify and detail the situation that could cause potential harm

**STEP 1**

Decide who might be harmed and how

**STEP 2**

Evaluate the risk and decide on precautions /interventions

**STEP 3**

Record and report your findings and agreed actions

**STEP 4**

Review your assessment and update if necessary

**STEP 5**

# Operational thinking for the identification of risks

Likelihood of occurrence

**Impact of  
occurrence**

	Certain 6	Likely 5	Probable 4	Possible 3	Remote 2	Improbable 1
Catastrophic 4	24	20	16	12	8	4
Critical 3	18	15	12	9	6	3
Marginal 2	12	10	8	6	4	2
Negligible 1	6	5	4	3	2	1



Low



Medium

High

## Deciding on the level of Risk

1-7 LOW

7-13 MEDIUM

13-24 HIGH

Low - If risk lies in the low category no additional direct action is required to address the risk but it is worth identifying and recording so that everyone is aware and measures can be taken to reduce the risk should this become necessary.

Medium - Risk in the medium category poses a significant risk and therefore countermeasures should be taken to reduce the likelihood of occurrence and/or significance. Contingencies should also be in place to deal with the risk should it occur.

High - High risks pose a substantial risk and should be evaluated to decide whether they are tolerable or intolerable. If the risk is deemed tolerable then activity should only be started once measures have been taken to reduce the risk and satisfactory contingencies have been put in place to minimise the impact of the risk

*Source: Adapted from PRINCE2 risk management*

# Case Study Activity

## Group presentations and feedback

## Dealing with the Risk

Once a risk has been identified and analysed - What are the choices?

- Avoidance (eliminate, withdraw from or not become involved)
- Reduction (optimise - mitigate)
- Sharing (transfer - outsource or insure)
- Retention (accept and budget)

## Some examples of how a safeguarding risk can be mitigated

### Risk

14-16 year olds lunch  
arrangements

Staff member who  
needs to clear up after a  
restaurant session

Apprentices in the  
workplace

### Mitigation

To appoint and train a  
lunchtime supervisory team

To put in place escort  
arrangements with the  
security team

Safeguarding awareness  
training for learners  
Emergency contact  
arrangements

## External inspection continued...

### Compliance or commitment?

- The grade for safeguarding is a 'limiting' grade, which impacts on grades for **Leadership and Management** and **Overall Effectiveness**.
- Compliance is the minimum necessary requirement for a judgement of 'adequate' in safeguarding
- **Staff Training** – The LSIS Safeguarding Training Modules are recognised by OfSTED. It will be important for providers to select the modules best suited to staff roles and responsibilities.

## Further LSIS Safeguarding Training

- Safeguarding in the Learning and Skills Sector
- Safer Staff Recruitment and Safeguarding
- Safeguarding and Human Resource (HR) Practices and Procedures
- Safeguarding and Inspection
- Safeguarding Facilitator Workshop
- Safeguarding Designated Person Workshop
- In house and bespoke activities

## Session Evaluation

- As a group reflect on the session and record the following:
  - 3 Low spots about the training
  - 3 High spots
  - 1 improvement
- In addition record for yourself one aspect that you are going to take back to your workplace

## Contact Details:

Learning and Skills Improvement Service,

Friars House,

Manor House Drive,

Coventry.

CV1 2TE.

(02476) 627 745

[safeguarding@lisis.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@lisis.org.uk)

Thank you

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AND SKILLS  
IMPROVEMENT  
SERVICE

