



# Fire Sector Federation

## Industry Benchmark Standards for Fire Risk Assessors

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Version 1.1



## Foreword

This new document, developed by the Fire Sector Federation (FSF), provides practical guidance for fire risk assessors who wish to understand the application of fire risk assessment across a range of buildings.

The standard identifies criteria reflecting, at three distinct core levels, individual, not company, competency for those undertaking general fire risk assessment. The three levels are intended to provide a pathway for individual progression, one that recognises entry into the profession will often commence with no understanding followed by personally development to an advanced level.

The standard recognises that building fire risk assessments are also undertaken beyond these three boundaries; sometimes by individuals using guidance designed for very simple buildings and, at the opposite point, by technically advanced specialised assessors who operate in specific environments, industries and buildings.

It establishes a benchmark Standard for fire risk assessors based upon principles of fire risk assessment and may be used by those who:

- Hold legal duties and have obligations and responsibilities for fire safety, notably under legislation including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and Fire Safety Act 2021 England and Wales; the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 supported by the Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010; and the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 supported by the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006 and Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2021.
- Individuals employed to undertake fire risk assessments;
- Companies, organisations, institutions and authorities who lead, educate, develop, supervise, assess and approve individuals, and
- Organisations and bodies that certify, accredit and provide third party assurance of those companies and individuals that undertake fire risk assessment.

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## INTRODUCTION

The tragic fire in Grenfell Tower London on the 14 June 2017, which claimed 72 lives, resulted in an independent inquiry chaired by Sir Martin Moore-Bick and an Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety conducted by Dame Judith Hackitt.

The fire also initiated action by construction industry organisations who undertook sector and professional reviews that resulted in the publication of recommendations in their own composite report 'Setting the Bar', in which the FSF has actively participated to seek improvement in fire risk assessor standards.

This earlier action has already produced an industry based Approved Code of Practice 'A National Framework for Fire Risk Assessor Competency' that offers specific guidance on the knowledge, skills, experience and behaviour required, especially for fire risk assessors operating in complex buildings, which is regarded as the complementary document to this Standard.

It is important that this Standard be read in conjunction with the Approved Code of Practice since the Code provides significant information and background to support interpretation and application of this Standard. Further information may be found at following link: <https://www.firesectorfederation.co.uk/fire-risk-assessment/>

This Standard expands the available guidance by recognising fire risk assessment is not always easy or simple being a dynamic and reflective process of how a building is constructed, used and occupied. This Standard supports having a systematic assessment of fire risk followed by the implementation of recommended appropriate controls, mitigation arrangements and continuous management of fire safety, to facilitate buildings being used safely.

The primary aim is to secure life safety from fire rather than protect property although in securing the first benefits are often derived for the second purpose as in making sure fire compartments are effective.





## PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS

This guidance provides the benchmark Standard for interpretation by professional organisations. Its purpose is to (a) define fire risk assessment competence at three levels and (b) support delivery of comparable standards across the sector.

Achieving the purpose will give public assurance that those who undertake fire risk assessments are competent. This includes those having legal duties, as Responsible or Accountable Persons, to show due diligence in their selection of fire risk assessors for the types and level of fire risk they wish to have assessed.

This Standard offers increasing levels of skill, knowledge, experience and behaviour to form a competency based progression route for fire risk assessors. It spans a career pathway for individuals from initial entry, through continuing personal development to the highest level of competence achievable. It will be supported by training and activities provided by other organisations.

This progressive pathway aims to provide a career route in fire risk assessment. Although application of the Standard is for interpretation by Professional Bodies and Certifying Bodies, the intent is to support a professional discipline of fire risk assessment that can be applied across the whole of the United Kingdom.

Compliance with this Standard does not confer a Qualification or Certification, recognition of which remains a responsibility falling upon those institutions and organisations that are accredited or approved to make these awards. Neither does compliance or adherence to the Standard directly confer any Third Party Accreditation or similar assurance, again this being the responsibility of others.

It is however a process of improvement designed to provide a clear and comparable benchmark of the individual's competency, when subjected to professional oversight by an approved body. Similarly, although directed at building life safety fire risk assessment, the Standard's methodology can be used and extended to premises and processes within buildings or in other spaces and linked to some elements of property protection.



## SCOPE AND USE

The Standard adopts a fire risk assessment process that is capable of meeting various circumstances and situations but requires interpretation based upon the individual's skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour.

An underlying principle of a professional approach in any discipline, including fire risk assessment, is being consciously aware of 'knowing what you don't know'; and thus, able to stop and seek assistance if the circumstances so require.

Because the scope of the Standard is extremely wide, having been developed with a universal view of building types, occupancies and uses, there is a requirement that there is the clearest application of the above principle, given that sometimes one feature of construction, use or occupancy, may not be apparent or conform to accepted or known performance.

This highlights a need for the fire risk assessor to be capable, aware and vigilant in the validation of their assessments. For example, an individual premise initially appearing to present low fire risk may, because of non-adherence to guidance, standards, processes, occupancy or construction, be of a higher and more complex fire risk.

In undertaking a fire risk assessment, the assessor is invariably contracted to assist another person as a competent individual. A duty of care exists towards that person to ensure they are aware of any fire risk critical to life safety and that they must take action, including any requiring immediate prohibitive action, identified in the assessment.

In the process of gaining experience, mentoring is judged the key component and individual's working alone must remain aware of this important feature. Supervision at the early stage of a career is essential but so too is continuous professional development. Established fire risk assessors will also need to consider carefully how to recognise changes between existing regulations, guidance, practices and construction development to maintain awareness.



## STRUCTURE OF THE STANDARD

The Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors provides a means to establish a set of quality standards and practice required by those employed within the UK Fire Sector in respect to the provision of Fire Risk Assessments. It has been prepared by fire risk assessors who are members of the Industry Response Group's Competency Steering Group, Working Group 4, coordinated by the Fire Sector Federation (FSF).

It underpins the existing FSF Approved Code of Practice by setting out the personal qualities and attributes that Fire Risk Assessors should maintain throughout their careers.

Moreover, the Standard considers the activity of the profession on three distinct risk levels, namely:

- **Foundation** – Fire Risk Assessments within low-risk premises
- **Intermediate** – the general requirement for Fire Risk Assessments within medium risk premises
- **Advanced** – Conducting Fire Risk Assessments within high-risk premises

**Low, medium and high risk premise descriptions are to be found in Annexe A.**

The Standard considers the career of an individual entering the profession at the Foundation stage and defines the benchmark standard required to satisfy this level in respect to achieving competence, maintaining professional quality and continuing personal development.

In this Standard, a Fire Risk Assessment is defined as a methodical process of qualitative and quantitative measures with recorded significant findings on fire risk management for those instructing and responsible for fire safety.

The Fire Risk Assessor is a competent person (having suitable knowledge, skills, experience and behaviour) who when instructed, is capable of undertaking a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment and effectively communicating advice on the findings.



## RISK ASSESSMENT PRACTICE

The Standard gives consideration to existing British Standards (PAS 79, 8414, 8670 series and 9980) and use of a suitable risk assessment approach (5-7-9 step).

In addition there are some specified high residential buildings, known as Higher Risk Buildings, which are directly impacted by legislation resulting from the Building Safety Bill 2022, requiring strict legal compliance regarding fire risk assessment.

Many buildings also have specific requirements related to their designated use or age, for example, hospitals, care homes, historic heritage or cultural buildings.

Likewise, special risks exist offshore or in nuclear installations etc., and in such cases the application of the Standard may be insufficient to demonstrate competency without additional skills and knowledge.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESSION

A pathway is provided which allows the Assessor to progress through their career, building competence and confidence and demonstrating to end users their ability to produce Fire Risk Assessments at higher levels within the Intermediate and Advanced environments.

The Standard recognises a range of accredited prior learning and experience, to this end, it enables points of entry at all stages based on evidence and the validation of competence which satisfies the requirements of the Standard.

The combination of these benchmark values and attributes together with a consistent application of the Fire Risk Assessor's duties are all important components of competence. The pathway describes how a Fire Risk Assessor can progress through the Foundation Standard and achieve competence within minimum timescales as their career progresses.





## COMPETENCE IN FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Competence is the ability to conduct a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessments to an effective standard. It refers specifically to the assessor's ability to continually apply themselves to perform and practice to this Standard.

Competence also involves self-awareness, and the assessor shall recognise the limitation of their own knowledge, skills, experience and behaviours. They shall also understand when they require the services of a higher level of assessor or other industry professional in order to assist in the assessment process.

This Standard is not intended for individuals who have determined to undertake a building fire risk assessment using officially published guidance as their sole source of knowledge. This is regarded as a basic competency and must only be used when the individual is clear that they can correctly interpret and apply any guidance within the defined constraints of the guide. The legal responsibility to competently undertake a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment remains entirely with the individual.

Competent Fire Risk Assessors will continue to demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience throughout their careers. They shall maintain the skills required to meet the Standard and will always exhibit the behaviours required to underpin their work as a competent Fire Risk Assessor. In doing so, assessors may consider their potential to perform at a higher level and shall work towards building their competence in order to progress to the next stage in their career.

To this end, it is accepted that some areas will develop quickly whilst other aspects of the Standard will require considerable reflection, learning and experience before a Fire Risk Assessor can move to the next level in their development.

To allow them to progress through their career, the Standard provides examples of development pathways which offer potential routes through which a Fire Risk Assessor can demonstrate the values and attributes required to undertake assessment work within the higher risk levels.



## BENCHMARK VALUES AND ATTRIBUTES

The Standard applies across four interrelated benchmark values and attributes:

- Professional Knowledge
- Principal Skills
- Principal Experience
- Professional Behaviour

In applying these values and attributes, the Standard will assist to drive the cultural change that is required within all of the Fire Sector. It provides focus on initial learning and development and sets out the need for continuous professional development. In doing so, it establishes a holistic view of what makes a professional and competent Fire Risk Assessor within the Fire Sector.

Organisations and individuals can interpret the Standard for themselves, but need to facilitate a common understanding for longer term development, an Approved Code of Practice has been published.

The Standard captures the stages of career progression across the benchmark values and attributes. It is based on robust research by Working Group 4 for Fire Risk Assessors and reflects the members' observations on what effective practice should look like across the Fire Risk Assessment community.

The Standard does not reference a particular qualification or certification scheme. Instead, it provides an interpretation of what a professional Fire Risk Assessor should be doing at the various stages of their career through the 'lens' of this Standard. As a result, this Standard can be used by those wishing to develop qualifications or certification schemes to provide consistency in interpretation and approach.

Fire Risk Assessors at all levels shall demonstrate a personal and professional commitment to communities, their profession and the environment. They are required to show they have adopted the benchmark values and attributes so that they can enhance the reputation of the Fire Risk Assessor profession.



## PROFESSIONAL DUTIES

To define the Standard, it is important to understand the Fire Risk Assessor's duties that apply across all three levels. Having knowledge of these allows a better understanding of the role and provides the basis for the creation of training, learning, development and quality assurance activities.

The duties of the Fire Risk Assessor are to:

1. Identify hazards and risks associated with fire, both in general and specialist buildings and processes
2. Report on issues relating to fire risk, specifically those posing any hazard or threat to life including the awareness of residents and other occupiers to fire and how to report matters of concern.
3. Evaluate existing fire risk assessments including appropriateness for the risk
4. Audit the management of fire safety management systems and application of responsibilities placed upon Responsible and Accountable Persons and other Duty Holders
5. Recommend controls to manage and reduce residual risks, including, where necessary, higher risk situations and temporary controls that might be required until a permanent control is implemented

These duties shall be met through the benchmark values and attributes, which will provide a means for Fire Risk Assessors to deliver competent services that are commensurate with their levels of experience and capabilities.

## PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge can refer to both a theoretical or practical understanding of the Fire Risk Assessment functions and requires a familiarity or awareness of the subject. A Fire Risk Assessor shall acquire, update and manage their knowledge in order to function competently.
- Professional knowledge shall be commensurate with the role, activity and level of the Assessor.

## PRINCIPAL SKILLS

- A Fire Risk Assessor shall possess a set of principal skills which are underpinned by their professional knowledge. Skills will develop the Fire Risk Assessors' expertise to ensure the best outcomes for Duty Holders and Responsible People. These are core skills which relate specifically to the activities that an Assessor must be able to undertake.



## PRINCIPAL EXPERIENCE

- For Fire Risk Assessment, experience relates to the accumulation of knowledge and skills that result from a direct participation in assessment work. The level of experience that can be demonstrated will have a corresponding effect on the level of Fire Risk Assessments that can be undertaken.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- Fire Risk Assessors shall, at all times, operate in a manner that promotes life safety. To achieve this their behaviours will, when reasonably practicable, actively promote and support the highest Standard of ethics. To support this ethical position, a culture which believes in safeguarding life and property will be fostered and shall not be compromised.



## The Foundation Standard

These are the role requirements of a Fire Risk Assessor at the point of career entry.

At this level the Assessor will conduct assessments in low-risk premises.

These examples are not exhaustive but are provided to assist individuals to provide examples of how they have met the competence and commitment requirements of the Foundation Standard.

### Professional Knowledge Foundation Level

<p><b>Understand, maintain and update their knowledge of the principles of Fire Risk Assessment in low-risk buildings.</b></p>	<p>Understand the foundation principles of Risk Assessment and demonstrate secure and current subject and vocational knowledge that is relevant to responsible persons and duty holders. Understand and demonstrate the meaning of a ‘fire risk assessed approach’.</p>
<p><b>Maintain and update their knowledge of Fire Risk Assessment methods and practices.</b></p>	<p>Under supervision, shall use sources of research to reflect on and inform their own practice.</p> <p>This may include (but is not restricted to) studying techniques, the use of journals or information published by professional bodies, and mentoring.</p>
<p><b>Record evidence based on Fire Risk Assessment in practice – carry out and record Continuous Professional Development and enhance competence.</b></p>	<p>Carry out reviews of their own development needs, plan how to meet objectives and maintain evidence of competence development. Such records should contain a reflective element to the activities undertaken.</p>
<p><b>Apply an understanding of effective practice in Fire Risk Assessment by referring to relevant guidance, applicable codes and Standards</b></p>	<p>Demonstrate a commitment to becoming a proficient Fire Risk Assessor by regular reviews of own work and upholding and using all relevant existing and future guidance etc.</p> <p>Evidence will be supplied regarding knowledge of this information and the ways in which this may be deployed in practice to ensure safer outcomes and mitigate risk.</p>
<p><b>Identify and use appropriate practices to evaluate fire risk present</b></p>	<p>Identify and use relevant guidance etc. to extend knowledge and understanding of Fire Risk Assessment methodology, seeking advice and applying this (under supervision) to their practice.</p>



## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

<p><b>Identify and use appropriate practices to evaluate fire risk present</b></p>	<p>Identify and use relevant guidance etc. to extend knowledge and understanding of Fire Risk Assessment methodology, seeking advice and applying this (under supervision) to their practice.</p>
<p><b>Apply and use and audit system suitable for low-risk buildings to conduct the Fire Risk Assessment</b></p>	<p>Provide evidence of a structured approach to fire risk assessments. This may follow the principals of PAS:79 and include the nine steps to fire risk assessment but may also follow other benchmarks based on relevant ACOPs, Government guidance, British Standards or Industry Standard Documents.</p>
<p><b>Evaluate their work with others and assess the impact and currency of their knowledge</b></p>	<p>Under supervision, supply details of actively participating in a regular means to receive professional feedback on performance as it relates to developing and maintaining professional knowledge.</p>
<p><b>Recognise the outcomes required of a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment</b></p>	<p>Provide evidence of suitable and sufficient risk assessments carried out in practice and record the outcomes. Illustrate how knowledge was applied and the way in which this assisted the Assessments outcome.</p>
<p><b>Provide recommendations to satisfy legal requirements and ensure fire risk present can be mitigated</b></p>	<p>Demonstrate a commitment to the application of relevant Standards as outlined above.</p>

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Principal Skills Foundation Level

<b>Carry out Fire Risk Assessments and evaluate the level of fire safety management within low-risk buildings.</b>	Demonstrate the ability to identify risks and produce proportionate solutions to mitigate these by following relevant Guidance, Standards, Regulations and Best Practice.
<b>Be self-aware and understand limitations in knowledge and capabilities.</b>	Provide evidence of situations where the task exceeded the Foundation level. Demonstrate confidence in seeking assistance and being able to refer these situations as appropriate.
<b>Work with others such as Local Authorities, Housing Regulators and the Fire and Rescue Service to achieve single and shared outcomes.</b>	Be aware of and understand the role of other agencies. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.
<b>Communicate effectively to those instructing or responsible for fire safety management in order to report the results of the Fire Risk Assessment</b>	Make use of oral, written and electronic methods for communication of technical and other information. Work with supervisors, colleagues, and clients and, be aware of their communication needs. This relates specifically to the need to be sensitive to diversity and equality.
<b>Ability to plan and schedule work so that tasks can be completed on time and to the relevant Standard.</b>	Accept responsibility and offer examples where Fire Risk Assessments were planned and conducted to meet client expectations. Describe methods used and outcomes.

## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

### Principal Experience Foundation Level

<b>Learning from supervisors and others to build experience base.</b>	Seeking out ways to understand how Fire Risk Assessment methodologies can be applied in practice.
<b>Being exposed to a range of Fire Risk Assessment opportunities that exist within low-risk environments.</b>	Reflecting on the outcomes of Assessments carried out and considering those produced by other colleagues within the sector.
<b>Accept and exercise personal responsibility.</b>	Work reliably and effectively as instructed and learn from how this direction has produced better outcomes.
<b>Making an active contribution to identifying risk(s) and using opportunities to reflect and learn.</b>	Manage and apply acquired knowledge and skills; promote good practice and seek out new opportunities to develop the experience base.
<b>Accepts personal responsibility and can manage strengths and weaknesses in a way that achieves positive outcomes.</b>	<p>Awareness of the needs and concerns of others and also the demands of the risks to be assessed.</p> <p>Able to ensure that outcomes are focussed on practical and effective solutions.</p> <p>Confident and flexible in dealing with complex and novel situations.</p> <p>Able to set challenging personal goals to stretch potential for acquiring new experiences.</p>

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Professional Behaviour Foundation Level

<b>Make a personal commitment to the Approved Code of Conduct – The National Framework for Fire Risk Assessor Competency. Recognise obligations to communities, the Fire Risk Assessor profession and the environment.</b>	Evidence can be drawn from consistent application of the Framework and a general attitude that seeks to promote the profession, for example working within a professional body, in a way that demonstrates excellent services and high-quality outcomes.
<b>Work effectively with others and be aware of the needs and concerns of others as it relates to diversity and equality.</b>	Illustrate through application by working in multi discipline teams, how awareness has been put into practice and how this has led to positive returns.
<b>Always demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and integrity. And work with accuracy and rigour.</b>	Consistently work in a way that protects confidentiality and is not directed by personal gain. Operate within their limitations and create work which is produced based on conscientious study and application.
<b>Accept and exercise personal responsibility in regard to respecting peoples' right to life and promoting compliance with the law.</b>	Demonstrate how life safety is of paramount concern and evidence the ways in which methods selected are in compliance with legal requirements and statutory obligations.

## The Intermediate Standard

Intermediate level Fire Risk Assessors conduct Fire Risk Assessments within buildings that are categorised as presenting a medium risk. They are capable of developing the design and application of solutions to suit the environment in which they operate.

In particular, Intermediate Fire Risk Assessors should demonstrate the following:

- The knowledge to solve problems using known and well proven techniques in compliance with current statutory requirements, codes of practice, guidance and best practice.
- Successful application of their skills to deliver suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessments.
- The experience to understand the limits of their own knowledge and skills and to possess the awareness to refer complex or higher risk problems that are outside their current capabilities.
- Effective interpersonal skills, which provide the means to clearly communicate many outcomes in a way that is easily understood.
- A commitment to the Standard and the values that underpin Fire Risk Assessment practice.

### Principal Knowledge Intermediate Level

<p><b>Must be competent throughout their careers by using a combination of general and specialist knowledge to understand and apply existing and new methods.</b></p>	<p>Actively engages in both formal and informal learning and development. Identifies opportunities to learn from others by offering feedback and seeking inputs from others. Makes a positive contribution to progressing Fire Risk Assessment practice.</p>
<p><b>Maintains and extends a sound theoretical and practical approach to the application of Fire Risk Assessment practice.</b></p> <p><b>In doing so they shall identify the limits of their own knowledge, commit to developing their capabilities and broaden their knowledge base by considering new applications and techniques.</b></p>	<p>Apply themselves to personal study and engages with other Advanced Fire Risk Assessors and Professional Associations who have relevant experience and can offer counsel and support in regard to developing their current and potential Fire Risk Assessment activities.</p> <p>Regularly reflects upon and challenges and the limitations of their own practice and to develop themselves to meet the various alternative situations and circumstances presented by assessment of moderate risk profiles. Evidence their learning and development through 'on the job learning', courses and conferences. Provide Foundation Fire Risk Assessors and those from within their peer group with support, feedback and assistance in respect to their learning and development.</p>
<p><b>Consistently applies sound evidence based approaches to providing quality solutions in respect to moderate risks and the completion of Fire Risk Assessments.</b></p>	<p>Applies their knowledge to undertake assessments and investigates and solves problems that arise throughout this process.</p> <p>Contributes to the development of systems designed to generate continuous improvements in regard to Fire Risk assessment practice.</p>



## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

<b>Contributes to the development of Fire Risk Assessment solutions.</b>	Seeks out opportunities to involve themselves in the design and development of new methods and practice.
<b>Provide recommendations to satisfy legal requirements and ensure fire risk present can be mitigated</b>	Use and analyse information to form suitable and sufficient assessments and be capable of presenting complex and challenging material both orally and in written reports.

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Principal Skills Intermediate Level

<p><b>Accepts responsibility for offering advice. Can provide solutions and answer questions from duty holders like responsible persons and other people in regard to properties, situations and circumstances presenting medium risk profiles.</b></p>	<p>If required as part of a project can assess resource requirements and provide a projections in timescales and costs.</p> <p>Offer informed good quality proportionate advice and accurate information in respect to medium risk profiles. When necessary, refer matters to other Assessors or industry professionals who possess a greater level of knowledge, skill and experience in respect to a particular problem or capability to help in identifying a higher risk-based solution.</p> <p>Will secure the necessary resources required to undertake Fire Risk Assessments and will deploy these effectively to ensure that outcomes and solutions are managed.</p> <p>Considers critical constraints such as those relating to health and safety, the environment, specific legislation, codes of practice or guidance.</p>
<p><b>Demonstrate and develop personal and social skills.</b></p> <p><b>Possess an ability to work and collaborate with others</b></p>	<p>Self-aware and capable of identifying strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Able to identify the needs and concerns of others, especially in regard to professional standards and to diversity and equality.</p> <p>Confident, resilient and flexible when faced with new, changing or challenging situations.</p> <p>Create, maintain and foster productive relationships in a way that delivers better and stronger outcomes and resolves conflict.</p>
<p><b>Communicate effectively with those instructing or responsible for fire safety management in order to report the results of the Fire Risk Assessment.</b></p> <p><b>Contribute to the delivery of presentations. Prepare written communications, documents and reports.</b></p> <p><b>Exchange and share information and provide advice to both technical and non-technical colleagues.</b></p>	<p>Demonstrate good communication skills with an ability to present issues to a range of clients and partners in understandable and meaningful ways.</p> <p>Actively contribute to meetings and discussions.</p> <p>Higher skills and capability to prepare communications including presentations, documents and reports and exchanging information and providing advice on Fire Risk Assessment matters. Engaging or interacting with professional networks.</p>

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Principal Experience Intermediate Level

<p><b>Carries out and records the CPD that is considered necessary to maintain and enhance their competence in the area of their practice.</b></p> <p><b>Builds competence through exposure to a range of situations which add to the experience base and drive improvements.</b></p>	<p>Keeps up to date with relevant national and international Fire Risk Assessment issues.</p> <p>Plans how to meet CPD and Organisational objectives. Maintains a CPD record including reflective elements</p> <p>Provides evidence of development through vocational learning, private study, in house courses, external courses, webinars, seminars and conferences.</p> <p>Evaluates CPD outcomes against any personal development plans agreed with Supervisors and managers.</p> <p>Assists Foundation Fire Risk Assessors with their CPD.</p>
<p><b>Continuous exposure to a range of Medium Fire Risk Assessment opportunities and using this to help inform future developments.</b></p>	<p>Reflecting on the outcomes of Assessments carried out and considering those produced by other colleagues within the sector.</p> <p>Satisfies legal and statutory obligations.</p>
<p><b>Accepts personal responsibility and can manage strengths and weaknesses in a way that achieves positive outcomes.</b></p>	<p>Aware of the needs and concerns of others and the demands of the risks to be assessed.</p> <p>Able to ensure that outcomes are focussed on practical and effective solutions.</p>

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Professional Behavior Intermediate Level

<b>Make a personal commitment to the Approved Code of Conduct – The National Framework for Fire Risk Assessor Competency. Recognise obligations to communities, the Fire Risk Assessor profession, and the environment.</b>	Offer evidence of consistent application of the Framework and a general attitude which seeks to promote the profession in way that demonstrates excellent services and high-quality outcomes.
<b>Work effectively with others and be aware of the needs and concerns of others as it relates to diversity and equality.</b>	Illustrate through application how awareness has been put into practice and how this has led to positive returns.
<b>Demonstrates high standards of honesty and integrity.</b> <b>Exercises responsibilities in an ethical manner.</b>	Consistently work in a way that protects confidentiality and is not directed by personal gain. Operate within their limitations and creates work which is produced based on conscientious study and application.
<b>Accept and exercise personal responsibility in regard to respecting peoples' right to life and promoting compliance with the law.</b>	Demonstrate how life safety is of paramount concern and evidence the ways in which methods selected are in compliance with legal requirements and statutory obligations.

## The Advanced Standard

Advanced Fire Risk Assessors must be competent throughout their career and may conduct assessments within High-Risk buildings including Higher Risk Residential Buildings. They shall consistently demonstrate advanced levels of knowledge together with commensurate skills, experience and behaviours that enables them to provide technical solutions to problems within complex buildings and those where there are significant levels of risk.

Advanced Fire Risk Assessors may also provide a point of counsel, supervision and validation for those who are working to the foundation and intermediate Standards.

Advanced Fire Risk Assessors are able to demonstrate:

- Successful application of professional knowledge with an ability to lead and conduct High-Risk fire risk assessments.
- Consistent application of their skills to deliver quality outcomes for responsible people and duty holders. Able to accept responsibility for finding complex solutions.
- Experience that allows them to deploy teams and individuals and help them to provide safe and successful outcomes.
- Accountability by demonstrating behaviours that motivates others and inspires confidence in those who have sought their services in respect to high-risk fire risk assessments.

### Principal Knowledge Advanced Level

<p><b>Consistently applies a blend of general and specialist Fire Risk Assessment knowledge.</b></p>	<p>Keeps up to date with new and emerging Fire Risk Assessment issues in both a national and international context by dedicating additional periods of time beyond continuous professional development to continually expand their specific knowledge and learning of new developments, processes, guidance, legislation and risk-based developments.</p>
<p><b>Maintains and updates their current knowledge of specialist Fire Risk Assessment methods and practices.</b></p>	<p>Systematically engages with a broad range of stakeholders and peers who have relevant experience regarding their current and potential Fire Risk Assessment activities. They will use this to regularly reflect upon and challenge the limitations of their own practice to develop themselves in a range of high-risk and complex profiles. Evidence development through 'on the job' learning, private study, courses and conferences. Assists teams and individuals with their own continuous professional development.</p>
<p><b>Extends their technical and theoretical knowledge through continuous learning, research and development.</b></p>	<p>Carry out reviews of their own development needs by planning how to meet objectives and maintain evidence of competence development. Continually seeks to broaden their knowledge of specialist and high-risk Fire Risk Assessment practice.</p>
<p><b>Engages in the progression of Fire Risk Assessment practice by supporting the development of relevant guidance, applicable codes and Standards</b></p>	<p>Prepares and presents options and recommendations based on both theory and applied research. Can test options and offer informed views, for example in peer reviews, to help promote best practice in Fire Risk Assessment methodologies.</p>



## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

<b>Contributes to the development of innovative and effective assessment practice and systems to ensure continuous improvements across the built environment.</b>	Promote and help develop the use of new Fire Risk Assessment approaches, methodologies and systems when appropriate. Capable of identifying constraints and offers and contributes to the development of solutions. Capable of leading and managing research projects or actively contributing in multi-disciplinary working.
<b>Provide recommendations to satisfy legal requirements and to ensure any fire risk that is present can be mitigated</b>	Use and analyse information to form suitable and sufficient assessments and be capable of presenting complex and challenging material both orally and in written reports.  Demonstrates a clear understanding as to when fire life safety risks have escalated to the point of being intolerable for a building to remain occupied.

## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

### Principal Skills Advanced Level

<b>Able to create, design commission and apply best practice solutions. Directs and supervises both team and individual work activities across a range of risk profiles.</b>	<p>Able to demonstrate consistent and fair leadership and management skills which motivate, inspire and support teams and individuals to achieve successful outcomes.</p> <p>Show commitment and initiative in meeting strategic objectives. Help others fulfil their obligations by acting as a mentor and influencer. Lead work so that outcomes comply with all relevant legislation, regulatory frameworks, guidance and approved codes of practice.</p>
<b>Understand limitations in current specialist knowledge and capabilities.</b>	<p>Display a high level of self-awareness and seek out ways to improve skills within a range of settings. Act as a role model and mentor for junior Fire Risk Assessors and others within the sector.</p>
<b>Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills. Identify opportunities for partnership working and develop and foster productive alliances with other key agencies and organisations.</b>	<p>Contribute to the role of other agencies. Demonstrate an ability to work with others, for example in professional bodies, by proactively engaging or interacting with professional networks.</p>
<b>Communicate effectively with those instructing or responsible for fire safety management to report the results of the High-Risk Fire Risk Assessment. Prepare and deliver presentations on strategic matters, lead and sustain debates and use results and feedback to improve proposals.</b>	<p>Demonstrate strong communication skills with an ability to explain complex issues to a range of clients and partners. This may include leading, chairing or contributing to meetings and discussions. Preparing communications including presentations, documents and reports. Exchanging information and providing advice on complicated matters to technical and non-technical colleagues.</p>

## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

### Principal Experience Advanced Level

<p><b>Seeks out opportunities for developing oneself and others. Able to mentor or lead teams and develop staff to meet changing technical needs.</b></p> <p><b>Builds competence through exposure to a range of situations which add to the experience base and drive improvements.</b></p> <p><b>Manages and applies safe systems of work. Identifies and takes responsibility for obligations in respect to health, safety, welfare and environmental issues.</b></p>	<p>Capability to participate and exercise in mentoring and staff appraisals showing leadership and participation in staff personal development. Able to assess effectiveness of the management, assessment and provide feedback.</p> <p>Plans and implements continuous improvements. Conducts quality audits.</p> <p>Monitors, maintains and improves service delivery.</p> <p>Identifies, implements and evaluates changes required to meet quality objectives and outcomes</p>
<p><b>Continuous exposure to a range of High-Risk Fire Risk Assessment opportunities and using this to help inform future developments.</b></p>	<p>Reflecting on the outcomes of Assessments carried out and considering those produced by other colleagues within the sector.</p> <p>Satisfies legal and statutory obligations.</p>

## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

### Professional Behaviour Advanced Level

<b>Continue personal commitment to the Approved Code of Conduct – The National Framework for Fire Risk Assessor Competency. Recognise obligations to communities, the Fire Risk Assessor profession and the environment.</b>	Maintain a record to demonstrate with evidence application of the Framework and work to promote the profession in a way that demonstrates excellence and high-quality outcomes.
<b>Support others and be aware of the needs and concerns of others as it relates to diversity and equality.</b>	Maintain a record with evidence to demonstrate how awareness has been put into practice.
<b>Continue to demonstrate by example the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Always work with accuracy and rigour.</b>	Consistently work in a way that protects confidentiality and is not directed by personal gain.
<b>Continue to accept and exercise personal responsibility in regard to respecting peoples' right to life and promoting compliance with the law.</b>	Maintain a record with evidence to demonstrate compliance with legal requirements and statutory obligations.

## Terms and Definitions

### Competency

Competency is the capability to apply or use a set of related knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform functions or tasks in a defined work setting.

### Competent Person

A person, suitably skilled by training and qualified by knowledge and having appropriate practical experience, who, when is instructed by their client, is able to undertake required task(s) correctly.

### Fire Risk Assessment

A methodical process of qualitative and quantitative measures with recorded findings on fire risk management.

### Fire Risk Assessor

A competent person who, when instructed, is capable of undertaking a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment and effectively communicating advice on the findings.

## Bibliography

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Fire Safety Act 2021 England and Wales

Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006

Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010

Fire (Scotland) Act 2005

Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2005

Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2021

PAS 79-1:2020 Fire risk assessment - Premises other than housing. Code of practice

BS 8670 Flex 8670 V3.0 Built environment. Core criteria for building safety in competence frameworks. Code of practice

BS 9980:2022 Assessing the external wall fire risk in multi-occupied residential buildings

Fire safety in purpose-built blocks of flats

Guidance to support a temporary change to a simultaneous evacuation strategy in purpose-built blocks of flats

# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Annexe

### Building Risk Definitions

The Standard is applied in the understanding that Fire Risk Assessors will operate on three distinct risk levels and that within which there is the potential for progression to the next level. This is based on the Assessor meeting the benchmark Standard associated with each level and demonstrating potential to progress through a blend of academic attainment, continuous personal development, vocational training, mentoring and quality assurance.

**The Foundation level** of Fire Risk Assessment is restricted to low-risk buildings, which in general terms may be defined as follows:

Residential buildings with family or familiar occupancy of less than 15; or Retail and commercial buildings occupied by less than 15 staff and the public; and is

- less than 3 storey height above ground floor level
- with internal travel distances of less than 30 metres
- with no abnormal hazards or substantial quantities of controlled product, and
- with a floor area of less than 300 square metres

**The Intermediate level** provides access to those buildings which fall within the moderate or medium risk band. These are defined as follows:

Residential buildings occupied by less than 50 persons who may include temporary or transient residents who may be unfamiliar with the building, or residents who have some impairments; or Retail and commercial buildings occupied by less than 100 staff and the public; and

- less than 7 storey height above ground level and has no occupied basements
- with internal travel distances of less than 60 metres
- with no abnormal hazards,
- with a floor area below 600 square metres,

## Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

- has multiple and unrestricted stairways and exit routes, and
- is not substantially clad with combustible or unknown materials

**The Advanced level** of Fire Risk Assessment shall be reserved for those who have demonstrated competency at the highest level. High risk buildings shall be defined as being those that are 18 metres and over in height but will also include the following:

- Residential buildings occupied by over 50 persons; who may be persons who may be unfamiliar with the building or have impairments or specialised needs; or Retail and commercial buildings occupied by over 100 staff and the public; and
- exceed a 7 storey height above ground level or have occupancy below ground that has no direct egress to ground level.
- with internal travel distances that exceed 60 metres
- with abnormal or transient hazards,
- exceed a floor area of 600 square metres
- have single stairways or complicated exit arrangements,
- have combustible or unknown cladding, and
- lack active fire protection or other fire mitigating measures

These descriptions are summarised in a Building Fire Risk Framework and can be adapted for use as a composite description. For example, UK Government guidance is provided to assist unqualified persons assess fire risk in 'simple risk' premises.

Developed using the framework a "Simple Risk" building would be regarded as:

A small traditionally constructed building, often two storeys but no higher than three storeys with a floor area of around 100m<sup>2</sup>, occupied by 10 or less persons excluding any basement. Internal travel distance to safety of about 20m with no serious hazards or persons requiring special assistance to escape from fire.



# Industry Benchmark Standard for Fire Risk Assessors

## Building Risk Fire Framework

Building Fire Risk Framework					
FIRE RISK	Simple	Low	Medium	High	Very High
OCCUPANCY	<10 Residential <10 Commercial	<15 Residential <30 Commercial	< 50 Residential <100 Commercial	50> Residential 100> Commercial	High or multi risk occupancies
TRAVEL (M)	<20	<30 metres	<60	60> or single stairs or complex arrangements	Complex or extended
SPREAD (M <sup>2</sup> )	<100	<300	<600	600>	Extended or Likely
COMPETENCY	Basic	Foundation	Intermediate	Advanced	Specialised
HEIGHT	<3 storey above ground no occupied basements	<4 storey above ground no occupied basements	<7 storey above ground no occupied basements	7> storey above ground or occupied basements	Any
HAZARDS	No abnormal hazards	No abnormal hazards	No abnormal hazards	Hazards present	High hazard
CONSTRUCTION	Traditional	Traditional, Modular or Lightweight Timber Frame	Traditional, Modular, LTF or External Wall System	Traditional, Modular, LTF or External Wall System	Any
EXAMPLE	Domestic scale housing and small retail shops	Larger domestic housing and smaller urban retail and commercial units	Flats in high rise buildings, smaller supermarkets, factory-commercial units	Flats in higher rise buildings, larger supermarkets, factory-commercial units	Large complex buildings, use of FSE, mixed use

### Notes

1. Fire risk categorisation requires systematic assessment of quantifiable and qualitative factors and the framework is therefore a very simplified stratification overview prepared to assist understanding.
2. Travel is the internal travel distance to the premises final exit and ultimate safety or to a place of relative safety which is within a protected route leading to the final exit and ultimate safety.
3. Spread is the maximum area likely to become involved in fire. Volume and compartment size are not used to avoid conflicts or confusion.
4. Competency Standards relate to those previously referred to in this Standard
5. Height is from ground level. Any occupied basements or floors below ground, as on a sloping site, need to be included as part of the height
6. Hazards relate beyond the risk of fire ignition to physical barriers or inference with senses that might reduce awareness of fire
7. Traditional refers to construction of brick, masonry, with wood floors, internal plastered walls etc., Modular is use of industrial constructions, typically wood with structural timber frames, etc. and External Wall Systems refers to use of cladding and decorative features on buildings