

Risk Score Descriptors

	1	2	3	4	5
Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Probable	Almost Certain
Frequency	Not expected to occur for years	Expected to occur at least annually	Expected to occur at least monthly	Expected to occur at least weekly	Expected to occur at least daily
Probability	< 1%	1 – 5%	6 – 20%	21 – 50%	> 50%
	Will only occur in exceptional circumstances	Unlikely to occur	Reasonable chance of occurring	Likely to occur	More likely to occur than not

	CONSEQUENCE SCORE (SEVERITY LEVELS) AND EXAMPLES OF DESCRIPTORS				
	1	2	3	4	5
Domains	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact on the safety of patients, staff or public (physical/psychological harm)	Minimal injury requiring no/minimal intervention or treatment. No time off work	Minor injury or illness, requiring minor intervention Requiring time off work for >3 days Increase in length of hospital stay by 1-3 days	Moderate injury requiring professional intervention Requiring time off work for 4-14 days Increase in length of hospital stay by 4-15 days RIDDOR/agency reportable incident An event which impacts on a small number of patients	Major injury leading to long-term incapacity/disability Requiring time off work for >14 days Increase in length of hospital stay by >15 days Mismanagement of patient care with long-term effects	Incident leading to death Multiple permanent injuries or irreversible health effects An event which impacts on a large number of patients
Quality/complaints/audit	Peripheral element of treatment or service suboptimal Informal complaint/inquiry	Overall treatment or service suboptimal Formal complaint (stage 1) Local resolution Single failure to meet internal standards Minor implications for patient safety if unresolved Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Treatment or service has significantly reduced effectiveness Formal complaint (stage 2) complaint Local resolution (with potential to go to independent review) Repeated failure to meet internal standards Major patient safety implications if findings are not acted on	Non-compliance with national standards with significant risk to patients if unresolved Multiple complaints/independent review Low performance rating Critical report	Totally unacceptable level or quality of treatment/service Gross failure of patient safety if findings not acted on Inquest/ombudsman inquiry Gross failure to meet national standards

	CONSEQUENCE SCORE (SEVERITY LEVELS) AND EXAMPLES OF DESCRIPTORS				
	1	2	3	4	5
Domains	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Human resources/ organisational development/staffing/ competence	Short-term low staffing level that temporarily reduces service quality (< 1 day)	Low staffing level that reduces the service quality	Late delivery of key objective/ service due to lack of staff Unsafe staffing level or competence (>1 day) Low staff morale Poor staff attendance for mandatory/key training	Uncertain delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Unsafe staffing level or competence (>5 days) Loss of key staff Very low staff morale No staff attending mandatory/ key training	Non-delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Ongoing unsafe staffing levels or competence Loss of several key staff No staff attending mandatory training /key training on an ongoing basis
Statutory duty/ inspections	No or minimal impact or breach of guidance/ statutory duty	Breach of statutory legislation Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Single breach in statutory duty Challenging external recommendations/ improvement notice	Enforcement action Multiple breaches in statutory duty Improvement notices Low performance rating Critical report	Multiple breaches in statutory duty Prosecution Complete systems change required Zero performance rating Severely critical report
Adverse publicity/ reputation	Rumours Potential for public concern	Local media coverage – short-term reduction in public confidence Elements of public expectation not being met	Local media coverage – long-term reduction in public confidence	National media coverage with <3 days service well below reasonable public expectation	National media coverage with >3 days service well below reasonable public expectation. MP concerned (questions in the House) Total loss of public confidence
Business objectives/ projects	Insignificant cost increase/ schedule slippage	<5% over project budget Schedule slippage	5–10% over project budget Schedule slippage	Non-compliance with national 10–25% over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met	Incident leading >25% over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met
Finance including claims	Small loss Risk of claim remote	Loss of 0.1–0.25% of budget Claim less than £10,000	Loss of 0.25–0.5% of budget Claim(s) between £10,000 and £100,000	Uncertain delivery of key objective/Loss of 0.5–1.0% of budget Claim(s) between £100,000 and £1 million Purchasers failing to pay on time	Non-delivery of key objective/ Loss of >1% of budget Failure to meet specification/ slippage Loss of contract / payment by results Claim(s) >£1 million
Service/business interruption Environmental impact	Loss/interruption of >1 hour Minimal or no impact on the environment	Loss/interruption of >8 hours Minor impact on environment	Loss/interruption of >1 day Moderate impact on environment	Loss/interruption of >1 week Major impact on environment	Permanent loss of service or facility Catastrophic impact on environment