



690. Sustainability & Climate Action - Climate Risk & Adaptation - Climate Risk & Adaptation Audit

Category:	Sustainability & Climate Action
Subcategory:	Climate Risk & Adaptation
Status:	Statutory
Type:	Competent Person
Priority:	Core
Commonality:	Common

Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.

Why This Task Matters

Your comprehensive assessment of climate risks directly protects pupils and staff from weather-related disruptions while ensuring educational continuity in an uncertain climate. By identifying vulnerabilities and building resilience, you demonstrate responsible leadership that safeguards learning environments, reduces operational risks, and builds confidence in the organisation's preparedness while recognising the essential role facilities staff play in creating secure, adaptable spaces that protect educational excellence for all.

Task Summary

Statutory: This task involves conducting a structured audit every four months to assess the school or college estate's exposure to climate-related risks such as flooding, overheating, or extreme weather. The audit should include review of site location data, building vulnerabilities, existing mitigation measures, and emergency preparedness. Staff should use systematic assessment methods to evaluate current risks, identify gaps in resilience, and recommend adaptation measures. The process should consider both acute events (flooding, heatwaves) and chronic changes (rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns). Findings should be documented with clear risk ratings, prioritised actions, and leadership approval. This regular assessment supports statutory climate adaptation requirements and helps maintain safe, functional learning environments despite changing weather

patterns.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Climate Change Act 2008:** Requires assessment and adaptation to climate risks.
- **Environment Act 2021:** Establishes requirements for climate risk assessment and adaptation planning.
- **National Adaptation Programme:** Requires public sector organisations to assess and address climate risks.
- **DfE guidance on climate adaptation in education:** Specifies requirements for educational premises.
- **UK Climate Change Risk Assessment:** Identifies key risks requiring adaptation measures.

Typical Frequency

This task should be completed every 4 months, providing regular assessment of changing climate risks and adaptation needs. The frequency could vary based on significant weather events, new scientific findings, or changes in the estate. In education settings, this schedule aligns with term patterns and allows time for implementing recommendations between audits.

Applicability

This task is core and common, applying to all schools and colleges as part of statutory climate adaptation requirements. Every educational establishment must assess its vulnerability to climate impacts to ensure pupil safety and operational continuity. The task applies regardless of location, though sites in flood-prone areas or with specific vulnerabilities may require more detailed assessments. There are no circumstances where this assessment would not be required, as climate risk management is fundamental to statutory compliance.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type:** This is a Competent Person task that should be carried out by staff with knowledge of facilities management and risk assessment.
- **Contractor Requirements:** Not applicable as this is a Competent Person task.
- **In-House Requirements:** Staff should have training in risk assessment and familiarity with the estate's layout and systems. Knowledge of local climate risks and adaptation measures is beneficial.

- **Permit to Work:** No permit to work is required for this task.
- **Delivery Model:** This task is normally completed in-house by trained staff, though external consultants may be engaged for complex assessments.

Key Considerations

Important factors include using current climate data and projections, considering the specific vulnerabilities of the site, and ensuring assessments are practical for implementation. The task should be planned to allow adequate time for comprehensive evaluation. Consider the educational context and potential disruption to learning activities. Risk assessment should focus on both physical building risks and operational impacts on educational delivery.

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Access to current climate data and risk assessment guidance
- Understanding of local climate risks and building vulnerabilities
- Knowledge of adaptation measures and emergency procedures
- Familiarity with the estate layout and systems

Tools & Materials

- Climate risk assessment template
- Site maps and building plans
- Local climate data and flood risk maps
- Camera for photographic evidence
- Risk rating matrix and prioritisation tools

Method (Step-by-Step)

1. **Data Review:** Gather current climate data, weather records, and site-specific risk information.
2. **Site Assessment:** Conduct systematic evaluation of building and grounds for climate vulnerabilities.
3. **Risk Analysis:** Assess likelihood and impact of different climate scenarios.

4. **Mitigation Review:** Evaluate existing adaptation measures and emergency preparations.
5. **Recommendations:** Develop prioritised recommendations for risk reduction.
6. **Report Preparation:** Prepare comprehensive risk assessment report with leadership sign-off.

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

Risks should be assessed using established likelihood and impact scales with clear prioritisation of high-risk areas. Recommendations should be practical and cost-effective for implementation.

If Results Fail

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. If critical vulnerabilities are identified, immediate actions should include implementing temporary mitigation measures and consulting emergency planning specialists.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

No reinstatement required. Ensure all documentation is filed appropriately.

Completion Checks

Confirm that comprehensive assessment has been completed, report prepared, leadership sign-off obtained, and evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod.

Record-Keeping & Evidence

- **Upload Process:** Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence:** Risk assessment report, annotated site maps, and leadership sign-off records.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence:** No Supporting/Good Practice Evidence is required for this task.

Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

Common mistakes include focusing only on obvious risks, failing to consider emerging climate threats, or not involving relevant stakeholders. Best practices include using current climate projections, consulting local authorities for flood risk data, and integrating findings with emergency planning. In

educational settings, consider impacts on pupil safety and learning continuity. Warning signs include outdated assessments or lack of follow-through on high-priority recommendations.

Quick Reference Checklist

- [] Review current climate data and projections
- [] Assess site vulnerabilities systematically
- [] Evaluate existing mitigation measures
- [] Analyse risk likelihood and impact
- [] Develop prioritised recommendations
- [] Prepare risk assessment report
- [] Obtain leadership sign-off
- [] Upload evidence to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

Grouping is feasible; align with related tasks of the same frequency and contractor visit.

Related Tasks

- Sustainability & Climate Action - Climate Risk & Adaptation - Overheating & Thermal Comfort Visual Check
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Climate Risk & Adaptation - Flood Risk & Drainage Resilience Review
- Sustainability & Climate Action - Policy & Governance - Climate Action Plan Annual Review & Update

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Users must ensure that all tasks are carried out in line with current legislation, manufacturer instructions, site-specific risk assessments, and organisational policies. Where necessary, professional advice should be sought from competent and accredited specialists — for example, fire risk assessors, water hygiene consultants, electrical engineers, gas safety contractors, or health and safety advisors.

