Guidelines for Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment for an office-based work environment

Note: These are guidelines only and need to be adapted to apply to specific local workplace conditions. Identify all hazards; evaluate the risks (low / medium / high); describe existing control measures and identify any further measures required.

HAZARD	RISK Low/ Medium/High	EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES (e.g. alternative work methods/mechanical aids/ training, etc.)	Actions		
			Additional controls needed	Person responsible	Date actioned
1. Slips and trips	L	1.1. Work areas should be kept clear of obstructions. 1.2. Egress in event of emergency **must** be available without hindrance 1.3. Any spillages should be cleaned up immediately. 1.4. All areas well lit, especially stairs. 1.5. Any hazards such as torn carpets, trailing cables, defects to floor coverings, faulty lighting etc. should be reported immediately to the line manager.			
2. Electrical equipment *(electric shocks or burns from using faulty electrical equipment)*	L	2.1. FMD checks University-provided portable electrical appliances for safety. 2.2. Personally owned portable electrical appliances **must** not be used on University premises unless electrically tested and checked at appropriate intervals. Such testing is the responsibility of the owner. 2.3. Electrical cables and plugs should be regularly visually inspected by the user for damage. 2.4. Any defective equipment should be reported immediately to the line manager, suitably labelled and taken out of use until repaired. 2.5. Electrical equipment **must** always be operated in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.			
3. Visual display units *(postural problems, eyestrain, headaches)*	L	3.1. Managers should ensure that the best practice guidelines for visual display units are met. 3.2. Individual staff members should: adjust their own workstations to maintain a comfortable working position; vary tasks; practise micro pauses; and take other breaks. 3.3. Users **must** report any problems to their line manager who in turn may request a full workstation assessment from a properly trained workstation assessor. 3.4. A workstation assessor will work with the staff member to recommend changes or adjustments and provide a brief summary of findings to him/her, the line manager and the Health and Safety Coordinator. 3.5. Staff should ensure that they take micro-pauses (brief pauses) and task breaks throughout the day.			

4. Manual handling of heavy/bulky objects *(back injuries)*	L	4.1. A risk assessment **must** be completed for lifting heavy and bulky loads that present a risk of injury. 4.2. A trolley should be used to transport boxes of paper or other heavy items. 4.3. High shelves should be used for light items only. 4.4. Training in lifting techniques should be provided for anyone who undertakes the lifting of heavy loads.			
5. Fire	L	5.1. Where reasonable and practicable the storage of cardboard boxes, files and documents should be kept to an absolute minimum. 5.2. Items that are not used should be removed to maximise space. 5.3. Equipment should be switched off when not in use for long periods. (e.g. one week). 5.4. Portable electrical equipment – see 2.1 and 2.2 above. 5.5. The fire alarm system is installed, maintained and tested by FMD. 5.6. Fire risk assessments for each building are carried out by FMD. 5.7. Staff **must** be acquainted with the Fire Evacuation Procedure for their area. 5.8. Fire exit routes **must** be kept clear from obstruction			
6. Working at height	L	6.1. Chairs or desks **must** not be used for access; a step stool or a step ladder should be used instead. 6.2. If a step ladder is used, users should read an appropriate risk assessment and be shown how to use the ladder safely. 6.3. Guidance on ladder safety is available in the hazard register.			
7. Hazardous Substances *Management of Substances Hazardous to Health* (MOSHH)	L	7.1. If any hazardous substances (e.g. chemicals, solvents or solvent-based glues) are used within the office area a MOSHH risk assessment must be completed and a safe system of work issued to users. 7.2. Staff should follow the instructions on containers of e.g. toner, kitchen or cleaning products.			
8. Filing cabinets	L	8.1. Filing cabinets should be loaded from the bottom up to maintain stability. 8.2. Where filing cabinets are of the type that allows more than one drawer to be opened at a time, staff should be aware of potential tipping risks. 8.3. Drawers should be closed immediately after use.			
9. Falling objects	L	9.1. Avoid storing items above head height where possible 9.2. Any items stored above head height should be secure and stable 9.3. Heavy items should not be stored above head height; they should be stored at waist height.			
10. Lone / Out of Hours Working	L	10.1. Such work should be minimised or avoided where feasible. 10.2. If unavoidable, staff should inform their line manager that they will be working. 10.3. A specific risk assessment may be required in circumstances where any potential risks are increased (e.g. mobility issues or known medical conditions).			