



**British Safety Council**  
**International Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health**  
2014 Specification

Version 1

For assessments in 2014

Accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)  
for graduate membership of the Institution (Grad IOSH)

## **Publishing Policy for Specifications**

Specifications are published on 1 October 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](http://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 health and safety organisations. Our vision is that no-one should be injured or made ill at work.

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 Diploma 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. This depends on clearly communicated expert advice from appropriately qualified practitioners. With this in mind, the British Safety Council offers the International Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health, an internationally-recognised, professional qualification for managers and practitioners with specific responsibility for health and safety in the workplace.

The content of International Diploma has been carefully designed to ensure that it covers all the aspects of occupational health and safety practice needed by a manager, including risk management, occupational health, promoting a positive health and safety culture and preparing a business case for investment in health and safety.

The International Diploma is accredited by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) as meeting the requirement for graduate membership of the Institution (Grad IOSH). Following the successful completion of a period of initial professional development, a graduate member may apply for chartered status (CMIOSH). Holders of the International Diploma may also apply for full membership of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM).

## **Qualification Structure**

The International Diploma comprises three mandatory units, each separately assessed.

Unit 1 Principles of Health and Safety Management

Unit 2 Safeguarding People's Health in the Workplace

Unit 3 Promoting a Positive Health and Safety Culture in the Workplace

## **Entry Requirements**

It is recommended that candidates entered for the International Diploma have:

- either a Certificate-level qualification in occupational safety and health;
- or an alternative appropriate qualification in a related sector;
- or appropriate experience in a health and safety role;
- and a level of literacy and numeracy adequate to cope with their assessments.

This recommendation is intended to ensure that all candidates who enter for the International Diploma can undertake the assessments 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](http://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....)
Understand the need for managing health and safety at work	1.1 Explain why occupational health and safety needs to be managed
Understand how international agencies and standards influence health and safety at work	2.1 Describe the role and functions of key international occupational safety and health organisations 2.2 Describe the responsibilities placed on employers for the health, safety and welfare of employees and others who may be affected by the employer's work activities 2.3 Explain how consultation can improve health and safety in the workplace 2.4 Explain how a health and safety policy is developed and used
Understand how to develop and implement a health and safety management system	3.1 Explain the principles and components of a health and safety management system 3.2 Explain the benefits of implementing a health and safety management system 3.3 Explain the role and responsibilities of a health and safety practitioner 3.4 Describe how health and safety performance can be measured and reviewed
Understand how to identify and evaluate hazards and risks associated with workplace activities	4.1 Evaluate the main hazards relating to workplace activities 4.2 Explain the potential consequences of uncontrolled workplace hazards 4.3 Describe the factors that need to be considered when assessing the risks from workplace activities 4.4 Describe the components of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment 4.5 Explain the different uses of generic, specific and dynamic risk assessments
Understand how to develop and implement control strategies for managing health and safety risks at work	5.1 Describe a general hierarchical approach for managing risk 5.2 Describe suitable control measures for specific workplace hazards 5.3 Describe how to develop and implement a safe system of work
Know how to report and investigate health and safety incidents at work	6.1 Evaluate theories of incident loss causation 6.2 Describe the requirements for incident reporting and investigation 6.3 Evaluate the role of human failure in incident causation 6.4 Describe how human failure can be assessed and reduced
Understand how to reduce the impact of workplace activities on the environment	7.1 Evaluate the main risks to the environment from workplace activities 7.2 Explain the measures to reduce and manage risks to the environment from workplace activities 7.3 Describe the main elements of an environmental management system

**Unit 2 Safeguarding People's Health in the Workplace**

<b>Learning outcomes (the learner will....)</b>	<b>Assessment criteria (the learner can....)</b>
Understand how an occupational health strategy integrates with an effective health and safety management system	1.1 Explain how occupational health strategies are developed and implemented within an overall health and safety management system 1.2 Describe the functions of and relationships between members of an occupational health team 1.3 Explain the internal and external requirements for reporting occupational diseases
Understand how occupational health hazards affect people	2.1 Describe common occupational health hazards 2.2 Explain how the body can be harmed from exposure to hazardous agents in the workplace 2.3 Explain how the body can defend itself from exposure to hazardous agents 2.4 Outline the principles of toxicology and epidemiology
Understand how the health of vulnerable persons can be managed in the workplace	3.1 Describe the responsibilities of employers for managing occupational health risks to vulnerable persons in the workplace
Understand how to identify and evaluate occupational health hazards and risks	4.1 Describe the factors to be considered when conducting risk assessments for occupational health hazards 4.2 Assess the risk of harm from exposure to occupational health hazards 4.3 Explain how exposure to hazardous agents can be measured and evaluated against established exposure limits or values
Understand how to develop and implement control strategies for managing occupational health risks	5.1 Describe a general hierarchical approach for preventing occupational ill-health 5.2 Describe suitable control measures for specific occupational health hazards 5.3 Describe methods for monitoring and reviewing occupational health control measures 5.4 Describe the requirements for and methods of monitoring the health of employees

**Unit 3 Promoting a Positive Health and Safety Culture in the Workplace**

<b>Learning outcomes (the learner will)</b>	<b>Assessment criteria (the learner can....)</b>
Understand the importance of promoting a positive health and safety culture within an organisation	1.1 Explain the benefits of a positive health and safety culture for an organisation 1.2 Explain the barriers to achieving a positive health and safety culture in an organisation 1.3 Describe the symptoms of a poor health and safety culture in an organisation
Be able to assess the existing health and safety culture of an organisation	2.1 Explain the methodology used for assessing the health and safety culture of an organisation 2.2 Describe the indicators that can be used to measure the health and safety culture of an organisation 2.3 Describe how to carry out a climate survey in relation to health and safety in the workplace 2.4 Critically analyse data to make judgments about the health and safety culture of an organisation
Understand the factors that influence staff behaviour	3.1 Explain the individual, organisational and job factors which influence workers' behaviour 3.2 Explain the role of an organisation's communication system in promoting positive behaviour and improving health and safety culture 3.3 Explain how staff competency can be measured, improved and maintained
Know how to develop a strategy for improving the health and safety culture of an organisation	4.1 Describe how to develop a strategy for improving the health and safety culture of an organisation 4.2 Explain the factors influencing the development of a strategy for improving health and safety culture 4.3 Explain how risk management principles are used in the development of a strategy for improving the health and safety culture of an organisation
Be able to develop and present a business case for improving the health and safety culture of an organisation	5.1 Construct a business case for investing resources into improving the health and safety culture of an organisation 5.2 Prepare a management report for improving the health and safety culture of an organisation

## **Scheme of Assessment**

Assessment for the International Diploma is via two written examinations and two workplace-based assignments. The written examinations test knowledge, understanding and the application of learning. The assignments provide an opportunity for candidates to apply their knowledge and understanding in their workplaces for the benefit of both themselves and their organisations. The examinations and assignments test the assessment criteria on pages 7-9 of this specification.

Assessments may be completed in any order.

### **Unit 1**

Unit 1 is assessed by a 3-hour written examination in two parts. Part A comprises one compulsory, stimulus-based question worth 40 marks. Candidates are presented with stimulus material relating to a fictitious workplace and are asked a series of questions centred on risk management. Part B comprises eight compulsory short-answer questions each worth 10 marks (total 80 marks). In order to pass this unit, candidates must achieve the pass mark and score at least 40% in each of sections A and B.

### **Unit 2**

Unit 2 is assessed by a 2½-hour written examination and an assignment based on an occupational health hazard in the candidate's workplace. The examination comprises ten compulsory short-answer questions each worth 10 marks (100 marks). The examination and assignment are weighted equally, i.e. they both carry a weighting of 50% for the unit.

### **Unit 3**

Unit 3 is assessed by an assignment involving an assessment of the health and safety culture in the candidate's workplace, preparation of a strategy for improving that culture and a business case to support the strategy.

## **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 at [qualifications@britsafe.org](mailto:qualifications@britsafe.org)

### **Booking your Examination**

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

Candidates should download the booking form from the website ([www.britsafe.org](http://www.britsafe.org)) 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 contact the British Safety Council Qualifications Team at [qualifications@britsafe.org](mailto:qualifications@britsafe.org)

### **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 e-mail [qualifications@britsafe.org](mailto:qualifications@britsafe.org). 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 Team on +44 (0)20 8741 1231 before the scheduled start time. Any candidate who fails to notify the Qualifications Team 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.

## **Assignments**

Candidates may choose when they complete and submit their assignments. A result will be issued within six weeks of submission.

## **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](http://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](http://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](http://www.britsafe.org/about/awarding-body)

## **Marking, Awarding and Reporting of Results**

Assessments for the International Diploma 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 and assignments are marked to the same standard.

### **Unit 1**

Grade boundaries are established for the examination by an awarding process designed to maintain standards from one examination to the next. This process involves a review of candidates' scripts across a range of marks around the expected grade boundaries and consideration of the statistics for the examination as a whole.

In order to pass this unit, candidates must achieve the pass mark and score at least 40% in each of sections A and B. Results are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail. Results are posted to candidates eight weeks after the examination.

### **Unit 2**

Grade boundaries are established for the examination by an awarding process designed to maintain standards from one examination to the next. This process involves a review of candidates' scripts across a range of marks around the expected grade boundaries and consideration of the statistics for the examination as a whole. Examination results are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass, Fail (above threshold)\* or Fail. The examination carries a weighting of 50% for the unit.

As the requirements of the assignment and the marking criteria do not change, standards are best maintained by applying the same grade boundaries over time. Grade boundaries for the assignment are published in the assignment guidance document. Assignment results are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass, Fail (above threshold)\* or Fail. The assignment carries a weighting of 50% for the unit.

\* It is possible to fail one component (examination or assignment) but still pass the unit (because of a strong performance in the other component), provided the candidate scores at least 40% in the failed component. This score of 40% is termed the 'threshold mark' and should not be confused with the pass mark.

The examination and assignment marks are scaled and then aggregated to give a total scaled mark for the unit as a whole. Unit grades are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail. Results are posted to candidates eight weeks after the examination or assignment submission.

### **Unit 3**

As the requirements of the assignment and the marking criteria do not change over time, standards are best maintained by applying the same grade boundaries over time. Grade boundaries for the assignment are published in the assignment guidance document. Results are reported as Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail. Results are posted to candidates eight weeks after the assignment submission.

## Resits and Resubmissions

Candidates may resit an examination or resubmit an assignment 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 all three 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
8, 9	Distinction (D)
5, 6, 7	Merit (M)
3, 4	Pass (P)

Candidates with the following combinations of unit grades will be awarded qualification grades as follows:

Unit grades	Qualification	Unit grades	Qualification
D + D + D	Distinction	M + M + M	Merit
D + D + M	Distinction	M + M + P	Merit
D + D + P	Merit	P + P + D	Merit
D + M + M	Merit	M + P + P	Pass
D + M + P	Merit	P + P + P	Pass

## **Qualification Result Issue**

Candidates who pass all three units will be awarded the BSC International Diploma in Occupational Safety and Health and may use the designatory letters IDipOSH after their name. The certificate is sent to the address supplied by the candidate upon registration.

## **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, including legal issues, and an ability to apply these effectively in a practitioner role. A distinction for the qualification as a whole reflects a very high level of achievement across the three 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, including legal issues, and an ability to apply these in a practitioner role. In units with two components, if achievement was below merit level in one component, this will have been compensated by a higher level of achievement in the other component. A merit for the qualification as a whole reflects either a high level of achievement in all three 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, including legal issues, and some ability to apply these in a practitioner role. In units with two components, achievement may have been unequal between them. A pass for the qualification as a whole reflects at least a pass level of achievement in every unit.

## **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](http://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.