

THE CITY & GUILDS TEXTBOOK

LEVEL 2 DIPLOMA IN

BUSINESS

ADMINISTRATION

VIC ASHLEY

SHEILA ASHLEY

UNIT 4

WORKING IN A HEALTHY AND SAFE WAY IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT



The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) say that everyone is entitled to work in premises that are safe for them to do so, and that customers are entitled to be protected from any risk to their health and safety while they are on the premises. There are a number of regulations that impose responsibilities on both you and the employer in respect of health and safety. Your employer's basic responsibility is to provide safe and healthy conditions and processes for you to work in, while your responsibility is to behave in a safe and responsible way to protect yourself, your colleagues, customers and visitors from any risk.

In this unit you will cover the following learning outcomes:

- know how to work in a healthy and safe way in a business environment
- be able to work in a healthy and safe way in a business environment

Assessment criteria

This section covers assessment criteria 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 2.4

Interim

An interval of time between one event, process, or period and another

Benchmark

To provide a standard against which something can be measured or assessed

WORKING SAFELY IN A BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

It is extremely important that everyone in the organisation is working in a healthy and safe way. Monitoring and reporting are vital parts of an organisation's health and safety culture. Management systems must allow senior management to receive both specific (eg incident-led) and routine reports on the performance of health and safety policy. Much day-to-day health and safety information needs to be reported only at the time of a formal review, but only a strong system of monitoring can ensure that the formal review can proceed as planned and that relevant events in the **interim** are brought to the management's attention.

The organisation must ensure that:

- appropriate importance is given to reporting both preventive information, such as progress of training and maintenance programmes, and incident data such as accident and sickness absence rates
- audits of the effectiveness of management structures and risk controls for health and safety are carried out as often as necessary
- the impact of changes such as the introduction of new procedures, work processes or products, or any major health and safety failure, is reported as soon as possible
- there are procedures to implement new and changed legal requirements and to consider other external developments and events

Effective monitoring of sickness absence and workplace health can alert the organisation to underlying problems that could seriously damage performance or result in accidents and long-term illness. The collection of workplace health and safety data can allow management to **benchmark** the organisation's performance against others in its sector. Appraisals of senior managers should include an assessment of their contribution to health and safety performance.

A regular review of health and safety performance is essential. It establishes whether the health and safety principles of strong and active leadership, worker involvement and assessment and review have been fixed in the organisation. It tells the organisation whether systems are effective in managing risk and protecting people.

Health and safety performance should be reviewed at least once a year. The review process should:

- examine whether the health and safety policy reflects the organisation's current priorities, plans and targets
- examine whether risk management and other health and safety systems have been effectively reporting

- report health and safety shortcomings, and the effect of all relevant management decisions
- decide actions to address any weaknesses and a system to monitor their implementation
- consider immediate reviews in the light of major shortcomings or event

Larger public and private sector organisations need to have formal procedures for auditing and reporting health and safety performance. The board should ensure that any audit is seen as a positive management and boardroom tool. It should have unrestricted access to both external and internal auditors, keeping their cost-effectiveness, independence and objectivity under review. Various codes and guides, many of them sector-specific, are available to help organisations report health and safety performance and risk management as part of good **governance**.

Performance on health and safety is increasingly being recorded in organisations' annual reports to investors and **stakeholders**. Management can make extra 'shop floor' visits to gather information for the formal review. Good health and safety performance can be celebrated at central and local level.

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), sensible risk management is about:

- ensuring that workers and the public are properly protected
- providing overall benefit to society by balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing real risks – both those which arise more often and those with serious consequences
- enabling innovation and learning not stifling them
- ensuring that those who create risks manage them responsibly and understand that failure to manage real risks responsibly is likely to lead to robust action
- enabling individuals to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility

Sensible risk management is not about:

- creating a totally risk free society
- generating useless paperwork mountains
- scaring people by exaggerating or publicising trivial risks
- stopping important recreational and learning activities for individuals where the risks are managed
- reducing protection of people from risks that cause real harm and suffering

Governance

The process of governing a country or organisation

Stakeholder

A person or group with a direct interest, involvement, or investment in something



Risks are acceptable when managed properly

There is a wide range of legislation and regulation which affects health and safety in a business environment. The major piece of legislation is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA), which imposes duties on both employees and employers.

Employees must:	Employers must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ work in a safe and sensible way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide a safe work area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ use equipment safely and correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide clearly defined procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ report potential risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure safe handling, storage and transport of stock
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ help identify training needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ train and supervise staff in health and safety matters
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ maintain safe entries and exits
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide adequate temperature, lighting, seating etc.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ provide a safe work area

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) require employers to take action in the following circumstances:

- death or major injury to an employee or member of the public. Notify the enforcing authority without delay and complete an accident report form within 10 days
- accident causing an employee to be unable to work for more than three days. Complete an accident report form within 10 days
- employee suffering a reportable work-related disease. Complete a disease report form
- something dangerous happens which does not cause a reportable injury but clearly could have done. Report immediately and complete an accident report form within 10 days

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers of five or more employees to:

- carry out a risk assessment
- implement measures identified as necessary
- appoint competent people to implement the measures
- set up emergency procedures
- provide clear information and training
- work together with other employers sharing the same workplace

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 aim to ensure that workplaces meet the needs of all members of a workforce including people with disabilities. Where necessary, parts of the workplace, including in particular doors, passage ways, stairs, showers, wash basins, lavatories and work stations, should be made accessible for disabled people.

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 apply to all who regularly use computers in their work, and relate to workstations as well as equipment. They require employers to:

- assess all workstations for health and safety risks and lower the risks as much as possible
- plan work activities to incorporate rest breaks at regular intervals
- arrange and pay for eye tests and pay for spectacles or lenses if these are prescribed specifically for computer work
- provide health and safety training for users and re-train if the workstation is changed or modified
- provide users with information on all aspects of health and safety which apply to them and measures being taken to reduce risks to their health

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 require that equipment provided for use at work is:

- suitable for the intended use
- safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and, in certain circumstances, inspected

HANDY HINTS

The HSE supply a list of major injuries, dangerous occurrences and diseases that are reportable under RIDDOR.



Where necessary, parts of the building – such as doorways – should be made accessible for people who are disabled

ACTIVITY

Look around your workplace and make a list of any areas that are not accessible to disabled people. Give the list to the person responsible for health and safety policy in your workplace.

ACTIVITY

Look around your workplace and make a list of any equipment that is not suitable for its intended use. Give the list to the person responsible for health and safety policy in your workplace.

ACTIVITY

Look around your workplace and make a list of any equipment that is not suitable for its intended use. Give the list to the person responsible for health and safety policy in your workplace.

- used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training
- accompanied by suitable safety measures eg protective devices, markings and warnings

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) requires employers to control any substances that may damage the health of staff or customers, for instance bleach, ammonia, acid, etc.

Employers must:

- assess the risk from hazardous substances
- decide how to prevent or at least reduce those risks
- ensure employees are properly informed, trained and supervised

REGULATIONS AND YOUR JOB ROLE

All of these regulations will have some impact on your job role, as they will affect the way you carry out your tasks, the equipment you use and your working hours, breaks etc.

In order to understand what could pose possible health and safety risks in the workplace, the first thing to understand is the difference between a hazard and a risk.

A hazard is something that can cause harm, eg electricity, chemicals, working up a ladder, noise, a keyboard, a bully at work, stress. A risk is the chance, high or low, that any hazard will actually cause somebody harm. For example, working alone away from your office can be a hazard. The risk of personal danger may be high. Electric cabling is a hazard. If it has snagged on a sharp object, the exposed wiring places it in a 'high-risk' category.

There are a wide variety of hazards relevant to a business environment, including:

- overuse or improper use of equipment, or poorly designed workstations or work environments, may cause posture problems and pain, discomfort or injuries to the hands and arms
- poor lighting can cause headaches or sore eyes
- lack of control over timing and frequency of incoming calls, or verbal abuse from customers, could cause stress
- high noise levels for long periods could cause hearing problems
- poor headset hygiene could cause ear infections
- exposure to sudden loud sounds while using telephone equipment could cause shock
- call handlers may suffer voice problems, including voice loss
- staff and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages

- handling heavy or bulky objects may cause injuries or back pain
- falls from any height can cause bruising and fractures
- using faulty electrical equipment could cause electrical shocks or burns
- electrical faults can also lead to fires. If trapped, staff could suffer from smoke inhalation/burns

There will be actions that can be taken in the case of identifying hazards such as those listed:

- make sure you get breaks away from the screen
- report any pain suffered as a result of computer use
- report if you feel unwell or uneasy about work issues
- access regular training on volume control
- modify working practices to minimise background noise
- maintain stocks of ear pads
- investigate any report of acoustic shock
- clean voice tubes regularly
- ensure spills are cleared up promptly
- use correct manual handling procedures
- use stepladders correctly
- check electrical installations regularly

It is everybody's responsibility to identify hazards and risks resulting from:

- using machinery and equipment
- using materials and substances
- the way work is carried out
- unsafe behaviour
- breakages and spillages
- the environment

If any risks are identified, they should be communicated to the person responsible for health and safety. Organisations will have at least one first aider or appointed person to be responsible for health and safety. Where the organisation has a health and safety officer, it is their responsibility to give advice and information on health and safety issues, ensure that training takes place and all necessary equipment and procedures are in place and followed. They are also responsible for carrying out risk assessments.

The person nominated to take charge of health and safety must be a competent person, defined by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 as someone with sufficient knowledge and experience to do the job properly.

ACTIVITY

Look around your workplace and make a list of any areas that are not accessible to disabled people. Give the list to the person responsible for health and safety policy in your workplace.

ACTIVITY

Make a list of the first aiders in your workplace, including the person responsible for health and safety policy.

The HSE says: 'A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people.' Employers have a duty under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to carry out risk assessments to identify what hazards exist in a workplace, and how likely these hazards are to cause harm. They must then decide what prevention or control measures are needed. The frequency of scheduled risk audits will depend on:

- The level of risk
- Legislation
- Regulations
- Organisation policy/procedures

Employers are responsible for carrying out the assessment, and for any steps that they need to take to eliminate, or control, risk. They should not only walk around the workplace and inspect for any hazards, but consult you and your colleagues about the hazards you face.



Precautions should be taken in unsafe working environments

HSE STEPS

The HSE advises employers to follow five steps when carrying out a workplace risk assessment:

- 1** Identify hazards, ie anything that may cause harm. Employers have a duty to assess the health and safety risks faced by the staff. They must systematically check for possible physical, mental, chemical and biological hazards. One common classification of hazards is:
 - a** Physical: lifting, awkward postures, slips and trips, noise, dust, machinery, computer equipment
 - b** Mental: excess workload, long hours, working with high-need clients, bullying. These are also called 'psychosocial' hazards,

affecting mental health and occurring within working relationships

- c** Chemical: asbestos, cleaning fluids, aerosols
 - d** Biological: including tuberculosis, hepatitis and other infectious diseases faced by healthcare workers, home care staff and other healthcare professionals
- 2** Decide who may be harmed and how. Identifying who is at risk starts with the organisation's staff, but employers must also assess risks faced by agency and contract staff, visitors, clients and other members of the public on the premises. Employers must review work routines in all the different locations and situations where their staff are employed. For example in contact centres, workstation equipment must be adjusted to suit each employee. Employers have special duties towards the health and safety of young workers, disabled employees, night- or shift-workers and pregnant or breastfeeding women.
 - 3** Assess the risks, and take action. Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. This will determine whether or not they should reduce the level of risk. Even after all precautions have been taken, some risk usually remains. Employers must decide for each remaining hazard whether the risk remains high, medium or low.
 - 4** Make a record of the findings. Organisations with five or more staff are required to record in writing the main findings of the risk assessment. This record should include details of any hazards noted in the risk assessment and action taken to reduce or eliminate risk. This record provides proof that the assessment was carried out, and the basis for a later review of working practices. The risk assessment is a working document. You should be able to read it. It should not be locked away in a cupboard.
 - 5** Review the risk assessment to ensure that agreed safe working practices continue to be applied, eg that management's safety instructions are respected by supervisors and line managers and to take account of any new working practices, new machinery, or more demanding work targets.

The basic rule is that employers must adapt the work to the worker.

The key aims of risk assessment are to:

- prioritise the risks: rank them in order of seriousness
- make all risks small: there are two main options, to eliminate the hazard altogether, or, if this is not possible, control the risks so that harm is unlikely

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 set out the following safety management guidance for employers for tackling risks. The basic approach is also known as a hierarchy of control:

- substitution: ie try a risk-free or less risky option
- prevention: eg erect a machine guard, or add a non-slip surface to a pathway
- re-organise work to reduce exposure to a risk: a basic rule is to adapt the work to the worker. Ensure chairs and display screen equipment are adjustable to the individual, and plan all work involving a computer to include regular breaks. For monotonous or routine work, introduce work variety and greater control over work. For instance, in call centres, introduce work variety by providing work off the phones, and varying the type of calls handled
- as a last resort, issue personal protective equipment to all staff at risk, and make sure they are trained in when and how to use this equipment, such as appropriate eye protection, gloves, special clothing, footwear
- provide training in safe working systems
- provide information on likely hazards and how to avoid them
- provide social and welfare facilities: eg washing facilities for the removal of contamination, a rest room, etc.

The HSE says risk should be assessed 'every time there are new machines, substances and procedures, which could lead to new hazards'. Also, if a new job brings in significant new hazards, then that job should be fully risk-assessed. If there is high staff turnover, then the way new staff do their work should be checked against the risk assessment, and training provided in safe working practices if necessary.

Your organisation should have a procedure in place which explains your role in the case of a fire or other emergency. This procedure will cover:

- how you should raise the alarm
- how to evacuate the building
- where the fire exits are
- where to go when you have evacuated the building
- where to find fire extinguishers
- how and when to use them

They will differ from organisation to organisation, but there are some basic things to know wherever you work. Make sure you have received adequate training in the procedures. Know the procedures above by heart: you will not have time to look for the instructions to refresh your memory in an emergency situation.

If you discover a fire, operate the nearest fire alarm. (If there isn't one, shouting 'Fire, fire' is usually pretty effective.). *If you know how and the fire is small enough*, tackle the fire using the fire equipment available. Make sure you keep your escape route clear and know whose job it is to call the fire brigade. If it's yours, dial 999 and follow the instructions



What should you do if there is a fire in your workplace?

the emergency operator gives you. Direct customers and visitors to the nearest fire exit and shut doors and windows in any room where there is a fire.

Of course, fire is not the only emergency you may come across. In most organisations, bomb threats are dealt with in a similar way to fires, but again find out what *your* company policy is, learn it and follow it.

There is also the possibility of a medical emergency involving staff, visitors or customers. The important thing in this situation is to know who the first aiders are, and to get them to the patient as quickly as possible. You can do serious and possibly permanent damage trying to help when you have not had the proper training.

HANDY HINTS

The basic rule in an emergency is: 'Get out, call the emergency services out and stay out'. No personal belongings or property are worth losing your life for.



In a medical emergency, first call the first aider and then the paramedics if needed

SAFE MANUAL HANDLING

One of the greatest risks in a workplace is damage to your back from lifting items incorrectly. You should not attempt to lift or carry any heavy object until you have received training in manual handling. After training it is important that you use the correct techniques. Before lifting anything:

- plan the best way to carry it
- assess the size and weight
- ask for help if necessary
- clear any obstructions from your path
- consider lifting in two stages

Assessment criteria

This section covers assessment criteria 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3

Some practical tips for safe manual handling:

- Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.
- Your feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load if it is on the ground). You should be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain stability.
- Where possible the load should be hugged as close as possible to your body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.
- At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).
- Don't flex your back any further while lifting. This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.
- Avoid twisting your back or leaning sideways, especially while your back is bent. Your shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as your hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.
- Keep your head up and look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.
- The load should not be **jerked** or **snatched** as this can make it harder to keep control and increase the risk of injury.
- There is a difference between what you can lift and what you can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.
- If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.



Take care when lifting heavy objects

Jerked

Pulled with a sudden strong movement

Snatched

Grabbed or grasped hastily

Invalidate

To deprive something of its legal force or value, eg by failing to comply with some terms and conditions

HANDY HINTS

All equipment should have an instruction manual, although these may be difficult to find

Where the guidelines are exceeded it will be necessary to get help to handle the item.

It is important when using any piece of equipment or tools that you follow the manufacturer's instructions. Before you use any equipment for the first time, you should read through the manual and familiarise yourself with the features and operating systems. The most important reason for following this is to ensure the safety of yourself and your colleagues. Some equipment may have blades which could seriously injure people if not used properly. Another reason is to avoid damaging the equipment. If you damage equipment through failing to follow the manufacturer's instructions, you will **invalidate** the guarantee and your organisation will have to pay for the repairs.

Organisations have policies and procedures on health and safety to ensure the wellbeing of staff, visitors and customers. It is important that you know and understand your organisation's policies and procedures in order to maintain a safe environment. Follow the legislation and carry out any responsibilities and specific policies that relate to your job role.

Everybody is responsible for minimising the risks to health and safety in the workplace. The factors to be taken into account when identifying health and safety risks include:

- legislation
- regulations
- organisational policy and procedures

Following health and safety procedures correctly will help to minimise risk. So will good housekeeping. This means keeping the workplace clean and tidy and removing and disposing of waste. All areas need to be kept clean as illness can spread by dirty conditions. The premises need to be kept tidy or there will be risk of falling over items left in aisles or spillages that are not dealt with immediately.

HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICERS

People with different responsibilities for the health and safety of the workplace will have different information and advice needs. Employees will need to know and understand the policies and procedures, their own responsibilities and how to assess their own risks. The health and safety officer will need to understand the legislation and regulations, government guidelines, how to carry out risk assessments, the reporting procedures, how health and safety is monitored, internal communication methods and the management of the health and safety policy.

The organisation as a whole must understand the legislation and regulations, the importance of risk assessments, the reporting procedures and the resources required to carry out any actions to reduce risks. To communicate information on health and safety, the golden rule is not to use a single method of communication but to use multiple channels including:

- briefings via existing networks (team meetings etc.)
- intranet bulletin board
- email
- notice boards
- staff newsletters
- leaflets

CASE STUDY

ENGAGING WORKERS

A truck manufacturer in the North-East wanted to take advantage of the knowledge of their workers in managing noise and vibration issues, but management were aware that a project to tackle hand-arm vibration issues was only going to work if they could gain workers' trust and co-operation. This was not going to be easily achieved when workers were asked to keep a record of what tools they used and for how long, and after the first week only four forms from a workforce of 78 were returned.

From the poor response rate, management quickly realised that the staff were suspicious of the reasons they were being asked to record the information requested. Workers' trust was vital before they could really get them involved in what they were trying to do, so they arranged for training to raise awareness of the health issues involved when using vibrating hand tools and explained that they couldn't fully address the situation without their workers help.

By talking to the workers and involving them in solving the problem, the company found out that workers become 'attached' to their hand tools. If they did the job well, they'd continue to use them, no matter how old the tools were or how much vibration they caused. A tool amnesty was held, production lines were re-tooled with efficient, low-vibration equipment and workers were told about the risk and how to avoid it.

The company set up a suggestion scheme, complete with boards around the production line where staff could raise any issue they like. Every week, teams checked the boards, noted any suggestions that came under their area of responsibility and considered what action they could take. A staff member's suggestion card would remain on the board until they were happy it had been acted on and only they were allowed to remove it.

As result, they've had hundreds of suggestions in the six months the boards have been up, and have made dozens of improvements.



Gaining workers' trust was vital for raising safety awareness

UNIT 4: TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- 1 Describe why it is important to work safely.
- 2 Describe an employee's responsibilities for health and safety.
- 3 Name the legislation which affects the use of computer screens.
- 4 List two possible health and safety risks in the workplace.
- 5 Describe your organisation's emergency procedures.
- 6 Describe why it is important to use approved techniques when lifting heavy objects.
- 7 Describe how an employee's personal conduct could endanger others.
- 8 Explain why it is important to follow manufacturers' instructions in the use of equipment.
- 9 Explain the importance of adhering to organisational policies on health and safety.