

NEBOSH

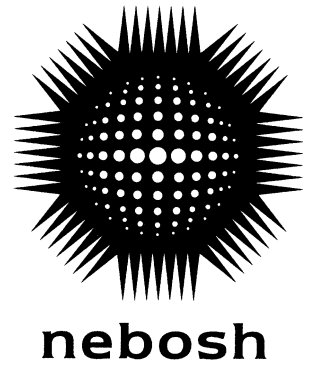
MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

UNIT NG1:

For: NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety

UNIT NGC1:

For: NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety
NEBOSH National Certificate in Construction Health and Safety
NEBOSH National Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management



Open Book Examination

Available for 24 hours from 02 December 2020, 09:00 GMT

Guidance to learners

This is an open book examination. It is not invigilated, and you are free to use any learning resources to which you have access, eg your course notes, or a website, etc.

By submitting this completed assessment for marking, you are declaring it is entirely your own work. Knowingly claiming work to be your own when it is someone else's work is malpractice, which carries severe penalties. This means that you must **not** collaborate with or copy work from others. Neither should you 'cut and paste' blocks of text from the Internet or other sources.

The examination begins with a realistic scenario to set the scene. You will then need to complete a series of tasks based on this scenario. Each task will consist of one or more questions.

Your responses to **most** of these tasks should wholly, or partly, draw on relevant information from the scenario. The task will clearly state the extent to which this is required.

The marks available are shown in brackets to the right of each question, or part of each question. This will help guide you to the amount of information required in your response. In general, one mark is given for each correct technical point that is clearly demonstrated. Avoid writing too little as this will make it difficult for the Examiner to award marks. Single word answers or lists are unlikely to gain marks as this would not normally be enough to show understanding or a connection with the scenario.

You are **not** expected to write more than 3000 words in total.

Try to distribute your time and word count proportionately across all tasks.

It is recommended that you use the answer template.

Please attempt **ALL** tasks.

SCENARIO

Over recent months large numbers of people, in almost every country in the world, have been affected by the spread of a virus. The situation has been categorised as a global pandemic and has led to national emergencies. Scientists discover more and more every day about how the virus works. However, the *current* understanding is that this virus is very easily transmitted through physical contact (between people and with contaminated surfaces) and breathing in respiratory droplets (mainly from coughing and sneezing but also from normal talking). In most cases, the virus leads to mild illness in the young, fit and healthy, but can cause severe illness and even death for others.

Official guidance on how to control the virus is also subject to change as the science evolves. The exact details can depend on which country you are in, and even which part of the country. But, *at the current time, in your location*, the primary control measures that are recommended against the spread of the virus are: keeping a physical distance between people (called 'social distancing'); general hygiene measures (frequent hand washing or hand sanitising, and regular cleaning and decontamination of surfaces). Wearing face masks (that cover the mouth and nose) is also recommended in some circumstances, as an additional measure.

You are the Health and Safety Adviser for a medium-sized insurance company that has certification to an internationally recognised occupational health and safety management system standard (something which, over the years, has made the organisation more efficient and attracted some important corporate clients). You normally work in an office building but, in order to control the spread of the virus through physical contact, and protect people, you, and all other office workers, are following *current* government instructions to work from home. In addition, it is anticipated that being away from the busy office environment will reduce work-related incidents (near misses, accidents, ill-health, property damage) and any possible investigations, enforcement action and civil claims that would have arisen.

You have written a procedure and guidance on best practice for home working, including workstation set-up in a home-working environment. This guidance has been distributed to all workers. The organisation is making widespread use of technology to enable remote home working, including video-conferencing facilities for business meetings and client contacts.

The organisation is also concerned about the workers' mental well-being during this new way of working. The management team have therefore asked each department to schedule short (30-minute) computer-based team meetings, at least on a weekly basis. The intention is to help workers maintain social contact with colleagues, but they are also a forum to raise concerns. Alternatively, one-to-one meetings can be arranged for those reluctant to discuss things during team meetings.

Six months later when the Government has the virus outbreak under much more control, Government advice changes, allowing people to return to offices, provided they implement a range of additional control measures to limit virus transmission. The Managing Director calls the Facilities Manager, the Human Resources Manager and you to a meeting to plan for a possible return to the office. Before the meeting, the Managing Director asks you and the Facilities Manager to carry out a specific virus risk assessment, with input from worker representatives. To help develop workable measures, you also visit an organisation that is at a more advanced stage of implementing virus management measures. You also research the latest government advice on making workplaces, like yours, secure against the virus.

At the meeting, you and the Facilities Manager present the findings of your risk assessment, site visit and research. You decide that the significant findings of the risk assessment will be shared with all workers through team meetings before the office return and a copy of the signed risk assessment will be placed on all health and safety noticeboards in the office. The organisation will extend the cleaning company contract to include more frequent and extensive cleaning of the office. An e-mail, including a detailed step-by-step approach to thoroughly washing hands and other hygiene procedures, will be sent to all workers. This will be supplemented by posters which will be in all washrooms. New hand sanitising procedures will be written and relayed during remote computer

team meetings and made available for reference on the company intranet. You will develop work instructions on social distancing measures. You will write a procedure for wearing personal protective equipment at work, especially when working in enclosed rooms. You will post additional social distancing measures to manage transmission risk on the company intranet.

The Human Resources Manager will also update the first-aid policy, fire evacuation arrangements and other emergency procedures. You indicate that reporting requirements for any virus-related ill-health cases to the Government authorities will need to be introduced and communicated to those implementing them. You and the Facilities Manager volunteer to carry out a detailed analysis, and corresponding update, of the health and safety management system.

All those at the meeting agree that the implementation of all these modified procedures, based on the risk assessment, will need acknowledgement, understanding and application by all workers. There will be an emphasis on training, with associated presentations devised and workshops held. There will be an expectation that supervisors and managers effectively implement and actively monitor the new arrangements through scheduled behavioural safety observations and safety tours. The Human Resources Manager naturally links this with an updated disciplinary procedure. You respond to this by suggesting that the significant changes at the organisation will require time for workers to adapt. There will need to be an acceptance that the new way of working will take some time to change behaviour and therefore become embedded in the culture. This applies especially to young workers (who may be far less directly affected by the virus). You also mention the need for revised policies for visitors and control of contractors. The Managing Director suggests that you and the Facilities Manager update these policies before the next meeting.

The organisation is facing greatly reduced income caused by the impact of the pandemic on the economy. The planned virus control measures will involve significant additional cost (initial and on-going) to the organisation if they are to be fully implemented. The Managing Director is therefore exploring areas where savings can be made. It is almost time to renew the occupational health and safety management system certification and, although the organisation is rightly proud of it, the Managing Director sees discontinuing certification as one way to make a saving. The largest external cost is the frequent audits conducted by a third party. You agree with the Managing Director that there are costs with certification but argue that, if done properly, these are outweighed by many benefits including reducing overall cost across the business.

The Managing Director thinks that external audits are unnecessary and add little value because the organisation already conducts regular workplace inspections. They also question why external parties are used when their own workers could carry out audits to lower cost. You advise them that audits differ considerably from inspections. You highlight this by telling them that you could audit your workplace inspection processes, but you would not inspect your audit processes! You also comment that using internal auditors may appear to save the organisation some money, but they are not always the best people to use.

Task 1: Managing risks for those working from home

- 1 Comment on the organisation's approach to managing risks to those working from home. (10)

Note: You should support your answer, where applicable, using relevant information from the scenario.

Task 2: Communicating health and safety

- 2 Effective communication is essential to positively influence health and safety culture. (10)
- Based on the scenario only, give examples of how communication is used effectively by the organisation.

Task 3: Benefits of certification to an ISO occupational health and safety management system standard to the organisation

- 3 What arguments could you use to help the Managing Director understand the benefits to the organisation of maintaining occupational health and safety management system certification? (20)

Note: You should support your answer, where applicable, using relevant information from the scenario.

Task 4: Applying further control measures

- 4 Based on the scenario only, what *administrative* measures are the organisation planning to take that would limit the spread of the virus and keep workers safe and healthy? (20)

Task 5: Influencing behaviour to improve performance

- 5 When workers eventually return to working in the office, with the new control measures in place, they will need to adopt new behaviours. (15)
- You think that the organisation will be effective in positively influencing this behaviour change. Justify why you believe this, using examples from the scenario only to support your justification.

Task 6: Checking management system effectiveness through auditing

- 6 The Managing Director appears to be confused about audits, inspections and those who carry them out. (10)
- Advise the Managing Director on
- (a) the differences between an audit and a workplace inspection. (10)
- (b) the benefits of using third party auditors, rather than internal workers, for carrying out health and safety audits of the management system. (5)

Task 7: Identifying data used to monitor health and safety performance

- 7 The organisation needs to determine the effectiveness of its health and safety performance.

Based on the activities (actual or planned) in the scenario, what could you collect and use as *health and safety performance indicators* in the organisation?

(10)

End of examination

Now follow the instructions on submitting your answers.