

GLOSSARY – OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

This glossary contains definitions of various terms used throughout Aspire’s range of resources for the Certificate IV in Occupational Health and Safety.

Term	Definition
Accessible information	Accessible information can be read and understood by the entire target audience.
Appropriate information	Appropriate information is information that everyone in the target audience is authorised to read and that is relevant to the topic being discussed.
Audit	An audit is an inspection or a check for compliance with national, state/territory or industry standards, or combinations of these.
Australian Standard	Australian Standards are published documents that set out specifications and procedures designed to ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform the way they were intended to.
Body mapping	Body mapping is a technique that is used to identify health problems related to a person’s job, in which workers indicate on a map of the body where they are experiencing aches and pains, cuts or bruising, illness or other conditions.
Code of practice	A code of practice is an industry guideline to help in the management of operations based on regulations or best practice. A code of practice is not law, but should be followed unless there is an alternative course of action that achieves the same or better standards. A code of practice can also be used where no legislation exists.
Consultation	Consultation is a mandatory OHS requirement. Employers must provide OHS information to employees, give them reasonable opportunities to raise OHS issues and contribute to OHS decision-making processes, and advise them of the outcomes of consultation.
Continuous improvement	Continuous improvement in OHS refers to the processes involved in making continual improvements to workplace safety and the OHS management system.
Duty of care	Duty of care is the term used to describe the obligations employers and employees have to each other and the people they are caring for. It includes making sure you provide appropriate care to meet each person’s needs, treat them with respect and maintain the person’s right to privacy.
Ergonomics	Ergonomics is the science of designing, developing and adapting or building equipment that meets the needs of the human body.
Evaluation	An evaluation is making a judgment about something (a document, task, process, system, etc.) against a set of accepted standards.
Hazard	A hazard is any situation that has the potential to cause (or lead to) harm to people or damage to property.
Hazard register	A hazard register is a document that summarises the hazards found within an organisation.

Term	Definition
Hierarchy of control	The hierarchy of control is a structured approach to reducing the risk associate with a hazard. It includes eliminating the activity, substituting the activity, isolating the hazard, using engineering controls, using administrative controls and using personal protective equipment (PPE).
Incident	An incident is an event that results in or has the potential to result in injury, ill health, damage or loss.
Intervention point	An intervention point is an identified point or event in the established time line at which, if the sequence of events had been stopped, changed or otherwise altered, an incident would not have occurred or the outcome may have been much less severe.
Issue resolution process	The issue resolution process documents how OHS issues should be managed, including roles, responsibilities and reporting requirements.
Job safety analysis (JSA)	A job safety analysis is a tool used to define and control hazards associated with a particular job or task.
Legislation	Legislation comprises the laws passed as Acts of Parliament. Acts may include regulations. Regulations are requirements that support the general rulings of the legislation.
Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)	This type of document contains important information to allow users to safely manage the risk from exposure to a hazardous chemical/substance or dangerous goods.
Monitoring	Monitoring is the process of observing and checking the progress, state or quality of a task or process.
Nomogram	A nomogram is a visual aid that provides a risk rating, based on the risk and likely consequences of an incident occurring.
OHS management system	An OHS management system is one used to identify and control or reduce OHS risks within an organisation. This includes the processes involved in identifying hazards and assessing and controlling the associated risks, as well as the documentation used to record these processes.
PDCA	PDCA is an abbreviation for an OHS implementation approach based on four steps: plan, do, check, act.
Personal protective equipment (PPE)	Personal protective equipment is used to prevent your skin, hair and clothing from coming into contact with surfaces where there may be hazardous substances or disease-causing bacteria and viruses. PPE includes gloves, helmets, earplugs, steel-capped shoes, aprons and goggles.
Policy	A policy is a line of action adopted from other considerations, such as government legislation, to guide and determine present and future decisions. Policies provide an overall plan with general goals.
Procedure	A procedure sets out actions that need to be executed as a sequence of activities, tasks, steps and processes to produce the desired result or outcome.

Term	Definition
Provisional improvement notice (PIN)	A provisional improvement notice is a written direction that requires a person or an organisation to remedy a breach or potential breach of safety requirements.
Qualitative data	Qualitative data is information that describes meaning and experiences. This type of data is often based on subjective responses from interviews and discussions. (See also quantitative data.)
Quantitative data	Quantitative data is information that is focused on numbers, numerical facts and frequencies. (See also qualitative data.)
Regulations	Regulations are the rules, procedures, guidelines, codes of practice and so on written by a body given authority by an Act of Parliament. The WorkCover/WorkSafe Authority in your state/territory is an example of a body authorised to make regulations.
Risk	A risk is the chance, high or low, that a hazard will cause harm, injury, ill health, damage or loss.
Risk assessment	A risk assessment is a process for evaluating risk levels using two criteria: the likelihood of an incident occurring and the severity of any outcomes.
Risk control measures/strategy	A risk control strategy is a set of procedures designed to reduce the risk of an incident occurring.
Safe operating procedure	A safe operating procedure is a step-by-step description of the safest way to carry out a task. It includes the risks associated with the task and incorporates appropriate risk controls.
Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)	A safe work method statement is similar to a job safety analysis. A safe work method statement documents a process for identifying and controlling health and safety hazards and risks.
Safe work procedure	A safe work procedure is a step-by-step description of the safest way to carry out a task. It includes the risks associated with a task and incorporates appropriate risk controls.
Stakeholder	Stakeholders include anyone with an interest in the safety of the workers in your organisation. This includes colleagues, managers, supervisors, OHS committees, suppliers, clients/customers and members of the broader community, such as healthcare professionals and the families of the workers.