

# HSLO Quick Guide

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# Introduction

As an HSLO, you have been chosen by your Head of Department<sup>1</sup> to play an important part in helping the University stay safe. Your involvement makes a big difference to the safety of yourself and everyone around you.

To help support you, we have made this quick guide, based on common queries from HSLOs. If there is something which you feel has been missed out, or need more specific help with, please get in touch.

Please note that this is not comprehensive guidance - additional information is available on the Staff Directory, links are included where relevant.

## 1) Health and Safety Inspections

### Staff Directory – Health and Safety Inspection

### Organising an inspection

#### **When does the inspection need to take place?**

Inspections must be completed annually but can take place at whatever time of year suits your department best. For larger departments, inspections may be separated over days/months as needed – see the annual cycle for more information.

#### **Who needs to be invited to the inspection?**

You should have at least one other person conducting the inspection with you. This is often the head of department but can be any member of your department. You are required to invite the Trade Union Representatives, though they do not have to attend. Representatives may request a copy of the completed inspection form after it has been completed. We also ask you to send an invite to [safety@essex.ac.uk](mailto:safety@essex.ac.uk), however a Health and Safety Adviser may only attend inspections of high-risk areas, or where the inspection is being led by a new HSLO/manager.

#### **How do I prepare for the inspection?**

You can start fill out the document check section of the Inspection Checklist, as it does not need to be done at the same time as the physical inspection. This will prompt you to review documents that are required as part of the inspection.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Head of Department' also refers to Heads of Schools, Sections and their equivalents.

You will also need to ensure all areas are accessible for inspection, which includes any individual offices. If any areas require additional safety precautions for the inspection party, these must be communicated in advance.

## **Inspection Action Plans**

### **How do I prioritise actions?**

High priority – there is an immediate risk and/or considerable effort/resources are required to mitigate the risk. For a more expansive definition, please see the Inspection Checklist.

Medium priority – no immediate risk, but it is likely of an incident occurring and/or serious consequences if not actioned

Low priority – unlikely to cause an incident or serious consequences but does require mitigation.

If you are unsure, contact your manager or health and safety.

### **Who needs to sign off on the action plan?**

Action Plans need to be signed off by the manager responsible for the area, usually the Head of Department.

### **What should I do if an action isn't completed within the required time frame?**

This depends on the specific circumstances, please discuss this with your HoD and/or Health and Safety Adviser

### **How long do I need to keep Action Plans for?**

Inspection Action Plans can be destroyed after 5 years.

# 2) Equipment Safety & PAT

## Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

### Staff Directory - PAT

#### What needs to be checked?

Each department should have an inventory of all electrical equipment kept within your areas. From this, you will need to determine which items require Portable Appliance Testing (PAT).

You should also conduct visual checks to ensure that there is no damage to any electrical equipment, and for any potential hazards such as 'daisy chain' extension cables and un-fused travel adaptors.

#### How do I arrange PAT?

Please contact the Estates Helpdesk to arrange PAT – it will help them if you also send them a list of items which need to be tested.

#### Does homeworking equipment need to be tested?

Equipment used to work from home does need to be tested, however only the cables need to be brought in. It may be possible to have two rounds of testing, which would allow for people to exchange cables brought in from home for ones which have already been tested.

## Equipment Safety

### Staff Directory – Work equipment safety

#### What needs to be checked?

'Work equipment' includes a broad range of items used for work purposes. Some of the common items include trolleys and ladders/step ladders, [electrical items](#), and furniture.

#### Do I need to be trained to inspect equipment?

Many common items, such as workstations and small electricals, can be inspected visually and do not require any training. Specialist or technical items will likely require some level of training.

Trolleys and ladders can be checked by a Health and Safety Adviser during your inspection, or training can be arranged ad-hoc for a small group.

# 3) Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

## Staff Directory - DSE

### Self-Assessments

#### **Do I need to do a DSE assessment?**

Self-Assessments should be completed annually, or when changes are made to an individual's workstation. All departments should have access to the online self-assessment via HR Organiser, but a Word version is available in case this is not available.

#### **What happens once the assessment has been completed?**

Assessments will either be reviewed by the head of department or DSE Facilitator(s) to action as necessary. This may involve an in-person assessment or discussion to resolve any issues highlighted by the assessment.

#### **I have a problem with the online form, what should I do?**

Please contact Commercial Applications to resolve issues with the online form.

### DSE Facilitators

#### **What is a DSE Facilitator?**

A [DSE Facilitator](#) is there to assist line managers by co-ordinating the assessment process and assisting employees to get equipment or further help if their DSE assessment identifies problems. DSE facilitators are listed on the [Health and Safety Department Contacts](#) page.

#### **My department's DSE facilitator isn't available, what should I do?**

You can contact [safety@essex.ac.uk](mailto:safety@essex.ac.uk), or you may be able to ask another department's facilitator for support.

#### **What happens if a DSE facilitator's intervention hasn't helped?**

If a DSE Facilitator requires additional support, please contact [safety@essex.ac.uk](mailto:safety@essex.ac.uk), to discuss if an assessment by Health and Safety is required. If someone has a medical condition which is causing issues while using DSE, an [Occupational Health referral](#) may be needed.

# 4) Health and Safety Training

## Staff Directory – Health and Safety Training

### Essential Training and Health & Safety Inductions

#### How do I know how many people have completed essential training?

Records for How We Work at Essex (HWWAE) and health and safety training run by the Health and Safety team are held on HR Organiser. Reports are available from Commercial Applications.

#### What is a Health and Safety Induction, and is it the same as How We Work at Essex?

HWWAE is an overview of information across the University, while a Health and Safety Induction ensures that new starters have been informed of health and safety processes and any risks that they may face while at work. Inductions must be completed with any new staff member, and a copy of their completed Induction Checklist kept on file. It is the duty of their line manager to ensure they have received an adequate induction, but completing the checklist with the new starter can be delegated to any competent member of the team.

### Training requirements

#### Who needs Health and Safety Training?

Everyone is required to complete How We Work at Essex, which provides an overview of health and safety requirements at Essex.

All other training requirements are dependent on job role - full details are available in the [Health and Safety Training Matrix](#) (.docx).

Directors and Heads of Department need to attend Managing Health and Safety Essentials, as do all line managers and principal investigators in high-risk areas. This is also recommended for anyone who has health and safety responsibilities

Anyone who is involved in risk assessments should attend Risk Assessment Essentials, and it is required for line managers and principal investigators in high-risk areas.

#### How many Fire Marshals does my department need?

Fire Marshal positions are voluntary, but it is recommended to aim for 10-30% of the total staff in your department. Some departments may need more than this, for example if there is an increased risk of fire or the department is spread across multiple floors/buildings.

## **How do should Fire Marshals be arranged?**

Fire Marshals are only expected to check the area they are in, while heading towards the nearest emergency exit, so exact layouts will vary depending on the location/size of your department. For example, if your department is based in corridors, you could have Marshals heading towards different exits from a central point, with this plan replicated on different floors if needed. For more specific advice, please contact the Fire Safety team ([fire@essex.ac.uk](mailto:fire@essex.ac.uk)).



# 5) Documentation

## What documents do I need to keep updated?

There are several documents that you will need to keep up to date. These include:

- Department Health and Safety Management Statement
- Risk Assessments (see below)
- Equipment inspection records
- Inspection Action Plan

## What risk assessments do I need?

Each department must have [risk assessments](#) in place for activities, area or equipment they oversee. Some of these will be similar to risk assessments in other departments, so a template is available for you to adapt in line with your department. Available templates include:

- [Offices](#)
- [Storage areas](#)
- [Driving for work](#)
- [Pregnant and post-natal workers](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Field trips/outings with students](#)
- [Overseas travel](#)

If research involving human participants or potentially hazardous material is conducted within your department, the Principal Investigator may be required to complete a [research risk assessment](#).

## What do I need to put on a Health and Safety Noticeboard?

The full list of recommended items is available in the Department Health and Safety Management Statement. This list includes the Management Statement itself, along with a Health and Safety Law poster with up-to-date contact information, and recent relevant health and safety communications.

## What is meant by 'health and safety communication'?

This generally refers to Health and Safety Bulletins, which are sent either to the whole University or to certain areas. University-wide bulletins are sent to the [safety bulletin subscription list](#), as well as to HoDs, Department Managers, Executive Deans etc.

# Appendix - Annual Cycle

Month	Event	Notes
1	Inspection preparation	<p>Get yourself inspection ready:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure you have reviewed an up-to-date H&amp;S Management Statement, based on current template<sup>2</sup>. Evidence of its being communicated to staff (e.g. notice board, email, minute from department meeting)</li> <li>Reviewed and up to date risk assessments (office, driving or department specific) based on the most current templates. Also, evidence of these being communicated to staff (e.g. notice board, email, minute from department meeting)</li> <li>Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) report and records of actions taken to make safe.</li> <li>Equipment inventories are up to date, inspections carried out and inspection records complete. Equipment tagged.</li> <li>Evidence of H&amp;S communication via a team meeting, bulletin, employee reminders.</li> <li>H&amp;S Law Poster is up, visible to staff and information correct.</li> <li>Examples of a recent completed DSE Self-Assessment and Induction checklist.</li> </ul> <p>Don't forget to invite the Trade Union Representatives two weeks beforehand. For higher risk areas you should also invite your lead Health and Safety Adviser to attend.</p> <p>Make sure you can access all the areas you intend to visit and inform the inspection party if there is anything else needed to access these areas safely.</p>
2	Annual inspection	Carry out or co-ordinate the Annual Health and Safety Inspection of your department and record areas inspected and actions required.
3	Inspection action plan submitted	<p>Submit the signed and dated inspection action plan to WHSW (and for Academic Departments, the Faculty Manager) within one month of the inspection.</p> <p>Keep a copy for your records. (NB: Old inspection action plans can be destroyed after 5 years, in line with the <a href="#">health and safety record retention schedule</a>.)</p> <p>Communicate the inspection findings to the department, particularly to those required to take action.</p>
4	Inspection action	Take any action needed as listed in inspection action plan.

<sup>2</sup> Available on University health and safety policy website: <https://www.essex.ac.uk/staff/health-and-safety-policies-and-procedures/policies>

Month	Event	Notes
5	First action plan review (3 monthly review)	<p>Review your inspection action plan with your Head of Department. High priority actions should have been address by now. Update the action plan and archive the old version.</p> <p>Your head of department should also be discussing Health and Safety KPI progress (e.g. essential training), monitoring and action. This is your opportunity to raise any health and safety issues or risks that might need to go onto the operational risk registers.</p>
6	Electrical equipment PAT	Ensure your PAT inventory is up to date and current. Send it to Estates Helpdesk to arrange testing. Old PAT records should be kept for at least 3 years.
7	Work equipment	Ensure your work equipment inventories are up to date; work equipment inspections completed, required actions taken and inspection records updated. Make sure that inspected equipment is tagged. Old records should be kept for 6 years.
8	Second action plan review	<p>Review your inspection action plan with your head of department. Medium and high priority actions should have been address by now. Update the action plan and archive the old version.</p> <p>Your head of department should also be discussing KPI progress, monitoring and action. This is your opportunity to raise any health and safety issues or risks that might need to onto the operational risk registers.</p>
9	H&S training	<p>Check staff have completed essential health and safety training and other required training for their role.</p> <p>Check that health and safety induction checklists are being completed and signed off by the employee and their manager.</p>
10	Roles and responsibilities	<p>Checking there are adequate DSE Facilitators in place and liaising with current DSE Facilitators to ensure records are up to date.</p> <p>Ensuring that there are enough Fire Marshals and First Aiders (if needed) for your team/department.</p>
11	Risk assessment	<p>Review risk assessments and health and safety standards for common activities across the department.</p> <p>Remind managers to review their risk assessments.</p>
12	Third action plan review	<p>Review your inspection action plan with your head of department. All actions should have been address by now. Update the action plan and archive the old version.</p> <p>Your head of department should also be discussing KPI progress, monitoring and action. This is your opportunity to raise any health and safety issues or risks that might need to onto the operational risk registers.</p>