



Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Company Policy and Generic Risk Assessment

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1.0 Introduction

This guidance has been developed on information provided by:

- The UK NHS (National Health Service)
- The WHO (World Health Organisation)
- CIPD (The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)
- The UK FCO (Foreign and Commonwealth Office)
- GOV.UK
- Australian Government
- Public Health Wales

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. A novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was identified in 2019 in Wuhan, China. This is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Detailed investigations found that SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats to humans and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans.

RISK LEVEL

The risk to the UK has been raised to **HIGH. This will be constantly reviewed and acted upon**

2.0 CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) POLICY STATEMENT

Protecting the health and well-being of our employees, contractors and anyone affected by our work is our top priority and we have developed a proactive plan designed to minimise the impact of COVID-19 within our workplace. We will implement the plan in phases as necessary, commencing immediately and following guidance from Public Health England and the UK Government.

Because the COVID-19 public health emergency is constantly changing, this policy and our management plans will be subject to change and ongoing reviews. All changes to the policy will be communicated to employees by email and posted on company notice boards.

The policy includes the measures that we are actively taking to protect our employees, visitors, and contractors from the COVID-19 virus and to further mitigate the spread of it through the business and wider community.

To maintain a healthy and safe workplace, all employees and contractors are requested to follow all the rules diligently. It is important that we all act responsibly and transparently in complying with these health precautions.

Scope

This coronavirus policy applies to all our employees who are either working in the office or at home. It is imperative that those personnel working from home read through the working from home guidance notes to ensure we maintain a collective and uniform response to this challenge.

Policy Elements

We require all employees to protect themselves and their co-workers from a potential coronavirus infection.

General:

- We will provide a safe healthy place of work
- We will provide hand sanitisers and desk wipes.
- Face masks will also be available to staff that request them
- The office and site managers will arrange an improved cleaning regime
- All employees are to comply with the COVID 19 notices posted around the building and sites
- All employees are to ensure that they comply with the risk assessments provided by office/site managers
- Social distancing must be observed until such times as the policy changes and measures relaxed
- All managers are to deliver team meetings with the use of technology wherever possible
- There are to be no group gatherings

Reporting:

- If you have cold symptoms, such as cough/sneezing/fever (above 37.5 °C), or feel poorly, call 111 and obtain medical advice
- If you have a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, you cannot return to the office *until you* have fully recovered and have received and are able to provide a negative test result.
- If a family member has the symptoms or COVID 19 you are requested to inform your line manager and to work from home
- If you have a medical condition and are in the vulnerable group discuss this with your line manager

Work from Home Requests:

- If you are feeling ill, but you can work, you can request to work from home.
- If you have returned from areas with a high number of COVID-19 cases (based on FCO announcements), we will ask you to work from home for 14 calendar days, and return to the office only if you are fully asymptomatic. You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues during this time.
- If you have been in close contact with someone infected by COVID-19, with high chances of being infected yourself, you are to request to work from home. You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues during this time.
- If you are a parent and you must stay at home with your children, discuss this with your manager to agree suitable arrangements and set expectations.
- If you need to provide care to a family member infected by COVID-19, discuss this with your manager to agree arrangements and set expectations.
- You will only be permitted to return to the office 14 calendar days after your family member has fully recovered, provided that you are asymptomatic, or you have a doctor's note confirming you don't have the virus. You will also be asked not to come into physical contact with any colleagues during this time.

Travelling/Commuting Measures:

- All work trips and events are cancelled/postponed until further notice.
- If you normally commute to the office by public transportation and do not have other alternatives, follow the guidance within the risk assessment and if this is not possible you can request to work from home as a precaution.
- If you are planning to travel voluntarily to a high-risk country with increased COVID-19 cases, you will be required to work from home for 14 calendar days on return. You will also be required not to come into physical contact with any colleagues during this time.

General Hygiene Rules:

- Wash your hands regularly and after using the toilet, before eating, and if you cough/sneeze into your hands (follow the 20-second hand-washing rule). You can also use the sanitisers you will find around the office.
- If necessary, cough/sneeze into your sleeve, preferably into your elbow. If you use a tissue, discard it properly and clean/sanitise your hands immediately.
- Where possible open the windows regularly to ensure open ventilation.
- Try to avoid touching your face, particularly eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands to prevent getting infected.
- If you find yourself coughing/sneezing on a regular basis, avoid close physical contact with your co-workers and take extra precautionary measures (such as requesting sick leave).

Sources of further information:

- <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm>
- <https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/riddor-reporting-coronavirus.htm>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested?>

3.0 Symptoms of coronavirus

The most common symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of:

- New continuous cough and/or
- High temperature

For most people, coronavirus (COVID-19) will be a mild infection

4.0 How is it spread

Because it's a new illness, we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person.

Similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.

There is no evidence to suggest that it can be spread through things like packages or food. (However, news outlets have advised to wash food packaging if shopping for vulnerable groups).

5.0 How to avoid catching or spreading germs

There are things we can do to help stop viruses spreading.

DO

1. Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
2. Always wash your hands when you get home or into work
3. Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
5. Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
6. Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell – follow government guidelines on social distancing

DO NOT

1. Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
2. Throw waste onto the open skips
3. Gather in groups

6.0 Social distancing in the workplace

To reduce the spread of germs in the workplace:

- Stay at home if you are sick
- ~~Work from home if you can~~ **Work from home where agreed with your line manager**
- Stop handshaking as a greeting
- Where possible internal meetings are to be held by video conferencing or phone call
- Large meetings are to be halted
- Essential meetings i.e. site meetings can be held outside in the open air if possible

- Lunch and Tea breaks are to be at different times to keep the number of personnel in the canteen/kitchen areas to a minimum
- Welfare facilities are to be cleaned regularly
- All high touch areas are to be cleaned regularly
- If possible open windows and adjust air conditioning for more ventilation
- ~~Non-essential travel is to halt~~ **Review the need for non-essential travel**
- For advice follow the Government guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

7.0 If you have coronavirus symptoms¹

Stay at home for 7 days if you have either:

- A high temperature – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
- A new, continuous cough – this means you have started coughing repeatedly

Do not go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital.

You do not need to contact 111 to tell them that you are staying at home.

Testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home.

USE THE NHS 111 ONLINE CORONAVIRUS SERVICE IF:

- You feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home
- Your condition gets worse
- Your symptoms do not get better after 7 days

Only call 111 if you cannot get help online.

8.0 Self-Isolation advice

The 14-day period is for those who have had exposure to a confirmed case but have not shown symptoms and represents the potential incubation period (the time it takes for symptoms to show if you have been infected). Most people will no longer be likely to transmit the virus 7 days after the onset of symptoms. You do not need to call NHS111 to go into self-isolation. If your symptoms persist past 7 days you should contact NHS. If you have no internet access, you should call NHS 111.

9.0 Stay at home advice

DO

- Try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions
- Ask friends and family and delivery services to deliver things like food shopping and medicines – but avoid contact with them

- Sleep alone if possible
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions
- Drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol, to help with your symptoms

DO NOT

- Do not have visitors (ask people to leave deliveries outside)
- Do not leave the house, for example to go, to school or public places

10.0 Ending Self-Isolation

You should remain at home until 7 days after the onset of your symptoms. After 7 days, if you feel better and no longer have a high temperature, you can return to your normal routine. If you have not had any signs of improvement and have not already sought medical advice, contact NHS 111 online. If you have no internet access, call NHS 111. Coughing may persist for several weeks in some people, despite the coronavirus infection having cleared. A persistent cough alone does not mean you must continue to self-isolate for more than 7 days.

11.0 Preventing the spread in the workplace

Managers and Supervisors are to

- Make sure the workplaces are clean and hygienic
 - Surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly
 - Why? Because contamination on surfaces touched by employees and customers is one of the main ways that COVID-19 spreads
- Promote regular and thorough handwashing by employees, contractors and customers
 - If possible, put sanitising hand rub dispensers in prominent places around the workplace. Make sure these dispensers are regularly refilled
 - Display posters promoting handwashing
 - Combine this with other communication measures such as offering guidance from occupational health and safety officers, briefings at meetings and information on the intranet to promote handwashing
 - Make sure that staff, contractors and customers have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water

12.0 How long can the virus survive?²

How long any respiratory virus survives will depend on a number of factors, for example:

- What surface the virus is on
- Whether it is exposed to sunlight
- Differences in temperature and humidity

- Exposure to cleaning products

Under most circumstances, the amount of infectious virus on any contaminated surfaces is likely to have decreased significantly by 72 hours. We know that similar viruses are transferred to and by people's hands. Therefore, regular hand hygiene and cleaning of frequently touched surfaces will help to reduce the risk of infection.

13.0 Treatment for coronavirus

- There is currently no specific treatment for coronavirus
- Antibiotics do not help, as they do not work against viruses
- Treatment aims to relieve the symptoms while your body fights the illness
- You'll need to stay in isolation away from other people until you've recovered.

APPENDIX 1: Toolbox Talk / Safety Briefing No. 81

Toolbox Talk/Safety Briefing No 81 Corona Virus (COVID 19)

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WHAT IS THE RISK OF CORONA VIRUS IN THE UK?

The UK Government have rated this as HIGH, however we will closely monitor this and act accordingly. Managers should monitor the advice provided by the Government and Public Health England

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new strain of coronavirus first identified in Wuhan City, China. A coronavirus is a type of virus. As a group, coronaviruses are common across the world. Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Generally, coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease. The situation is changing daily and we will continue to manage your Health Safety and Welfare

WHAT'S THE RISK OF CORONAVIRUS FOR TRAVELLERS?

The government has issued advice to travellers and this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>. This page is updated as the emergency situation changes and should be monitored by managers

SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS

The symptoms are

- A cough
- A high temperature
- Shortness of breath

However, these do not in themselves mean that you have the illness as the symptoms are very similar to other illnesses that are much more common such as colds and flu

HOW IS THE VIRUS SPREAD?

Because this is a new illness, we are not certain how this spreads from person to person, it is however assessed as being transmitted through the air and possibly touch. There is still no evidence that it can be spread through things like packages and food or materials. The advice is that if possible, leave packages such as post etc for 24 hours

MONITORING

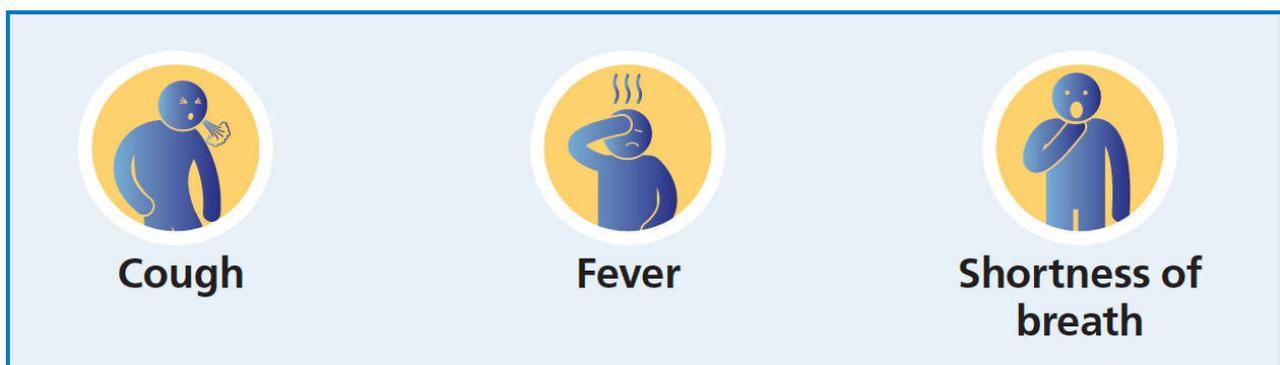
We are monitoring the government announcements and we will respond accordingly

APPENDIX 2:

CORONAVIRUS

Are you suffering from the following signs and symptoms?

- Cough
- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing/shortness of breath



If yes, to protect yourself and others please go home and search 'NHS Coronavirus' for advice and access the 111 online coronavirus service.

As soon as possible contact your Employer for guidance.

Do not enter this building

Poster layout and content developed from NHS and Public Health England.

APPENDIX 3:

CORONAVIRUS

Wash your hands

more often for

20 seconds

Use soap and water or a hand sanitiser when you:

- Get home or into work
- Blow your nose, sneeze or cough
- Eat or handle food

CORONAVIRUS

PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

- 1 - Safe Place!
- 2 - Safe Person!
- 3 - Sound Information!

Poster layout and content developed from NHS and Public Health England.

APPENDIX 4:

CORONAVIRUS



Wash hands frequently with soap and water or use a sanitiser gel



Catch coughs and sneezes with **disposable tissues**



Throw away used tissues (then wash hands)



If you don't have a tissue **use your sleeve**



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid close contact with people who are unwell

APPENDIX 5: Risk Assessment

Part 1: Risk Assessment for (COVID-19)

Risk assess each hazard and implement the necessary controls as appropriate. Provide awareness briefings to all affected workers and contractors, use the briefing record to capture their names. **Note:** *The assessment has been started – add to the assessment as appropriate.*

Description							
Prepared by (<i>print</i>)		Prepared by (<i>sign</i>)		Position		Date	
Authorised by (<i>print</i>)		Authorised by (<i>sign</i>)		Position		Date	

Risk No.	Hazard	Who might be affected and how?	Enter either, or/and 1 - Details of recommended NHS / UK Government / FCO / WHO / etc. / General health and safety risk management controls (zoonosis) 2 - What we are currently doing	Evaluate current control measures. Do we need to implement additional controls?			Enter either, or/and 1 - New control measures recommended 2 - Why the recommended control measures are not implemented 3 - General comments	By who	By when
				YES	NO	N/A			

1 - SAFE PLACE OF WORK

	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19)	<p>Employees</p> <p>A visitor enters the workplace with CV19 and passes the virus on to employees.</p>	<p>An information poster/email is sent to regular visitors which highlights the risks of CV19 and states that symptomatic individuals will not be allowed entry or will be requested to leave.</p> <p>Information poster highlighting the symptoms of CV19 is placed on the entry/sign in point. The poster will state that symptomatic individuals will not be allowed entry.</p> <p>Hygiene requirements (handwashing etc.) and symptoms of CV19 will be included within Induction.</p> <p>CV19 Information posters are placed in designated locations within the workplace (toilets, notice boards etc).</p> <p>This information has been passed onto employees,</p>	Yes					
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R1	<i>Someone entering the workplace with CV19</i>		<p>The individual will be moved to a designated area which is at least 2 metres away from other people.</p> <p>We have identified a designated room or area where they can be isolated behind a closed door, such as a staff office. If it is possible to open a window, we will do so for ventilation.</p>	Yes			Test temperatures at entry point	Local Manager	Immediate
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R2	<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19)</p> <p>Someone becomes ill within the workplace</p>	<p>Employees, visitors</p> <p>Contracted CV19 by any means.</p>	<p>The individual will be sent home and advised to follow NHS guidance online. If the person is a visitor, their organisation will also be contacted.</p> <p>The workplace will be decontaminated following Governmental guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings</p> <p>This information has been passed onto employees.</p> <p>Increased formal cleaning regime is underway.</p> <p>Employees are cleaning equipment more often (keyboards, work surfaces etc.).</p> <p>Hand sanitisers have been placed in the workplace.</p> <p>Extra hygiene requirements (handwashing etc.) are enforced.</p> <p>Multi-use handtowels are not used to dry hands.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>			<p>First Aider to wear face mask and protective equipment i.e. latex gloves goggles etc</p>		
R3	<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19)</p> <p>Contaminated workplace</p>	<p>Employees, visitors</p> <p>A person catches CV19 due to contaminated surfaces.</p>	<p>This information has been passed onto employees.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>			<p>Paper towels to be used and disposed of in sealed double bags</p>		

R4	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) Proximity, workplace gatherings	Employees A person catches CV19 due to working closely with an infected person.	Where possible the social distancing policy has been implemented. All work areas and activities have been evaluated against the possibility to implement social distancing (no handshaking, deferring large meetings etc.) https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-information-on-social-distancing This information has been passed onto employees.	Yes					
				Yes					
				Yes					

Risk No.	Hazard	Who might be affected and how?	Enter either, or/and 1 – Details of recommended NHS / UK Government / FCO / WHO / etc. / General health and safety risk management controls (zoonosis) 2 – What we are currently doing	Evaluate current control measures. Do we need to implement additional controls?			Enter either, or/and 1 – New control measures recommended 2 – Why the recommended control measures are not implemented 3 – General comments	By who	By when
				YES	NO	N/A			

2 – SAFE PERSON/SAFE EMPLOYEE

R5	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) General	Employees (including those considered at increased risk) Employees are not aware of the risks from CV19 and become infected due to lack of awareness of control measures.	NHS provides advice on what CV19 is, what the risks are, the symptoms, how CV19 is spread, and how to avoid catching or spreading germs (simple Do's and Don'ts): https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/ Government guidance on hand washing is provided in line with the 20 second rule: https://www.nhs.uk/video/pages/how-to-wash-hands.aspx Consideration will be given to those employees who may be deemed to be at increased risk. Advice on risks, symptoms and control measures has been passed onto employees. A formal training program has been implemented which considers Safe Place, Safe Person, Sound Information.	Yes			Ensure hygiene facilities are well maintained		
R6	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) Self-isolation	Employees Employees are not aware of the need to self-isolate or how to self-isolate.	NHS 111 online provides advice on when to self-isolate and access to an online interactive and personal checklist: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/ Advice on how to self-isolate has been passed onto employees.	Yes			Toolbox/Safety Brief to be given		

R7	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) Travel (Travelling abroad)	Employees Travelling abroad for work to an area with a higher risk of CV19.	We do not insist employees travel to an area with a higher risk of CV19. Practical alternatives to travel including postponing trips and holding meetings via video conferencing are implemented. Advice and guidance on travelling has been passed onto employees.	Yes Yes Yes					
R9	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) Booked annual leave	Employees Employee(s) may become affected due to travelling to an affected area as part of booked annual leave.	Employee(s) are granted permission to cancel at short notice any pre-booked annual leave to an affected area.	Yes					

R10	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19)	Employees, general public, family members	Employee(s) are advised to follow NHS online guidance: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/	Yes					
			if NHS 111 or a GP determines the employee is symptomatic and certifies them unfit for work, they will be treated as off sick as per normal policy.	Yes					
			Symptomatic employees will be sent home.						
			Colleagues who have had contact with a symptomatic employee will be made aware of the symptoms and advised to contact NHS online for guidance.	Yes					
			Where possible working from home will be preferred						
			As a last resort, if we decide to suspend an employee as a precaution this will be on full pay unless the employees specific contract provides us a right to suspend without full pay for this reason. Such a suspension will not be considered a 'medical suspension'.	Yes					
This advice or how to access it is passed onto employees.	Yes								
	Symptomatic or exposed employee(s)	Employee(s) is/are symptomatic of CV19 or has been in close contact with someone with CV19.							
	Presenteeism	A person catches CV19 due to another employee continuing to work despite being unwell.							
									Manager to provide a briefing on this

R11	<p>Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19)</p> <p><i>Employee(s) who have contracted CV19</i></p>	<p>Employees, general public, family members</p> <p>Contracted CV19 by any means.</p>	<p>If NHS 111/online or a GP determines an employee has contracted CV19 they will be treated as off sick as per normal policy.</p> <p>Employees who have had contact with a symptomatic employee will be made aware of the symptoms and advised to follow NHS online guidance.</p> <p>The workplace will be decontaminated following Governmental guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings/covid-19-decontamination-in-non-healthcare-settings</p> <p>Personal Protective Equipment has been provided relative to activities. information has been passed onto employees.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>					
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Risk No.	Hazard	Who might be affected and how?	Enter either, or/and 1 - <i>Details of recommended NHS / UK Government / FCO / WHO / etc. / General health and safety risk management controls (zoonosis)</i> 2 - <i>What we are currently doing</i>	Evaluate current control measures. Do we need to implement additional controls?			Enter either, or/and 1 - <i>New control measures recommended</i> 2 - <i>Why the recommended control measures are not implemented</i> 3 - <i>General comments</i>	By who	By when
				YES	NO	N/A			

3 - SOUND INFORMATION

R12	Coronavirus (COVID-19) (CV19) Lack of accurate information / a failure to disseminate information	Employees (including those considered at increased risk) Employees are not aware of the risks from CV19 and become infected due to lack of awareness of control measures.	We have designated a CV19 Appointed Person. Responsibilities include: a) Signing up to relevant websites to receive timely updates. b) Monitoring relevant Websites and News outlets. c) An internal and external risk communication plan has been developed to ensure timely updating/ sharing of information with all stakeholders (meetings, circulars, emails etc.).	Yes					
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Part 2. Health & Safety Risk Assessment - Briefing Record

If the risk assessment is updated the briefing of the changes must be recorded.

First Name	Surname	Signature	Time	Date

Guidance Note – IMPORTANT: If you feel your health, safety or security is at risk at any time, you must stop work immediately and seek advice.