



# Health and Safety

## Module 4 – Managing Health and Safety

### Introduction

In this module, we will look at how health and safety issues should be organised and controlled to protect people and improve safety.

### Core elements to effective health and safety

Most organisations have management processes or arrangements in place to deal with payroll, personnel issues and finance – managing health and safety is no different.

To help organisations comply with the law, HSE encourages a common-sense and practical approach to managing health and safety. It should be part of the everyday process of running an organisation and an integral part of workplace behaviours and attitudes.

#### **The core elements to effectively managing health and safety are:**

1. leadership and management
2. staff who are trained and skilled
3. an environment where people are trusted and involved.

These elements must be underpinned by an understanding of the risks the organisation creates or faces.

### What does the law say?

Organisations have a legal duty to put in place suitable arrangements to manage health and safety, both criminal law and civil law apply to workplace health and safety.

In Module One you were introduced to the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, this sets out the foundation of health and safety law in Britain.

Other examples of health and safety law include:

- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

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- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- The Health and Safety (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 ensures that EU derived health and safety will continue in domestic law after the United Kingdom has left the EU.

## Minimum legal requirements

**As a minimum, there should be processes and procedures to meet the legal requirements, including:**

- a written health and safety policy
- assessments of the risks to staff, contractors, visitors, and any other people who could be affected by your activities – and record the significant findings in writing
- arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures that come from risk assessment
- access to competent health and safety advice
- providing people with information about the risks in the workplace and how they are protected
- instruction and training for employees in how to deal with the risks
- ensuring there is adequate and appropriate supervision in place
- consulting with employees about their risks at work and current preventive and protective measures.

## The Plan, Do, Check, Act approach

Managing health and safety can rarely be achieved by one-off interventions. A sustained and systematic approach is necessary. While this may not always require a formal health and safety management system, whatever approach is used it probably contains the steps Plan, Do, Check, Act.

Plan, Do, Check, Act helps you achieve a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than as a stand-alone system.

The Health and Safety Executive has produced a document called 'Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65)' which will be useful if you need to put in place or oversee your organisation's health and safety arrangements. There is a link in the **Resources** section of the course.

## Plan

To implement your health and safety policy, you need to establish and maintain an effective health and safety management system that is proportionate to the risks. Policies should be designed to meet legal requirements, prevent health and safety problems, and enable you to respond quickly where difficulties arise or new risks are introduced.

- Think about where you are now and where you need to be.
- Say what you want to achieve, who will be responsible for what, how you will achieve your aims, and how you will measure your success. You may need to write down this policy and your plan to deliver it.

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- Decide how you will measure performance. Think about ways to do this that go beyond looking at accident figures; look for active indicators as well as reactive indicators.
- Consider fire and other emergencies. Co-operate with anyone who shares your workplace and co-ordinate plans with them.
- Remember to plan for changes and identify any specific legal requirements that apply to you.

## Do

Delivery depends on an effective management system to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of staff and other people affected by your work. You should aim to protect people by introducing management systems and practices that ensure risks are dealt with sensibly, responsibly and proportionately.

- **Identify your risk profile**
  - Assess the risks, identify what could cause harm in the workplace, who it could harm and how, and what you will do to manage the risk.
  - Decide what the priorities are and identify the biggest risks.
- **Organise your activities to deliver your plan**  
**In particular, aim to:**
  - involve workers and communicate, so that everyone is clear on what is needed and can discuss issues – develop positive attitudes and behaviours
  - provide adequate resources, including competent advice where needed.
- **Implement your plan**
  - Decide on the preventive and protective measures needed and put them in place.
  - Provide the right tools and equipment to do the job and keep them maintained.
  - Train and instruct, to ensure everyone is competent to carry out their work.
  - Supervise to make sure that arrangements are followed.

## Check

Monitoring and reporting are important parts of health and safety arrangements. Management systems allow organisations to receive both specific (eg incident-led) and routine reports on the performance of health and safety policy.

- **Measure your performance**
  - Make sure that your plan has been implemented – ‘paperwork’ on its own is not a good performance measure. For example, you could implement inspections at pre-determined times and proactively measure how many you have performed. You could also observe staff behaviour and record the level of compliance and non-compliance.
  - Assess how well the risks are being controlled and if you are achieving your aims. In some circumstances, formal audits may be useful.



- **Investigate the causes of accidents, incidents or near misses**

Remember that proactive measures are always more important than reactive measures.

## Act

It is important that health and safety performance is reviewed. It allows you to establish whether the essential health and safety principles - effective leadership and management, competence, worker consultation and involvement - have been embedded in the organisation. It tells you whether your system is effective in managing risk and protecting people.

### Review your performance

- Learn from accidents and incidents, ill health data, errors and relevant experience, including from other organisations.
- Revisit plans, policy documents and risk assessments to see if they need updating.
- Take action on lessons learned, including from audit and inspection reports.

### You may need to go round the cycle more than once, particularly when:

- starting out
- developing a new process, product or event
- implementing any change.

## In summary

This module has covered how health and safety issues should be organised and controlled to protect people and improve safety performance.

You are now ready to complete the corresponding questionnaire. Simply close this window to save your progress and click '**Questionnaire 4**' to begin the questions.