



Setting out a policy

Your policy should be set out in such a way that makes it clear to everyone what is expected of them in order to comply. In a small organisation it's likely that a simple statement will be suitable. It's also likely that the organisation section of the policy will contain only one or two names, as most of the responsibilities will be allocated to those people.



Why have a Health and Safety Policy?

All organisations employing five or more people must have a written Health and Safety Policy statement. The policy should cover all aspects of the organisation and be relevant to all employees.

A Health and Safety Policy demonstrates how seriously an organisation takes its health and safety responsibilities. A good policy will show how the organisation protects those who could be affected by its activities.

The policy should be of an appropriate length and relevance to the activities and size of the organisation.



Aims of a policy

There are no hard and fast rules about the length of the policy. The important thing to remember is to link the aims of the policy to the level of risk. A policy is a written statement, usually comprises three elements:

- * a statement section (often a single page) detailing how safety will be managed and that demonstrates the organisation's commitment to health and safety
- * an organisation section that details where responsibilities are allocated and how employees fit into the overall safety management system
- * an arrangements section that contains details of how specific activities and functions are managed. This arrangements section could include such matters as risk assessments, fire safety, first aid, accident reporting, electrical safety, work equipment, hazardous substances, manual handling and other workplace issues. In larger organisations the arrangements section may refer to other documents, such as safety manuals or safe systems of work.



Monitoring and review

Monitoring that the policy is still effective is vital. There are many ways that this can be done, including carrying out spot checks or safety inspections using prepared checklists.

More formally, effective monitoring can be achieved through audits and by reviewing management reports and accident investigations.

DISCLAIMER:

Information is for guidance only and does not constitute formal professional advice. As such, no reliance should be placed on the information contained in this toolkit. Where specific issues arise in your organisation advice should be sought from the relevant expert(s) as necessary.