

Unit 110 Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety

Unit summary

Identify and deal with hazards and risks to health and safety.

Fundamental to this unit is an understanding of the terms 'hazard' and 'risk'. They have been defined in the section Key Words and Phrases and it is VERY IMPORTANT that they are understood before undertaking the unit.

Key words and phrases which you might see used frequently within the Health and Safety for People at Work units

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the body appointed to support and enforce health and safety law. They have defined two important concepts as follows:

Hazard "a hazard is something with potential to cause harm".

Risk "a risk is the likelihood of the hazard's potential being realised".

Almost anything may be a hazard, but may or may not become a risk. For example:

1. A trailing electric cable from a piece of equipment is a hazard. If it is trailing across a passageway there is a high risk of someone tripping over it, but if it lies along a wall out of the way, the risk is much less.
2. Toxic or flammable chemicals stored in a building are a hazard, and by their nature may present a high risk. However, if they are kept in a properly designed secure store, and handled by properly trained and equipped people, the risk is much less than if they are left about in a busy workshop for anyone to use - or misuse.
3. A failed light bulb is a hazard. If it is just one bulb out of many in a room it presents very little risk, but if it is the only light on a stairwell, it is a very high risk. Changing the bulb may be a high risk, if it is high up, or if the power has been left on, or low risk if it is in a table lamp which has been unplugged.
4. A box of heavy material is a hazard. It presents a higher risk to someone who lifts it manually than if a mechanical handling device is properly used.

Workplace This word is used to describe the single or multiple areas in which you carry out your work.

Working practices Any activities, procedures, use of materials or equipment and working techniques used in carrying out your job. In this unit it also covers any omissions in good working practice which may pose a threat to health and safety.

Workplace policies	This covers the documentation prepared by the employer on the procedures to be followed regarding health and safety matters. It could be the employer's safety policy statement, or general health and safety statements and written safety procedures covering aspects of the workplace that should be drawn to the employees' (and 'other persons') attention.
Other persons	This phrase refers to everyone covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act including: visitors; members of the public; colleagues; contractors; clients; customers; patients; students; pupils.
Personal presentation	This includes: personal hygiene; use of personal protection equipment; clothing and accessories suitable to the particular workplace.
Responsible persons	The person or persons at work to whom you should report any health and safety issues or hazards. This could be a supervisor, line manager or your employer.

Key points regarding Health and Safety legislation and regulations

Health and Safety At Work Act 1974

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the main piece of legislation under which nearly all the other regulations are made. It is for this reason that only this piece of legislation is specifically referred to in this unit.

Employers have a legal duty under this Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of the people for whom they are responsible and the people who may be affected by the work they do.

Under this Act it is also important to be aware that all people at work, not just employers, have a duty to take reasonable care to avoid harming themselves or others through the work they do.

Risks should be reduced 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. This term means the duty-holder (in most instances the employer) can balance the cost against the degree of risk although obviously any Health and Safety Inspectors would expect that relevant good practice is followed.

According to the Act:

Employers must safeguard so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all the people who work for them and 'other persons'. This applies in particular to the provision and maintenance of safe plant and systems of work, and covers all machinery, equipment and substances used.

People at work also have a duty under the Act to take reasonable care to avoid harm to themselves or to others by their working practices, and to co-operate with employers and others in meeting statutory requirements. The Act also requires employees not to interfere with or misuse anything provided to protect their health, safety or welfare in compliance with the Act.

Other Legislation

There is an array of health and safety regulations and codes of practice which affect people at work. There are regulations for those who, for example, work with electricity, or work on construction projects, as well as regulations covering noise at work, manual handling, working with VDUs, or dealing with substances hazardous to health, etc. The specific requirements for all or any of these can be obtained from HSE local offices.

As many of the regulations are only relevant to certain workplaces or working practices no specific reference has been made in the Knowledge Requirements to any of these regulations. The phrase “your duties for health and safety as defined by any specific legislation covering your job role” is intended to relate to those specific pieces of legislation important to your workplace and/or working practices which you should be able to find out about.

Skills

You will apply the following skills:

- Reading
- Analysing
- Decision-making
- Communicating
- Working safely
- Personal presentation

Performance indicators

You will:

Identifying hazards and evaluating risks

1. Correctly name and locate the persons responsible for health and safety in your workplace
2. Identify which workplace policies are relevant to your working practices
3. Identify those working practices in any part of your job role which could harm yourself or other persons
4. Identify those aspects of the workplace which could harm yourself or others
5. Evaluate which of the potentially harmful aspects of the workplace are those with the highest risk to you or to others
6. Report those hazards with a high risk to the persons responsible for health and safety in the workplace
7. Deal with those hazards with low risks following workplace policies and legal requirements

Reducing risks to health and safety

8. Carry out your working practices in accordance with legal requirements
9. Follow the most recent workplace policies for your job role
10. Put right those health and safety risks that you are able to within the scope of your job responsibilities
11. Pass on any suggestions for reducing risks to health and safety within your job role to the responsible persons
12. Make sure your personal conduct in the workplace does not endanger the health and safety of yourself or others
13. Follow the workplace policies and suppliers' or manufacturers' instructions for the safe use of equipment, materials and products

14. Report any differences between workplace policies and suppliers' or manufacturers' instructions as appropriate
15. Make sure your personal presentation at work ensures the health and safety of yourself and others; meets any legal duties and is in accordance with workplace policies

Range

Risks resulting from:

- a the use and maintenance of machinery or equipment
- b the use of materials or substances
- c working practices which do not conform to laid down policies
- d unsafe behaviour
- e accidental breakages and spillages
- f environmental factors

Workplace policies covering:

- g the use of safe working methods and equipment
- h the safe use of hazardous substances
- i smoking, eating, drinking and drugs
- j what to do in the event of an emergency
- k personal presentation

Knowledge

You will know:

1. Your legal duties for health and safety in the workplace as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
2. Your duties for health and safety as defined by specific legislation covering your job role
3. What hazards may exist in your workplace
4. The particular health and safety risks which may be present in your own job role and the precautions you must take
5. The importance of remaining alert to the presence of hazards in the whole workplace
6. The importance of dealing with or promptly reporting risks
7. The requirements and guidance on the precautions
8. Agreed workplace policies relating to controlling risks to health and safety
9. Your responsibility for health and safety in your job description
10. The responsible persons to whom to report health and safety matters
11. The specific workplace policies covering your job role

12. Suppliers' and manufacturers' instructions for the safe use of equipment, materials and products
13. The safe working practices for your own job role
14. The importance of personal presentation in maintaining health and safety in the workplace
15. The importance of personal conduct in maintaining the health and safety of yourself and others
16. Your scope and responsibility for putting right risks
17. Workplace procedures for handling risks which you are unable to deal with

Evidence requirements

This section is aimed at the assessor and sets out the evidence requirements for this unit.

1. Evidence for this unit is generated when your candidate is carrying out real work in a private sector, not-for-profit or public service organisation, whether full-time or part-time, paid or voluntary.
2. For this unit, evidence may be collected in an approved Realistic Working Environment or an extended work placement.
3. Simulation is not allowed for this unit.
4. Evidence must show that your candidate has consistently met the standard over a sufficient period of time for you to consider the candidate competent.
5. You may use the following assessment methods when assessing this unit:

Performance evidence	Observation	Yes
	Examination of work products	Yes
Supplementary evidence	Witness testimony	Yes
	Questions *	Yes

* This includes verbal and written questioning, questionnaires, work based tasks, reflective accounts, case studies, professional discussion and feedback reports.

6. Your candidate needs to demonstrate that they:

Identify hazards and evaluate risks. Evidence may include:

- Observation reports
- Risk assessments
- Communications reporting hazards or suggesting improvements
- Witness testimony
- Reflective account
- Questions

Evidence must show identification of a minimum of two types of risk from the following:

- The use and maintenance of machinery or equipment
- The use of materials or substances

- Working practices which do not conform to laid down policies
- Unsafe behaviour
- Accidental breakages and spillages
- Environmental factors

Reduce risks to health and safety. Evidence may include:

- Observation reports
- Communications reporting hazards or suggesting improvements
- Witness testimony
- Reflective account
- Questions

Evidence must show your candidate follows a minimum of four types of workplace policies from the following:

- The use of safe working methods and equipment
- The safe use of hazardous substances
- Smoking, eating, drinking and drugs
- What to do in the event of an emergency
- Personal presentation

7. Contingencies

Performance Indicator 10	If there are no risks for the candidate to put right, 'what if' questions may be asked to confirm competence
Performance Indicator 11	If there are no risks, the candidate can make suggestions for reducing risks in answer to 'what if' questions to confirm competence
Performance Indicator 14	If there are no differences between workplace policies and suppliers' or manufacturers' instructions, 'what if' questions may be asked to confirm competence

8. Evidence generated for this unit may contribute towards Unit 101:

- Communicate information
- Be accountable for your work
- Improve your own performance
- Behave in a way that supports effective working

and Unit 202

- Work to achieve your organisation's purpose and values
- Apply your employment responsibilities and rights
- Support sustainability
- Maintain security and confidentiality