

## Health and safety policy guidance and risk assessments

This information applies to standard 4- Health and Safety

The standard requires you to have a health and safety policy and risk assessments in place. If you have five or more employees, these should be in writing however it is best practice to have them written down anyway. They should be reviewed annually plus when there are any changes (office moves, new ways of working etc.) or after accidents/incidents. Specific risk assessments should also be produced for pregnant women and young people when applicable.

Your policy and risk assessment can be used to help you decide what information, instruction and training you need to provide to your employees.

### Health and Safety Policy

Your policy should include your statement, responsibilities and arrangements.

**General statement of intent-** Overview of what you do to ensure the health and safety of your employees. Examples of what you could include in this section:

- Declaration to provide a safe and healthy working environment
- Reference to the consultation facilities that exist and sources of expert advice for staff
- Commitment to provide relevant information and training in respect of health and safety
- Reference to the support expected from all employees to achieve safety objectives

**Responsibilities-** who in the organisation is responsible for what in regards to health and safety- e.g Directors, managers, health and safety representative, all staff. Examples of what you could include are:

- Duties and responsibilities for health and safety at all levels within the business
- The person ultimately responsible for health and safety at all levels within the business
- Specific responsibilities, e.g. for training, competent persons

**Arrangements-** The detail of what you are actually doing to ensure employees are safe. Examples of what you could include are:

- Procedures for identifying hazards, assessing risks and precautions to be taken
- Methods of consultation with employees
- Accident reporting and investigation, fire and first aid arrangements
- Procedures for safe use of machinery, substances or processes
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## Risk assessments

These detail what the hazards are in your workplace, what you are doing to control them and if there is anything else you need to do. If there is more to do, state who will do it and a deadline date. Remember to include mental health hazards such as stress as well as physical hazards. Consulting your employees on their views when creating your risk assessments is a useful way of ensuring that you have considered everything.

## Examples

An **example template for a policy and risk assessment** (produced by the Health and Safety Executive) is available here:

- Health and Safety Policy template: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/write.htm>
- Risk assessment template and examples: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

Note: These templates are an example that an employer can adapt or develop to meet its needs. Policies should be tailored for your organisation and there are many other example templates available should you wish to use them.

Further information is available on the Health and Safety Executive website – [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) including sector specific guidance for your industry and a search facility.

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