



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**AUCKLAND**  
Te Whare Wānanga o Tāmaki Makaurau  
NEW ZEALAND

Monitoring and Measuring Performance

# Health and Safety Audits

Guidance Information

## **APPLICATION**

These guidelines apply to all staff and students at the University

## **PURPOSE**

These guidelines provide frequently asked questions (FAQ's) to give further explanation and support recommended good practice for implementing the Monitoring and Measuring Health and Safety Performance Standard.

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## **GUIDELINES**

### **General FAQs**

#### **What is an audit system and what does it aim to achieve?**

An audit system is a way of looking at how effective we are in managing our health and safety risks. By considering a representative sample of activities, it systematically checks how a whole school, service or department manages either its whole range of health and safety risks, or just one specific topic in detail. It aims to give valuable information that highlights strengths as well as areas of greatest risk to enable local and University resources to be focused on these areas.

#### **Why are we using the HASMAP audit tool?**

Out of the many audit systems available, the University has selected and committed to the HASMAP ('Health and Safety Management Profile') system HASMAP is the audit tool devised by the Universities Safety and Health Association (USHA) specifically for use in

universities. It has been accepted by the Health and Safety Executive as a valid audit method for Tertiary/Higher Education and the Chairs of University Councils (UK).

### **Why is my area being audited?**

The University must be sure that every faculty, service division, school and department is implementing health and safety procedures effectively to create a safe and healthy environment. The best way to do this is through a system of checks and balances that lets each area know how effective their management systems are. The audit helps us all to identify objectively our strengths (areas of best practice to share with others) and areas for improvement (where local resources should be focused and more central support, training and information may be needed).

### **What happens – can you give me a quick overview?**

- The audit begins with a pre-meeting led by the Auditors to agree the process, timescales and scope with the Head of School/ Department and/ or Dean/ Director.
- The school/ department or service then has approximately 3 weeks to prepare for the audit itself which starts with a meeting to confirm the process details.
- Over the next few weeks, identified staff will be asked to answer questions and bring documents as written evidence to the audit team.
- The school/ service then receives a report setting out key findings - which you can discuss and respond to, before working with the Health and Safety Audit Manager to agree an implementation plan to deal with any issues raised

### **What is the difference between a topic audit and a full audit?**

Each audit assesses how well a school/ department or service is managing health and safety risks and how much it has improved over time.

- full audits give a clear picture of the whole scope of activities in an area. They help the school/ department or service identify and prioritise areas for improvement, covering all relevant topics (e.g. from office management to hazardous substance control)
- they are led by the centrally based health and safety audit manager along with a health and safety manager
- topic audits look at a specific subject (e.g. manual handling) or specific Key Performance Indicators (e.g. risk control, competence, surveying and leadership) in a school/ service.
- they are led by your local health and safety manager and give us an in-depth look at key areas
- they often occur after new topic procedures are introduced

### **How will the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service ensure a consistent approach?**

The health and safety audit teams are fully trained to ensure consistency in the HASMAP process. All audits are monitored by the audit manager and head of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service.

### **What does the auditor do?**

The audit is usually undertaken by a small team of auditors from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service who

- plan the audit, produce a methodology to discuss and agree with head of school/ service and/ or dean/ head of service group and arrange and lead on the opening and closing meetings
- request information, interview people, observe areas and work activities and make informed judgements based on the evidence provided

- produce a full, detailed report and summary overview outlining how and where expected legal University standards have been achieved and best practice can be shared or where improvements still need to be made
- agree the action plan and timescales with the head of school/ service and sign off the actions once completed

## **FAQs for Academic Heads of School (Department)/ Directors of Service**

### **I'm an Academic Head of School (Department) or Directors of Service, what do I need to do?**

- you should approve the audit methodology in consultation with the audit manager, be available for interview, provide any necessary documents and attend the opening and closing meetings
- you should let staff know that the audit will occur and that they may be interviewed
- you should also identify key staff who should be involved
- after the audit you should feedback on and formally accept the final report, share the findings with staff and develop an action plan with your health and safety manager
- you should agree this with the lead auditor and address the recommendations until all actions are signed off by the lead auditor
- keep a record of the audit report and action plan until the next audit occurs, or until all the actions have been completed and signed off, or for at least three years - whichever is the longest.

### **How will the audit help my school/department/service?**

The audit aims to:

- give valuable information to each school/ department or service by highlighting strengths and examples of good practice or innovative solutions.
- identify the areas of greatest risk in each school/ department service, to enable local and central resources to be focused on these areas.
- be flexible and objective (but not bureaucratic) in its approach. The audit provides a simple bar chart overview that shows the school/ service's performance against the audit question set, supported by a detailed explanatory report that can be fine-tuned to satisfy your needs.
- help the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to help you by prioritising the topics on which you need more guidance, and listening to any issues you have to see how we can continuously improve the service we offer you.

### **Who keeps records?**

Both the head of the area being audited (often the head of school/ department or service) and the health and safety audit manager must keep copies of the audit report and action plan until all actions have been signed off. The audit manager will also retain a file copy until the next audit.

### **How long will the audit take?**

That depends on the size of the school or service. A full audit can take between 4 to 8 weeks, whilst a topic audit will take between 2 to 4 weeks.

### **When will it happen?**

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service will notify the head of school/ service no later than 4 weeks before the audit. However if an external agency intervenes, or there are other internal concerns, we may change the timetable to bring forward priority areas.

**What if the audit is due to take place when my school/ service is too busy?**

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service take a flexible approach and understand the pressures on staff, but all areas must receive an audit over the next 3 years. If an audit is scheduled at an unsuitable time the head of school/ service should discuss this with the health and safety manager and health and safety audit manager to determine if an alternative date can be arranged.

**What happens after the audit?**

The health and safety audit manager will ask the head of school / service (supported by the health and safety manager) to prepare a response to the report, and discuss it with them before making a final decision. The health and safety manager then helps the head of school/ service to develop an action plan and share the report findings with staff.

**What support do I get?**

Your health and safety manager will support you through the process. If you have further questions you can contact the health and safety audit manager.

**Staff FAQs****What do staff do during the audit?**

Staff simply need to answer any questions as fully as possible and find any documents or records needed to provide evidence of those answers. You may need to show the health and safety audit manager and/ or health and safety manager around the area and if asked by the head of school/ service to attend the closing or opening meeting, you should do so.

**Who will be asked to attend an interview and what will they be asked?**

Staff are selected for interview either randomly from the staff list or asked specifically because it is thought that they may have useful information to share. If you are selected, you will be asked questions about your role in relation to health and safety - the key thing to remember is that there is no right or wrong answer. The aim is to give the auditor a true picture of the current situation to see how well the systems work, it is not to apportion blame or name individuals.

**Who gets the results?**

The head of school/ service and the line managers they have identified will receive a performance summary and full report, as will the dean or head of service group.