

5x5 RISK MATRIX AND SCORING GUIDE

Likelihood and severity defined for construction, the bands and their actions, and honest residual scoring

GUIDE — DISPLAY AND ISSUE

KD-BL-MX-005 Rev A0

MHSWR 1999 reg 3 requires a suitable and sufficient risk assessment; it sets no scoring method. This is the house scale used on KD-BL-RA-001 and KD-BL-RM-003 — use one scale across the business so that a 12 means the same on every job. Scores rank risks for action; they are not measurements. The pre-written KD-RAMS documents rate risk H, M or L without a number: where both are used, read L as LOW, M as MEDIUM and H as HIGH or above. Written for Great Britain; in Northern Ireland the equivalent Northern Ireland regulations apply — check them.

LIKELIHOOD — how often this harm happens in this kind of work, done the way it will be done		
1	Very unlikely	Not known to have happened in this kind of work.
2	Unlikely	Has happened in this kind of work, but rarely.
3	Possible	Happens from time to time in this kind of work.
4	Likely	Happens often in this kind of work.
5	Almost certain	Expected on most jobs of this kind, or already happening here.

SEVERITY — the worst credible outcome, not the worst imaginable		
1	Minor	First aid only; back to work the same day.
2	Moderate	Medical treatment; off work for up to seven days; full recovery.
3	Serious	Off work for more than seven days but back within a month; full recovery expected.
4	Major	Fracture, serious burn, hospital admission or off work for more than a month, with full recovery expected — or several people seriously hurt.
5	Fatal or permanent	Death, permanent disability including amputation or loss of sight, or incurable disease such as one caused by asbestos or silica dust.

SCORING RESIDUAL RISK HONESTLY

- Score the risk before controls as the task would be done with nothing extra in place. Score the residual with only the controls that will actually be there on the day — not the ones you hope for.
- Controls usually cut likelihood, not severity. A collision with a moving excavator is as severe in a hi-vis vest as without one. Lower the severity only when the control changes the harm itself — a lower working height, a lighter load, a less hazardous product.
- PPE and "take care" do not justify a big drop. Count a control only if it is provided, checked and supervised.
- Score the worst credible outcome — not the worst imaginable, and not the most common.
- Where different people face different harm from one hazard, score the worst of them.
- Where two people score the same hazard differently, use the higher score until the difference is talked through.
- Score again whenever the method, the people, the equipment, the weather or the site changes, and after any incident or near miss.

		SEVERITY 1 – 5				
		1	2	3	4	5
LIKELIHOOD 1 – 5	5	5 MED	10 MED	15 HIGH	20 V HIGH	25 V HIGH
	4	4 LOW	8 MED	12 HIGH	16 HIGH	20 V HIGH
	3	3 LOW	6 MED	9 MED	12 HIGH	15 HIGH
	2	2 LOW	4 LOW	6 MED	8 MED	10 MED
	1	1 LOW	2 LOW	3 LOW	4 LOW	5 MED

LOW score 1–4
MEDIUM score 5–10
HIGH score 12–16
VERY HIGH score 20–25

Go ahead with the controls in place, and add any further control that is reasonably practicable — a low score does not end the duty to reduce risk so far as is reasonably practicable. The supervisor checks the controls in the normal course of the work.

Go ahead only with every control in place and briefed. Look for a further reasonably practicable reduction; the supervisor checks at the start and during the work.

Do not start. Add controls or change the method, the equipment or the sequence and score again. Work starts only when the residual is MEDIUM or lower.

Do not start, and stop if started. The job as planned is not acceptable — redesign it.

SCALE ADOPTED BY (BUSINESS)

ADOPTED BY — NAME AND ROLE

DATE ADOPTED

LOOK AT THE SCALE AGAIN ON

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continued

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R REVISION HISTORY

Every revision of this document, and every review that found nothing to change. The revision on the front of this sheet is the one you are holding — check kubitdocs.com for the current one before use.

Rev	Date	Class	What changed	Authorised by
D0	2026-09-12	first-issue	First issue.	— not yet approved —
A0	2026-09-12	review	Approved for issue by the author. Content unchanged from the reviewed draft; the draft status strip is removed. No independent third-party review has been carried out.	Author — director, UK principal contractor, SMSTS. Not an independent review.

Class: first-issue - material (the law, a control, a field or the scope changed — past buyers are notified) - editorial (wording or layout only) - review (checked, nothing changed) - withdrawal. Revision prefix D = draft, not approved and not for sale; A = approved for issue by the person named, on the date shown.