



**INSTITUTE OF
FIRE PREVENTION OFFICERS**

incorporating the

INSTITUTE OF FIRE SAFETY OFFICERS

Register of Fire Risk Assessors Guidance Notes for Applicants

IFPO – Register of Fire Risk Assessors

1. Purpose of the Register

Like many other institutions whose members (affiliates and associates) provide professional fire risk assessment services, the IFPO believes that it is necessary to provide a register of its members and non members who provide such services. The purpose of the register is to enable the public (specifiers; end users; insurers and other interested parties) to determine the suitability of a service provider in terms of their competence and qualifications, to undertake a satisfactory fire risk assessment in the circumstances prescribed.

The register will hold the details of competent and expert individuals whose credentials to undertake fire risk assessments have been successfully evaluated by the Institute of Fire Prevention Officers. This register will be made available to the public via the IFPO website and also in published format.

Membership of the IFPO is not a prerequisite, nor is it a guarantee of suitability for registration. Entry onto the register is open to any practising fire safety professional, subject to the provision and successful evaluation of evidence of relevant experience, training and qualification.

2. Scope and Role of Fire Risk Assessor

While the scope and role of the fire risk assessor might be considered at times vague and open to interpretation, we have adopted the following definition as we feel it adequately reflects our understanding of the role and the scope of activities a fire risk assessor might reasonably be expected to undertake: -

A fire risk assessor is a person who carries out surveys of premises to identify fire hazards and assesses the consequent fire risk to people in those premises.

The survey identifies the fire hazard, assesses the probable consequent risk and provides recommendations to minimise and control these risks. The risk might be characterised as a life safety risk; a risk to assets or property or the potential impact of fire on business continuity.

A competent fire risk assessment would encapsulate elements of life safety, property protection and business continuity. It is also reasonable to expect a competent fire risk assessor to be able to undertake an audit function to verify the adequacy, or otherwise, of a fire risk assessment undertaken by others.

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From the client perspective it would be reasonable to expect a consultant, employed to carry out a fire risk assessment, to also include in his report client compliance with the relevant fire safety legislation or, where non-compliance is found, recommendations to ensure compliance.

3. Method of Assessment

There is no single correct – or for that matter incorrect - method for undertaking a fire risk assessment, or for recording the outcome. However, there is an underlying legislative prerequisite that the assessment will be 'suitable' and 'sufficient'. While these prerequisites also defy concrete definition, it is possible to identify common characteristics of risk assessment and to determine if the methodology used is sufficiently rigorous and robust to meet legislative responsibilities.

It is for this reason that the method of assessment chosen allows applicants to demonstrate their competence and expertise in a range of ways. It is recognised that a competent fire risk assessor is likely to be someone with a blend of experience, training and education. With this in mind, the assessment process will not place undue emphasis on formal qualifications. The application form is deliberately freestyle to enable applicants the maximum flexibility in their submission. We have provided general sections for guidance, but also urge applicants to add in any additional supporting or supplementary details which they feel will benefit their application. It is not necessary to provide evidence under all sections.

The application form is broken down into the following sections:

- a. Basic personal details – the requirements are self evident
- b. Address contact details – the requirements are self evident
- c. Categories of registration – for assessment purposes, it would be useful to know if an applicant is employed as a fire risk assessor within a single organisation or operating on a wider independent commercial basis. With respect to the former, the evidence required in support of the application may naturally be limited to a smaller range of activities, specifically related to the needs of the employing organisation. An individual looking to provide commercial fire risk assessment would be expected to provide evidence of a wider scope of inspection activities.
- d. Institutional/professional membership - Membership of the IFPO is not a prerequisite, nor is it a guarantee of suitability for registration. For assessment purposes it would be useful to have details of any other professional body or trade body membership relevant to the application.

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- e. Fire Safety Education – please detail courses, training, seminars and qualifications relevant to your application.
- f. Fire Safety Experience – please detail work related experience that demonstrate your underpinning knowledge of the subject or practical work based experience of fire risk assessment.
- g. Fire Risk Assessment/Audit Experience – please provide sample details of the types of premises you have conducted fire risk assessments and audits. The list should demonstrate your breadth of experience in this field.
- h. Other Relevant Fire Safety Information – please detail any other information which you feel will support you application.
- i. Fire Risk Assessment Submissions – please provide the details of ten fire risk assessment and/or audits that you have undertaken. The panel will review the range and scope of the projects detailed and will contact one or more of the individuals named to verify the details provided and to assess client satisfaction. The list should show a variety premises.
- j. Risk Assessment Process – please provide a written account of your approach to a fire risk assessment beginning with your instruction/contract to carry out the assessment and concluding with delivery of the report. This is a most important part of your application as you will be able to demonstrate a logical methodical approach to fire risk assessment.
- k. Professional Indemnity – you are required to hold professional indemnity insurance and if necessary public liability insurance. Evidence of professional indemnity must be provided with your application. On an ongoing basis, annual renewal of the registration will only take place once evidence of currently public indemnity/public liability insurance has been provided. *This will not be necessary for those applicants who provide fire risk assessments for their employer only.*
- l. Referees – please provide the names and contact details of two referees. Depending upon the evidence provided in support of the application the panel may or may not request or contact referees.
- m. Declaration - in signing the form you are declaring that, to the best of your knowledge, the evidence provided is true and valid. You are agreeing to the Panel contacting one or more of the contacts provided in the list of projects. You are also agreeing to attend for interview should the Panel consider it necessary, and agreeing to participate, if required by the Panel, in a witnessed/accompanied fire risk assessment.
- n. Self Assessment Questionnaire – the questionnaire should be completed and submitted with your application. It will show the source of your acquired knowledge.

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4. Review Process

All applicant submissions will initially be reviewed by an internal panel of four suitably qualified IFPO members. If the decision to accept or reject an applicant is split, the applicant's details will be subject to external independent review. The outcome of the review will be one of the following:

- o Successful applicants will be entered on the register.
- o Applicants may be accepted onto the register with limitations attached to the scope/range of assessments they are deemed qualified to undertake. The limitations may, for example, restrict the applicant to undertake risk assessments for one particular organisation if they are in permanent employment by that organisation for the purpose of undertaking risk assessments/audits.
- o Additional information/evidence may be requested to support the application. The panel may ask the applicant to be present for interview in order to help them arrive at a decision. In exceptional circumstances the Panel will nominate at least one member to accompany the applicant on a risk assessment to view first hand the approach adopted and the expertise demonstrated
- o The application may be rejected. Unsuccessful applicants will be given feedback and subject to rectifying the areas of perceived weakness in the evidence provided (such as additional training for example) the applicant will generally be eligible to reapply.