IT'S H&S RISK ASSESSMENT TIME!
CONTENTS

4 FOREWORD

6 WHAT IS AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT?
   WHY CONDUCT AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT?
   ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

8 WORKING CONDITIONS IN H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS
   PHYSICAL AND ERGONOMIC CONDITIONS
   PSYCHOSOCIAL CONDITIONS
   CHEMICAL CONDITIONS
   RISK OF ACCIDENTS

12 SMALL BUSINESSES AND H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

14 PREPARING FOR THE H&S RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS
   EXPERIENCES FROM THE MOST RECENT H&S RISK ASSESSMENT
   WAYS TO CONDUCT AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT
   WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED (INTERNALLY/EXTERNALLY)
   KEEP PEOPLE INFORMED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS
   TIMETABLE

18 MAPPING
   CHOOSING A METHOD
   DEPARTMENTAL MEETING
   WALK-THROUGH - OBSERVATION AND DIALOGUE
   QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD
   WHAT DOES THE MAPPING REVEAL?

24 ABSENCES DUE TO SICKNESS AND H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

26 ASSESSMENT, PRIORITISATION AND ACTION PLAN
   INCORPORATE PREVENTION INTO YOUR SOLUTION PROPOSAL

28 ACTION PLAN FOLLOW UP

31 FURTHER INFORMATION

33 ABOUT BAR KONTOR

35 CHECKLISTS AND FORMS
   MAPPING CHECKLIST
   H&S RISK ASSESSMENT FORM
   ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW FORM
Everyone benefits from a sound working environment. The H&S risk assessment (in Danish called an APV) helps ensure a healthy environment in the workplace and is a vital tool for systematically working with the working environment.

There is much to be gained from a sound working environment: improved well-being, improved efficiency and improved finances. This applies to both large and small companies.

This guide gives some good advice on H&S risk assessments as well as providing specific examples of how to conduct them in the workplace. Risk assessments do not have to be an elaborate affair. In fact, much of the work can be done at a single meeting in the workplace.

The aim of this guide is to help you get started on the risk assessment process, regardless of whether you are a manager, employee or working environment organisation representative.

We hope that you will find plenty of inspiration here for your upcoming H&S risk assessment process. If you need more information about H&S risk assessments, please visit BAR Kontor’s website at www.barkontor.dk

This guide has been reviewed and approved by the Danish Working Environment Authority (WEA) pursuant to the Danish Working Environment Act. Only the contents of the guide have been assessed by the WEA, not whether the guide covers every topic within the area.
WHAT IS AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT?

A health & safety (H&S) risk assessment is an assessment of the working environment at a workplace. A risk assessment makes it possible to obtain a good overview of the areas where change is needed.

Before starting the risk assessment process, it is important to set aside time to prepare and plan for the upcoming process.

An H&S risk assessment must contain the following:

- Mapping of the working environment
- Assessment of the mapping and any working environment-related problems identified
- Incorporation of working environment-related absences due to sickness
- Prioritisation of working environment-related problems and action plan
- Follow-up

This guide will help you navigate the various elements.

WHY CONDUCT AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT?

The purpose of an H&S risk assessment is to ensure that the company examines all essential aspects of the working environment as well as working systematically and continuously to solve any working environment-related problems. The bird’s eye view that the company gains from a risk assessment makes it possible to target, plan and prioritise working environment initiatives.

ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

> All businesses with employees are required by law to conduct an H&S risk assessment. The employer is responsible for ensuring compliance.

> An H&S risk assessment must be conducted at least every three years or when significant changes are made to the workplace that have an impact on the working environment, such as moving to new premises.

> An H&S risk assessment must be a written document and must cover all essential aspects of the working environment.

> The employer must secure the involvement of the working environment organisation in the planning, organisation and implementation of the risk assessment as well as in the follow-up process.

> For businesses without a working environment organisation (enterprises with fewer than 10 employees), the risk assessment must be carried out jointly by the management and the employees.

> Involvement must be documented by the signature on the H&S risk assessment of one manager and one employee representative.

> The H&S risk assessment must be available to all employees, managers and the Danish Working Environment Authority.

> It must be possible to prove that the company has covered every element in the H&S risk assessment.
Action areas

Physical conditions
  > Indoor climate
  > Lighting
  > Noise

Ergonomics

Psychosocial conditions

Absences due to sickness

Other conditions
An H&S risk assessment must cover all essential aspects of the working environment, including:

- Physical conditions
- Ergonomic conditions
- Psychosocial conditions
- Chemical conditions
- Risk of accidents

You will find the typical working environment-related conditions on the checklist at the back of this guide. You can also find more guides and tools on BAR Kontor’s website: www.barkontor.dk

**PHYSICAL AND ERGONOMIC CONDITIONS**

The physical and ergonomic working environment in the office workplace addresses such aspects as indoor climate, lighting, noise, furnishings, working posture and conditions relating to computer monitor work, such as:

- The positioning of the monitor
- The intensity of the computer work
- Using the computer’s tools

Consult the checklist on pages 36-39 to find out which conditions apply to office workstations. You can find more inspiration in BAR Kontor’s guides:

- Working with computers
- Indoor climate in the office
- Good lighting in the office
- Noise and acoustics in the office

The guides can be downloaded at www.barkontor.dk
Updating an H&S risk assessment
It is important to be aware that it can be necessary to adjust and update your H&S risk assessment in case of accidents due to working environment-related conditions.
PSYCHOSOCIAL CONDITIONS

The psychosocial working environment must be included in the H&S risk assessment. Many factors influence well-being and the psychosocial working environment. There are generally six criteria for assessing the psychosocial working environment.

Six words of wisdom:

- Workload – balance between requirements and resources
- Social support – from both colleagues and management
- Meaningfulness – is the work meaningful?
- Influence – on working conditions and tasks
- Predictability – being informed about important changes
- Reward – recognition, training, pay etc.

When assessing the psychosocial working environment, you should consider the entire workplace, not just isolated episodes. It is therefore a good idea to take your organisational structure and corporate culture as your point of departure when deciding how to handle the psychosocial working environment in your H&S risk assessment.

According to studies conducted by the National Research Centre for the Working Environment, if problems relating to the psychosocial environment that come to light during the H&S risk assessment are not dealt with, the psychosocial environment could worsen. It is important to inform employees about and provide feedback on the solutions to any problems.

If you know beforehand that there are problems with the psychosocial working environment, it is important to get someone involved who is trusted and who can contribute to a positive risk assessment process. You can find out more about the psychosocial working environment and well-being at work in BAR Kontor’s guide on well-being on our website, www.barkontor.dk, and on the National Research Centre for the Working Environment’s website, www.arbejdsmiljoforskning.dk.

CHEMICAL CONDITIONS

Hazardous chemicals and materials may be part of work life in certain functions, such as cleaning, warehouse, post distribution, printing and canteen. In these areas you should ask whether workplace instructions have been drawn up and whether all required protective gear is available and being used. On BAR Kontor’s website, you can find out more about workplace instructions.

RISK OF ACCIDENTS

The H&S risk assessment should contain an assessment of whether there are areas with a risk of accidents. The objective is to collect employee observations of dangerous incidents and situations, e.g. loose ceiling panels or colleagues who read documents while walking down the stairs.

The working environment organisation is already tasked with investigating and working to prevent accidents and near misses (dangerous situations). The H&S risk assessment process will give you additional information from the employees on the risk of accidents.
SMALL BUSINESSES AND H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

Preparing an H&S risk assessment isn’t rocket science. There are ways to make it simple and manageable. For your inspiration, three different methods are described on page 18.

For workplaces with fewer than 10 employees, the employer must ensure that the employees are directly involved in the H&S risk assessment process. The requirements for the risk assessment are the same, regardless of whether the company has a working environment organisation or not.

As a small workplace, you have a better chance of carrying out your H&S risk assessment more quickly and with personal involvement. For instance, at a single departmental meeting, you can discuss whether there are any problems, decide on solutions and appoint a person responsible for implementation. And you can follow up on your solutions at the next departmental meeting, which makes the path from decision to action very short.

Remember that an H&S risk assessment must culminate in a written document.

Annual working environment talks
All companies must hold working environment talks once a year. In this connection, your H&S risk assessment will be very useful as inspiration.
So what do we prioritise first?
PREPARING FOR THE H&S RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Before you get started, it's a good idea to talk about:

- Your experiences from the most recent H&S risk assessment
- How you will conduct this H&S risk assessment
- Who should be involved (internally/externally)
- How you will inform and motivate managers and employees throughout the risk assessment process
- The timetable for your H&S risk assessment

If there are fewer than 10 employees, the H&S risk assessment process will normally be initiated by the manager. If there are 10 or more employees, the working environment organisation will normally take the initiative and define the main parameters for the process.

An H&S risk assessment must be conducted at least every three years or when significant changes are made to the workplace that have an impact on the working environment. Such changes may include moving, renovations or major reorganisation of work assignments.

EXPERIENCES FROM THE MOST RECENT H&S RISK ASSESSMENT

What went well, and what went less well? Incorporating these experiences can help improve both the content and the entire process of the upcoming H&S risk assessment.

WAYS TO CONDUCT AN H&S RISK ASSESSMENT

There are several ways to conduct an H&S risk assessment: for example through dialogue at departmental meetings, on a walk-through or with the aid of a questionnaire. The different methods are described on page 18, and you are free to choose the method you feel best suits your company’s culture and needs. The main thing is that you and your colleagues work together to determine the state of your working environment and whether anything needs changing.

On pages 19, 20 and 22 you can read about how three different companies and organisations conducted their H&S risk assessments.
What have we learned from last time?

What should we do this time?
How should we conduct the process?

Who should be involved?
WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED (INTERNALLY/EXTERNALLY)
As a rule, an H&S risk assessment is something you should conduct yourselves. This results in the best involvement and sense of ownership. The employees are an important source of solution proposals as they know their work best. However, you may not have the resources to implement the H&S risk assessment or part of it yourselves, for instance for solving the problems that come to light. If this is the case, you should seek assistance from outside the company.

You can obtain external advice from employer, management and employee organisations, authorised working environment consultants and other consultancies. If your company chooses to use external experts to carry out various tasks in the H&S risk assessment process, the working environment organisation must be consulted before the employer signs agreements with new external advisors.

KEEP PEOPLE INFORMED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS
It is vital to keep your colleagues continuously informed throughout the process. They will be more motivated and committed to the H&S risk assessment process if they feel the process is based on realistic views and a willingness to take action.

It is a good idea to appoint one person to be responsible for keeping everyone informed about:

- Scheduled commencement
- The individual employee’s role
- The process and content
- Expectations
- Results

This information can be communicated at staff meetings, by email to everyone, via the company’s intranet or as a combination of all three.

TIMETABLE
When preparing for the H&S risk assessment, it is important to set a realistic timetable. The timetable should ensure that not too much time passes from mapping to action, otherwise you risk losing the motivation for and commitment to the process.

If you use external advisors, be sure to make clear agreements regarding the timetable. Internally, you can set the dates of your meetings while preparing for the H&S risk assessment.
MAPPING

Once you have completed the preparations for the H&S risk assessment, the next step is describing the actual working environment conditions. This is called mapping. This must cover the physical, ergonomic, psychosocial and chemical conditions as well as areas where there is a risk of accidents. Read more about these topics on pages 8-11.

CHOOSING A METHOD

You are free to choose how you want to conduct the working environment mapping process. For instance, you can do it at a departmental meeting, on a walk-through or with the aid of a questionnaire. Or you can use a combination of these methods. Your choice depends to a great extent on your corporate structure, culture and needs. A large company might prefer to use a questionnaire, while a small company or a department might decide to discuss the working environment at a departmental meeting or during a workplace walk-through; see page 20.

Checklist

BAR Kontor has prepared a checklist you can use to map the working environment at a departmental meeting or on a walk through the workplace. This ensures that you cover the typical working environment conditions at your office workplace. The checklist can be found at the back of this guide and online at www.barkontor.dk.

Questionnaire

If you opt for the questionnaire method, BAR Kontor has developed a questionnaire that gives employees and managers the opportunity to describe causes and propose solutions during the mapping stage of the process. The working environment organisation will need this information for the subsequent process of preparing the general assessment, prioritisation and action plan. You can find the questionnaire at www.barkontor.dk.
DEPARTMENTAL MEETING

If the mapping can be done at a departmental meeting, it is a good idea to distribute BAR Kontor’s checklist before the meeting so that everyone understands the kinds of conditions they should be aware of. This is also a good way to ensure that all aspects of the working environment are covered.

Advantages: A meeting with personal involvement where there is plenty of opportunity to discuss the problems in detail. After the mapping, you can also choose to move on to the other elements of the H&S risk assessment and conclude the meeting with an action plan. This establishes a sense of ownership because it gives the employees the opportunity to describe the problems in their own words. This also makes it possible to shed light on any problems not covered by the questionnaire.

Disadvantages: Not appropriate for large numbers of participants. Critical conditions, such as bullying, may not come to light due to lack of anonymity. Requires a high degree of trust among the participants. Recommendations: Max. 20 meeting participants.

Example: H&S risk assessment at departmental meeting
Karen Møller, Working Environment Representative, Health, Safety, Environment Department, SAS:

“This was the first time we conducted our H&S risk assessment at a departmental meeting. One week before the risk assessment meeting, the employees in the department were given a list of the working environment conditions they should think about in connection with the risk assessment. At the meeting, people paired up like a kind of speed dating, and asked each other to name the three things that most affect them with regard to the working environment. Then, the entire group met and listed the items on a board in order to achieve a common understanding. Finally, we broke the working environment areas down into groups and prioritised them according to how much they affected the participants. The result was a prioritised list of the areas that needed our attention first.

We then discussed how we should proceed and what we could solve, not individually, but in H&S teams. We appointed an H&S team for each of the highest priority items. Anyone who wanted to could join a team and participate in the further process. The remaining items on the list will be addressed at a later stage.

This method suited our structure, because there are only 10 people in our department and because we could all be present at the same time. This method allows us to carry out the mapping process and get started on an action plan far more quickly than if we sent out a questionnaire first. But I also think that concerns voiced at a departmental meeting tend to be more well-founded. For instance, we can immediately ask why something is a problem and why they think this or that. This gets a dialogue going right away. We reach an agreement on what problems there are, if any, and what we can do together to solve them.

We have received positive feedback from the participants about this method, and they feel there are obvious advantages because we find the solutions quickly.

The next step is to keep up our momentum - take stock of how far the H&S teams have progressed with their action plans and how the changes are working out on a daily basis.”
WALK-THROUGH
- OBSERVATION AND DIALOGUE

With the walk-through method, mapping is carried out by one or two colleagues/working environment representatives walking through the workplace and talking to colleagues about their working environment. It’s a good idea to bring a checklist on the walk-through and use it to structure the discussions and observations. BAR Kontor’s checklist can be found at the back of this guide and online at www.barkontor.dk.

Advantages: This method encourages personal involvement, where colleagues/H&S teams engage in direct dialogue with the employees. Observations also provide good insights into problems. Relatively small problems can perhaps be dealt with immediately.

Disadvantages: Time-consuming if the company is large and the H&S team has to talk to a lot of colleagues. A walk-through comprises 1-1 interviews and therefore does not encourage the exchanging of ideas in the same way as mapping at a departmental meeting does. Similarly, prioritisation, assessments and action plans cannot be dealt with during walk-throughs.

Recommendations: This is recommended for small companies/departments. It is an advantage if, concurrently with the mapping, you also gather information on causes and solution proposals for the conditions that you observe. This will make it easier to proceed with the risk assessment.

Example: H&S risk assessment during company walk-through
Allan Pleman, H&S Consultant, Prosa:

“I think the best method for conducting an H&S risk assessment is to walk around, talk to people and listen to what problems there might be. For example, whether there are problems with the heating, cooling or lighting that can be dealt with quickly. It’s easiest to just talk about it and get it fixed. We deal with a lot of little things while we’re visiting people at their workstations anyway. Many questions are easier to understand if they can show us what they mean. Finally, the walk-through method is good because it ensures that we and those who are being ”assessed” have the same understanding of the question and how it should be interpreted.

In practice, the H&S team visits every workstation. However, we have an agreement that the head of the H&S team does not interview his own employees. I interview them alone. Likewise, the head of the H&S team interviews my manager.

In the working environment organisation, we have agreed on a common checklist that we take as our point of departure. We send it out to people when we make the appointment to visit their workstations. We also cover cleaning. Here, we supplement with questions that are relevant to their area.

If there are things that can be dealt with immediately, we do so. Perhaps little adjustments can be made, such as the positioning of the telephone to make the distance shorter, or little things like a desk lamp or a rollermouse. These are things that we either have in store or can order. Things that can’t be dealt with immediately are added to the list.

We have two H&S teams, so after visiting everyone, the entire team meets and decides on the problems that need solving. We then draw up an action plan for each individual problem, put someone in charge and set a date for follow-up.”
Here’s how to adjust the resolution on your screen.

I’ll have to look into whether this is a general problem.
QUESTIONNAIRE METHOD

Large companies often use the questionnaire method for mapping the working environment. The method is quite effective, although it is not possible to assess, prioritise and draw up action plans at the same time. Those activities must be carried out afterwards. Questionnaires can be distributed by hand or sent out by email. It may be a good idea to use the questionnaire BAR Kontor has developed, which can be downloaded at www.barkontor.dk. You can also draw up your own questionnaire based on BAR Kontor’s checklist on pages 36-39 in this guide. The main thing is to cover all aspects of the working environment.

Advantages: Questionnaires allow you to cover all aspects of the working environment within a short space of time.

Disadvantages: With questionnaires, there is a risk of missing some of the details about a problem because there is no direct dialogue at the workstation. At the same time, topics that are not included in the questionnaire may be overlooked. Questionnaires also generate extra work for the working environment organisation, which will need to go back afterwards and ask for more details about the problems revealed by the mapping. Achieving a high response rate to a questionnaire may also be a challenge.

Recommendations: Adapt the questionnaire to suit your working environment conditions. It is important to inform everyone that the responses are anonymous. It is a good idea to leave space for the employees to write down the causes of and propose solutions to the issues they want changed. This will make it easier to proceed with the risk assessment.

Example of the questionnaire method

Rie Kejser, HR/Learning & Development Business Partner, Canon Denmark:

“We have used internet-based questionnaires for our H&S risk assessments since 2003, and during this period we have conducted three risk assessments. We put a lot of effort into the questionnaires – on their wording, the possible answers and the number of questions. In the past we asked a lot of questions, which made the questionnaires complicated to complete and to act on afterwards. There were more than 50 questions to be answered. In 2009 we decided this was too many, and so we cut the number of questions drastically. Today there are no more than 30 on-screen questions.

We use the questionnaire approach for our H&S risk assessments because we have to ask 230 people about many different types of work areas. It is therefore vital that we can target the questions to the different types of work areas. This also means that the questions may vary, although we try to keep the variation to a minimum in order to make it possible to compare them and take action on them. But they DO differ because the work areas differ.

It is one thing to investigate and something else entirely to take action on what your investigations reveal. Drawing up the questions is not the hard part; the challenge lies in the follow-up work where we visit the different working environments. We have tried to pre-define action modules on the Internet, but ended up dropping them because we were drowning in checklists and control questions. Many areas are actually relatively simple to deal with and don’t require complicated action modules. For the latest risk assessment, we used a spreadsheet, and that has worked OK. We haven’t yet found the pearls of wisdom when it comes to choosing an action plan. However, overall, I think we have found a good solution. We can also see that we have many more competed action plans today than in 2006.”
**WHAT DOES THE MAPPING REVEAL?**

**Working environment-related problems that can be solved here and now**
Many working environment-related problems can be solved here and now. If this is the case, they don’t need to be included in the subsequent action plan.

**Working environment-related problems that can’t be solved here and now**
You have mapped your working environment and found working environment-related problems that can’t be solved here and now. The causes may be that you lack the planning, time and/or resources to solve them. The problems that can’t be solved here and now must be included in the action plan.

**Are there no working environment-related problems?**
If your mapping reveals that there are no working environment-related problems, you must document in writing that you have mapped all working environment conditions, that the working environment organisation/employees have been involved and that no working environment-related problems have been observed. Both the employee representative and a manager must sign the document.

You can draw up your own questions based on BAR Kontor’s questionnaire, which is available at www.barkontor.dk
ABSENCES DUE TO SICKNESS AND H&S RISK ASSESSMENTS

In your H&S risk assessment, you must also determine whether there are any conditions in the working environment that contribute to absences due to sickness.

The purpose of the risk assessment is to increase the company’s knowledge of any links between absences due to sickness and conditions in the working environment. This will subsequently help you to prioritise the conditions in the working environment that require action. It is entirely up to you how you choose to investigate any link between absences due to sickness and working environment conditions. For instance, you can choose to include questions on absence due to sickness in the mapping stage. The focus should be on absences due to sickness in general and not on the individual’s absence statistics.

You can read more about roles, responsibilities and handling of absence due to sickness in BAR Kontor’s topic on absences due to sickness at www.barkontor.dk.
Examples of working environment-related absences due to sickness:

An employee suffers from headaches and has to go home early from work and then calls in sick the following day. The headache may be a sign of poor indoor environment, such as poor ventilation or noise. Would it help to air out more often or reduce the noise in the office?

An employee has sprained an ankle on the stairs, resulting in sick days. Can the stairs be made safer in order to avoid similar accidents in future?

Several employees often suffer from back pain and have to call in sick. Is it possible to organise the work procedures in a better way?
ASSESSMENT, PRIORITISATION AND ACTION PLANS

When it is time to assess, prioritise and draw up a working environment action plan, you may find BAR Kontor’s H&S risk assessment form helpful. You can find the complete form on page 40-41.

The H&S risk assessment form consists of four sections: Problem, Cause, Solution and Follow-up. These items should be completed first. Use one form for each problem. When you have completed the forms, the next step is to prioritise them in the order they should solved. The completed forms can make up your action plan.

On the H&S risk assessment form, the following must be completed:

Problem: Describe the problem: How serious is it, how many are affected by it and what is considered most irritating about it?

Cause: Describe the cause or causes of the problem.

Solution proposal: Describe the various possible solutions to the problem. Determine how accessible the solution to the problem is and what resources you need for identifying the right solution for you. Remember to incorporate prevention into your solution proposal.

Solution: Describe which solution you have chosen for a given problem, who will implement the solution and who is responsible, as well as when the problem should be solved.

Follow-up: Describe how and when you will follow-up on whether the problem has been solved. Make sure to indicate who is responsible for follow-up. Read more on page 28: Follow-up on the action plan.

Obtain an overview of your H&S risk assessment forms
BAR Kontor has developed an overview form you can use to simplify the action plan and subsequent follow-up process.

You can find the forms on pages 40-43 as well as at www.barkontor.dk
INCORPORATE PREVENTION INTO YOUR SOLUTION PROPOSAL

When describing the seriousness of the problem, you should consider:

- Whether the solutions can prevent similar problems from arising?
- Whether the solutions are aimed at the root cause of the problem?
- Whether the work process can be adapted to employees in a more appropriate manner?
- Whether there are strains that can be changed or avoided?
- Whether the solutions protect as many people as possible?
- Whether the employees have the proper training and instruction?

At www.barkontor.dk, you will find a number of factsheets and guides on the individual working environment conditions.

One problem, several causes

Be open to the notion that one problem may have several causes. For instance, noise in the office may be caused by:

- Colleagues talking on the phone
- Talking in the hallways
- Colleagues moving in and out
- Many hard surfaces
- A noisy photocopier
  - or a combination of all of these
An H&S risk assessment is an ongoing process.

You should assess and follow up on:

- Whether the chosen solutions have been implemented?
- Whether the solutions have had the desired effect?

It is important to update the action plan so that you continue to have a good overview of the process.

This can be done by:

- Making a note of when the working environment-related problem was solved
- Adjusting the action plan if you are unable to meet the set deadline
- Adjusting the action plan if you need to find a new solution
FURTHER INFORMATION

National Working Environment Authority
www.at.dk
Arbejdsmiljøvejviser (Working environment directory) 17 - Kontor (Offices) - 2009
WEA Guideline - D.2.3 June 2009, Skærmarbejde (Working with computer monitors)
WEA Guideline - A.1.11 June 2007, Arbejdsrum på faste arbejdssteder (Work spaces at permanent workstations)

BAR Kontor
www.barkontor.dk
Indeklima på kontoret (Indoor climate in the office), 2010
Arbejde ved computer (Working with computers), 2011
Godt lys på kontoret (Good lighting in the office), 2007
Støj og akustik på kontoret (Noise and acoustics in the office), 2007
Trivsel på kontoret (Well-being in the office), 2011
Kontormaskiner og arbejdsmiljø (Office machines and the working environment), 2008
Indtænk arbejdsmiljøet ved ombygning, leje og indretning af kontor (Remember the working environment when renovating, renting space and furnishing the office), 2011

National Research Centre for the Working Environment (NFA)
www.arbejdsmiljoforskning.dk - questionnaire on the psychosocial working environment

Other
Arbejdsmiljøbutikken (The Working Environment Shop) www.arbejdsmiljobutikken.dk
Videncenter for arbejdsmiljø (Working environment knowledge centre) www.arbejdsmiljoviden.dk
Branchearbejdsmiljørådene (Sector working environment councils) www.bar-web.dk

The organisations behind BAR Kontor
Danish Chamber of Commerce www.danskerhvervdk
Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) www.didk
Danish Association of Managers and Executives www.lederne.dk
HK/Privat www.arbejdsmiljoportalen.dk
HK/Handel www.arbejdsmiljoportalen.dk
Prosa www.prosadk
ABOUT BAR KONTOR

In the Danish working environment legislation, 11 sector working environment councils have been established – including a sector working environment council for private office and administrative workplaces (BAR Kontor).

BAR Kontor covers private office workplaces, determined based on so-called sector codes. This group includes, e.g., IT companies, legal and accounting firms, temp agencies, consultancies, travel agencies, architects and other office workplaces. However, because office work takes place in one form or another in the majority of businesses, BAR Kontor’s material can be used by most companies.

The objective of BAR Kontor is to help solve health and safety issues and thereby support working environment efforts at companies in the area of private office and administrative workplaces.

BAR Kontor provides specific guidelines on relevant working environment issues within the sector in the form of sector guides, campaign material, tools, hosting of theme days and other activities.

BAR Kontor comprises representatives of employer, manager and employee organisations within the area of private office and administrative workplaces.
CHECKLISTS AND FORMS

This guide contains:

- Checklist for mapping working environment conditions
- H&S risk assessment form for assessing and describing solution proposals
- Action plan overview form

All checklists and forms are available at www.bar-kontor.dk and can be adapted to suit your needs. On our website you will also find a questionnaire for mapping working environment conditions that contains additional response fields compared to the checklist in this guide.
### PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>INDOOR CLIMATE</strong></th>
<th><strong>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>(read more in the guide “Indoor climate in the office”)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the area tidy so that the cleaners can do their job?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the cleaning satisfactory?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the temperature comfortable?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it possible to avoid excessively high temperatures, cold or drafts?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a ventilation system and does it work properly?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it possible to screen off sun glare?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the office aired out regularly?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are office machines, such as photocopiers and very active printers, placed in well-ventilated spaces with no permanent workstations?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any damp spots on walls or ceiling, and does the area often smell musty?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is static electricity a problem?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other observations about the indoor climate?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LIGHTING

*(read more in the guide “Good lighting in the office”)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there daylight in the area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the workstation sufficiently illuminated?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are the desk lamps placed so that the light comes in from the side, just below eye level?

Can the work be done without irritating reflections and glare?

Other observations about lighting:

**NOISE**
*read more in the guide "Noise and acoustics in the office"

Are there problems with noise or sounds?

Other observations about noise:

**ERGONOMIC CONDITIONS**
*read more in the guide "Working with computers"

Is it possible to vary working posture?

Is the employee acquainted with the adjustment options on the equipment (monitor, keyboard, chair, desk etc.) - and are they used?

Can the seat and backrest of the employee’s desk chair be adjusted to suit the employee and how he/she works?

Are the keyboard and mouse positioned so that the employee’s forearm is supported?

Is there room for the monitor, keyboard, mouse/pointing device, documents/document holder on the desk?

Is the height of the monitor adjusted so that the viewing angle is slightly downwards?

Is the monitor placed at a viewing distance of 50-70 cm?

Does the monitor display flicker?

WRITE COMMENTS HERE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the monitor display flicker?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does each employee have enough space at his/her workstation to push back their chair and stand up?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do boxes, clutter or other things prevent the employee from doing his/her work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other observations about ergonomics:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHOSOCIAL CONDITIONS</strong> <em>(read more in the guide “Well-being in the office”)</em></td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the workload heavy for extended periods of time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible to recover after busy periods?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it often necessary to work overtime?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the employees have a clear understanding of what is expected of them?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the employees have an influence on their workload and on how their work is organised?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the employees have the necessary information to do their job in a satisfactory manner?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there cases of bullying?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there cases of sexual harassment?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the employees feel they receive the recognition and appreciation they deserve?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a risk of physical violence in connection with the work?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there opportunities for training/development, including variation in work tasks?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there professional, managerial and co-worker support on a day-to-day basis?</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other observations on psychosocial conditions:</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ABSENCES DUE TO SICKNESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are there conditions in the working environment that contribute to absences due to sickness?</th>
<th>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other observations on absences due to sickness:</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OTHER CONDITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the employees given sufficient instruction and training?</th>
<th>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What dangerous actions and situations have you observed?</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are accidents and near misses prevented?</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When working with substances marked as hazardous, is there access to the appropriate workplace instructions and to the necessary protective gear, such as gloves?</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other conditions:</td>
<td>WRITE COMMENTS HERE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the checklist, at [www.barkontor.dk](http://www.barkontor.dk) you will find a questionnaire containing answer fields. Both the checklist and the questionnaire can be adapted to suit your needs.
The completed H&S risk assessment forms can then make up your action plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION OF WORK FUNCTION:</th>
<th>COMPLETED BY:</th>
<th>PRIORITY:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**PROBLEM**
WHAT IS THE TASK/PROBLEM?

**CAUSE**
WHAT IS CAUSING THE PROBLEM?

**SOLUTION PROPOSAL**
DESCRIBE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOLUTION</th>
<th>WHICH SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN CHOSEN?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</td>
<td>COMMENCEMENT DATE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOW-UP</td>
<td>HOW SHOULD IT BE FOLLOWED UP ON?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?</td>
<td>DATE OF FOLLOW-UP:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This form is also available at www.barkontor.dk and can be adapted to suit your needs.
# ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW FORM

## PREPARED

Date: _______________  By: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY 1, 2, 3</th>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
<th>CAUSE</th>
<th>SOLUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date and signature of management representative: ________________________________

Date and signature of working environment representative(s) (companies with at least 10 employees): ________________________________

Date and signature of employee representative: (companies with fewer than 10 employees): ________________________________
This overview form is also available at [www.barkontor.dk](http://www.barkontor.dk) and can be adapted to suit your needs.
"It's H&S risk assessment time!" is a guide on H&S risk assessments for office workplaces. The guide provides a useful overview of how to conduct an H&S risk assessment at your workplace in an easy and rewarding manner. It is supplemented by specific examples and experiences from other companies.

BAR Kontor
Sector Working Environment Council for Private Office and Administrative Workplaces
Ny Vestergade 17
DK-1471 Copenhagen K
Tel.: +45 3336 6610
Email: info@barkontor.dk
www.barkontor.dk

BAR Kontor is a collaboration between labour and management to ensure healthy working environments in private office workplaces. BAR Kontor comprises representatives from the Danish Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of Danish Industries, Danish Association of Managers and Executives, HK/Privat, HK/Handel and Prosa.