



# **Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit**

Specification August 2026

Summary of Change document

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## 1.0: Introduction

This summary document has been prepared to outline the main areas of change within the British Safety Council's Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2026 (FSA).

The document is intended to assist those organisations who have previously undertaken the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2025 in their preparations for being audited against the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit 2026 Updated model.

***It is important to note that the content of this summary should not be interpreted as a definitive or exhaustive source of information when preparing for the audit itself.***

***It is strongly recommended that the summary document is read and used in conjunction with the specification document itself, pre audit reports (if applicable) and other related sources of information.***

### 1.1: Background to the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2026 (FSA).

As part of the British Safety Council's commitment to the continual improvement of our products, together with a recognition of recent developments in technological advancements and health and safety management trends, our five-star audit specification(s) are reviewed on an annual basis.

The subsequent 2026 version of the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification has been designed to complement our quality assurance and auditor standardisation processes in order to ensure a quality experience for the auditee.

The review of the 2025 Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification was carried out by a technical project team comprising health and safety professionals. The review considered continuing concerns around electrical safety and its potential impact on fire safety. It concluded that the 2026 model should place greater emphasis on the effective management of electrical safety, alongside suitable and proportionate fire safety management arrangements.

The 2026 specification also continues to test the ongoing commitment and continual improvement expected within mature occupational health and safety management systems. In addition, selected elements have been updated to introduce greater consistency in requirements and to include an expectation that organisations consider, explore and evaluate appropriate technological solutions where relevant.

The Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit model is reflective of a **PLAN / DO / CHECK / ACT** management cycle.

The Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2026 has maintained a cap of 50 elements tested however we have maintained that a significant portion of marks are awarded within the 'Do' portion of the improvement cycle. It also recognises the need to recognise and address issues related to wellbeing in the workplace.

The Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2026 provides organisations with a structured route toward a genuine best practice in managing and implementing occupational health and safety and the subsequent business benefits that improved occupational health and safety performance can bring.

## 2.0: Summary of changes

This section of the document is intended to outline the specific changes between the previous Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2025 and the August 2026 version.

### 2.1: Sectional changes

The Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit Specification 2026 specification model has retained the previous format in respect of four sections containing related elements. However, **FIVE** elements within section 1 have specific mandatory requirements to achieve a threshold mark.

Within this specification further measures working alongside the maturity requirements have been taken with threshold expectations being assigned to specific questions under 12 elements.

**Table 1:**

| <b>Plan</b>                                               | <b>Do</b>                           | <b>Check</b>                                  | <b>Act</b>                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>Section 1</b>                                          | <b>Section 2</b>                    | <b>Section 3</b>                              | <b>Section 4</b>                            |
| <b>Organisational leadership, commitment and planning</b> | <b>Implementation and operation</b> | <b>Performance monitoring and measurement</b> | <b>Evaluation and continual improvement</b> |

During the audit process, the auditor will examine specific Occupational Health and Safety criteria and review how well the organisation can demonstrate an integrated approach to this subject area across the management cycle and the four sections of the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit specification.

### 2.2: Best Practice Indicators (BPI)

The effective implementation and progression of mature Occupational Health and Safety management systems (and associated arrangements) toward overall business efficiency cannot be overstated.

It is recognised that there are a number of factors involved for any organisation in reaching this status, but it is considered that five best practice indicators are primary management tools in respect of this:

BPI 1: Leadership and Commitment

BPI 2: Stakeholder Participation

BPI 3: Risk Management

BPI 4: Organisational Health and Safety Culture

BPI 5: Continual Improvement

The subsequent audit report document includes a summary of performance within these areas (measured against a best practice threshold) and also recommendations for improvement wherever appropriate.

### 2.3: Element changes

The number of elements within the Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit specification compared to 2025 had remained at 50 elements. The marks allocated per section have been further adjusted. Section 2 remains the section where the majority of marks can be achieved. Sections 1 and 3 now have equal standing. This reflects the need for leadership and commitment to be co-equal with Monitoring and reviewing.

Table 4 highlights the linkages between the previous 2025 specification and the August 2026 Five Star Occupational Health and Safety Audit specification.

**It should be noted that, in keeping with the holistic approach to the audit process, an element may well be considered pertinent to more than one section and may also have relevance to other elements across the specification.**

It should also be noted that those elements which remain unchanged from the previous specification have been subject to revision and have, in some cases, been updated from a content perspective.

**Table 4: Amended (and new) Elements (refer to specification document for examples of typical information required during the audit process)**

| <b>2025 specification element title</b>                                                                       | <b>Element reference</b> | <b>Updated (2026) specification element title</b>                                       | <b>Element reference</b> | <b>Comment</b>             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Section 1<br/>Organisational leadership, commitment and planning</b>                                       |                          |                                                                                         |                          |                            |
| <b>Leadership and commitment</b>                                                                              | <b>1.01</b>              | <b>Leadership and commitment</b>                                                        | <b>1.01</b>              | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Scope and context of occupational health, safety and wellbeing management system</b>                       | <b>1.02</b>              | <b>Scope and context of occupational health, safety and wellbeing management system</b> | <b>1.02</b>              | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Status Assessment</b>                                                                                      | <b>1.03</b>              | <b>Status Assessment</b>                                                                | <b>1.03</b>              | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Legislative (and other) Compliance</b>                                                                     | <b>1.04</b>              | <b>Legislative (and other) Compliance</b>                                               | <b>1.04</b>              | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Stakeholder Identification, Consultation and Participation (including corporate social responsibility)</b> | <b>1.05</b>              | <b>Stakeholder Identification, Consultation and Participation</b>                       | <b>1.05</b>              | No Change to Element Name. |
| <b>Structure (roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities)</b>                                  | <b>1.06</b>              | <b>Structure (roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities)</b>            | <b>1.06</b>              | No change to Element Name. |
| <b>Occupational health, safety and wellbeing objectives, programmes and plans</b>                             | <b>1.07</b>              | <b>Occupational health, safety and wellbeing objectives, programmes and plans</b>       | <b>1.07</b>              | No change to Element Name. |

|                                                         |      |                                                         |      |                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|
| <b>Provision of resources and support</b>               | 1,08 | <b>Provision of resources and support</b>               | 1.08 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Competence, capability and behaviours</b>            | 1,09 | <b>Competence, capability and behaviours</b>            | 1.09 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Strategic and operational risk management</b>        | 1.10 | <b>Strategic and operational risk management</b>        | 1.10 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Management of change</b>                             | 1.11 | <b>Management of change</b>                             | 1.11 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Information management</b>                           | 1.12 | <b>Information management</b>                           | 1.12 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Procurement, outsourcing and contract management</b> | 1.13 | <b>Procurement, outsourcing and contract management</b> | 1.13 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Emergency response and crisis management</b>         | 1.14 | <b>Emergency response and crisis management</b>         | 1.14 | No change to Element Name |
| <b>Wellbeing strategy, scope and objectives</b>         | 1.15 | <b>Wellbeing strategy, scope and objectives</b>         | 1.15 | No change to Element Name |

| <b>2025 specification element title</b>                                                                | <b>Element reference</b> | <b>Updated (2026) specification element title</b>                                                      | <b>Element reference</b> | <b>Comment</b>             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Section 2 - Implementation and operation</b>                                                        |                          |                                                                                                        |                          |                            |
| <b>Identification of hazards, opportunities and assessment of risk</b>                                 | 2.01                     | <b>Identification of hazards, opportunities and assessment of risk</b>                                 | 2.01                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Safe systems of work (operating procedures, method statements, work instructions, permits etc.)</b> | 2.02                     | <b>Safe systems of work (operating procedures, method statements, work instructions, permits etc.)</b> | 2.02                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Management and control of work equipment</b>                                                        | 2.03                     | <b>Management and control of work equipment</b>                                                        | 2.03                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Job Design</b>                                                                                      | 2.04                     | <b>Job Design</b>                                                                                      | 2.04                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Remote/Lone Working (Including home and hybrid working)</b>                                         | 2.05                     | <b>Remote/Lone Working (Including home and hybrid working)</b>                                         | 2.05                     | No change to Element Name. |
| <b>Management of occupational road risk (including traffic and transport management)</b>               | 2.06                     | <b>Management of occupational road risk (including traffic and transport management)</b>               | 2.06                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Management and control of lifting operations</b>                                                    | 2.07                     | <b>Management and control of lifting operations</b>                                                    | 2.07                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Management and control of pressure systems</b>                                                      | 2.08                     | <b>Management and control of pressure systems</b>                                                      | 2.08                     | No change to Element Name  |
| <b>Management and control of hazardous substances</b>                                                  | 2.09                     | <b>Management and control of hazardous substances (including</b>                                       | 2.09                     | No Change to Element Name  |

|                                                                            |      |                                                                            |      |                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>(including asbestos and legionella)</b>                                 |      | <b>asbestos and legionella)</b>                                            |      |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Management and control of confined space work</b>                       | 2.10 | <b>Management and control of confined workspace</b>                        | 2.10 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Management of excavations and work below ground</b>                     | 2.11 | <b>Management of excavations and work below ground</b>                     | 2.11 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Management and control of electrical hazards</b>                        | 2.12 | <b>Management and control of electrical safety</b>                         | 2.12 | No change to Element Name<br>Changes to best practice statement<br>Questions re-phrased to better align with the statement<br>Increased questions from 5 to 20 |
| <b>Management and control of noise &amp; vibrations</b>                    | 2.13 | <b>Management and control of noise &amp; vibrations</b>                    | 2.13 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Management and control of personal protective equipment</b>             | 2.14 | <b>Management and control of personal protective equipment</b>             | 2.14 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Workplace welfare (housekeeping, storage, welfare facilities, etc.)</b> | 2.15 | <b>Workplace welfare (housekeeping, storage, welfare facilities, etc.)</b> | 2.15 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Emergency response and crisis management</b>                            | 2.16 | <b>Emergency Response and Crisis Management</b>                            | 2.16 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Fire safety management (protective and preventative controls)</b>       | 2.17 | <b>Fire safety management (protective and preventative controls)</b>       | 2.17 | No change to Element Name<br>Revision of the best practice statement to make it clearer<br>Questions reviewed and aligned to the re-worded statement           |
| <b>Wellbeing and Psychosocial Risk Management</b>                          | 2.18 | <b>Wellbeing and Psychosocial Risk Management</b>                          | 2.18 | No change to Element Name                                                                                                                                      |

| 2025 specification element title                                                               | Element reference | Updated (2026) specification element title                                                     | Element reference | Comment                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Section 3 Performance monitoring and measurement</b>                                        |                   |                                                                                                |                   |                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Monitoring of occupational health, safety and wellbeing objectives</b>                      | 3.01              | <b>Monitoring of occupational health, safety and wellbeing objectives</b>                      | 3.01              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Monitoring of occupational health, safety and wellbeing programmes and plans</b>            | 3.02              | <b>Monitoring of occupational health, safety and wellbeing programmes and plans</b>            | 3.02              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Audit (internal and external)</b>                                                           | 3.03              | <b>Audit (internal and external)</b>                                                           | 3.03              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Monitoring systems (including inspection, risk assessment review, sampling and surveys)</b> | 3.04              | <b>Monitoring systems (including inspection, risk assessment review, sampling and surveys)</b> | 3.04              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Health Impact monitoring</b>                                                                | 3.05              | <b>Health impact monitoring</b>                                                                | 3.05              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Monitoring of procurement, outsourcing and contractors</b>                                  | 3.06              | <b>Monitoring of procurement, outsourcing ad contractors</b>                                   | 3.06              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Accident, incident, near miss report and investigation monitoring</b>                       | 3.07              | <b>Accident, incident, near miss report and investigation monitoring</b>                       | 3.07              | Inclusion of Suitable use of technology to undertake assessments<br>Questions updated accordingly<br>No change to marks |
| <b>Ill health monitoring (including absenteeism and presenteeism)</b>                          | 3.08              | <b>Ill health monitoring (including absenteeism and presenteeism)</b>                          | 3.08              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |
| <b>Loss/damage analysis</b>                                                                    | 3.09              | <b>Loss/damage analysis</b>                                                                    | 3.09              | No change to Element Name                                                                                               |

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Non-conformance monitoring</b>                                                    | 3.10                     | <b>Non-conformance monitoring</b>                                                    | 3.10                     | No change to Element Name      |
| <b>Monitoring of competence, capability behaviours and health and safety culture</b> | 3.11                     | <b>Monitoring of competence, capability behaviours and health and safety culture</b> | 3.11                     | No change to Element Name      |
| <b>2025 specification element title</b>                                              | <b>Element reference</b> | <b>Updated (2025) specification element title</b>                                    | <b>Element reference</b> |                                |
| <b>Section 4 - Evaluation and continual improvement</b>                              |                          |                                                                                      |                          |                                |
| <b>Top management review process.</b>                                                | 4.01                     | <b>Top management review</b>                                                         | 4.01                     | No change to Element Name<br>. |
| <b>Effectiveness of Leadership, resources and support</b>                            | 4.02                     | <b>Effectiveness of Leadership, resources and support</b>                            | 4.02                     | No change to Element Name<br>. |
| <b>Opportunities for improvement</b>                                                 | 4.03                     | <b>Opportunities for improvement</b>                                                 | 4.03                     | No change to Element Name      |
| <b>Effectiveness of corporate social responsibility</b>                              | 4.04                     | <b>Effectiveness of corporate social responsibility (part of ESG)</b>                | 4.04                     | No change to Element Name      |
| <b>Evaluation of legislative (and other) compliance</b>                              | 4.05                     | <b>Evaluation of legislative (and other) compliance</b>                              | 4.05                     | No change to Element Name<br>. |
| <b>Evaluation competence, capability, behaviours and health and safety culture</b>   | 4.06                     | <b>Evaluation competence, capability, behaviours and health and safety culture</b>   | 4.06                     | No change to Element Name      |