

BSBWHS311

**ASSIST WITH
MAINTAINING
WORKPLACE
SAFETY**

BSBWHS311

Assist with maintaining workplace safety

Release 1

Learner Guide

Aspire Version 1.2



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Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBWHS311 Assist with maintaining workplace safety*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this Learner Guide

This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this Learner Guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which Practice Tasks to complete.
Summaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning Checkpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a Learning Checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which Learning Checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table provides definitions for each foundation skill.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interprets WHS legislative and organisational documentation Applies appropriate strategies to construct meaning from WHS legislative and organisational documentation
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents WHS information using required format and industry specific vocabulary
Oral communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents information using language and non-verbal communication appropriate to audience and context Uses questioning and active listening to confirm understanding
Navigate the world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follows WHS policies, procedures and legislative requirements relevant to own role Keeps up to date with changes to WHS laws relevant to own role
Interact with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selects appropriate communication protocols and conventions to provide information to others Collaborates with others to achieve joint outcomes Plays an active role in facilitating effective group interaction, influencing direction and taking a leadership role on occasion Provides feedback to others in forms with which they can engage and respond
Get the work done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sequences and schedules activities, monitors implementation and manages relevant communication Initiates standard procedures when responding to issues raised through consultation Uses feedback to participate in the identification and implementation of opportunities to improve arrangements for managing WHS issues

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Contribute to the implementation of WHS policies and procedures	1A Identify work health and safety (WHS) laws	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1B Explain WHS policies and programs	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	1C Explain hazard management processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 2: Contribute to WHS consultation arrangements	2A Support WHS consultative processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2B Respond to WHS issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2C Encourage participation in WHS processes	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	2D Support the implementation of improvements	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
Topic 3: Contribute to WHS training needs	3A Identify WHS training needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	3B Provide WHS training opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident

Topic	Key outcome	Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 4: Assist in addressing WHS hazards	4A Identify WHS hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4B Control hazards and risks	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4C Respond to inadequate controls	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident
	4D Complete incident reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Confident <input type="checkbox"/> Basic understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Not confident



Topic 1 | Contribute to the implementation of WHS policies and procedures

- 1A Identify WHS laws
- 1B Explain WHS policies and programs
- 1C Explain hazard management processes

1A Identify work health and safety (WHS) laws

The WHS laws are designed to protect the health and safety of all people at work.

Work health and safety laws apply to any person impacted by the conduct of an organisation or business. The laws apply to all industry sectors across all states and territories in Australia.

Every person has a part to play to maintain a safe working environment in the business services sector. Workers, employers, managers and supervisors all have key responsibilities that must be followed, and it's important that everybody understands the WHS laws in addition to their main job role. This additional knowledge helps to inform work behaviours and improve safety standards. After all, everybody deserves to feel safe at work, regardless of what their job is.

WHS legislation

WHS legislation was developed to establish a uniform set of WHS laws to protect the health and safety of workers in Australia.

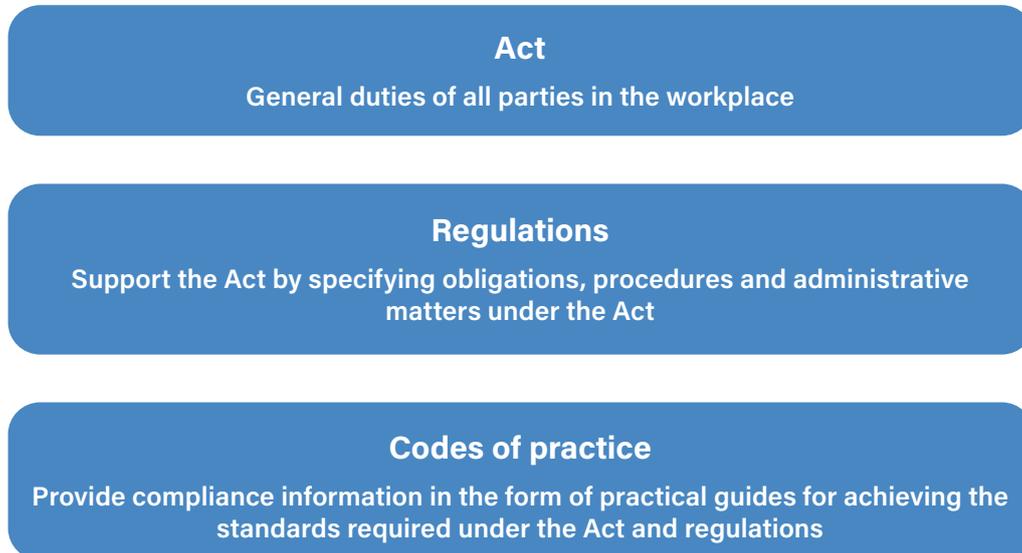
The model WHS laws began in January 2012 as part of the national harmonisation process, which aimed to bring Australia together under one uniform set of WHS laws.

Led by Safe Work Australia, this process resulted in three key developments: the model Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Cth), the model Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 (Cth) and a set of model Codes of Practice. Currently (as at January 2020), all states and territories have adopted the model laws, except WA and Victoria. The latter two states instead developed their own legislation to which all business must adhere.

The harmonisation of WHS laws had several key objectives:

- Protect the health and safety of workers
- Improve safety outcomes in workplaces.
- Reduce compliance costs for business.
- Improve efficiency for WHS regulators.

The following diagram provides an overview of the relationship between the model WHS acts, regulations and codes of practice:



The Work Health and Safety Act

The WHS Act is the principle piece of legislation in the WHS framework in each state and territory.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) describes the legal requirements for a safe and healthy workplace. In particular, it lists the requirements and duties key parties have in relation to work health and safety; it also details the penalties for non-compliance.

Workers and other persons are given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks in the workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The following table lists the WHS Acts in each state and territory:

State/Territory	WHS legislation and regulator
Australian Capital Territory	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> WorkSafe ACT
New South Wales	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> SafeWork NSW
Northern Territory	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> NT WorkSafe
Queensland	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i> WorkSafe Queensland

State/Territory	WHS legislation and regulator
South Australia	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> SafeWork SA
Tasmania	<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012</i> WorkSafe Tasmania
Victoria	<i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</i> WorkSafe Victoria
Western Australia	<i>Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 (WA)</i> WorkSafe WA

Regulations

WHS regulations provide detailed information about an organisation's WHS obligations in relation to risks and hazards.

Regulations specify how some duties under the WHS Act must be met. They also state the procedural or administrative processes that must be in place within each workplace.

Regulations provide information about:

- identifying hazards
- performing risk assessments for workplace hazards
- specifying controls and/or processes to minimise hazards
- representing and participating with workers on health and safety issues
- monitoring requirements for licencing and accreditation
- monitoring safety when working with hazardous materials and chemicals.

Codes of practice

Codes of practice address specific issues related to health and safety risks in the workplace.

Codes of practice are not regarded as mandatory law; however, they are the minimum standards that should be followed by employers and managers. They provide detailed practical guidance on how to comply with requirements and obligations outlined in the relevant act.

It is important to remember that the guidelines contained within each code should be followed unless a better standard can be implemented by the employer.

Some examples of codes of practice are listed below:

- How to safely remove asbestos
- WHS consultation, cooperation and coordination
- First aid in the workplace
- Hazardous manual tasks.

You can source online information about codes of practice from the following sources:

Safe Work Australia: [aspirelr.link/model-codes-of-practice](https://www.aspirelr.link/model-codes-of-practice)

Duty of care

One of the most important principles you need to understand in relation to WHS is duty of care.

Under the model WHS laws every person in the chain of supply has a general duty of care to:

- recognise the hazards on their worksite
- take reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the harm that these hazards could cause to people.

WHS duty holders

The concept of duty of care is central to defining roles and responsibilities in the workplace.

Duty of care describes the legal obligation of individuals and organisations to anticipate and act on possible causes of injury and illness that occur in their work environment.

While aspects of WHS legislation may vary between states and territories, there are common legislative requirements and obligations under the duty-of-care principle. Everyone in the workplace has the responsibility of duty of care for themselves, customers, visitors and each other. A person or organisation must do everything they can to eliminate or minimise a possible cause of harm. More than one person can have the same WHS duty and therefore share that duty. However, duties cannot be transferred from one individual to another. The list of duty holders, as clearly identified in the WHS Act, is provided below:

PCBUs	Persons conducting a business or undertaking, such as an employer, corporation, association, partner in a partnership or sole trader
Officers	Senior managers in a business who have the decision-making power to determine the direction a business takes on health and safety issues, such as a director, company secretary, chief executive officer or chief financial controller
Workers	Any individual who carries out work for a PCBU such as an employee, independent contractor, work experience student or outworker
Other persons	Other people in the workplace such as visitors, customers, WHS inspectors or members of the public

A key principle that underpins health and safety legislation is that everything 'reasonably practicable' is done to make a workplace healthy and safe. Here are some factors to consider when determining what is reasonably practicable:

- The likelihood of a person being exposed to harm due to a hazard or risk occurring
- How serious the injury or harm might be if the hazard or risk occurs
- What the individuals know, or should be expected to know, about the hazard or risk and how to eliminate or minimise it
- How accessible the ways to eliminate or minimise the risk are
- The cost of eliminating or minimising the hazard or risk

Persons conducting a business or undertaking

Designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers of plant, structures or substances are considered to be PCBUs because they fall under the business categories listed. These PCBUs have a responsibility to make sure their products do not present a risk to health and safety when they are used in a workplace.

PCBUs have a duty to consult, cooperate and coordinate between duty holders. So far as is reasonably practicable, the primary duty of care of all PCBUs is to:

- provide and maintain a safe working environment
- provide and maintain safe plant and structures
- provide and maintain safe systems of work
- ensure safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
- provide adequate facilities for the welfare of workers at work and access to facilities
- provide information, training, instruction or supervision
- monitor the health of workers and conditions in the workplace.

Officers

An officer is a senior manager in a business who has the decision-making power to determine the direction that a business takes on health and safety issues. They may be a director, company secretary, chief executive officer or chief financial controller.

Officers must take reasonable steps to exercise due diligence; that is, to carry out their role with perseverance and care. Under the WHS Act, officers must take reasonable steps to:

- keep their knowledge of WHS up to date
- understand how the business operates
- understand the workplace's hazards and risks
- have processes in place for receiving and responding to information in a reasonable time frame
- allocate appropriate resources to eliminate or minimise risk
- maintain processes for monitoring how the business complies with WHS.

Workers

A worker is any individual who carries out work for a PCBU. This includes employees, independent contractors, outworkers (home-based workers), apprentices, work experience students, trainees and volunteers who work in an employment-like setting. A worker's duty of care involves:

- taking reasonable care of their own safety
- cooperating with any reasonable policy or procedure they have been notified of that relates to WHS
- complying with any reasonable instruction given by the PCBU
- taking reasonable care to make sure their conduct does not adversely affect the safety of others.

Other people at a workplace

Other people at a workplace include:

- visitors
- customers
- a WHS inspector on a visit
- people walking past a construction site.

Like workers, these other people must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety
- not adversely affect the health and safety of others
- comply with any reasonable instruction given by a PCBU.

Other legislation relevant to WHS

A range of other legislation is relevant to WHS. You need to understand the duties of workers and employers under various laws to ensure you are equipped to help maintain a safe and healthy workplace. Other relevant legislation includes:

- environmental protection
- equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination law
- industrial relations law.

Environmental protection laws

Care of the environment has become an increasingly important aspect of an organisation's responsibilities.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) provides the legal framework to protect and manage Australia's built and natural environment. However, the control of the environment is left to each state and territory through individual environmental protection Acts.

You need to be aware of your state or territory's environmental protection Acts and regulations, and the role and powers of the regulator. There are laws relating to the management and transportation of hazardous waste, noise, pollution and waste products. For example, relevant state and territory's conservation and land management regulations impose a penalty for discharging or depositing waste on crown land managed for conservation.



Environmental laws also cover the responsible use of the Earth's resources, including water, coal, oil and natural gas and the earthworks associated with accessing these resources.

The following table provides a description of the state and territory authorities and the principle legislation for environmental protection.

Jurisdiction	Principle Act	Authority
ACT	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1997</i>	Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate
NSW	<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
NT	<i>Environmental Assessment Act 1982</i>	Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
QLD	<i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i>	Department of Environment and Science
SA	<i>Environment Protection Act 1993</i>	Environmental Protection Authority SA
TAS	<i>Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994</i>	Environmental Protection Authority Tasmania
VIC	<i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
WA	<i>Environment Protection Act 1986</i>	Environmental Protection Authority WA

Equal employment opportunity

The term equal employment opportunity (or EEO) means employers must provide equal access to jobs, benefits and services for all current and prospective employees in the workplace.

Equal employment opportunity aims to ensure fair and equitable outcomes in all areas of employment. This relates to recruitment, selection, access to information, training and development, supervision and management.

Equal employment opportunity is about:

- fair practices in the workplace
- management decisions being made without bias
- recognition and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers
- employment practices that produce staff satisfaction, commitment to the job and the delivery of quality services to customers
- ensuring the best person is recruited and/or promoted
- ensuring training and development are linked to employee needs and customer needs
- ensuring the workplace is efficient and free of harassment and discrimination.

Equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination law

Legislation exists to protect workers so that they are treated fairly in the workplace.

In Australia, national, state and territory laws cover equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination in the workplace.

To ensure fairness and equality in the workplace, employers have the responsibility of ensuring that:

- they assess work tasks and develop safe systems of work
- the work environment is free from all forms of harassment
- staff are provided with information that will assist them to carry out their duties
- all staff members have an equal opportunity to:
 - increase skills to meet work demands
 - attend training courses
 - act in higher duties
 - participate in job rotation schemes
 - apply for all available jobs.

Discrimination occurs when one person is treated less favourably than another in the same or similar circumstances, on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination (sex, age, race, etc.).

Under Australian anti-discrimination law, employees must not directly, or indirectly discriminate against another customer, worker or other person in the course of their duties.

Anti-discrimination legislation at a Commonwealth level includes the following:

<i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i>	Prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin and immigration
<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i>	Prohibits discrimination based on mental or physical impairment (including disease)
<i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i>	Prohibits sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender, marital status and pregnancy
<i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i>	Prohibits discrimination against young and older Australians

Industrial relations law

Industrial relations law covers working conditions and the employer/employee relationship.

Industrial relations law includes workplace agreements, pay rates, rosters and other entitlements. Issues that have WHS implications, such as any risk to employee health and safety from working additional hours, shift work or working in hot or cold conditions, may be dealt with under industrial relations legislation, in particular through the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth).

The Fair Work Act includes several provisions directly relevant to WHS. It covers the protection of workers against unsafe and unfair working conditions, including those that may impact on a person's mental health.

The main goals of the fair work laws are to provide a healthy balance of rights and responsibilities for workers and employers and promote cooperation and productivity that results in national economic growth and social inclusion for all Australians.

For more information on the industrial relations laws, visit the Fair Work Commission website: aspirelr.link/fairwork

Example

Duty of care in the workplace

Bronwyn is employed as an administration officer in a reception area. Her role is to engage with clients and refer their needs to staff members who can provide the information requested as and when it is required. When she first starts work, her supervisor Ron explains during induction training that Bronwyn has a duty of care to:

- her colleagues, including other administration staff and those not employed in the administration section of the business
- clients
- non-client visitors to the reception (such as service staff and professional guests).

Practice Task 1

Question 1

Draw a line to match each term to its correct description.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| » Codes of practice | » General duties of all parties in the workplace |
| » Regulations | » Provide compliance information in the form of practical guides for achieving the standards required under the Act and regulations |
| » Guidance material | » Support the Act by specifying obligations, procedures and administrative matters under the Act |
| » Act | » Provides further guidance for complying with WHS legislation; includes regulator guidance material and Australian and industry standards |

Question 2

Which of the following are practical examples of WHS regulations? Tick all that apply.

- Performing risk assessments for workplace hazards
- Maintaining safe plant and structures
- Monitoring hazardous work involving noise, hazardous tasks, confined spaces, risk of falls, demolition work or electrical safety
- Monitoring requirements for licencing and accreditation
- Performing daily bank reconciliations

Question 3

Which of the following statements about workplace laws are correct? Tick the correct answer.

- WHS laws cover the fairness, equality and discrimination of workers in the workplace.
- Environmental protection laws cover working conditions and the employer/employee relationship, including workplace agreements, pay rates, rosters and other entitlements.
- Industrial relations law covers the transportation of hazardous waste, noise, pollution, waste products and water.
- Anti-discrimination laws cover the protection of workers against unreasonable risk to their health and safety.

1B Explain WHS policies and programs

WHS policies, procedures and programs provide the workforce with important information about how to work safely.

WHS policies are the driver for reducing health and safety incidents in the workplace. A policy is an official statement of intent from the employer or senior management team that shows that the organisation has made a commitment to the health and safety of their workers and other people that are impacted by the operations.

Under WHS law, every workplace needs to have a detailed WHS policy and set of safe work procedures that workers have access to and can understand. These documents should be based on the latest WHS laws, relevant to the state or territory where the employer is based.

Once the workforce has a firm understanding of their requirements under the organisation's WHS policies, the work environment will be safer, resulting in fewer incidents.

WHS policies

WHS policies aim to show what the organisation plans to achieve in clear and simple terms.

They outline how management will achieve workplace safety, along with the specific responsibilities of the PCBU and the organisation's officers, management and workers.

A WHS policy may include the following information:

Statement	A statement committing the organisation to providing a safe and healthy working environment
Objectives	Objectives of the policy, including how health and safety will be integrated into all organisational activities
Strategies	Strategies (procedures) the organisation will use to achieve its WHS objectives, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ emergency evacuation procedures ▪ WHS audits ▪ reporting accidents ▪ reporting incidents and near misses
Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities of key positions such as the officers, managers and supervisors with specific accountability for implementing health and safety practices and procedures

Function	The function of the health and safety committee and its commitment to consultation and cooperation between management and workers
Review process	The review process for assessing the policy's effectiveness, stating a commitment to regularly monitoring and reviewing the policy to ensure health and safety in the workplace

WHS policies should cover all areas of the work environment that can impact the health and safety of workers.

Examples of WHS policy areas are outlined below.

Policy areas	
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every workplace has its own hazards and risks that are unique to the nature of work, size, workforce composition, structure and industry in which it operates. ▪ Organisational risk management policies and procedures will outline how to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – identify and report hazards – assess risks for each hazard – identify suitable controls – implement controls to eliminate or minimise risks – monitor and review hazards, risks and controls.
Emergency response including fires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An emergency is a situation that is dangerous. It could be when people are injured or when property and materials are damaged. Emergencies can include fires, bomb threats, gas leaks, sudden illness and floods. ▪ The types of immediate responses may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – extinguishing a fire – issuing personal protective equipment (PPE) to people affected by the emergency – shutting down equipment and machinery – turning off water, gas or electricity supply at the source – contacting emergency services – raising the emergency alarm – restricting access to affected areas – advising occupants or public to move to a safer location.
Emergency evacuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The primary aim of emergency evacuation policies and procedures is to make sure that the building occupants are safe in the event of an emergency. ▪ Procedures usually explain that occupants must evacuate the building if the fire alarm goes off. ▪ You will need to make sure that you are familiar with your organisation's policy and procedures in regards to an alarm sounding. ▪ Procedures for evacuation will usually depend on the environment in which you work.

Policy areas	
Incident investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Following a workplace incident (including a near miss, injury, illness or fatality), a formal investigation must take place to identify the causes and address the issues that contributed to the event. ▪ The primary goal of an incident investigation is to prevent a similar issue from occurring. ▪ Incident investigation policies and procedures will usually include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inspecting the hazards associated with the task or work area to gather more information to understand the root causes – consulting with workers – conducting a risk assessment – implementing or recommending appropriate controls – reporting the outcomes of the investigation process.
Incident and hazard reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whenever you identify issues, such as incidents or hazards, you will have to follow your organisation's policy and procedures for reporting them. ▪ This could be done verbally or in writing (e.g. by filling in a form, emailing an appropriate person such as your supervisor or WHS supervisor). ▪ Reports usually require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the nature of the hazard/incident – the location of the hazard/incident – suggested corrective action – any actions taken to manage the incident/hazard – key people involved.

WHS procedures

WHS procedures are more detailed instructions developed to ensure everyone works safely and effectively and can often be followed as a step-by-step guide. Information contained in WHS procedures includes:

- selecting, using and storing personal protective equipment (PPE)
- personal presentation and workstation set-up
- standard safety precautions and housekeeping
- safe handling of chemicals, poisons and dangerous materials, including safety data sheets (SDSs)
- emergency and fire drills
- implementing hazard identification and control systems
- manual handling
- staff development and training programs

- waste management
- emergency contact numbers, including local doctors and hospitals
- WHS personnel
- location of first-aid equipment.

WHS Programs

Every organisation is required to have in place WHS programs that managers and workers are expected to adhere to at all times to meet the legislation and duty of care requirements. WHS programs can include:

- biological health monitoring
- air quality and environmental testing
- general worker health and wellbeing
- measures and initiatives for health and safety prevention
- training and education for new and existing workers
- hazard identification and risk control
- consultation arrangements
- monitoring and review mechanisms.

The foundation for good WHS performance is effective communication. Policies, procedures and programs are written with good intentions but they can end up merely being posted on a wall and not communicated or enforced within the workplace.

A WHS policy is intended to be the driving force behind the WHS management system, in particular the culture and standards of behaviour. Unless workers are aware of the policy, procedures, programs and their responsibilities under the WHS laws, they will fail to meet the expectations set out by management. Workers need information about how to work safely so they can:

- follow instructions for performing their tasks safely
- identify the hazards associated with performing their work tasks
- support all WHS initiatives, including programs and safety controls, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) that should be worn or used while performing a task.

Effective communication skills

Effective communication means explaining information in a way that another party can easily understand.

There should always be an opportunity for a two-way discussion, whereby each person can listen and ask questions to clarify the information being presented.

As a member of a work team, you will have opportunities to explain WHS information to team members and colleagues using meetings, email, telephone and face-to-face discussions.

When explaining WHS matters to others, follow these communication techniques to ensure the information you provide is relevant, accurate and understandable:

- Avoid legal jargon and complicated terms
- Use language that the individual worker will understand
- Don't read the riot act, explain the WHS requirements in positive terms
- Don't overload workers with complicated and lengthy written information
- Allow sufficient work-time for workers to read information about WHS matters
- Consider the needs of workers who do not speak English well or for whom English is not their primary language
- Use written forms of communication for larger amounts of information
- Ask for workers' feedback to ensure their understanding
- Provide follow-up support to ensure workers can use the information in their job
- Where possible, provide a written explanation to support your verbal communication.

Example

WHS Policy

BizOps Enterprises is committed to providing a safe working environment for all of its workers in accordance with its legislative obligation. Prompt attention to unhealthy or dangerous situations is a demonstration of this commitment.

All workers have a responsibility for work health and safety (WHS) in the workplace.

Training in and communication of health and safety practices and procedures will be provided to all workers.

The WHS Officer at BizOps Enterprises is Dmitri Lavrov.

Health and safety representatives will be appointed according to state/territory legislation. Health and safety representatives shall have the authority divested by state legislation.

BizOps is committed to regular consultation about WHS with staff and their representatives and, where necessary, with contractors and suppliers of equipment and services, to ensure that workplace health and safety management is of the highest standard.

BizOps has a comprehensive range of strategies and programs available to staff to support their health, safety and wellbeing and the return to work of ill or injured staff, including ensuring training and instruction is provided to staff commensurate with their roles and responsibilities to enable them to comply with this policy.

WHS Policy continued...

First-aid attendant

Workers will be invited by the Managing director: Business operations to undertake the role of first-aid attendants. Workers have the right to refuse. Selected workers will be required to obtain the relevant first-aid certificate to perform the role of first-aid attendants. The company will arrange this.

First-aid kits will be supplied and maintained. The kits will be kept in a secure place that is accessible in times of need.

Emergency evacuation procedure

An emergency evacuation procedure will be developed by consultation between health and safety representatives and the department managers and in conjunction with relevant managing directors. Workers will abide by this emergency procedure.

The emergency procedure will be applied from time to time so as to ascertain its effectiveness.

WHS audit

Regular WHS audits will be conducted to identify potential hazards. These audits are to take place at least annually, with additional audits to be scheduled if there are office/site restructures. The results of the audit will form the basis of the WHS strategy.

Actions arising from the audit will be recorded in the audit file and reported to the Managing director: Business operations.

Reporting of safety hazards/defects

Safety hazards/defects are to be reported to the workers' immediate manager. That manager is responsible for preparing a preliminary report and forwarding it to the Managing director: Business operations for appropriate action.

Reporting of incidents

Incidents are defined as 'any event that causes injury, potential injury or may be classified as a "near miss"'. All incidents will be recorded in the WHS issue register, which must be readily accessible.

This procedure does not supersede any requirements under the workers compensation legislation in any state or territory for workers to complete an accident report.

Smoke-free

In recognition of its duty to provide a safe and healthy environment for its workers and visitors, BizOps designates its workplace as a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted in any of the offices, corridors, lifts, lobbies, stairwells or toilets of any BizOps work environments.

Example

Safe work procedure

The following is an example of a safe work procedure for the supply of hazardous substances and the use of safety data sheets (SDSs).

Hazardous substances and safety data sheets (SDSs)	
Purpose	SDSs provide information on handling hazardous substances safely. It is vital that all workers know the procedures to employ, the potential health effects and required safety precautions.
Responsible person	Any person requesting the supply of a hazardous substance that has not previously been ordered and/or used within the workplace.
Access	Freely available to any worker via the central computer system (SDS database) or near the hazard; for example, by the machinery or in the lunch room where detergents and other chemicals may be kept for cleaning.
Purchase of hazardous substances	Request the supply of the SDS at the time of purchasing a hazardous substance. In the event that the SDS does not accompany the delivery of the substance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ contact the supplier immediately ▪ access the SDS on the supplier website (if available) ▪ quarantine the substance – it is not to be used until a current SDS is on site.
Currency	Check the currency of SDSs stored on site every two years. Ask suppliers to supply up-to-date SDSs.
Supervision and training	Training and information consistent with the information and advice provided by the SDS will be provided to workers using a hazardous substance before they begin working with it.

Practice Task 2

Question 1

Draw a line to match each term to its correct description.

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| » WHS Procedures | » Outline how management will achieve workplace safety, along with the specific responsibilities of the PCBU and the organisation's officers, management and workers |
| » WHS Programs | » Detailed instructions developed to ensure everyone works safely and effectively and can often be followed as a step-by-step guide |
| » WHS Policies | » Include a range of actions that address specific work health and safety hazards and risks across the organisation |

Question 2

Which of the following are WHS policy areas? Tick all that apply.

- Risk management
- Customer service
- Incident reporting
- Hazard reporting
- Emergency evacuation

Question 3

How can you demonstrate effective communication when explaining WHS requirements?
Tick all that apply.

- Use legal jargon.
- For larger amounts of information, speak with smaller groups.
- Ask for the workers' feedback to ensure understanding.
- Don't overload workers with complicated and lengthy written information.
- Consider the needs of workers who do not speak English well or for whom English is not their primary language.

1C Explain hazard management processes

Every workplace has unique hazards and risks that are relevant to the nature of work, size, workforce composition, structure and industry.

As a member of a work team, you have the responsibility to monitor and maintain the safety of your immediate work environment, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Under WHS legislation, workers must be informed of the range of hazards and risks that may impact on their personal health and safety and be involved in the hazard management process. You will have opportunities on a daily basis to help to ensure your work team is informed about the hazards and risks that can impact on their health and safety.

This level of initiative will support the organisation's WHS policies and contribute toward a safer working environment.

WHS hazards and risks

The term 'hazard' refers to a source of danger. For every hazard there are risks. The term 'risk' refers to the likelihood and consequence of harm that may result if a person comes into contact with a hazard. For example, if a person attempts to use a kettle that has a faulty electrical cord, there is a high risk that they may become electrocuted, resulting in a serious injury or fatality. The WHS legislation requires that all duty holders have a duty of care to:

- eliminate risks to health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable
- take reasonable steps to reduce or eliminate causes of harm.

Hazard identification

For every hazard, there is a risk of injury or ill health.

The organisation's WHS policy, procedures and hazard management programs will include a systematic approach aimed at identifying hazards and then eliminating or minimising the risks. Hazards may arise from:

- worker behaviour – such as mistakes, negligence or intentional acts of harm
- equipment and substances used in the workplace, and the specific work environment
- ineffective management systems and procedures
- poor work practices
- poorly trained workers
- inattentive managers
- poorly maintained equipment.

Team members will have many opportunities to identify hazards within their work areas.

Workers need to be made aware of the ways in which they can identify hazards in the workplace.

It is most important that everyone has a daily awareness of the dangers in their immediate working environment. If people are aware of the issues around them that can cause harm – to themselves or others – they can work more safely and monitor those hazards to ensure they are controlled effectively. Hazards may be identified through the following methods:

- Scheduled workplace inspections
- Team hazard hunts
- Reviewing hazard and incident reports
- Carrying out pre-start checks on equipment and technology
- Discussing safety issues with team members

Example

Hazards in the workplace

Workplace feature	Example hazard
Surfaces	Wet floor
Electrical	Frayed electrical cords, incorrectly wired equipment, poorly maintained equipment
Knives and box cutters	Poorly trained staff
Heavy items	Poor manual-handling techniques
Obstacles	Fraying or lifted carpet, items stored in the wrong place
Chemicals	Incorrectly labelled or stored, lack of safety data sheet (SDS) or appropriate PPE
Lighting	Poor lighting
Operating machinery	Inadequate machine guards
Airborne contaminants	Asbestos
Training	Insufficient induction or on-the-job training
Clothing	Restricted movement, slippery soles on shoes, loose-fitting gloves
Work practices	Shift work may lead to fatigue-related hazards
Imaging equipment in a medical centre	Risk of exposure to chemicals and radiation
Manual handling	Medical staff lifting patients

Risk assessment

The first step in implementing a risk management process is hazard identification.

Once a hazard has been identified, the next step is to assess the risk it poses.

Under WHS laws, workers must be consulted in both the hazard identification and risk assessment process.

As the workers are the people working alongside the hazards on a daily basis, they can provide valuable input and collaborate with management and other WHS specialists to determine the likelihood of an incident occurring and the degree of harm that may be caused. A risk assessment involves:

- discussing how many times and the length of time a person is exposed to the hazard
- working out the chance of injury or damage occurring as a result of the hazard
- discussing how many other people are exposed to the hazard
- working out the likely degree of seriousness of the injury or damage
- finding the most appropriate method for managing that risk.

Risk assessment involves:

- discussing how many times and the length of time a person is exposed to the hazard
- working out the chance of injury or damage occurring as a result of the hazard
- discussing how many other people are exposed to the hazard
- working out the likely degree of seriousness of the injury or damage
- finding the most appropriate method for managing that risk.

Organisations often develop checklists that suit their specific needs to help with the risk assessment process.

Example

Risk assessment checklist

Hazard	Who is at risk	How often	High risk	Medium risk	Low risk
Stacking boxes of paper on high shelves	Administration assistant	Once a week	√		
Frayed carpet in reception area	Customers and receptionist	Every day		√	
Changing toner on photocopier (gloves have been provided)	Office assistant	Irregularly			√

Communicating hazard and risk information

Good communication will ensure workers are consulted about hazards and risks and are provided with timely information about the identification and assessment of these issues.

As a member of your work team, you can keep your colleagues informed of:

- hazards and risks within their immediate work area and those which impact on their personal health and safety
- outcomes of the risk assessment process
- proposed risk controls to manage the identified hazards
- outcomes of the monitoring and review process.

This information should be regularly communicated to new and existing workers through structured and informal consultation and communication processes.

Legal requirements for communicating workplace information

Communication is fundamental to all aspects of a worker's job role, not just health and safety.

Without quality and current information, workers cannot fulfil their core job tasks and legal obligations.

The model WHS laws place a large emphasis on worker consultation, communication and providing relevant health and safety information, instruction and training to workers:

- PCBU's must provide sufficient information, instruction and training to workers to ensure they are able to work safely.
- All information, instruction and training provided to workers must have regard to the nature and risks of the work carried out and the control measures, and be provided in a way that the worker is able to access and understand (for example, giving consideration to disability, impairment, language spoken or physical access restrictions).
- Relevant information about health and safety matters must be shared with workers, and workers must be advised of the outcome of any contributions put forward to the PCBU.
- Workers must be provided with reasonable opportunities to provide input about matters that may impact on their health and safety.
- The views of workers must be considered when making decisions about how to manage WHS hazards and risks.

Example

Hazard identification and risk assessment process

Jennifer is an administration officer who works for a medium-sized plumbing company. Her role involves taking enquiries from customers, scheduling appointments for plumbing team members, entering customer and sales information into the computing systems, ordering stationery and collating sales reports for the manager.

Jennifer has been with the company for three years and has proved to be reliable and responsible. She has been asked by her manager to take on more of a safety role in the office team. As part of this new task, she is required to present on a topic of WHS at each weekly team meeting.

For the next meeting, Jennifer has prepared a short presentation about the hazard identification and risk assessment process, which will help re-educate the work team about the types of dangers in the workplace and how to assess them. As part of the preparation for the meeting, Jennifer has emailed each team member to ask them to consider one safety hazard that they are exposed to as part of their daily work duties.

This provides the meeting with a number of healthy discussion points, including how to assess each hazard to determine the likelihood and consequence of harm.

Practice Task 3

Question 1

Select true or false for each of the following:

- a) A hazard is a potential source of human injury. » True » False
- b) Risks include the various types of danger that could cause harm to people in your work environment. » True » False

Question 2

Which of the following WHS matters should be communicated to work colleagues?

Tick all that apply.

- Outcomes of risk assessment processes
- Proposed risk controls to manage the identified hazards
- Outcomes of the monitoring and review process
- The hazards and risks within their immediate work area and those that impact on their personal health and safety
- The WHS Officer's annual remuneration

Question 3

Select true or false for each of the following:

- a) The term hazard management refers to the process of identifying hazards, assessing risks and implementing controls to eliminate all workplace hazards. >> True >> False
- b) The first step in implementing a risk management process is assigning a risk rating. >> True >> False
- c) Once a hazard has been identified, the next step is to assess the risk it poses. >> True >> False
- d) Under WHS laws, workers do not need to be consulted during hazard identification and risk assessment processes. >> True >> False

Summary

- The WHS Act is the principle piece of legislation in the WHS framework in each state or territory. It describes the legal requirements for a safe and healthy workplace, in particular the requirements and duties of key parties in relation to work health and safety and the penalties for non-compliance
- As a member of a work team, you will have opportunities to explain WHS information to team members and colleagues using meetings, email, telephone and face-to-face discussions.
- Team members need to be aware of the opportunities they have to identify hazards within their work areas.
- Good communication will ensure workers are consulted about hazards and risks, and are provided with timely information about the identification and assessment of these issues.
- A safe workplace can be more easily achieved if everyone in the workplace is consulted and given the opportunity to share information relevant to WHS.

Learning Checkpoint 1

Contribute to the implementation of WHS policies and procedures

Part A

1. What are the key functions of Equal Employment Opportunity law? Tick all that apply.
 - Checking all cords for signs of damage or fray
 - Management decisions being made without bias
 - Ensuring training and development are linked to employee needs and customer needs
 - Ensuring the workplace is efficient and free of harassment and discrimination
 - Transportation of hazardous waste
 - Recognition and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers
2. Select true or false for each of the following:
 - a) Hazard identification and risk assessment outcomes should only be shared with employees at weekly team meetings and face to face. » True » False
 - b) Explaining organisational WHS policies, procedures, programs and legislative requirements effectively involves two-way discussion. » True » False
 - a) A team meeting would be the best mode of communication for presenting a large amount of WHS information. » True » False
3. Which of the following are covered under environmental protection laws? Tick all that apply.
 - Management of hazardous waste
 - Noise, pollution and waste products
 - Health and safety of workers and other people who are impacted by the conduct of the business
 - Responsible use of water, coal, oil and natural gas
 - Recognition and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all staff and customers

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Natiq is an administration officer in the human resources department of a large professional services organisation. One of his duties in this role is to provide WHS support to new team members through the induction program and daily coaching support.

The induction introduces WHS laws, policies and procedures. Natiq explains that the organisation values the health and safety of all workers and that the key to maintaining a safe work environment is for everyone to play their part.

New workers learn about the PCBU's duties as well as their own responsibilities in following the organisation's policies and procedures and instructions from supervisors – all of which will contribute to a safe workplace.

Workers are taught that their duties include reporting hazards, carrying out regular safety checks of the office equipment and attending monthly team meetings to discuss WHS matters.

1. How is the PCBU meeting their duties under the WHS laws? Tick all that apply to this scenario.

- Encouraging worker participation and consultation at monthly team meetings
- Ensuring fair and equal treatment of workers by providing everyone with equal access to training
- Ensuring workers understand their legal duties under the WHS laws and have opportunities to raise issues about safety matters
- Providing sufficient training and information about their requirements for working safely
- Providing instructions and information to workers about workplace policies and procedures including consultation processes
- Encouraging workers to meet weekly and setting monthly sales targets

2. What are the workers' duties under the WHS laws? Tick all that apply to this scenario.

- Following all reasonable instructions as well as workplace policies and procedures
- Maintaining a safe work environment for all workers
- Advising others that it's their responsibility to take care of all hazards and risks in the workplace
- Working in a way that doesn't cause harm to all workers

3. Which Act covers protection of workers from working in unsafe and unfair working conditions?



Topic 2 | Contribute to WHS consultation arrangements

- 2A Support WHS consultative processes
- 2B Respond to WHS issues
- 2C Encourage participation in WHS processes
- 2D Support the implementation of improvements

2A Support WHS consultative processes

Consultation is a major part of an effective WHS management system and of the legal framework.

Consultation means workers have a say in work health and safety matters. It involves managers and PCBUs asking for and considering workers' opinions and sharing insights into ways of improving the health and safety standards of the workplace.

From an employer's point of view, involving workers in health and safety matters is not only an important way to encourage good communication, ownership and participation in WHS matters, but it is a legal requirement under the WHS Act.

Nature of consultation

The Model Code of Practice: Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination states that for consultation to be effective, four key elements must exist.

Consultation is about PCBUs sharing work health and safety information with their workers and providing opportunities for both parties to respond to and contribute to work health and safety issues that affect them. Consultation does not mean the PCBU tells workers what to do or provides information about a safety risk. Although these are legal obligations under other sections of the Act, it is not regarded as effective consultation.

Consultation is a two-way process by which workers and PCBUs (including managers):

- talk to each other about health and safety matters
- listen to each other's concerns
- seek and share views and information
- consider what the other party says before making decisions.

Importance of worker consultation

Consultation is an important step in achieving incident prevention and employee engagement.

If workers are involved and are able to contribute their suggestions into making the workplace safer, the procedures, equipment and systems that are put in place are more likely to be supported. This will result in fewer incidents. Effective consultation benefits both the employer and worker in the following areas:

- Better working relationships
- Improved flow of information
- Increased employee engagement and morale
- Overall greater safety culture
- Better insights into hazards, risks and appropriate controls
- Workers feeling more valued and wanting to do their best at work
- Greater teamwork within front-line groups.

Formal consultation processes include the use of HSRs and HSCs. Each of these parties have specialist WHS roles and take on board a number of responsibilities, in terms of improving safety in the workplace.

Sometimes, however, informal consultation is more suited to certain situations. The following table provides a summary of each of the most common informal consultation processes:

Consultation process	Description
Weekly team meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For low-risk workplaces, WHS matters are discussed as the first item in the standard weekly operations meeting. Workers are encouraged to share their concerns and observations about hazards and risks. These are openly discussed and the team works together to agree on suitable actions to eliminate or minimise the risks.
Suggestion box	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a workplace that houses all workers in one central location, a suggestion box can be useful in encouraging workers to contribute their thoughts and issues by filling out a basic report and dropping it into a suggestion box, which is then read and actioned by a designated safety person. The box should be located in an accessible location such as the staff kitchen or breakout room.
Toolbox talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a high-risk workplace, designated health and safety meetings called 'toolbox talks' are held. These can be hour-long or short discussions before a work shift to identify and consider specific health and safety issues and hazards relevant to the task.

Consultation process	Description
Email dropbox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a workplace where workers predominantly use computers, tablets or other mobile devices, a designated email dropbox (e.g. safetymatters@businessname.com) for health and safety matters can be useful. Workers are encouraged to report their concerns and observations via an email which is read and actioned by a designated health and safety person. This process is also effective for mobile or outworkers.
Shift changeover meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a workplace that runs across the clock, one shift will often commence work at the conclusion of another. It is wise practice for the supervisor of the first shift to provide a verbal or written summary to the supervisor of the second shift which includes safety incidents, hazards and any other issues that may affect the health and safety of workers in the second shift.
Ad-hoc meetings with the supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For small low-risk workplaces such as an office, library or retail outlet, workers can be encouraged to discuss their concerns and observations with their supervisor, who will document and take action on the report (if deemed necessary) and provide feedback to the worker on the outcomes of their input.

WHS parties

Effective WHS consultation processes must involve a number of key people who are all committed to making safety a priority.

Every workplace is different. Based on their size, scope of operations and risks, the parties involved in the consultation will vary.

The following explains the key parties that can be involved in WHS consultation processes.

Key party	Description and role
Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HSRs represent members of their work group in all things related to health and safety. They have a range of powers that enable them to fulfil these duties.
Health and Safety Committee members (HSCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An HSC is used to bridge the gap between workers and PCBUs on work health and safety issues. HSCs exist to ensure workers and PCBUs meet regularly and work together to improve work health and safety performance across the organisation. Unlike HSRs, committees and their members have no legal powers under the WHS Act.
Front-line workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers can include any paid or unpaid employee or contractor on any type of employment arrangement. Front-line workers are the people who are involved in day-to-day operational tasks and who are exposed to the hazards and risks; therefore, they can have the greatest level of insight into WHS issues.
Managers and supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers are trained, coordinated and led by management and supervisory teams. These people are responsible for implementing the safe work procedures and controls and ensuring daily compliance with the WHS systems of the PCBU.
Union representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers in high-risk industries are often associated with a union. Every union representative must hold a valid WHS entry permit as authorised by the regulator or authorising authority in the relevant jurisdiction. Union representatives are legally entitled to consult with workers and their PCBUs on any WHS matters that impact on the workers' health and safety.
PCBU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PCBU may be a physical person such as a business owner or a partner in a partnership or franchisee. The PCBU has the primary duty of care to consult with workers and ensure their needs and concerns are considered in decision-making processes.
Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers are essential in the consultation process, in particular when the PCBU is an entity (not a physical person) or does not have an active role in managing the business. Officers are responsible for ensuring there are appropriate consultation systems in place and that resources and processes have been provided to facilitate effective consultation.

Health and safety representatives

Health and safety representatives (HSRs) are a key link between workers and the person conducting the business or undertaking (PCBU). An HSR is a person from a workplace who has been elected by a work group to represent them on WHS issues. There can be as many HSRs and deputy HSRs as needed after consultation, negotiation and agreement between workers and the PCBU.

HSRs have a range of functions and powers in relation to their work group members and the areas they work in, as explained below.

HSR functions	HSR powers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent their work group in matters related to WHS • Provide information to workers about health and safety • Bring issues to the attention of the PCBU in an attempt to resolve them • Monitor risk control measures • Investigate WHS complaints from the work group • Inquire into potential risks to the health and safety of workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can conduct an inspection • Can accompany an inspector during an inspection • Can be present at an interview about WHS with a worker • Can request that an HSC be established • Can direct a person to cease unsafe work in certain circumstances

Health and safety committees

Your organisation may employ a health and safety committee. These committees are made up of elected members but they differ from HSRs in that they are not employees from a designated work group. They address concerns of all workers and cooperate with management to develop better safety standards, policies and procedures across the whole organisation – not just one work group.

Unlike HSRs, a health and safety committee has no legal powers. Health and safety committees have the following functions under the model WHS laws:

- Facilitate cooperation between the PCBU and workers to develop measures that improve the safety of the work environment and the health and safety of workers
- Assist in developing health and safety standards, rules and procedures that will be followed or complied with at the workplace
- Any other functions agreed by the PCBU and the HSC
- Meet at least once every three months to discuss WHS matters.

Support the implementation of consultation processes

Consultation processes must be engaging for all workers.

The workforce should have a reasonable opportunity to express their concerns about WHS issues, share suggestions on how safety performance can be improved, provide input about risk assessments and give feedback about hazard and risk controls.

In addition to participating in consultation processes, workers may have opportunities to support the implementation of new or existing workplace health and safety consultation processes.

This may include:

- taking on board actions to set up a safety meeting
- maintaining an email dropbox
- forwarding on feedback about WHS issues from a suggestion box.

Implementation can also include asking other team members to talk with managers and safety specialists about their concerns and suggestions for improving safety in the workplace.

The greater the engagement and support for WHS consultation that exists in the workforce, the more improvements can be made, which will eventually lead to fewer workplace incidents.

Example

A WHS consultation process in action

Jerry works as a receptionist in the head office of a large fitness provider. The workplace has successfully used an HSC arrangement to engage with all 35 workers in the office for the past five years. The committee regularly engages with workers to ask for and respond to any issues raised about safety matters.

Jerry learned about the HSC arrangement through his induction training and feels comfortable going to his nominated HSC member for any concerns about his health and safety. On a weekly basis, Jerry receives an email from his HSC member asking for any suggestions on how safety could be improved, as well as any new hazards that he may have found in the past week.

Any matters that Jerry raises will be discussed in the monthly HSC meetings, where all of the HSC members review the items raised by the workforce, agree on actionable items and implement changes into the workplace.

Practice Task 4

Question 1

Which of the following statements about worker consultation are correct? Select true or false for each one.

- a) Consultation is about PCBUs sharing work health and safety information with their workers. » True » False
- b) Consultation is a one-way communication and involves PCBUs telling workers how to work safely. » True » False
- c) Consultation provides opportunities for all parties to discuss WHS issues and provide feedback about issues directly affecting them. » True » False
- d) Consultation will help with identifying hazards and risks as well as implementing appropriate controls. » True » False
- e) Consultation is generally only for larger organisations and is not a requirement of law. » True » False

Question 2

Draw a line to match the beginning of each sentence about key WHS contacts to the correct ending.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| » Health and safety committee members | » are responsible for ensuring there are appropriate consultation systems in place and that resources and processes have been provided to facilitate effective consultation. |
| » Health and safety representatives | » are used to bridge the gap between workers and PCBUs on work health and safety issues. |
| » PCBUs | » are used to represent members of their work group in all things related to health and safety and have a range of powers to enable them to fulfil these duties. |
| » Officers | » have the primary duty of care to consult with workers and ensure the needs and concerns of workers are considered in decision making processes. |

2B Respond to WHS issues

Every workplace has its own hazards that need ongoing attention to ensure the risks do not pose a threat to the health and safety of workers.

Working in the business services sector will expose people to issues such as inadequate equipment, unsafe work practices, concerning behaviours and dysfunctional safety systems. All of these issues need to be raised by workers; otherwise, they may jeopardise the health and safety of people in the workplace.

Types of WHS issues

Workers' issues about safety matters will vary according to level of severity and impact of the hazard on their health and safety.

When supporting WHS consultation arrangements, it is important that every issue raised by a worker is treated seriously, regardless of how trivial or minor it may seem.

Workers' WHS issues may include:

- new hazards and risks
- concerns about personal safety
- inadequate safety controls
- out-of-date procedures
- faulty equipment
- worker misconduct
- lack of resources such as time and tools
- requests for new safety equipment
- ideas for improvement
- grievances about bullying and harassment.

Responding to issues raised

Workers who take the time to raise concerns and make suggestions about safety improvements need a timely response.

If issues raised are not responded to in a timely manner, workers will feel undervalued and unappreciated by management, and will be less likely to raise their concerns and ideas in the future.

When faced with a concern raised by a worker, management needs to demonstrate the following skills to respond effectively:

Interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demonstrate professionalism. ▪ Be respectful. ▪ Respond constructively to feedback. ▪ Maintain control of personal emotions ▪ Communicate effectively with a range of people in a range of situations.
Leadership skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Show integrity to follow through on your commitments. ▪ Honour the request/needs of the worker. ▪ Show support when workers elect to stop unsafe work. ▪ Represent the organisation in a professional manner. ▪ Motivate workers to take responsibility for issues that are within their control. ▪ Stay resilient in difficult times.
Teamwork skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share knowledge with the worker to the level that is appropriate. ▪ Demonstrate and promote mutual respect. ▪ Honour workers' time and workloads. ▪ Build support and engagement for team and business goals. ▪ Use team members' skills and knowledge to resolve issues.
Problem-solving skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluate information and ideas. ▪ Identify root causes and underlying issues. ▪ Identify a suitable response. ▪ Recommend a course of action. ▪ Refer to specialist people where appropriate.

Consultation is a two-way process of interaction, providing information and sharing insight into the WHS matters that impact on workers.

Model WHS laws require that PCBUs not only consider the workers' opinions when making decisions, they also need to provide feedback to workers on the outcomes of consultation in a timely manner.

Ongoing feedback creates an open dialogue with team members about concerns, improves working relationships and allows them to feel empowered to contribute again when genuine issues or opportunities for improvement arise in the future.

Workers need to be encouraged to contribute and should not feel as though their concerns and input end up in a void. Feedback should always be a positive experience; therefore, it should be given in a professional and tactful way. Tips for giving good feedback:

- Provide feedback as soon as practicably possible.
- Be specific with details about the person's contribution and how the information was considered in the decision-making process.
- Provide a sound reason as to why the worker's suggestion did/did not influence the final outcome.
- Ensure the statements you deliver are non-judgemental.
- Avoid making assumptions or generalisations about a situation.
- Keep your focus firmly on work matters – not the person.
- Do not become involved in private issues or matters not related to your work team. They are not your concern, even if they affect performance.
- Do not become emotional or biased, and do not share your personal perspectives on the matter.
- If an event remains unresolved, refer the matter to your WHS manager, officer or PCBU; your organisation may have grievance procedures for addressing and resolving WHS disputes.

Record issues raised

When a team member provides input, reports hazards or raises WHS concerns, it is important to record the matter.

By documenting hazards and other WHS issues, you create a record of all WHS issues that can be used to prevent incidents from recurring. You also provide evidence that the organisation and its duty holders have done all that is 'reasonably practicable' to prevent an incident.

The PCBU must be able to provide evidence that it is meeting its legal requirements for consultation under the WHS legislation. Therefore, documentation of all discussions, reports and resolutions must be maintained in an appropriate manner. Documentation can be done in a number of ways to keep everyone informed:

- Team meeting minutes
- Safety committee meeting minutes
- Hazard reports
- Keeping email trails
- Saving copies of written communication in a file

Example

Respond to worker issues

Rimmel works as an administration officer for a small finance company, reporting to the finance manager. The main consultation process used to engage workers with management is an email dropbox, whereby staff email their concerns about safety, as well as any improvements, to the email dropbox.

Part of Rimmel's role is to receive and respond to WHS issues raised by the workforce by managing the dropbox.

Rimmel generally receives one to two emails per week. As part of her duties, she is required to acknowledge each email received and advise the sender, on a timeframe of five working days, as to when they will expect to receive a response.

For each email received, Rimmel notes the matter in the WHS issues register, which is then used for discussion at the next monthly team meeting.

Practice Task 5

Question 1

Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) PCBUs are only required to provide feedback to workers on the outcomes of consultation if those workers are in a management position or higher. » True » False
- b) When providing feedback, it is acceptable to make assumptions or generalisations about employees if you know them well enough. » True » False
- c) Feedback about WHS matters should be timely and ongoing. » True » False

Question 2

What types of information are included in WHS records? Tick all that apply.

- Purchase orders
- Team meeting minutes
- Safety committee meeting minutes
- Hazard reports
- Email trails

2C Encourage participation in WHS processes

Consultation is an important step in achieving incident prevention and employee engagement.

Consultation is a process involving both PCBUs and workers in sharing work health and safety information on an ongoing basis.

Consultation processes must be promoted to the workforce and workers need to be encouraged to take part in the arrangements.

When it comes to work health and safety, no news does not always mean good news. Workers may not raise their concerns or suggestions for many reasons, such as fear of victimisation, lack of knowledge about WHS hazards or lack of understanding about how to raise their issues in a constructive manner. Workers may not contribute their ideas if the organisation has a history of WHS specialists and managers not providing feedback.

Without accurate, reliable and current information, PCBUs and safety specialists will be unable to make good decisions about how to address hazards and improve safety performance.

Involving workers

Under WHS laws, workers have the right to be consulted by the PCBU (including officers and managers) about any matters that impact on their health and safety.

A person is a worker if they carry out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as a paid or unpaid employee, contractor or subcontractor; outworker, work experience student or volunteer. Under the model Act, the PCBU must consult workers when:

- managing health and safety hazards and risks including the controls used to eliminate or minimise risks
- deciding on welfare facilities
- proposing or making changes that may affect the health or safety of workers
- making decisions about safety procedures, for example health monitoring, supervision and the provision of information and training
- reviewing the effectiveness of hazard and risk controls
- resolving issues and complaints relating to health and safety.

The goal of WHS consultation is to bring together workers and the PCBU (including managers) to improve communication so that WHS issues can be managed in a timely manner. An effective consultation process is therefore directly related to the level of participation from the workforce.

When workers are engaged in WHS consultation processes, information of a high standard can be shared, ultimately improving the organisation's safety performance.

To encourage greater participation, workers must be advised of the consultation processes that are available in the organisation, including:

- how they can raise their concerns
- what will be done with their feedback
- where they can access information in a timely manner.

Characteristics of the work team

The level of engagement from workers in WHS consultation processes is largely relevant to the characteristics of the work team.

A small team of workers with similar rostered hours, and who have strong relationships and excellent communication skills, will usually feel more comfortable raising issues and sharing ideas. In contrast, a larger workforce with split working rosters and lower levels of language and literacy skills will feel less comfortable raising issues and sharing ideas.

The following table describes some of the key characteristics of a work team that may impact on the level of involvement in WHS consultation processes.

Key characteristics	Description
Language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills of the workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every worker requires at least a basic skill level of reading, writing and oral communication to be effective and safe in the workplace, regardless of job role. • LLN represent the core skills required of workers and underpin all other technical and non-technical job task skills. • LLN skills must be considered when designing WHS consultation programs and sharing information with workers.
Individual culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture refers to the way a person goes about life and includes their values, thoughts, feelings, attitudes and belief systems, and how they prioritise the wellbeing of themselves and others. • Culture impacts on a person's attitudes toward safety. A person may have cultural requirements, external pressures and/or stressors in their lives.

Key characteristics	Description
Employment arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every worker must be given a reasonable opportunity to participate in consultation about matters that affect their personal health and safety. The number and complexity of working arrangements can make consultation more difficult for WHS team members. ▪ Complex employment arrangements can often make the level of engagement in consultation processes difficult. ▪ Employment arrangements can include full-time, part-time, contract work, outworkers, mobile workers, project teams and shift workers.
Special needs and limitations of workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every workforce is made up of diverse workers who have a range of special needs and limitations. These characteristics can present challenges as well as risks to people's health and safety in the work environment. ▪ Special needs can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - physical and mental disabilities - visual or hearing impairments - language, literacy or numeracy challenges - English as a second language - personal or religious beliefs that limit a person's ability to complete certain tasks - physical height and fitness restrictions - personal injuries as a result of workplace accident - personal health problems - family/personal commitments limiting availability for shifts and attendance at training events.

The benefits of having an effective consultation process for workers include:

- having a say in what changes are to be made when issues arise
- feeling more engaged and satisfied in the job role
- having greater knowledge of the risks that impact on the worker's personal health and safety
- having the ability to be an ongoing active contributor to improving WHS standards
- having more input into how their personal safety can be protected.

Example

Promoting consultation arrangements

Paulina works as a personal assistant to the branch manager at a home loans company. She values health and safety and is proactive in promoting the importance of maintaining a safe workplace to other staff.

Paulina regularly takes on board a number of initiatives that aim to increase the amount of participation in the WHS consultation processes. For example, Paulina recently developed a series of posters about the company's consultation arrangements and placed them in the toilets and kitchen. The posters contained information about what consultation is, how to raise issues, what would be done with the information received and the benefits of raising concerns and ideas about safety matters.

Paulina has also been proactive in talking to staff about how to raise suggestions for safety improvements during regular conversations and during team meetings.

Practice Task 6

Question 1

Which of the following actions should involve employee consultation? Tick all that apply.

- Reviewing confidential financial statements
- Conducting workplace risk assessments
- WHS Officer's annual remuneration review
- Incorporating new health and safety requirements imposed by legislation, regulations and codes of practice
- Making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the health and safety of workers
- Reviewing policies, procedures and work practices

Question 2

Which of the following employee characteristics could have an impact on WHS consultation involvement? Tick all that apply

- Language and literacy skills
- Special needs and limitations of workers
- Numeracy skills
- Individual culture
- Dietary preference

2D Support the implementation of improvements

Continuous improvement is an ongoing effort to achieving higher standards of performance through a process of planning, taking action and reviewing outcomes.

The implementation of improvements is one of the key driving principles behind decreasing WHS incidents and managing hazards.

New equipment, tasks and working conditions can contribute to new hazards and risks. As new issues and suggestions are raised by workers, they need to be assessed to determine what can be done to improve health and safety in the workplace.

Based on the outcomes of the assessment, you may need to assist in implementing improvements to workplace policies, procedures or programs to reduce the risk of an incident.

If no action is taken following an issue raised by a worker, it can lead to a non-compliance, which could lead to a work-related incident or possibly fines from the WHS regulator.

Remember, the goal of WHS consultation is not to gain agreement with the requests of workers; it is about improving communication and bringing workers and management together to improve overall safety performance.

Work with key personnel

When working on possible WHS improvements, you will need to engage with several parties to identify and implement changes.

In the business services sector, your supervisor will usually be your primary point of contact for safety matters and in particular, implementing and approving any changes within the work environment.

Depending on the issue being raised, you may also need to liaise with other key personnel, including:

- health and safety representatives (HSRs)
- health and safety committee members
- officers of the organisation
- supervisors and line managers
- union representatives
- colleagues with greater experience.

Assist in developing changes

Improvements must focus on eliminating the root causes where possible or minimising their impacts by fixing errors in the system or environment.

By addressing the root causes, you will have tackled the problem at its source. This will be more effective in preventing a similar non-compliance in the future.

Applying short-term solutions may be required until a more stringent change can be implemented. However, this strategy should only be used when restrictions apply and you are unable to tackle the root cause.

The changes that are agreed to must be practical, cost-effective and focus on addressing the source of the issue that has been identified. Improvements may include:

- implementing a formal safety management system
- modifying an existing process
- introducing a new step or process
- updating the WHS policy
- introducing a new reporting process
- removing or replacing faulty equipment.

Action plans

The final step in the assessment process is to document the issues and solutions in an action plan. A thorough action plan will include the following elements:

Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The goals of the action plan
Action steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A breakdown of the specific activities needed to integrate the improvements into operations
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People, physical and financial needs to support the action steps
Roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying key personnel and duty holders who have an impact on the revised policy
Communication and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How workers will be educated and trained in the new process or policy
Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ranking/order of importance for each action
Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When each action must be completed by

Under WHS laws, consultation is only required for matters that affect the health and safety of a particular worker. For example, a change in work roster from day shift to night shift may contribute to worker fatigue. Therefore, only the workers affected by the change of roster must be consulted before making the change – not the entire workforce.

Under the model WHS laws, PCBUs and their officers are not expected to action every request from every worker. Further, they are not required to do anything that is deemed as 'unreasonable' according to the hazards and risks identified.

A PCBU is only required to do what is reasonably practicable by taking a level-headed approach to worker consultation and conducting a risk assessment on the matter to determine the consequence and probability of harm.

Example

Reasonably practicable

When making a decision about how to address a WHS matter, a PCBU must consider the following six key points, as stated in the model WHS Act:

- Likelihood of the hazard resulting in an incident
- Degree of harm that may be caused
- Prior knowledge of the hazard and its risks
- Availability of resources to control the hazard
- Cost versus benefit
- Level of influence and control over the hazard.

Practice Task 7

Question 1

Who are the key personnel you may need to engage with on WHS matters? Tick all that apply.

- Union representatives
- Health and safety committee members
- Mayor
- Officers of the organisation
- Police officers
- Health and safety representatives (HSRs)

Question 2

What are some examples of improvements to WHS? Tick all that apply.

- Implementing a formal safety management system
- Modifying existing processes
- Updating the WHS policy
- Increasing the WHS Officer's annual salary
- Removing or replacing faulty equipment

Summary

- Consultation is about PCBUs sharing work health and safety information with their workers and providing opportunities for both parties to respond to, and contribute to, work health and safety issues that affect them.
- Consultation is an important step in achieving incident prevention and employee engagement.
- Effective WHS consultation processes must involve a number of key people that are all committed to making safety a priority.
- Effective consultation processes require workers to have reasonable access to information and the ability to regularly share this with the PCBU.
- PCBUs are required to take on board concerns from workers about WHS issues, give feedback and take into account their concerns when addressing workplace safety issues, or planning and implementing new health and safety strategies.
- Workers need ongoing encouragement and information to participate in WHS consultation processes.
- When working on possible WHS improvements, engage with several parties to identify and implement changes that will reduce the risks in the work environment.
- WHS improvements must focus on eliminating the root causes where possible, or minimising their impacts by fixing errors in the system or environment.

Learning Checkpoint 2

Contribute to WHS consultation arrangements

Part A

1. Draw a line to match each consultation process to its correct description.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| » Verbal discussion with supervisor | » Used to encourage workers to record their thoughts and issues by filling out a basic report, which is then read and actioned by a designated safety person |
| » Suggestion box | » Used to ensure workers and PCBUs meet regularly and work together to improve work health and safety performance across the organisation |
| » Email dropbox | » Used to encourage workers to discuss their concerns and observations, which will then be documented, and appropriate action taken where necessary |
| » Health and Safety Committee | » Used to encourage workers to report their concerns and observations via email which is read and actioned by a designated health and safety person |

2. Examples of WHS issues raised by employees could include? Tick all that apply.

- Concerns about personal safety
- Worker misconduct
- Inadequate safety controls
- Having to work on your birthday
- Lack of resources such as time and tools
- Sales not making budget

3. What are some examples of worker limitations and special needs? Tick all that apply.

- Physical and mental disabilities
- Lunch hour preference
- Visual or hearing impairments
- English as a second language
- Hair colour
- Personal health problems

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Natiq is an experienced administration officer in the human resources department of a large professional services organisation. As part of his role, he provides WHS training and support to new team members. His consultation process involves a weekly departmental team meeting but workers can email him about more serious concerns.

His latest challenge is to consult with workers on management's decision to increase staff and change rosters. This is due to a new contract they have taken on. Workers are concerned about these changes because the building is not big enough for increased staff. They worry about the impact on their health and safety.

1. Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) Under WHS laws, the entire workforce must be consulted before making changes to Natiq's departmental roster. >> True >> False
- b) Under WHS laws, the employer and its senior manager are required to promptly action every request put forward by the workers, including if they refuse to accept the change to their roster. >> True >> False

2. List three potential ways Natiq could encourage workers to raise their WHS issues.

3. Natiq is working with the department manager in preparing an action plan after identifying improvements needed to the work area. What elements would you expect to see in the action plan? Tick all that apply.

- Action steps
- Management budgets and forecasts
- Roles and responsibilities
- Priorities



Topic 3 | Contribute to WHS training needs

- 3A Identify WHS training needs
- 3B Provide WHS training opportunities

3A Identify WHS training needs

Ensuring workers are appropriately and adequately trained in using the equipment needed to carry out their work tasks is a critical step in controlling risk or harm.

PCBUs must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers are provided with the required information, instruction, training and supervision.

Training and information for your team

Training and information for your team may consist of a range of elements designed to ensure that:

- the organisation and individuals meet their obligations under WHS legislation, regulations and codes of practice
- work groups and individuals are compliant with organisational policies and procedures.

Employers' information and instruction to workers

Employers must provide information and instruction to workers regarding:

- WHS
- the health effects of specific hazards
- the organisation's risk management processes
- the organisation's WHS consultative procedures
- potentially hazardous work tasks
- changing practices or policies in the workplace (that could put workers at risk).

Key learning domains

An effective WHS training program should consider the different learning domains and the unique requirements for each.

Each domain is just as important as the other because they are all interrelated. For example, a worker cannot effectively carry out a physical task (skill) without having a firm understanding of how (knowledge) and why they need to do it (attitudes). All three domains must be in place before a person can competently carry out a work task to the right standards.

According to Bloom's taxonomy, people have three areas (or domains) of learning as described below.

Domain	Description
Cognitive	They need to have the right knowledge. Knowledge is defined as a collection of information that is understood by the individual and is in turn used for achieving a goal. Knowledge of a system, process or piece of equipment will enhance a person's ability to perform a skill to a higher level.
Psychomotor	They need to develop the right skills. Skills are things that a person can physically perform. They should be assessed in a live workplace environment and be able to be demonstrated consistently to the required safety standards.
Affective	They need to possess the right attitudes. Attitudes are learned mindsets, emotions, feelings and tendencies. While skills and knowledge are relatively simple to train and develop, attitudes are not. Attitudes generally improve as a result of personal experience and choices made by the individual.

Identifying current competencies

Competency means a person can perform a task safely over a period of time, to the required standards.

To identify current competency levels, you will need to collect information about a worker's past work performance and observe the person in their natural working environment. You will need to consult with supervisors, as well as other key people such as team members and peers, managers and, if appropriate, customers.

It is also good practice to research a range of internal documents to give you a good picture of what the person can and cannot do according to the organisation's standards.

By collecting a range of subjective and objective information, you will have sufficient evidence to determine the gaps and provide quality feedback to team members about their current competencies.

Examples of useful documents include:

- incident/accident report forms
- statistics and figures on incidents and accidents
- manager reports
- feedback from colleagues
- feedback from customers/clients
- performance reviews.

Training needs analysis

A training needs analysis can be used to gauge requirements for training a work group or an entire organisation.

A training needs analysis includes four components as outlined below:

Evaluate

- It is essential to evaluate the existing skills, knowledge and attitudes of workers before implementing a training plan. A WHS training needs analysis is required to ensure training is relevant to each person's unique needs.
- When new workers are inducted into an organisation their training needs can be identified and addressed before they commence their tasks.
- For existing workers, the needs analysis may be conducted when changes occur, following an incident or as part of a periodic performance review.

Identify

- A worker's training needs are based on the gaps between what the worker is currently capable of, and the requirements of their job. These gaps may be determined using a competency rating tool or other document, such as an observation checklist. Training needs are then categorised according to priority, indicating which needs are urgent and which are of lower priority.
- All aspects of the worker's environment must be taken into consideration. The worker may need training in policies and procedures of the general work environment, or they may require specialised training with specific requirements, such as licences or certificates required to operate machinery and equipment.
- You may find that workers need refresher courses or upskilling to remain compliant with legislation and WHS requirements. Ongoing monitoring and assessment will identify any deficiencies or gaps in workers' abilities. Observing a worker at work can help you identify where further training is needed.

Discuss

- It is important to consult and collaborate with workers when planning their training. This will ensure there is ownership and engagement, which will deliver better outcomes for the training.
- You should discuss training needs with the worker and include other key personnel such as management, human resources, WHS personnel or specialist in-house trainers.

Implement

- To meet workers' training needs, a training plan must be implemented based on the training needs analysis you have conducted. This requires consultation with the worker, management and training provider (if applicable).
- Follow your organisational policies and procedures regarding the implementation of training plans and ensure you work within the prescribed budgets and work schedules.

As a part of the planning and implementation process, it is good practice to develop a WHS training plan for team members and other staff. This training plan will be built on the training needs analysis you have conducted. Your organisation may already have WHS training plans in place or templates already developed that you can use.

The training plan should include:

- the training required
- names of workers requiring this training
- time lines for the training
- a timetable for follow-up training.

Reporting training needs to relevant people

You must make sure training needs are reported to these key parties before implementing the training. This will ensure the training plans are within budgets and fit in with rosters and schedules.

You will also need approval to implement the training, which will require formal authorisation from a key decision maker.

Follow your organisational procedures regarding who needs to approve your plan and who you should discuss it with. You may need to report to the following people about WHS training.

Other team leaders or supervisors	To determine whether other workers require similar training and can therefore share resources
Human resources department in your organisation	To determine whether policies or procedures for meeting training needs already exist
Union delegates or industry representatives	To determine whether WHS training is guided by other authorities
WHS regulator of your state or territory	To determine the training needs of workers and ensure WHS legislative compliance
Accredited trainers external to your organisation	To determine the availability and cost of external training
Other workers within your organisation	To determine the availability and resources needed for internal training

Your organisation must keep records of each worker's skills, knowledge, experience and WHS training history. These records should be stored in a WHS skills register. They help identify a worker's training needs. Each worker should have a detailed job description that lists the WHS issues surrounding each task they perform. This information may be used as a guide when updating equipment, altering processes or changing roles.

Example

Competency rating tool

As part of the training needs analysis, competency rating tools are used to determine the current competencies of workers.

They are completed through consultation and behavioural observation of workers in the live work environment.

An example of a Competency Rating Tool is provided below.

Competency requirement	1 - Requires development	2 - Meets requirements	3 - Exceeds requirements
Ability to operate a forklift with zero harm	Able to operate equipment under strict supervision in all environments	Able to operate equipment in controlled environments with limited supervision	Able to operate equipment in complex environments without supervision
Conduct a safety inspection of the work area	Able to access the work area and hazard reports	Able to identify a limited range of hazards and conduct an inspection with some assistance	Able to identify complex hazards and determine appropriate risk ratings without assistance

Practice Task 8

Question 1

Draw a line to match each step of the training needs analysis to its correct description.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| » Identify | » Involves evaluating the existing skills, knowledge and attitudes of workers before implementing a training plan |
| » Discuss | » Involves using a competency rating tool, or other document such as an observation checklist, to identify gaps between what the worker is currently capable of, and the requirements of their job |
| » Implement | » Involves consultation and collaboration with workers when planning their training to ensure ownership of and engagement in training |
| » Evaluate | » Involves the use of a training plan to help facilitate the worker's training |

Question 2

What should a training plan include? Tick all that apply.

- Incident register
- Description of the training required
- Workers who require training
- Equipment maintenance records
- Timelines for the training

3B Provide WHS training opportunities

There are a range of WHS training opportunities and strategies available to meet the different training needs of team members.

One WHS training strategy is to deliver it in-house by experienced workers or qualified personnel using structured WHS training programs, online learning or coaching and mentoring programs.

You may have opportunities to source specialist training delivered by organisations or people from outside the workplace, such as qualification or licensed outcome-based training, delivered by registered training providers.

Follow your organisational procedures for making training arrangements.

Internal training

Internal training may be through training sessions, workshops or mentoring.

This type of training may include:

- induction training
- emergency procedures
- mentoring
- coaching.

The delivery of induction training will vary depending on the size of the organisation and the number of workers starting at one time. Large organisations may conduct formal induction sessions in groups, while smaller workplaces may provide one-on-one training.

An induction session should include an orientation tour of the workplace to familiarise workers with facilities, emergency exits, noticeboards and work colleagues. An induction booklet or kit should be provided to each worker with information on the organisation's WHS policies and procedures.

Organisational induction training should be regularly reviewed and WHS information revised when procedures change and when new equipment has been purchased. WHS information that should be provided in induction training includes:

- existing hazards and risks at work and how to identify new ones
- measures applied to control hazards and risks
- how to interpret safety signs and information
- how to work and operate equipment safely

- fire and emergency and first-aid procedures
- organisational procedures for reporting health and safety incidents
- who to discuss safety issues with; for example, the elected representative for the work group
- how to get involved with health and safety; for example, attending meetings and consultation.

Emergency procedures

All workers should know their roles and responsibilities in an emergency situation. Emergency procedures should be explained to team members and displayed in a prominent position in the workplace. The training emergency information needs to include:

- the meaning of the evacuation alarms
- the names and appearances of the fire wardens
- the location of the emergency exits
- what to take and what not to take with you
- how to walk down the emergency exit steps; for example, single file, walk slowly, don't panic, hold onto the rail
- where to meet and what to do when you arrive at the evacuation location
- when you will be told to return to your workplace.

Mentoring

WHS mentors must be skilled in the task they are assisting others with, have analysed the risks involved and have a best practice solution established. Mentors can share their knowledge, experience and expertise with the worker and encourage them to discuss their concerns or ask for guidance. Mentors can contribute to the training process by:

- explaining or clarifying issues
- respecting contributions from others and acknowledging achievements
- leading by example in promoting a safe workplace
- providing guidance in solving problems
- providing encouragement and feedback to workers.

Coaching

Coaching is a learning process aimed at bringing out the best in a person and developing the competencies across all levels of business.

Coaching should aim to build capability, produce desired results and inspire and motivate the worker. The coaching process relies on the input of both the coach and the team member. Its success relies heavily on the coach identifying particular behaviours in the individual to ensure they will thrive under the coaching process. The process of coaching a worker involves:

- focusing on the team members' needs which are aligned with organisational requirements such as WHS policy standards
- achieving competency through the team members, not the coach
- achieving desired team and organisational objectives.

External training

External training generally involves WHS courses.

The following types of courses may provide appropriate support for your training needs:

- Licenced or certificate courses
- Accredited or approved courses
- Short courses
- Vocational (VET) and professional courses

Licenced or certificate courses

Workers performing some types of tasks and operating specific equipment are required to hold special licences or recognised certificates. Requirements vary between states and territories. Industry legislation and standards provide guidance on the particular task. Training may take place at the workplace or on the premises of the training provider.

Accredited or approved courses

Training courses for Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) must meet criteria determined by the relevant health and safety authority. These representatives need the relevant skills and knowledge to carry out their duties and responsibilities. Under section 72 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth), HSRs are entitled to attend a:

- five-day initial training course
- one-day bridging course, if required
- one-day refresher trainer course 12 months after initial training.

First-aid training courses are vital for reducing the severity of injury and illness in the workplace. The WHS regulations require that the PCBU ensures the provision of and access to first-aid equipment and facilities. The PCBU must also ensure an adequate number of workers are trained in first aid.

Short courses may be appropriate for meeting organisational training needs.

Below are examples of external courses that are relevant for WHS training:

- Risk assessment and control, hazard identification and consultation
- Management and supervisory techniques
- Workplace ergonomics, stress management and bullying
- WHS issues specific to the organisation
- WHS for workers who speak English as a second language and/or who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

A WHS training component is included in traineeship and apprenticeship programs. WHS training is also available in various forms and levels, from vocational education and training (VET) sector training to a university degree. WHS education covers a diverse range of industries and disciplines and may be very specialised. Depending on the organisation and its training needs, support or funding may be available for a worker or supervisor to pursue WHS education.

Assist with training needs

There are some common principles that need to be applied in training situations.

You may be appointed as a mentor, coach or asked to assist with facilitating a module from a WHS training program, such as induction session.

There are common principles that can be applied to ensure you achieve positive outcomes from the training process. Trainers, coaches and mentors need to demonstrate the following:

Communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You need to have excellent verbal and non-verbal communication skills and be an active listener.
Subject matter knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest the time in learning the content for the training and anticipating questions that may be asked by worker. The more confident you are about the subjects you are delivering, the more competent you will become in the training role.
Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give honest feedback about the worker's performance to ensure the person is aware of their progress, where they have improved and where they still require development.
Availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make yourself available to meet with the worker at least once a month for an hour. Be available for follow-up questions in between meetings. Be reliable and committed to the relationship.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on teaching the worker how to think for themselves. Try not to come up with the solutions. Instead, work with them to help them come up with the solutions.

Example

Assist with providing training to staff

Julian works as an office support worker for a medium-sized textiles company. The organisation employs 25 staff who work along a manufacturing line, making a range of clothing items. Recently, there has been an increase in WHS incidents, including two serious injuries in the past month that led to long-term absences from work.

Following an investigation into the incidents, it was deemed that the current WHS induction program had a number of gaps and needed a major redevelopment.

Julian has excellent communication and presentation skills and has a passion for health and safety. He is currently working as part of a small project team, alongside the training officer and the health and safety representative, to develop a new WHS induction program for the textile manufacturing workers. The aim of the program is to enhance the skills, knowledge and attitudes of workers towards health and safety and equip them to maintain safe work practices in the manufacturing plant.

Julian's role in the project is to document the training plan for the new induction program and to deliver the training module on WHS consultation. The new induction training will consist of five three-hour blocks, spread out over one working week.

The consultation training will involve a facilitator-led tutorial about the importance of consultation and the ways in which workers can raise issues about safety in the workplace. This will be followed by an interactive discussion based on a case study that is relevant to the workplace consultation process.

Practice Task 9

Question 1

What are some common examples of WHS training opportunities and strategies?
Tick all that apply.

- Internal training programs
- Workshops
- Shareholders' meeting
- Completing an incident report
- Coaching and mentoring

Question 2

Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) HSRs are entitled to attend first-aid training plus bridging and refresher courses. >> True >> False
- b) Only large high-risk organisations with more than 100 employees need to have a worker who is trained in first aid. >> True >> False

Question 3

Fire evacuation training should include the following. Tick all that apply.

- Responsibilities of fire wardens and floor wardens
- Procedures for clearing everyone from the building
- Evacuation meeting points
- Procedures for checking off the names of all evacuated individuals
- Location of the nearest elevator

Summary

- An effective WHS training program should consider the different learning needs and the unique requirements of each worker.
- A training needs analysis can be used to gauge requirements for training a work group or an entire organisation.
- As a part of the planning and implementation process, it is good practice to develop a WHS training plan for team members and other staff.
- There are a range of internal and external WHS training opportunities and strategies available to meet the different training needs of team members.
- When assisting in WHS training, you can apply common principles to ensure you achieve positive outcomes from the training process.

Learning Checkpoint 3

Contribute to WHS training needs

Part A

1. Which of the following statements about training are correct? Select true or false for each one.
 - a) Worker training is a critical part of an organisation's commitment to WHS. >> True >> False
 - b) PCBUs are only required to provide training to workers in management positions. >> True >> False
 - c) Employers are required to advise workers about hazardous working conditions and tasks. >> True >> False
 - d) Changes to workplace policies and practices (that could put workers at risk) do not need to be communicated to workers. >> True >> False
 - e) WHS training programs should focus on a worker's cognitive skills only. The other skills will come with 'on the job' experience. >> True >> False

2. What WHS information needs to be provided in induction training? Tick all that apply.
 - Existing hazards and risks at work and how to identify new ones
 - Measures applied to control hazards and risks
 - How to interpret safety signs and information
 - How to investigate WHS incidents
 - Fire and emergency and first-aid procedures
 - Organisational procedures for reporting health and safety incidents

3. Select true or false for each of the following.
 - a) It is important to consult with supervisors, WHS personnel and management before planning any training. >> True >> False
 - a) Competency means a person can perform a task quickly. >> True >> False

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

As administration officer in the human resources department of a large professional services organisation, Natiq runs the induction program and provides day-to-day coaching support to new team members.

As part of the induction training, all new workers are provided with an introduction to the WHS laws as well as workplace policies and procedures of the department. Natiq explains that the organisation values the health and safety of all workers and that the key to maintaining a safe work environment is for everyone to play their part.

Natiq teaches the new workers about the duties of the PCBU and senior managers (officers), as well as the workers' own responsibilities. Workers are required to follow the organisation's policies and procedures, as well as any instructions given by the supervisors to help contribute to a safe workplace.

Workers are taught that their duties include reporting hazards, carrying out regular safety checks of the office equipment and attending monthly team meetings to discuss WHS matters. These are part of the organisation's consultation processes.

1. List five skills or attributes Natiq must demonstrate when providing WHS training.

2. Select true or false for each of the following.

- | | | |
|--|--------|---------|
| a) For Natiq to determine a worker's competency in performing work tasks safely, only past work performance is relevant. | » True | » False |
| b) Documents such as manager reports, feedback from colleagues/customers/clients, incident reports and performance reviews should be used to help determine the new workers' levels of competency. | » True | » False |

3. Natiq is working with an external safety training provider in planning a half-day training course in emergency and fire response. What would you expect to see covered in this training course? Tick all that apply.

- Roles and responsibilities of all workers in an emergency
- Location of emergency exits
- Equipment maintenance procedures
- Financial reporting procedures
- Where to meet and what to do when you arrive at the evacuation location
- Meaning of evacuation alarms



Topic 4 | Assist in addressing WHS hazards

- 4A Identify WHS hazards
- 4B Control hazards and risks
- 4C Respond to inadequate controls
- 4D Complete incident reports

4A Identify WHS hazards

A hazard is a source, or potential source, of human injury, ill health or disease. Anything that may cause injury or ill health to anyone in your workplace is a hazard.

For every hazard, there are risks. Risk is the likelihood of a hazard resulting in an injury or disease, together with the seriousness of the injury or disease. For example, electricity is a hazard. There is a risk that someone may receive a shock if equipment is incorrectly wired or if wiring is exposed. Manual handling is also a potential hazard, because there is a risk that a person may strain their back if it is not done according to correct manual-handling procedures and guidelines.

Contribute to the hazard management process

Hazard management is the process of finding the sources of danger in the work environment and taking the best action possible to make the workplace safer.

The aim of the hazard management process is to find out what can cause harm and then remove the hazards or reduce the risks of harm.

Hazard management covers four main steps below.

Step	Key tasks
Hazard identification	Find the dangers and understand what can cause harm to people on the work site.
Risk assessment	Determine the likelihood and level of harm that can be caused by a hazard if a person is exposed to the hazard..
Risk control	Remove the hazard or put things in place to reduce the level of harm.
Follow-up action	Follow up to see that the controls are doing their job properly by speaking with the supervisor and other workers and asking for their feedback.

Types of hazards

The hazards identified in your workplace will depend on the kind of activities, people and technology in your organisation.

When new technologies or work practices are introduced to a workplace, they can create new hazards.

Below are five types of hazard that are common to many types of workplaces:

Biological hazards	
	<p>Bacteria, viruses, mould, mildew, spillages of blood or body fluids and waste, needlestick injury, contaminated sharps, dressings and waste, fumes, insects</p>
Chemical hazards	
	<p>Chemical substances such as acids or poisons and those that could lead to fire or explosion, cleaning agents or materials, fumes, scheduled drugs</p>
Mechanical/electrical hazards	
	<p>Electricity and equipment, plant and machinery</p>

Physical hazards	
	Floors, stairs, work platforms, steps, ladders, fire, falling objects, slippery surfaces, hazardous manual handling, excessively loud and prolonged noise, vibration, radiation, poor lighting, poor ventilation, hold-ups or threatening customers/patients
Psychological hazards:	
	Workplace stressors arising from a variety of sources such as workplace bullying, conflict, poor time management

Methods for identifying hazards

Workplace safety procedures include instructions for identifying hazards.

Several of these procedures will be formal and may include performing scheduled workplace inspections, carrying out hazard hunts in small groups and reviewing incident reports in team meetings.

The most valuable information you can provide about hazards in your work environment will come from having a daily awareness of your work environment and the hazards that you are exposed to when carrying out your work tasks.

This will require you to observe your environment, talk to your team members, complete your safety checklists as part of your daily work routine, and implement your daily work practices.

Workplace inspections

Workplace inspections are conducted on a regular basis and may involve the assistance of the HSR or health and safety committee member.

The purpose of inspections is to identify and control the hazards before they cause harm. This is a way of being proactive about hazards, rather than reacting after an incident has occurred.

Evidence needs to be gathered to show that workers are following relevant health and safety laws as well as the organisation's policies and procedures. Site and workplace inspections also provide an opportunity for workers to raise any WHS concerns. There are many formal processes you can follow:

- Inspect the existing and known hazards.
- Inspect the work processes; that is, how the tasks are performed. These can be routine inspections at specific times of the month or year.
- Inspect any new processes or equipment to assess hazards.
- Inspect work practices or equipment after complaints or concerns are raised by workers or customers.
- Make follow-up inspections after processes have been changed due to recommendations.

Example

Hazards and risks in the workplace

Here are some examples of common hazard categories that exist in a workplace:

Type of hazard	Examples of hazards	Type of harm that may occur
Biological	Viruses spread through food contamination or sick workers	Micro-organisms can cause hepatitis, Legionnaires' disease, Q fever, HIV/AIDS or allergies
Electricity	Working with live electricity and exposed cabling or wires	Shock, burns or death from electrocution
Extreme temperatures	Heat or extreme cold working conditions	Extreme heat can cause dehydration, heat stroke or fatigue while extreme cold can cause hypothermia or frost bite
Gravity	Falling objects, fall and slip hazards	Broken bones, bruises, serious cuts and lacerations leading to amputation of limbs, dislocations, concussion, permanent injuries or death
Hazardous chemicals	Chemicals (such as acids, hydrocarbons, heavy metals) and dusts (such as asbestos and silica)	Respiratory illnesses, asthma, cancers or contact dermatitis
Machinery and equipment	Being hit by moving vehicles or being caught by moving parts of machinery	Fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations including long-term or permanent injuries or death
Manual tasks	Heavy or awkward shaped objects that require manual lifting, restraining a load, vibration from power tools, overexertion or repetitive movement	Sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons; back injuries, including damage to the spinal discs and nerves; joint and bone injuries or degeneration; nerve injuries or compression; soft tissue hernias

Hazards and risks in the workplace continued...

Type of hazard	Examples of hazards	Type of harm that may occur
Noise	Sudden or ongoing exposure to loud noises of 85 dB(A) or higher	Permanent or temporary hearing loss, infections, tumours and structural problems
Psychosocial hazards	Effects of work-related stress, bullying, violence and work-related fatigue	Depression, anxiety, drug/alcohol dependence, fatigue, schizophrenia, presenteeism
Radiation	Ultraviolet, welding arc flashes, microwaves and lasers	Burns, cancer, blindness

Reporting WHS hazards

As a worker, you have an important role to play in helping your workplace remain safe.

If you identify a workplace hazard, you must report the issue immediately to your supervisor, line manager or specialist WHS person as quickly as possible.

If the lives of people are at risk, you must immediately advise a supervisor or other responsible person to ensure no harm occurs, and warn the people affected by the hazard.

Reporting hazards or potential incidents may require you to:

- Verbally notify your supervisor, line manager or WHS person
- Complete a formal hazard report form and submit the form to the relevant person.

The first step in implementing risk management is hazard identification.

Once a hazard has been identified and reported, the next step is to assess the risk it poses.

Your supervisor, line manager or WHS specialist may ask for your input and collaborate with you to determine the likelihood of an incident occurring, and the degree of harm that may be caused. Risk assessment involves:

- discussing how many times and the length of time you are exposed to the hazard
- working out the chance of injury or damage occurring as a result of the hazard
- discussing how many other people are exposed to the hazard
- working out the likely degree of seriousness of the injury or damage
- finding the most appropriate method for managing that risk.

Example

Hazard reporting and response procedure

MyTel Communications developed a staff guideline outlining the steps in a hazard reporting and response procedure. This provided a formal way of resolving a particular safety issue in the workplace.

Hazard reporting and response procedure

If a serious hazard or incident is identified, workers must report the matter to the PCBU, their direct supervisor or HSR as soon as possible, using the quickest means. Where appropriate, the worker and their supervisor should take all reasonable steps to contain the hazard within the bounds of personal safety.

When the hazard is controlled, an incident report must be submitted to the PCBU. It must include hazard details, associated risks, location, anyone who may have been affected, workers who have been exposed and recommendations regarding how to treat or rectify the problem.

A hard-copy hazard report form must also be submitted to the HSR or supervisor. As manager, you will receive a signed notification that the form has been received.

The HSR must provide a written response within seven working days. A final response is required within 14 working days from when the report was received. It must detail all decisions made, consequent actions taken and proposed outcomes.

If the original person making the report is dissatisfied with this response, they can request more information. The manager must respond within seven days of this appeal. If the report originator is still dissatisfied, they can appeal to the HSC, their HSR or contact the health and safety regulator.

Practice Task 10

Question 1

Draw a line to match the beginning of each sentence about hazard management to the correct ending.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| » Follow-up action | » Find the dangers and understand what can cause harm to people on the work site. |
| » Risk control | » Determine the likelihood and level of harm that can be caused by a hazard if a person is exposed to the hazard. |
| » Hazard identification | » Remove the hazard or put things in place to reduce the level of harm. |
| » Risk assessment | » Follow up to see that the controls are doing their job properly by speaking with the supervisor and other workers and asking for their feedback. |

Question 2

Draw a line to match each hazard type to its correct description.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| » Biological hazard | » floors, stairs, work platforms, steps, ladders, fire, falling objects, slippery surfaces, hazardous manual handling, excessively loud and prolonged noise, vibration, radiation, poor lighting, poor ventilation, hold-ups or threatening customers/patients |
| » Psychological hazard | » substances such as acids or poisons and those that could lead to fire or explosion, cleaning agents or materials, fumes, scheduled drugs |
| » Physical hazard | » workplace stressors arising from a variety of sources such as workplace bullying, conflict and poor time management |
| » Chemical hazard | » bacteria, viruses, mould, mildew, spillages of blood or body fluids and waste, needlestick injury, contaminated sharps, dressings and waste, fumes, insects |

Question 3

Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) Hazards should be reported using any means possible, just as long as they are reported on time and to the correct personnel. >> True >> False
- b) Examples of hazard reporting systems may include: >> True >> False
- Hazard/risk register
 - Hazard report
 - WHS risk assessment tool
 - Safety checklist
- c) Completed hazards reports should be stored securely at your desk for discussion at the next staff meeting. >> True >> False

4B Control hazards and risks

Hazard control is the process of determining and implementing the best way to control hazards.

Once a hazard has been identified and its risks have been assessed, action must be taken to either eliminate or control the hazard before it results in injury or illness.

The best way to control a hazard is to eliminate it. Elimination is the first choice in a system called the hierarchy of control.

Legal requirements

Risk control is a legal requirement of all PCBUs, officers and workers under the WHS laws.

All duty holders are required to exercise their duty of care to identify and manage hazards and risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Codes of Practice provide practical guidance on how to control hazards and risks.

Specific types of hazards, such as asbestos, confined spaces and working at heights, are covered in the Regulations, as well as specific Codes. Other types of hazards are covered by guidance materials, available through the regulator and Safe Work Australia. Unions, industry associations, consultants, specialist WHS advisors, colleagues and HSRs can also provide information and advice.

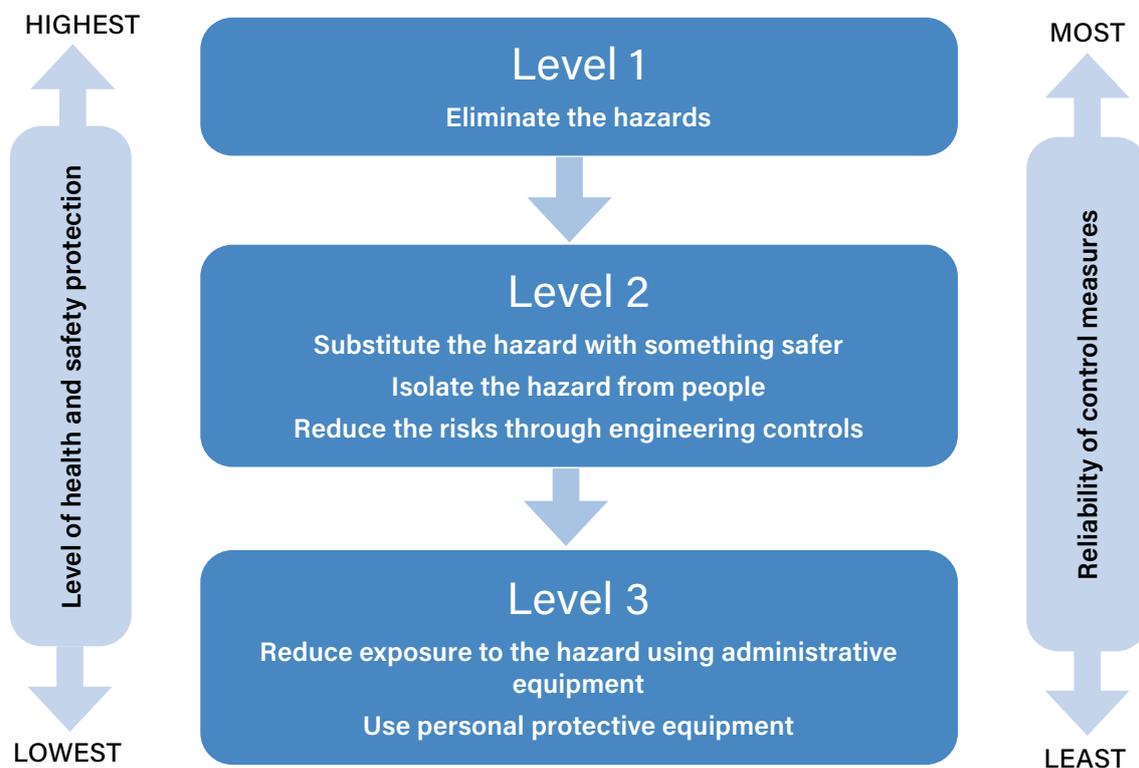
You can source online information from the Safe Work Australia website: [aspirelr.link/safeworkaustralia](https://www.aspirelr.link/safeworkaustralia)

Hierarchy of control

The model regulations state that risks should be managed using the hierarchy of control.

As the name suggests, controls are measures that should be applied in sequence. This means that if the first option is not available, choose the next one. For example, if you can't eliminate a piece of equipment because it is vital to the operation of the business, choose the next best option (substitution). You may find that in many cases, a combination of controls is the best method.

This is the hierarchy of control, starting from the best option and working down to the least preferred options.



Control level	Examples
Level 1 control – Elimination	
Eliminate the hazard from the workplace entirely; for example, remove hazardous substances from the workplace or remove professional samples of drugs from consultation rooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discarding a hazardous product, substance or piece of equipment ▪ Cleaning up a spill ▪ Removing a hazardous task from a work system ▪ Extinguishing a fire ▪ Removing a noisy machine from a working area ▪ Terminating a worker for serious misconduct
Level 2 controls – Substitution, isolation and/or engineering controls	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substitution: substitute or modify the hazard by replacing it with something less dangerous; for example, if a cleaning agent is hazardous because it produces harsh fumes, replace it with one that does not produce harsh fumes. ▪ Isolation: isolate the hazard by physically removing it from the workplace or by securing the area involved; for example, storing sharps in a lockable cabinet in a hospital ward. ▪ Engineering controls: use engineering methods to control the hazard at its source; for example, provide additional ventilation in a production area or securely store hazardous materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substitution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – substituting a hazardous chemical with a less dangerous one – replacing telephone handset with a headset where the telephone is in frequent use – substituting a smaller package or container to reduce the risk of hazardous manual task injuries such as back strain ▪ Isolation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – isolating and storing chemicals properly by using a fume cupboard – isolating copying equipment and other machinery in soundproof rooms to reduce fumes and noise – using security measures to protect staff ▪ Engineering controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – redesigning machinery to reduce noise levels – using ventilation to remove chemical fumes and dusts; using wetting down techniques to minimise dust levels – changing bench heights to reduce bending

Control level	Examples
Level 3 controls – Administrative controls and PPE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administrative controls: introduce management processes that ensure workers' health and safety; for example, rosters that are designed to ensure workers have reasonable breaks between shifts to minimise the likelihood of hazards being realised. Administrative controls include provisions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ensure workers follow correct and safe procedures – train workers to use equipment or undertake tasks correctly – regularly maintain equipment – regularly monitor equipment. – PPE: introduce PPE such as goggles, gloves and masks to reduce exposure to a hazard. Protective equipment is the last control option and is most effective when used with higher controls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administrative Controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regularly maintaining plant and equipment – redesigning jobs – using team lifting – limiting exposure time to a hazard through staff rotation – training and education – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ earplugs in noisy areas ○ eye protection when working with hazardous chemicals ○ gloves to protect against skin absorption or burns.

Reasonably practicable

When deciding on what controls to implement, the PCBU or duty holder must do only what is 'reasonably practicable' to ensure the health and safety of people.

In most cases, cost will not be the key factor in determining what it is reasonable for a duty holder unless it can be shown to be 'grossly disproportionate' to the risk. If the risk is particularly severe, a PCBU will need to demonstrate that costly safety measures are not reasonably practicable due to their expense and that other less costly measures could also effectively minimise the risk.

The term 'reasonably practicable' is defined in the model WHS Act as being the requirement to weigh up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring (i.e. the probability of a person being exposed to harm)
- the degree of harm that might result if the hazard or risk occurred (i.e. the potential seriousness of injury or harm)
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk and ways of eliminating or minimising it

- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the hazard or risk
- after assessing all of the above, the cost of eliminating or minimising the hazard or risk
- degree of influence or control of the matter.

Implementing Controls

The agreed control measures that you implement into work operations will lead to minor or major changes in the workplace.

To ensure the controls are given the best chance of success, you will need to plan how you will introduce them to workers and supervisors.

The Model Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks recommends three essential support mechanisms when implementing risk control measures:

Written procedures

- Develop a written safe work procedure that describes the task, identifies the hazards and documents how the task is to be performed to minimise the risks.

Training, instruction and information

- Train your workers in the new process to ensure that they are able to perform the task safely.
- Training should require workers to demonstrate that they are competent in performing the task.
- Training, instruction and information must be provided in a form that can be understood by all workers including those with special needs.

Supervision

- The level of supervision required will depend on the level of risk and the experience of the workers involved.
- High levels of supervision are necessary where inexperienced workers are expected to follow new procedures or carry out difficult and critical tasks.

Example

Hazard report form

Part 1

Hazard report number:		Area of work:	
Date:		Specific hazard location:	
Reported by:		Contact phone number:	
		Contact email:	
Hazard description:			

Risk assessment		
Risk likelihood legend	Grade	Level of likelihood
	A	Expected (will occur regularly)
	B	Probable (will occur at some stage)
	C	Possible (could occur)
	D	Improbable (could occur but unlikely)
	E	Rare (may occur but in limited situations)
Risk impact/ consequence legend	Grade	Level of impact
	1	Insignificant
	2	Minor
	3	Moderate
	4	Major
	5	Catastrophic

		Consequences				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain	High	High	Very High	Very High	Very High
	Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very High	Very High
	Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Very High
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate

Suggested controls

(Apply the hierarchy of control: elimination, substitution, isolation, engineering, administration, personal protective equipment)

Immediate actions taken

Having completed Part 1, forward the original to the health and safety representative (HSR) for the area, who will forward this on to the relevant manager.

Hazard report form continued...

Part 2

Action required: (remember to apply the hierarchy of control)

Recommended control(s):			
Job request raised:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Job no.	
Person responsible			
Controls to be completed by:			
Approved by organisational unit head/officer	(name)	(signature)	(date)
Completion verified by health and safety representative (HSR)	(name)	(signature)	(date)

Practice Task 11

Question 1

Number each step in the hierarchy of control, starting from the best option (number 1) and working down to the least preferred option (number 6).

- Engineering controls: use engineering methods to control the hazard at its source.
- PPE: introduce PPE such as goggles, gloves and masks to reduce exposure to a hazard.
- Elimination: eliminate the hazard from the workplace entirely.
- Isolation: isolate the hazard by physically removing it from the workplace or by securing the area involved.
- Substitution: substitute or modify the hazard by replacing it with something less dangerous.
- Administrative controls: these are management processes that are introduced to ensure workers' health and safety.

Question 2

Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) The first step in implementing risk management is to hold a team meeting to discuss employee responsibilities. >> True >> False
- b) Your supervisor, line manager or WHS specialist may ask for your input and collaborate with you to determine the likelihood of an incident occurring and the degree of harm that may be caused. >> True >> False
- c) The best way to control a hazard is to substitute it with something less dangerous. Substitution is the first choice in a system called the hierarchy of control. >> True >> False

4C Respond to inadequate controls

The final step of the risk management process is to monitor and review the controls.

This is perhaps the most important and often neglected part of the process. By completing this step, you are able to determine whether the controls are working effectively, report on inadequacies of existing controls and identify if new hazards have arisen.

As with all other steps in the risk management process, the methods of reviewing risk controls must be performed in consultation with workers.

Monitor the controls

Once a risk control has been introduced into work operations, it must be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to make the necessary improvements.

In some cases, risk controls may have caused new hazards, or are not serving their purpose in reducing the risks.

Ongoing reviews may be conducted weekly, monthly or quarterly depending on the nature of the hazard and its risks.

The WHS regulations explain five key situations where control measures must be reviewed. These include:

1. When the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk; for example, when an incident occurs
2. Before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control
3. If a new hazard or risk is identified
4. If the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
5. If a health and safety representative requests a review

To perform a review on a risk control, the same activities performed in the hazard identification step can also apply.

The results of the review should reveal a risk rating that has been reduced to acceptable levels. If it has not been reduced, the controls may be inadequate and need to be modified. You can complete a review of the risk controls and hazard by:

- performing a follow-up inspection
- performing a follow-up risk assessment
- reviewing hazard records and reports
- observing the hazard/work site
- consulting workers.

Importance of consultation

Consultation is essential in evaluating the effectiveness of a risk control measure and finding inadequacies in risk controls.

Workers are the people on the frontline using the controls and they are exposed to the hazards. Often, they are well aware of the hazards and risks associated with a task or work area. Involving workers in consultation about risk controls will result in greater engagement and support for WHS changes.

If problems in risk controls occur, you will need to revert back to step one of the four-step risk management process, and complete each step again until the risk level has been reduced to safe levels.

Always document your review to demonstrate compliance with workplace health and safety policies and legislation. Questions to ask workers as part of consultation processes include:

- Are the controls working effectively?
- Have the controls introduced any new problems?
- Have all the hazards been identified?
- Have the new work methods made the job safer?
- Are people following the new procedures?
- Has sufficient instruction and training been provided?
- Is the likelihood of consequences reducing over time?

Document hazard management procedures

All parts of the hazard management processes will need to be documented according to workplace procedures.

This procedure is used to describe to the workers, HSC members and HSRs how the WHS hazards and risks are being managed in the work environment.

Hazards and risk controls should also be documented for the purpose of showing compliance with the model codes of practice, and for making decisions about how to improve workplace health and safety.

Details of the review process can be recorded in a 'risk register', which is a simple table that allows users to record all the necessary information about each of the four steps of the risk management process. Consider the following when documenting the hazard management procedure:

- Use words every worker can understand.
- Remove legal jargon and complex terms.
- Keep the content short, simple and to the point.
- Use bullets and lists, rather than large paragraphs.
- Edit, proof-read and format the document.
- Have at least two other people check the procedure before distributing it to the workers.

An example of a risk register is provided on the following page.

Description of hazard	Risks/impacts on people and operations	Assessment of likelihood	Assessment of seriousness	Risk rating	Mitigation actions	Residual risk rating after controls have been applied	Responsibility for mitigation action(s)	Date of follow-up review

Practice Task 12

Question 1

What are some situations where control measures must be reviewed? Tick all that apply.

- Every time a new employee commences with the company
- When the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk; for example, when an incident occurs
- Before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control
- There are no identified changes to existing hazards and risks
- If the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
- If a health and safety representative requests a review

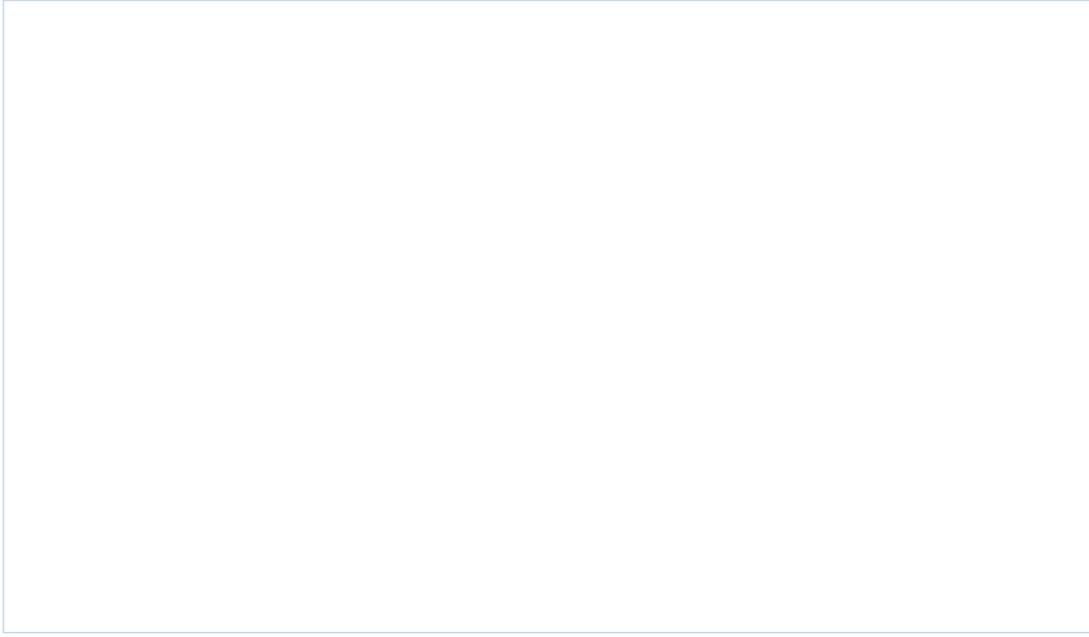
Question 2

Which of the following actions should involve employee consultation? Tick all that apply.

- Reviewing confidential financial statements
- Conducting workplace risk assessments
- Incorporating new health and safety requirements imposed by legislation, regulations and codes of practice
- Making decisions about potential training providers
- Reviewing policies, procedures and work practices

Question 3

Why is it important to document hazard management processes?



4D Complete incident reports

Under WHS legislation, PCBUs must keep information and records relating to incidents involving the health and safety of their workers.

Organisations may use specific forms to record the details of minor accidents and serious injuries. Forms are also available from sources such as WHS authorities.

Accurately completing and maintaining WHS records ensures the organisation can build valuable reference information in relation to managing WHS in the organisation. This can be used this to identify hazards and risk controls for its work groups. It also enhances the organisation's ability to maintain a healthy and safe workplace.

Incident records

WHS records are a critical part of WHS management within an organisation and enable organisations to comply with WHS policies, procedures and legislation.

Records assist in identifying the root cause of incidents, injuries and near misses; where changes have affected WHS; patterns and trends for WHS; changes in normal activities; and whether corrective action has resolved WHS issues.

WHS records cover a range of information about the organisation, its workplace and the workers in the organisation.

Below is a list of possible WHS records:

- Any record of alcohol or drug use
- Records as specified in Commonwealth and state or territory WHS legislation, regulations and codes of practice
- Audit and inspection reports
- Consultation; for example, HSC meetings and work team meeting agendas, including WHS items and actions
- First-aid/medical post records
- Hazardous chemicals registers
- Induction, instruction and training
- Manufacturer and supplier information, including dangerous goods storage lists
- Plant and equipment maintenance and testing reports
- Workers compensation and rehabilitation records
- Workplace environmental monitoring records
- Worker licencing and competency records
- Records of consultation in the workplace

Complete WHS documents

It is crucial that all WHS documentation is completed accurately and promptly.

You must be familiar with the processes, systems and tools used by your organisation to achieve this and ensure you comply with these requirements at all times.

Your organisation's WHS policy and procedures indicate what forms and systems are to be used to complete and record WHS documents. These include:

- workplace incidents and near miss reports
- risk assessment and risk control strategies
- workers compensation forms
- induction checklists
- records of consultation
- accident reporting
- WHS training records
- inspection reports
- workplace hazards.

Record-keeping systems

The WHS laws state that records of WHS matters must be maintained by the PCBU.

Sound record-keeping systems helps businesses to identify problems, leading to greater awareness of hazards and the ability to prevent recurrences and new incidents before they arise. The more information a business collects, the greater its ability to understand why incidents occurred, which will assist in making better decisions, setting priorities and identifying trends.

Organisational procedures should be in place for collecting, filing, storing, retrieving and disposing of WHS records. Many organisations use information and record-keeping systems linked to their human resource management processes to record, update and maintain WHS information about their workers. Other organisations implement specific WHS management systems to enable the completion of activities associated with WHS management in the workplace.

Supervisors and managers are generally responsible for maintaining WHS records; however, workers must report on incidents as part of their responsibilities under the organisational policy.

Notification of injury

Minor injuries should be entered in an injury register and in the first-aid register.

For more serious injuries that require time off work, the following should be completed:

- Notification of injury form to the relevant government authorities
- Entry in the injury register
- Entry in the first-aid register
- Workers compensation report form

The notification of injury form is to be completed and forwarded to the relevant government body in your state or territory. This is for serious incidents such as death, amputation and serious eye or head injuries, as well as near misses that could have resulted in death or injury.

The incident needs to be reported within a specified time frame, regardless of whether it involved a worker, contractor or visitor. The employer must also keep a copy for a specified minimum time.

First-aid register

A first-aid register documents any treatment provided to someone involved in a workplace incident. The first-aid register includes:

- the name of the injured person
- the department or work area
- the date and time of the treatment
- the name of the person providing first aid
- a description of the injury
- what treatment was provided
- the first-aid items used.

Injury register

An injury register (hard copy or electronic) must be kept at all workplaces. Many organisations use an internal incident report form to meet the requirements of the injury register. This is acceptable as long as all required information is provided.

An injury register should record:

- the injured person's name
- the injured person's job title or occupation
- the time and date of the injury or illness
- the exact location of the person when the injury or illness occurred
- how the injury or illness happened
- the nature of the injury or illness and the body parts affected
- the names of any witnesses
- the date of notification
- the name of the person entering the details in the register if not the injured person
- acknowledgment from the employer that notification of the incident or injury has been received.

Example

Workplace incident report form

Here is an example of a workplace incident report form.

Workplace incident report				
Surname		First name:		Report no:
Address				
Telephone no:		Mobile no:		
Date of injury:		Time:		
Details of injury:				
Bodily location of injury:				
Description of the circumstances of the incident:				
Description of incident by witness:				
Signature of witness: (please also print name)		Date:		
When was the injury reported?				
Date:		Time:		
Who was the injury reported to?	Name:			
	Position:			
Details of action by management:				
Date ceased work:		Time ceased work:		
Total time lost:				
Details of preventive measures taken (to be completed by HSR):				
Name:	Signed:			
	Date:			

Practice Task 13

Question 1

Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) A major injury is the only category of injury that must be reported. >> True >> False
- b) The appropriate person or department to report an emergency to could include the fire warden, first-aid officer, health and safety representative, supervisor or owner/manager. >> True >> False

Question 2

What should you do if a worker sustains a serious injury and needs to take time off work? Tick all that apply.

- Complete a notification of injury form and send it to the relevant government authorities.
- Await the worker's return before notifying relevant government authorities, so that you know the full extent of his/her injuries.
- Record the details of the incident in the injury register.
- Notify your customers using email or social media.
- Complete a worker's compensation report form.

Question 3

Which of the following occurrences are examples of WHS incidents you may need to report on in the workplace? Tick all that apply.

- Serious equipment, plant or property damage
- Exposure to hazardous substances or circumstances
- Low printer toner
- Dangerous occurrences that may have injured someone
- Manual handling tasks

Summary

- A hazard is a source, or potential source, of human injury, ill health or disease. For every hazard, there are risks. Risk is the likelihood of a hazard resulting in an injury or disease, together with the seriousness of the injury or disease.
- Hazard management is the process of finding the sources of danger in the work environment and taking the best action possible to make the workplace safer.
- The most valuable information you can provide about hazards in your work environment will come from having a daily awareness of your work environment and the hazards that you are exposed to when carrying out your work tasks.
- Hazards must be reported to your supervisor, line manager or specialist WHS person as quickly as possible.
- Once a hazard has been reported, action must be taken to either eliminate or control the hazard before it results in injury or illness.
- The hierarchy of control must be followed when deciding on how to address WHS hazards, starting with elimination of the hazard, where possible
- Once a risk control has been introduced into work operations, it must be reviewed and, where necessary, revised to make the necessary improvements.
- Consultation is essential in evaluating the effectiveness of a risk control measure and finding inadequacies in risk controls.
- WHS records are a critical part of WHS management within an organisation and enable organisations to comply with WHS policies, procedures and legislation.

Learning Checkpoint 4

Assist in addressing WHS hazards

Part A

1. Which of the following statements about incident reports are correct? Select true or false for each one.
 - a) Near-miss incidents do not need to be reported. » True » False
 - b) Incident reports should be used to investigate underlying causes so that steps can be taken to eliminate or minimise the risk of the incident recurring. » True » False
 - c) An incident report should include a description of the circumstances surrounding the incident. » True » False
 - d) Information included on an incident report form can be viewed by everyone. » True » False
 - e) The format of a formal incident report will look different for each employee. » True » False
2. Which of the following methods can be used to identify hazards in your workplace? Tick all that apply.
 - Asking friends and family members for their feedback on safety
 - Scheduled workplace inspections and walk-arounds
 - Carrying out hazard hunts in small groups
 - Checking the local messenger
 - Reviewing incident reports in team meetings

3. Draw a line to match each workplace risk management procedure to its correct risk management control type.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| » Isolation | » A faulty printer cartridge that is leaking hazardous material is replaced with a new one. |
| » Elimination | » All workers must complete a minimum of 36 hours training on the equipment. |
| » Engineering controls | » All toxic cleaning chemicals are to be removed from the workplace entirely. |
| » Substitution | » Sharp objects are to be securely stored in lockable cabinets/drawers. |
| » Administrative controls | » New shelving equipment is installed to store heavy boxes of files. |

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Natiq is an administration officer in the human resources department of a large professional services organisation. His role mainly involves scheduling appointments for staff and management, entering information into the computing systems, ordering stationery and collating reports for the supervisors.

Natiq has recently been asked by his manager to take on more of a safety role in the department. One of the key tasks involves monitoring, reviewing and reporting on risk management controls used in the office.

Natiq was also asked to consult with other workers to determine the effectiveness of current risk controls measures and identify any issues where they are failing to address workplace hazards.

He documented the review in a risk register that is used to demonstrate the organisation's compliance with workplace health and safety policies and legislation.

1. Why is it important for Natiq to monitor and review risk management controls?

2. Which of the following methods could Natiq use to review current risk management controls that are not be working effectively? Tick all that apply.

- Placing an order for more personal protective equipment
- Performing a follow-up risk assessment
- Using industry standards
- Reviewing hazard records and reports
- Consulting workers

3. Select true or false for each of the following.

- a) Natiq does not need to document and report hazard management processes to relevant stakeholders if the hazard is safely removed. » True » False

- b) Natiq will need to access a copy of the incident register when documenting risks and actions used to manage those risks. » True » False