

Unit 27: Understanding Health and Safety in the Business Workplace

Unit code:	H/502/5458
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to enable learners to develop knowledge of the legislation and regulations relating to health and safety in a business workplace in order to conduct an audit and carry out a risk assessment.

● Unit introduction

It is important, when working in business, to ensure compliance with organisational procedures and legal requirements, as the consequences of non-compliance can have serious implications for employees and employers. It is important, therefore, for learners to appreciate that those working in business must understand the principal issues which affect the working environment, for all individuals and the organisations that employ them. This involves keeping up to date with information on the legal issues that affect safe working practices.

Everyone at work plays an important part in ensuring health and safety and it is essential that key personnel are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Employers must take reasonable care to protect their employees, and others, from the risk of injury, disease or death, while employees must take care to protect themselves and others.

Safe working conditions and the 'welfare of employees' can contribute to the success of an organisation. It is important that organisations take steps to prevent accidents in the workplace and monitor procedures regularly. Learners will investigate the procedures that organisations have in place for maintaining safe working conditions and the various ways organisations can conduct risk assessments

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand how health and safety legislation and regulations affect a business working environment
- 2 Know the requirements for healthy, safe and productive working conditions
- 3 Understand the role and responsibilities of key personnel
- 4 Be able to assess and manage risk.

Unit content

1 Understand how health and safety legislation and regulations affect a business working environment

Legislation: statutory duties of employers and employees relating to health, safety and welfare; Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992; Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995; Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 1994; Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992; Manual Handling Operations Regulations

Implementation in workplace: legal requirements; workplace policies for job role; reporting procedures; key personnel responsible for health and safety; harmful work practices; organising own work area

2 Know the requirements for healthy, safe and productive working conditions

Physical environment: impact of working environment eg potential for falling objects, sharp edges and trailing leads; evacuation assembly areas; site building works; off-site work; organic infestation; vermin infestation; dampness and mould; materials eg hazardous, waste disposal; hygiene facilities eg washing and rest facilities, disabled access and toilet facilities; food preparation areas; pest control; noise and atmospheric pollution; temperature and ventilation

Equipment: safety guards; warning signs and sound signals; maintenance frequency; protective clothing; accessible emergency exits; fire extinguishers or sprinkler systems

Legislation: Data Protection Act 1998; Computer Misuse Act 1990; Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988; Freedom of Information Act 2000

3 Understand the role and responsibilities of key personnel

Identification of responsible person: facilities manager; human resources director; department heads; individual employee obligations and responsibilities; first aider; fire marshals; head counts

Roles, responsibility and accountability: role of parties involved, eg tenant/leaseholder, maintenance agencies, contractors and sub-contractors, emergency services, freelance consultant advisers, trade union representatives; implementation; monitoring working conditions; identifying and documenting improvement; upgrading and compliance; budget allocations

4 Be able to assess and manage risk

Risk assessments: format; frequency; content; safety and security hazards in the workplace; industry best practice guidelines; checks on suppliers' premises; industry-related experience

Monitoring and prevention: training and staff development; industry-related awareness of hazard; departmental representatives; awareness raising across organisations; benchmarking; use of equipment in accordance with manufacturers' instructions; rest breaks; safety devices eg smoke alarms, fire extinguishers; regular checking of equipment and procedures; procedures for recording and reporting accidents and dangerous occurrences; organisational and legislative requirements; review of records and action planning; public liability insurance

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain the legal requirements and regulations for ensuring the health, safety and security of those employed in business	M1 assess the implications of health, safety and security legislation and regulations for a business role in a workplace environment	D1 make recommendations for improving health and safety standards and practices in a selected work environment.
P2 describe the requirements for a healthy and safe workplace, as applied to the physical environment and equipment used, in a selected business		
P3 explain the roles and responsibilities for health and safety of key personnel in a selected workplace	M2 analyse the roles and responsibilities for health and safety of key personnel in a selected workplace	
P4 plan a risk assessment for a selected administrative work environment. [IE]	M3 conduct a detailed risk assessment of a selected workplace. [IE]	

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills which are embedded in the assessment of this unit. By achieving the criteria, learners will have demonstrated effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This unit is best taught by using case studies tutors can research from trade union material, the Health and Safety Executive or local and national newspapers and radio stations. The deaths at work of over 600 people every year illustrate the importance of effective education and training on health and safety.

Learners could use case study material of their experiences in full or part-time employment. Television and film material such as the Fawlty Towers episode entitled 'Basil the Rat' and the films such as Silkwood and Erin Brockovich, may be used to add both humour and tragedy to discussions about workplace health and safety. Learners could discover case study material for themselves through internet searches. They could then be guided towards analysing the causes of hazards and carry out workplace risk assessments, possibly starting with their school or college. This could then be used for outside workplaces and illustrated with photographs, drawings and role play.

This may lead to considering of the procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies, along with the learning process involved in reviewing and evaluating health and safety after events. Questions of financial investment in facilities, or the blocking of fire exits to reduce draughts and save on heating bills, all arise from real-life experience. The unit may be completed with a review of the legislative requirements. On their own, these topics can be 'dry' but will be brought to life by using real-world scenarios and human interest 'hooks'. This is one way to engage learners in discussions about law and regulations.

It is advisable for learners to base some learning activities on a selected organisation to gain an appreciation of the possible responsibilities in a business job role. This could be the organisation they work for or one chosen with tutor guidance. This unit deals mainly with legalities in the workplace, and care should be taken to ensure that learners are able to relate this to 'real' situations.

The need for emergency procedures and accident reporting could be taught through practical exercises. Accident report forms can be filled in using a scenario, and examples of organisations' evacuation procedures can be evaluated. An 'at risk' evaluation of security will prove equally useful. A good source of reference would be an organisation's health and safety policy.

Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), and subsequent regulations. Again, the responsibility is two way. Both the DPA and the regulations contain a large number of issues that can be dealt with in a discussion, case study or role play. For example, learners could discuss the implementation of the regulations within their own particular environment and discuss ways of making improvements. Activities should be designed to increase awareness of health and safety issues. Role-play activities could include 'right and wrong' scenarios. Related legislation, for example European Directives, should also play an important role.

Learners should be familiar with the eight main points of the DPA. This complicated act should not be dealt with in too much detail. Practically, a good exercise would be to look at the issues affecting a centre environment and the data issues that surround it, for example disclosure of examination results, references.

Health and safety legislation and the DPA link to procedures relating to health and safety and security of information. Learners can identify risks and hazards in their particular environment and undertake a risk assessment. Job descriptions can be examined and employee responsibilities highlighted. Another way of reinforcing health and safety and security of information issues is to produce notices and posters commenting on, for example, VDUs, protective clothing, manual handling, fire precautions and confidentiality of information. There are a number of very good health and safety videos and DVDs available.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to the unit. Whole class
Key features of Health and Safety legislation. Whole class
In groups, learners research practical examples of the legislation
Pairs feed-back findings to whole class with discussion
Assignment 1: Health and Safety in the Workplace
Pair work – Simon Jones case study
Research the case on the website and tutor-led whole class discussion
Introduction to the requirements for safe and productive working conditions
Visiting speaker on Health and Safety requirements for the physical environment and equipment
Pair work using topical case studies
Small group research using newspapers, journals and the web for recent examples of Health and Safety issues in the workplace
Oral presentations by groups on their findings and whole class discussion
Introduction to roles and responsibilities for Health and Safety
Visiting speaker on roles and responsibilities of Health and Safety personnel in their organisation
Group work using Topical case studies
Individual research on Health and Safety in organisations for the assignment
Writing up the report
Introduction to Health and Safety procedures in the workplace. Whole class
Risk assessments formats, procedures and guidelines. Whole class
Case studies-risk assessment-small groups with tutor led feedback
Assignment 2: Conducting Health and Safety Procedures
Risk assessment arrangements and documentation for groups. Whole class
Conducting the risk assessment in groups
Writing up the risk assessment documentation in groups
Writing up the report in groups
Preparing the presentation in groups
Giving the presentation – all groups
Supervised assignment time
Non-supervised study time and completion of assignments

Assessment

For P1, learners are required to explain the key features of legislation and regulations on health and safety and how they are applied to working conditions in a selected organisation. Learners should focus on their application to the workplace rather than repeating vast amounts of law.

This could lead on to P2 where learners should describe the requirements for a healthy and safe workplace as applied to a selected business, which may be seen as a positive way of referring to a risk assessment.

For P3, learners should explain the roles and responsibilities of key personnel in a selected workplace for health and safety, for example the facilities manager, site manager, human resources director or head of department. Learners should include the obligations and responsibilities of individuals at work. Attention should focus not only on job descriptions, which include health and safety related issues, but also on how attention to health and safety may be verified regularly.

For P4, learners will plan and conduct the procedures for carrying out a risk assessment in a selected workplace situation.

For M1, learners should assess the standard of working conditions and the workplace policies for a job role that might reasonably be expected in a selected organisation.

M2 requires an analysis of the roles and responsibilities for health and safety of key personnel in a selected workplace. Learners should assess if the roles and responsibilities allow the organisation to meet the requirements of health and safety legislation.

For M3, learners are required to conduct a detailed risk assessment of a selected workplace. This is the vehicle for assignment two, which can be carried out in pairs or small groups.

For D1, learners are required to make realistic and appropriate recommendations for improving health and safety standards and practices in a selected workplace. These recommendations will come from the findings of the risk assessment learners carried out.

P1 and P2 develop into M1 and then D1.

P3 develops into M2 and then D1.

P4 develops into M3 and then D1.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, P3, M1, M2 D1	Health and Safety in the Workplace	You are working for a team of health and safety consultants. You have been asked to conduct a review of health and safety procedures and practices in a manufacturing organisation and a service provider.	Report

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P4, M3	Conducting health and safety procedures.	<p>This assignment can be done in pairs or small groups.</p> <p>An organisation has commissioned you to work with them in the development of their health and safety processes.</p> <p>Your tasks are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> report back on the procedures that they should have in place to identify, monitor and prevent health and safety hazards. explain the procedure for carrying out a risk assessment. follow this up by conducting a risk assessment for the organisation. make recommendations for raising health and safety standards and practices in the organisation. 	<p>Written report.</p> <p>Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Presentation on recommendations.</p>

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Business sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the Business suite:

Level 3
Training in the Business Workplace
Managing Physical Resources in a Business Environment
Aspects of Contract and Business Law
Aspects of Civil Liability for Business
Aspects of the Legal System and Law-making Process
Managing Business Information
Business Project Management

This unit also links with the following Level 3 National Occupational Standards.

Health and Safety:

- Unit HSS1: Make sure your actions reduce risks to health and safety
- Unit HSS2: Develop procedures to safely control work operations
- Unit HSS3: Monitor procedures to safely control work operations
- Unit HSS4: Promote a healthy and safe culture in the workplace

- Unit HSS6: Conduct a health and safety risk assessment of the workplace
- Unit HSS7: Make sure your own actions within the workplace aim to protect the environment

Business and Administration:

- Unit 110: Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety
- Unit 301: Carry out your responsibilities at work
- Unit 302: Work within your business environment
- Unit 303: Supervise an office facility
- Unit 313: Organise and coordinate events.

Legal Advice:

- Unit LA18: Obtain and provide legal information materials
- Unit LA22: Liaise with other services.

Management and Leadership:

- Unit B08: Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements
- Unit B10: Manage risk
- Unit E05: Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety
- Unit E06: Ensure health and safety requirements are met in your area of responsibility.

Essential resources

Learners will need to have access to organisations in order to research health and safety policies and practices. They will need access to computers to conduct web based research.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Centres should develop links with organisations that can provide visiting speakers to talk on topics related to health and safety in the workplace. The centre as an organisation is a valuable resource for guest speakers and for providing access for learners to conduct research into health and safety procedures and practices, and to conduct a risk assessment. Learners can also draw on their own experience through their part-time jobs and work placements.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Atkin B and Brooks A – *Total Facilities Management* (Blackwell Science (UK), 2000) ISBN 0632054719

Barclay L – *Small Business Employment Law for Dummies* (John Wiley & Sons, 2005) ISBN 0764570528

Carysforth C and Rawlinson M – *NVQ Level 3 and Technical Certificate Business and Administration* (Heinemann, 2006) ISBN 0435463349

Frohwen R and Smith G – *Pocket Idiot's Guide to Copyrights* (Alpha Books, 2004) ISBN 1592572286

Health and Safety Executive – *Successful Health and Safety Management* (Guidance Booklets) (HSE, 1997) ISBN 0717612767

Martin M and Jackson T – *Employment Law Pocketbook* (Management Pocketbooks, 2004) ISBN 1903776147

Ridley J – *Health and Safety in Brief* (Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd, 2004) ISBN 0750662115

TUC – *Your Rights at Work: A TUC Guide* (Kogan Page, 2003) ISBN 0749441135

Stranks J – *Health and Safety Law, 4th Edition* (Prentice Hall, 2001) ISBN 0273654527

Stranks J – *A Manager's Guide to Health and Safety at Work, 6th Edition* (Kogan Page, 2001) ISBN 074943550X

Journal

Health and Safety Commission Newsletter (Health and Safety Executive)

Websites

www.bized.ac.uk Business education website including learning materials and quizzes

www.hse.gov.uk Health and Safety Executive

www.tuc.org.uk Trades Union Congress main website

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	<p>identifying questions to answer and problems to resolve when researching working conditions in an organisation</p> <p>planning and carrying out research in an organisation on health and safety procedures</p> <p>exploring issues, events or problems, from different perspectives arising from health and safety case studies and from research into health and safety in an organisation</p> <p>analysing and evaluating information from their risk assessment of an organisation, judging its relevance and value in order to make recommendations</p> <p>supporting the conclusions in their reports and risk assessment using reasoned arguments and evidence.</p>

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	planning and carrying out research on health and safety case studies in newspapers, journals and the internet
Creative thinkers	<p>asking visiting speakers questions to extend their thinking on health and safety</p> <p>questioning their own and others' assumptions when discussing health and safety issues in groups</p>
Team workers	<p>collaborating with others when working in groups to conduct a risk assessment in an organisation</p> <p>reaching agreements and managing discussions to achieve results when working in groups to conduct a risk assessments in an organisation</p>
Self-managers	organising time and resources and prioritising actions when reviewing health and safety procedures and practices in an organisation
Effective participators	trying to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views, to reach workable solutions when collating feedback from group work on health and safety case studies.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	writing and saving their assignment work
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	using websites to research information on health and safety
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	using PowerPoint for risk assessment presentations
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	participating in pair or small group work to discuss features of health and safety legislation
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	reading textbooks, journals, newspapers and web pages related to health and safety in the workplace
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	writing reports on health and safety provision in the workplace.