



British Safety Council

International Certificate in
Occupational Safety and Health

2014 Specification

(for Examinations in 2014)

Version 1

Publishing Policy for Specifications

Specifications are published on 1 September each year to allow registered course providers and candidates adequate time to prepare for assessments from 1 January the following year.

For all British Safety Council specifications the electronic version on the British Safety Council website is definitive in the case of any difference between it and a previously printed version.

The electronic version on the website is updated if any significant changes are made during the lifetime of the specification.

All significant changes to a specification are side barred, irrespective of whether they are changes to the subject content, the scheme of assessment or the administrative arrangements. The exceptions are presentational changes and correction of typographical errors. Side bars are used to indicate any changes from the previous version only; side bars in Version 3 indicate changes from Version 2, but not changes from Version 1.

Course providers and candidates should check that this printed version of the specification is the latest version by visiting www.britsafe.org

Acknowledgements

This specification has been developed by the British Safety Council in consultation with professional bodies, standard setting bodies, enforcement bodies, employers, consultants and other interested parties. The British Safety Council recognises and values all those who contribute their time and expertise to the development of its specifications.

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The British Safety Council

The British Safety Council is one of the world's leading advocates of workplace health and safety. Our vision is that no-one should be killed, injured or made ill by work activities.

We are a leading charity and all that we do is for public benefit. We currently use the surplus from our revenue generating activities to provide free health and safety e-learning courses to employees of our member organisations.

We are a government-regulated awarding body and, as such, must comply with a wide range of conditions set by the regulator so that rigour and consistency in the awarding of qualifications is maintained.

The British Safety Council is the only awarding body to offer a complete suite of health and safety qualifications from Entry Level to Level 6 in the UK Qualifications and Credit Framework.

- BSC Entry Level Award in Workplace Hazard Awareness
- BSC Level 1 Award in Health and Safety at Work
- BSC Level 2 Award in Supervising Staff Safely
- BSC Level 2 Award in Risk Assessment
- BSC Level 2 Award in COSHH Risk Assessment
- BSC Level 2 Award in DSE Risk Assessment
- BSC Level 2 Award in Fire Risk Assessment
- BSC Level 2 Award in Manual Handling Risk Assessment
- BSC Level 3 Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health
- BSC Level 6 Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health
- BSC International Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health
- BSC International Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health

Specification development is guided by steering committees comprising representatives from professional bodies, standard setting bodies, enforcement bodies, employers and trade unions. Through focus groups, the British Safety Council further consults with employers and course providers. Specifications are then developed with the help of independent chartered health and safety practitioners. Assessments are marked by independent examiners.

The International Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health

Despite advancements in health and safety, people continue to be killed and seriously injured at work. In addition to the tragic loss of life and personal suffering, employers found themselves faced with court fines and costs, increased insurance premiums, compensation claims, reduced productivity, damaged reputation and lower staff morale.

The vast majority of occupational accidents and incidents of ill-health can be avoided by good health and safety management. With this in mind, the British Safety Council offers the International Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health, an internationally-recognised qualification for people with responsibility for aspects of health and safety in the workplace.

The British Safety Council's International Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health is accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) as meeting the academic requirement for technician membership of the Institution (Tech IOSH). Holders of the International Certificate may also apply for associate membership of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM).

Qualification Structure

The International Certificate comprises two mandatory units, each separately assessed.

Unit 1 Principles of Health and Safety Management

Unit 2 Controlling Hazards in the Workplace

Entry Requirements

There are no formal entry requirements for the International Certificate, but candidates should have a level of literacy and numeracy adequate to cope with the examination. This recommendation is intended to ensure that all candidates who enter for the International Certificate can undertake the examination with a reasonable expectation of success.

Language of Assessment

The qualification is assessed in English only. Assessments will be presented in English and candidates must respond in English.

Candidates for whom English is a second language are advised that their reading and writing skills should be equivalent to at least Level 6 of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) Test for Non-Native Speakers of English. Candidates may obtain information on this language testing service from the IELTS website (www.ielts.org).

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria

Unit 1 Principles of Health and Safety Management

Learning outcomes (the learner will....)	Assessment criteria (the learner can....)
1. Know how international agencies and standards influence health and safety at work	1.1 Outline the roles and functions of key international occupational health and safety bodies
2. Understand how to organise health and safety in the workplace	2.1 Outline the responsibilities of employers, directors, managers and staff in relation to health and safety in the workplace 2.2 Outline the importance of effective communication in relation to health and safety in the workplace 2.3 Outline sources of health and safety information available to employers
3. Understand how to develop a positive health and safety culture in the workplace	3.1 Describe how a health and safety culture can be measured 3.2 Describe ways of improving a health and safety culture 3.3 Describe the benefits of a positive health and safety culture 3.4 Describe the barriers to a positive health and safety culture
4. Understand the principles of accident prevention in the workplace	4.1 Explain the differences between accidents, incidents and near misses 4.2 Explain the causes of accidents/incidents at work 4.3 Explain the costs associated with accidents/incidents at work 4.4 Explain the need to prevent accidents/incidents at work
5. Understand the importance of effective occupational health provision for organisations and people	5.1 Outline the causes and effects of ill-health in the workplace 5.2 Describe measures to prevent ill-health related to activities in the workplace 5.3 Explain the benefits and costs of effective occupational health provision for employers and employees 5.4 Outline the effects and costs of inadequate occupational health provision for employers and employees
6. Know the main features of a health and safety management system	6.1 Outline the main features of a health and safety management system 6.2 Explain the purpose of and requirements for a health and safety policy 6.3 Explain the purpose of and procedures for health and safety audit and review 6.4 Describe how to measure, audit and review health and safety performance in the workplace
7. Understand the principles of workplace risk assessment	7.1 Describe the main stages of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment 7.2 Describe a range of methods for gathering information for a risk assessment 7.3 Outline a hierarchical approach to managing risks in the workplace 7.4 Outline the requirements for carrying out and reviewing workplace risk assessments 7.5 Outline when specific risk assessments are required

Unit 2 Controlling Hazards in the Workplace

Learning outcomes (the learner will....)	Assessment criteria (the learner can....)
1. Understand the principles of fire prevention in the workplace	1.1 Explain the principles of fire 1.2 Describe fire hazards and risks in the workplace 1.3 Describe the main stages of a fire risk assessment 1.4 Explain how to prevent a fire in the workplace 1.5 Explain the arrangements required to protect people and workplaces from fire
2. Understand how to manage emergencies in the workplace	2.1 Identify the situations which require emergency procedures 2.2 Describe the main features of an emergency plan 2.3 Describe how to evaluate the effectiveness of emergency planning and procedures
3. Understand the hazards and risks associated with workplace activities	3.1 Outline the main hazards and risks relating to workplaces and occupational activities 3.2 Describe the risk factors relating to workplaces and occupational activities 3.3 Outline who may be at risk from hazards in the workplace 3.4 Describe the consequences that may result from uncontrolled workplace hazards
4. Understand how to control risks in the workplace	4.1 Describe a general hierarchical approach for preventing and reducing risks 4.2 Describe suitable control measures for specific workplace hazards 4.3 Outline methods for monitoring and reviewing control measures
5. Understand the requirements of reporting and investigating incidents in the workplace	5.1 Explain the need for internal incident reporting and investigation 5.2 Describe the main elements of an incident investigation
6. Understand how to reduce the impact of workplace activities on the environment	6.1 Describe the main risks to the environment from workplace activities 6.2 Describe control measures that can be used to reduce the risks to the environment from workplace activities

Scheme of Assessment

Assessment for the International Certificate is via two 90 minute written examinations which test the assessment criteria on pages 7-8 of this specification.

The Unit 1 examination comprises eight compulsory short structured questions. The Unit 2 examination also comprises eight compulsory short structured questions. In order to achieve the qualification, candidates must pass both units.

The examinations may be sat on the same day or on different days, and may be completed in any order.

Arrangements for Assessment

Examinations

The British Safety Council can arrange for you to take the examinations at selected British Council offices worldwide. To check the location of your nearest British Council office, please contact the British Safety Council Qualifications Team on +44 (0)20 8741 1231 or e-mail qualifications@britsafe.org

Booking your Examination

All candidates must book their examination directly with the British Safety Council at least six weeks before their preferred examination date. This allows the British Safety Council time to schedule the examination with the British Council and prepare and despatch the relevant examination question paper.

Candidates may book and pay online via the website (www.britsafe.org). Alternatively, candidates may download the booking form from the website and submit their form by post or fax. When booking, please state at which British Council office you would like to sit the examination and on what date. The examination fee must be paid at the time of booking, and the booking form must be completed and the declaration signed before the candidate is eligible to sit the examination.

Upon receipt of your booking, the British Safety Council will contact the relevant British Council office to schedule the appointment. You will then receive confirmation of your booking by e-mail.

If the British Council office is not able to accommodate you on your preferred examination date, a member of our Qualifications Team will work with you to identify a convenient examination date.

Should you have any enquiries regarding the booking process, please telephone the British Safety Council Qualifications Team on +44 (0)20 8741 1231.

Re-scheduling your Examination

You may re-schedule your examination appointment at no charge, subject to availability of spaces at the British Council office. You must contact the British Safety Council at least four weeks prior to your examination date, otherwise your request cannot be processed and all fees will be forfeited.

Cancelling your Examination

Candidates wishing to cancel their examination should, in the first instance, telephone the Qualifications Department on +44 (0)20 8741 1231. Candidates will be required to confirm their cancellation in writing. Cancellations made more than four weeks before the examination date are free of charge. No refund will be given for cancellations made less than four weeks before an examination.

Non-Attendance

If, for any reason, a candidate is unable to attend the examination, they should telephone the Qualifications Department on +44 (0)20 8741 1231 before the scheduled start time. Any candidate who fails to notify the Qualifications Department of their inability to attend an examination before the scheduled start time will be issued with an absent result and will forfeit the examination fee, unless the absence was due to illness, in which case the candidate should obtain a doctor's certificate and submit it to the Qualifications Department, British Safety Council, 70 Chancellors Road, London W6 9RS, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Reasonable Adjustments

When necessary, the British Safety Council endeavours to make reasonable adjustments for candidates with particular requirements to enable them to have access to fair assessment and to demonstrate achievement. Candidates may require reasonable adjustments for a number of reasons including a permanent or temporary disability or medical condition.

Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that candidates receive recognition of their achievement without compromising the equity, validity and reliability of the assessment. They are not concessions to make assessment easier for candidates, nor advantages to give candidates a head start.

The Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Application Form may be downloaded from the British Safety Council website (www.britsafe.org/about/awarding-body). Candidates requiring a reasonable adjustment for must submit a Reasonable Adjustment Application Form at the earliest possible opportunity and no later than two weeks prior to the examination date, except in exceptional circumstances, e.g. injury in the days leading up to the examination.

Special Consideration

Special consideration involves procedures that may result in an adjustment to the marks of candidates who have not been able to demonstrate attainment because of exceptional circumstances during the examination itself.

The Special Consideration Policy and Application Form may be downloaded from the British Safety Council website (www.britsafe.org/about/awarding-body). Candidates requesting special consideration must submit a Special Consideration Application Form within 14 days of the examination.

Malpractice

The fairness of the assessment process depends upon all parties acting in good faith and adhering to the highest professional standards of conduct. Any evidence of deviation from such standards may lead to disqualification of candidates. Course providers and candidates should familiarise themselves with the Malpractice Policy which can be found at www.britsafe.org/about/awarding-body

Marking, Awarding and Reporting of Results

Assessments for the International Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health are externally marked by examiners appointed and trained by the British Safety Council. Rigorous standardisation procedures, including meetings of all examiners, ensure that the marking schemes are applied in exactly the same way and that all examination scripts are marked to the same standard.

Results are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail. Results are posted to candidates six weeks after the examination.

Resits

Candidates may resit an examination upon payment of the appropriate fee.

Awarding Units

Candidates who achieve a pass in a unit will receive a result notification as a record of achievement.

Awarding the Qualification

Once a candidate has successfully completed both units, the unit grades are aggregated to give a result for the qualification as a whole. Points are allocated to unit grades as follows:

Unit Grade	Points
Distinction	3
Merit	2
Pass	1

The points are added together and converted to a grade for the qualification using the following rule:

Points	Grade
6	Distinction (D)
4, 5	Merit (M)
2, 3	Pass (P)

Grade Descriptions

Distinction - A candidate who has achieved a distinction in a unit has demonstrated a thorough knowledge and understanding of occupational health and safety issues relevant to that unit. A distinction for the qualification as a whole reflects a very high level of achievement across the two units.

Merit - A candidate who has achieved a merit in a unit has demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of health and safety issues relevant to that unit. A merit for the qualification as a whole reflects either a high level of achievement in both units or a very high level in one unit balanced by a satisfactory level in another.

Pass - A candidate who has achieved a pass in a unit has demonstrated satisfactory knowledge and understanding of health and safety issues relevant to that unit. A pass for the qualification as a whole reflects at least a pass level of achievement in both units.

Result Enquiries and Appeals

The British Safety Council endorses the right of individuals to enquire about their result and to appeal against the outcome of that enquiry. Procedures are in place to ensure that result enquiries and appeals are dealt with thoroughly and fairly.

A result enquiry or an appeal can result in a grade being confirmed, raised or lowered. Where a grade is changed, the new grade will replace the original grade, whether it is higher or lower. The Result Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Application Form may be downloaded from the British Safety Council website (www.britsafe.org/about/awarding-body). To request a result enquiry the candidate must complete a Result Enquiry Application Form and submit it within 14 days of the result issue date.