



Manage a health & safety induction for office-based workers

As a manager, you are **legally responsible** for the health and safety of your employees. A high-quality health and safety induction for new employees will help you meet your responsibilities.

If your employees work in an **office-based environment**, this guide and accompanying interactive quiz will help you to **create** a high-quality induction, **check** whether each employee has absorbed the information, and keep an **audit trail** for legal purposes.

Advice on how to manage an office health and safety induction process

This guide will help you to create a high-quality health and safety induction for an **office-based environment**. You'll be able to check whether each employee has absorbed the information - and keep an audit trail.

There are four steps to this process (the first of these is a one-off):

1. Create a health and safety presentation relevant to your office environment and workforce. We supply a PowerPoint template that you should review and, where necessary, adapt. See the page in this guide on how to create a health and safety induction for your office.
 2. Ensure that all new employees receive this presentation.
 3. After the presentation, ask each employee to use the interactive quiz to score their understanding of health and safety issues. It's an interactive and objective way of testing what they've understood. At the end of the tool, they'll get a personalised score and a PDF which can be printed out.
 4. Check the printouts and keep them as an audit trail - to show that you have given a high-quality induction. It's important that you also **address any gaps or misunderstanding** shown by any employee's printout.
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Create a health and safety induction for your office

As a manager, you are legally responsible for the health and safety of your employees. A high-quality **health and safety induction** for new employees is a key way of meeting your responsibilities.

The ideal health and safety induction should:

- identify the major risks and hazards workers will face in **your** office
- focus on the best ways of reducing the probability of these occurring, and their impact if they occur
- name the individuals responsible for key health and safety matters
- give your employees an understanding of the processes for reviewing risks

and ways to reduce them so that they can see if these are being carried out by the right individuals

- emphasise that employees themselves share responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of their environment
- not be excessively long
- be regularly reviewed and updated

It may seem that an office-based environment poses few risks - and indeed typically they will be fewer than, say, a factory floor or a timber yard. But **few risks** does not mean there are **no risks**. By the end of drafting your induction presentation you must have a clear understanding of the risks in your environment.

You can download a sample health and safety induction presentation for an office-based environment (PPT) - [Opens in a new window](#). The interactive quiz your employee will use mirrors this presentation, so it's a good place to start from. However, it is vitally important that you **consider whether this presentation needs to be adapted to reflect any particular circumstances in your office environment**.

Principal risks in an office environment

It may seem that an office-based environment poses few risks - and indeed they are usually fewer than, say, a factory floor or a timber yard. But few risks does not mean there are no risks.

Prepare for your presentation by first carrying out a risk assessment. Walk round every part of your premises, ideally with a couple of other people, to think through the problems and hazards that might arise. For more information, see our guide on managing the risks in your business.

You could also use our Health and Safety Performance Indicator to benchmark your business' performance and think through the risks and a mitigation for each.

Fire risks

Fire is an ever-present risk. You need to ensure that your employees understand what to do if a fire occurs, who will be in charge, and where they need to gather outside.

See our guide on fire safety and risk assessment.

Slips, trips and falls

There is a significant risk of slips, trips and falls in any workplace. There are obvious hazards such as uneven steps or trailing cables, but clutter, bags and other personal belongings, boxes of paper, discarded packaging, etc on the floor can also create hazards. For more information, see our guide on how to avoid slips and trips.

Loose or frayed electrical cabling can create electrical fires or slips and trips. New electrical items such as copiers, printers or hard drives are often added in unplanned ways, creating new hazards. Keep cabling under regular review.

Hazardous substances

Printers and copier toner cartridges contain poisonous substances. The best way to ensure that your employees aren't exposed to these is to make sure they follow the manufacturer's instructions. See our guide on how to manage harmful substances safely.

Catering

Catering facilities, even a simple water boiler, can cause serious injury or infection if they are not managed and used properly. Think through the catering facilities in your office: is someone responsible for cleaning the fridge regularly?

Every work environment is different. While carrying out your risk assessment you should aim to get a fresh point of view on what you see every day. Involving a trusted colleague from a supplier or partner business might bring in the fresh pair of eyes you need.

When you have finished your risk assessment and want to create a presentation based on it, download the sample template health and safety induction for an office-based environment (PPT) - [Opens in a new window](#). The interactive quiz mirrors this presentation, so it's a good place to start. However, it is vitally important that you consider whether this presentation needs to be adapted to reflect particular circumstances in your office environment.

Finally, use our interactive health and safety induction quiz yourself to ensure that it meets your needs. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete.

If the quiz doesn't meet your needs, we will value your feedback, bearing in mind that we intend it to address fairly standard office environments.

Test that each employee has absorbed the health and safety information

When you have prepared your health and safety induction presentation, you need to set up a regular routine ensuring that every new employee or contractor receives an induction in a meaningful way. Our interactive tool will help you to check what they understand and remember, but this can only ever be as good as the briefing they receive from you.

It may be tempting to email your presentation to each employee when they start, but if you do this you should consider whether you can confidently declare that you have given health and safety matters the attention the law demands. Best practice is to ensure that there are verbal sessions - which give an opportunity for questions and answers - and walkabouts to ensure that fire exits and other spaces are pointed out to the employee.

However you give your health and safety induction, at the end of it point each employee to the interactive health and safety induction quiz. Once completed, they should download the PDF file, print it out and give it to you (or they can email the PDF file to you if that's easier).

Note that the results for each employee are **not saved until they have downloaded and printed out the PDF file**. If they use the tool and close their browser window, their individual results will be lost. Make sure they download and print the PDF as soon as they have completed the tool.

We recommend that, once you have checked each employee's printout - and taken any corrective action required - you keep it as an audit trail to show that they have received the induction.

The final step is to set up a regular risk assessment routine and ensure that your presentation stays up to date with new risks, hazards and changing members of staff - as well as the law. Sign up for our regulation updates service to keep on top of new and changing health and safety regulations.

It's also a good idea to regularly use our interactive Health & safety performance indicator to find out how well you're managing your health and safety.

You can find this guide by navigating to:

Home > Workplace health & safety > Protecting your business > Manage a health & safety induction for office-based workers

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