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safer working together

# UK Health & Safety Requirements For SMEs






# Contents

Introduction .....	3
Key H&S Acts / Legislation.....	4
Summary of the key regulations for SME .....	5
Is H&S training a key requirement .....	6
Engineering sector-specific requirements .....	8
The benefits of online H&S courses .....	9
Why choose Safety Aide? .....	10
Take a free trial of our online H&S training portal .....	10



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 <https://www.safetyaide.com>  [08000 806 801](tel:08000806801)  
 [info@safetyaide.com](mailto:info@safetyaide.com)

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# Introduction

Running a small-to-medium enterprise (SME) comes with many rewards - but just as many responsibilities. Keeping your staff members safe is an essential part of your business, but what are the UK health & safety requirements for you as an SME? We have created this guide to help you to remain fully compliant, provide your employees with a secure environment, and give them the knowledge they need to stay safe at work.

Since 2020, more and more workplaces are moving partially online as hybrid working is gaining momentum. It's for this reason that Safety Aide have created our extensive online Health & Safety training courses.

In our comprehensive Health & Safety training courses we provide you with awareness in a range of topics, including but not limited to:

- Health & Safety Induction
- Fire Awareness
- Working At Height
- Noise Awareness
- DSE (Display Screen Equipment)
- Manual handling

But first, let's learn a bit more about the importance of Health & Safety training...



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# Key H&S Acts / Legislation

Every SME needs to comply with certain key H&S acts and legislation laid out to ensure that employees are protected and that every working environment is meeting the expected health and safety requirements.

For SMEs who employ other people, the UK Health & Safety legislation applies and must be followed. The main legislation you should be aware of as an SME are the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 is the primary legislation for occupational health and safety in the United Kingdom and it's there to define the duties of employers and employees to maintain health and safety standards in the workplace through training and incorporating provisions and procedures that are understood and adhered to by all employees.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 are in place to outline what requirements employers must follow in order to manage health and safety and maintain a safe workplace. This includes conducting risk assessments, providing health and safety training for every employee and making sure that your organisation has at least one competent person to oversee health and safety matters whilst following legislation.



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# Summary Of The Key Regulations For SMEs

There are requirements you must meet as an SME with staff members who rely on you to keep them safe and informed. You will need to appoint a staff member to manage your health and safety duties, and write up a health and safety policy of which your staff members must be aware. It is also important that you carry out a risk assessment of your workplace, and address any risks quickly and in a suitable manner.

It is vital that you train your employees in all applicable areas of health and safety for your workplace, and have liability insurance for your place of business.



You should check whether your business is required to register with the HSE. Following this, the key regulations your business should abide by are:

- 1 - Providing adequate staff training, covering health and safety procedures and ensuring they are carried out.
- 2 - Providing protection for staff welfare.
- 3 - Providing a safe working environment.
- 4 - Providing the correct information, as well as instructing and supervising your staff.

Remember that your health and safety policy will need to be written down once your business has more than five employees.



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# Is H&S Training A Legal Requirement?

As laid out under The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, every employer, including SMEs, is legally required to provide employees with appropriate health and safety training and to provide a safe working environment. This includes equipment and PPE necessary for employees to work safely.

This is further expanded by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which identifies specific situations where having health and safety training is important which can include new arrivals, any industry specific risks that have emerged or updating skills.

## Who Needs Health & Safety Training In Your Workplace?

Anyone employed by your organisation will be required to have health and safety training from the managers and supervisors to your employees themselves. This then gives everyone a clearer idea on the health and safety policies put in place and how risks can be prevented.

### 1) Employees

Your employees will need to know about how they can work their role safely and without causing any risks to themselves or their colleagues. They'll also need to know of any new health and safety implications that can directly affect their role.

### 2) Managers and supervisors


Within your organisation, you'll need to make sure that your managers and supervisors understand what is expected from them in terms of health and safety, and how you expect them to deliver that knowledge to employees. To ensure this, they'll need training on specific hazards of certain processes and how those risks can be managed.

### 3) You!

As an employer you're also required to have regular health and safety training so that you're up to date with identifying hazards and knowing how to quickly get help from associations or authorities if an accident were to happen. You'll also need to know how to consult employees on the health and safety issues linked to their role.

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## RIDDOR reports

RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) is the main measure one must take when reporting an accident or injury that takes place within the workplace. This means that a responsible person must report an injury that occurs. You should always keep a log of employee accidents and injuries that have taken place, both for your own reference and for audit purposes.

A RIDDOR report must be made in a range of circumstances, such as if a death or injury takes place on your premises or is work-related. These need to fall under “specified injuries” such as certain fractures, amputations, or injuries that could cause a reduction or loss of eyesight, brain or organ damage, serious burns which cause notable damage, head injuries that cause the victim to lose consciousness or injuries caused by working in enclosed spaces. Any injury which results in a hospital stay of over twenty-four hours will also require a RIDDOR report, as will any incapacitation of over seven days. If a member of the public is injured in your workplace which results in their direct hospitalisation, it requires reporting.

Other reasons for RIDDOR reports include occupational diseases (including damage caused by typing or computer use such as carpal tunnel syndrome), occupational cancer, or disease caused by exposure to chemicals.



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# Engineering Sector - Specific Requirements

There are some specific requirements applicable to the engineering sector, due to the increase in dangerous machinery and activities. You will need to provide full training to employees, and also retrain them whenever new equipment is introduced.

If your business is focuses on engineering, or you have chemicals or other hazardous materials present, you may need a sign indicating that PPE (personal protective equipment) must be worn in these areas. This should be clearly displayed at the entrance to these areas, as well as within the working area itself.

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# The Benefits Of Online H&S Courses

Providing your employees with health and safety courses (and receiving it yourself) is highly beneficial. It reduces the chance of accidents occurring and keeps your employees aware of what to do in case of emergencies. Increased awareness of health and safety overall should result in fewer sick days being taken due to workplace illnesses or injuries and can help your employees to feel more valued and increase their loyalty.

In the last two years countless companies have learned of the untold benefits of moving online, and many have branched out to providing some key support services for their employees solely online.

No longer do team members have to stay late in the office, or come in on weekends in their own time. With an online Health & Safety course, team members can catch up on their progress from the comfort of their own homes, in their own time, with no rush – and no one will have to take time off work to get the training done. All your team members need are an internet connection.



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# Why Choose Safety Aide?

Safety Aide provides courses in a number of different aspects of health and safety which would greatly benefit any SME. From fire safety and workplace risks to a whole host of other factors to be aware of such as DSE, ergonomics, slips, trips and falls, asbestos awareness, and more. We offer online courses that are convenient for your staff, wherever they are, as well as delivering assessments on site that will be carried out by experienced professionals.

We are on hand to provide you with awareness courses that will help you to comply with the current legal requirements, providing you with all the information you need to keep your employees safe and knowledgeable.

Our e-learning opportunities also allow you the benefits of in-depth Health & Safety awareness with none of the overheads associated with in-person events. By taking our courses, not only will you save money but your employees will have increased health and safety awareness which will reduce the risk of accidents happening.

## Take A Free Trial Of Our Online H&S Training Portal

Do you want your staff to have a greater eye for health and safety in the workplace? You can take a free trial of our online health and safety training portal, encompassing a wide range of health and safety topics to choose from. Sign up now to access the knowledge you need.



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