



GSES

**GSES Health & Safety Pillar (version 4.7)
Assessment Guide**

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INTRODUCTION

- The goal of this document is simple: to help new users start with GSES *Assessments*.
- The Assessments are, for each Pillar, the way to measure your organization against the GSES Enterprise standard. It contains all criteria in the GSES standard and allows you to earn points for each by filling in the assessment.
- To guide you through our Assessments for each pillar, we provide Assessment Guides like the one you are reading right now. It elaborates on what each of the criteria in an assessment means and provides practical suggestions on how to provide an answer.

GSES PLATFORM PRACTICALITIES

- Start an assessment by logging in and navigating to Assessment under Organization. For more Getting Started information on how to use the platform for measuring your organization, please read through our "Getting Started measuring your Organization" guide.
- Assessments consist of 10-15 criteria in total. Most criteria are in 'closed-end format', so you can select your initial answer from a list.
- The criteria are grouped into five sections: 1. Plan (Policy and Goals), 2. Do (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication), 3. Check (Evaluate) and 4. Act (Improve).
- There is additional room to elaborate on your answer. This is important for both your internal record keeping (what is the key rationale given for the answer) as well as the auditors performing the audit to evaluate your performance.
- When you're done with the assessment, you can request a verification by an independent auditor. The auditor will check if and to what extent the answers you have given are supported by the uploaded evidence.
- This audit transforms the assessment from an internal exercise into an audited evaluation of sustainability performance which can be the basis of internal and external communication.
- For your audit preparation, for each criterion there is a suggestion of what that 'supporting evidence' could be. The suggestion is a practical recommendation and contains the preferred answer for auditors. However, if you have a different type of evidence to support your answers, that is also acceptable.
- At any point you can save your (draft) assessment and continue at a later moment. Click 'save' in the top right corner of your screen.
- When you're done, you can click on 'submit assessment' in the top right corner of your screen. After which you can proceed to request verification.

USEFUL NOTES

- If you need help, email support@gses-system.com. This is the fastest and most effective way to get the help you need. Your email arrives in our support box where a team of people is ready to pick it up and help you.
- GSES recognizes that every organization is different. We do not require you use a specific type of format policy document as evidence to support assessment answers. Your internal documents suffice. An auditor has the responsibility to assess whether your evidence is proof of performance.
- The auditor will only evaluate to what extent the answers given are supported by the evidence documents uploaded. The content of the evidence document itself (e.g. a CSR policy) will not be evaluated.

- Evidence is sent directly to the auditors, GSES does not have access to your evidence. This safeguards confidentiality of your documents and the independence of the audit process.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT VERSION 4.7

SECTION 1 - PLAN (POLICIES AND GOALS)

Criterion 1: Preferences and Requirements in relation to H&S

Criterion 2: Policies and Objectives for H&S

SECTION 2 - DO (ACTIONS, IMPLEMENTATION, MEASUREMENT, COMMUNICATION)

Criterion 3: H&S Employees

Criterion 4: H&S Risks and Opportunities

Criterion 5: Organizational Inventory

Criterion 6: Leadership and Support

Criterion 7: H&S Hazards

SECTION 3 - CHECK (EVALUATE)

Criterion 8: HS Performance

Criterion 9: HS Assessment audit

SECTION 4 - ACT (IMPROVEMENT)

Criterion 10: Conclusions

SECTION 1 - PLAN (Policies and Goals)

Preferences and Requirements in relation to H&S

Effective Health and Safety (H&S) management requires a thorough understanding of the preferences and requirements of key stakeholders, including employees, clients/customers, and subcontractors. These groups often have specific safety concerns and expectations that must be addressed to maintain a safe and healthy working environment. The international standard ISO 45001:2018, "Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Requirements with Guidance for Use", serves as a framework for organizations to manage H&S risks and improve overall safety performance. The GSE-Standard H&S pillar is based on this ISO standard, ensuring that organizations meet both legal and ethical obligations to protect physical and mental health.

To effectively meet these requirements, organizations must maintain an inventory of the preferences and needs of their stakeholders, ensuring that H&S policies are tailored and relevant. The assessment criterion explores whether the organization has documented these preferences, laying the groundwork for a comprehensive H&S management system that promotes a safe, healthy, and compliant working environment.

Criterion 1:

The organization has made an inventory of health & safety preferences and requirements for the following stakeholders:	Points
a Employees.	6
b Clients/customers.	2
c Subcontractors.	2
d None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about aspects of your stakeholders' H&S preferences and requirements.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (c) and elaborate in the context box. Note, you can select "yes" for multiple answers if appropriate. If all the answers or the entire criterion are not applicable, select "not applicable" for each answer and explain in the context box.
- You can then upload evidence to support your answer, such as your company's H&S policy including the needs of stakeholders. This can be a specific document or a section in another document or on your website/ webpage. To show the communication with stakeholders, you can upload stakeholder meeting reports.

Helpful notes:

- The criterion asks you to confirm that your organization has conducted a stakeholder analysis whereby the needs and preferences of certain stakeholders are identified and recorded. The evidence uploaded should reflect these statements, showing that these aspects are included in the policy. The content of the evidence itself (e.g. the preferences) is not the topic of the evaluation.

SECTION 1 - PLAN (Policies and Goals)

Policies and Objectives for H&S

Clear Health and Safety (H&S) policies and objectives are essential for managing risks and ensuring a safe environment for employees, clients, and subcontractors. A well-defined H&S policy outlines the organization's commitment to safety and provides a structured approach to managing potential hazards.

To effectively implement this, organizations should establish a comprehensive H&S management system, set concrete objectives, and use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track progress. These KPIs, aligned with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) criteria, help monitor performance and drive continuous improvement in safety practices.

The assessment criterion explores whether the organization has formalized its H&S approach by having clear policies, set objectives, and established performance indicators to manage and evaluate H&S outcomes effectively.

Criterion 2:

The organization has implemented its Health & Safety policies and objectives in any of the following ways:	Points
a H&S policy is set out in a company policy document or a separate H&S policy has been drawn up.	3
b A H&S management system has been set up.	2
c Specific, quantitative targets have been set for H&S.	3
d H&S performance indicators (KPIs) have been established to measure progress towards the H&S targets.	2
e None of the above	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about aspects of your organization's H&S approach and asks to elaborate on the objectives and KPIs of your organization.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (d) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence you can upload to support your answer includes your organization's H&S policy and management system, clear objectives, and KPIs. This can be a specific document or a section in another document or on your website/ webpage for example.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

Helpful notes:

- The criterion asks you to confirm certain aspects of your organization's H&S policy and targets. The evidence uploaded should reflect these statements, showing that these

aspects are included in the policy. The content of the evidence itself (e.g. the policy or the targets) is not the topic of the evaluation.

SECTION 2 - DO (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication)

Involvement of employees and H&S communication

Employee involvement is vital for effective Health and Safety (H&S) management, as it helps ensure policies are practical and aligned with workplace realities. Organizations must consult and involve employees, especially non-managerial staff, in a structured manner. This includes providing the time, training, and resources necessary for meaningful participation, as well as ensuring timely access to clear and relevant H&S information.

Best practices, such as those outlined in ISO 45001:2018, emphasize consulting employees when establishing H&S policies, identifying and addressing barriers to participation, and involving them in defining competence and training needs. The assessment criterion examines whether the organization has mechanisms in place for consulting and engaging employees and whether it provides other stakeholders with the necessary information to support a safe and healthy work environment.

Criterion 3:

The organization consults and involves employees in a structured manner and informs other stakeholders with regard to H&S matters in any of the following ways:		Points
a	There are mechanisms, training, and resources in place for employee consultation and participation.	2
b	Offering employees timely access to clear, comprehensible, relevant information about Health & Safety.	2
c	Non-managerial employees are/were consulted when establishing the H&S policy.	1
d	Obstacles and barriers to employee participation are identified and removed, or minimized.	1
e	Non-managerial employees are involved in establishing competence requirements, training needs, training, and evaluating training.	2
f	Timely access to clear, comprehensible, and relevant information about H&S is available to all other stakeholders.	2
g	None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about the involvement of employees regarding H&S management.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (f) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence that you can upload to support your answer includes communication of H&S information, training records or other well-being initiatives.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

Helpful notes

- Option (f): Other stakeholders refer to non-workers, such as visitors, the local community, shareholders, and the wider public.

SECTION 2 - DO (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication)

H&S Risks and Opportunities

Identifying and managing Health and Safety (H&S) risks and opportunities is crucial for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment. This includes assessing a range of risks, such as physical, chemical, biological, psychosocial, mechanical, electrical, and movement-related hazards, which can affect employees, contractors, temporary workers, apprentices, and the environment.

A robust H&S management system, based on standards like ISO 45001:2018, helps organizations systematically identify, evaluate, and address these risks while also exploring opportunities to improve safety, employee well-being, and environmental protection.

The assessment criterion examines whether the organization has created an inventory of H&S risks and opportunities for all relevant groups, ensuring comprehensive protection for both people and the environment.

Criterion 4:

The organization consults or informs any of the following stakeholders with regard to H&S risks:	Points
a Employees.	2
b Subcontractors.	2
c Temporary workers.	2
d Apprentices.	2
e Other internal stakeholders.	1
f The environment.	1
g None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about the management of H&S risks and opportunities and the assessment of this range of risks.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (f) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence that you can upload to support your answer includes risk assessment documentation, environmental considerations or a H&S program.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

Helpful notes

- H&S risks, or hazards, can be related to aspects such as physical, chemical, biological, psychosocial, mechanical, electrical or based on movement and energy.
- Opportunities are a circumstance or set of circumstances that can lead to improvement of H&S performance.
- Option (f): Including the environment as a stakeholder indicates that the organization understands the impact of the environment on its operations (and therefore the impact of its operations on its employee health and safety). It also indicates that the organization recognizes its own impact on the environment, and tries to minimize this while finding opportunities for H&S performance improvement.

SECTION 2 - DO (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication)

Organizational Inventory

An organizational inventory is essential for managing Health and Safety (H&S) effectively. It involves documenting tools, machines, and systems that promote safety, as well as identifying potential emergency situations that require immediate response. The inventory also helps highlight opportunities to improve H&S performance for employees, contractors, temporary workers, and the environment. Additionally, it ensures the organization is aware of and compliant with legal and regulatory requirements related to hazards and risks.

The assessment criterion examines whether the organization has created a comprehensive inventory covering these key areas, supporting a proactive approach to safety and compliance.

Criterion 5:

In the context of promoting Health & Safety, the organization has made an inventory of any of the following:	Points
a The information/documentation on tools, machines, and systems that promotes safety.	2
b Potential emergencies (unplanned or unscheduled situations) that require an immediate response.	2
c Opportunities for improving H&S-related performance for employees, subcontractors, temporary employees, and other internal stakeholders.	2
d Opportunities for improving H&S-related performance for the environment.	2
e Legal and other requirements applicable to its hazards and H&S risks (including opportunities).	2
f None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about the identification of risks and opportunities related to H&S within your organization.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (e) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence that you can upload to support your answer includes an emergency response plan or inventory for safety tools, machines, and systems.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

SECTION 2 - DO (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication)

Leadership and Support

Effective leadership and strong support from management are crucial to fostering a culture of safety within any organization. Management's commitment to Health and Safety (H&S) not only ensures compliance with regulations but also demonstrates a genuine concern for the well-being of employees. By showing leadership, management can create an environment where employees feel safe and supported, free from the fear of reprisals when raising safety concerns.

Furthermore, organizations must actively engage employees by providing access to relevant H&S training and information. This includes offering additional training sessions, integrating H&S across all divisions, and establishing clear contact points for employees to access H&S-related information. Encouraging employees to actively contribute to H&S communication ensures that safety practices are continuously improved, making the workplace safer for everyone.

The assessment criterion explores whether management demonstrates leadership in H&S, provides necessary support to employees, and fosters a collaborative culture focused on safety.

Criterion 6:

The organization informs, consults and involves employees in a structured manner in any of the following ways:	Points
a Management shows leadership on H&S matters.	2
b Management informs employees and creates a culture that protects employees from reprisals.	2
c Employees are allowed to attend additional information sessions or training courses on H&S-related topics that are relevant to them.	1
d The organization involves all divisions in the integration of H&S.	1
e The organization has set up clear contact points for H&S information.	2
f Employees can make an active contribution to the content of H&S-related communication.	2
g None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about the initiatives for creating a culture of safety through effective leadership.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (f) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence that you can upload to support your answer includes H&S policy and management commitment and leadership in H&S.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

Helpful notes

- In the context of this criterion, management refers to the individuals or teams within an organization who are responsible for overseeing operations, setting policies, and ensuring the well-being of employees. This typically includes executives, senior leaders, department heads, and other managerial roles that influence workplace culture, policies, and practices related to health and safety (H&S).

SECTION 2 - DO (Actions, Implementation, Measurement, Communication)

Dealing with Health & Safety Hazards

Identifying and addressing Health and Safety (H&S) hazards is a critical responsibility for management in ensuring a safe and secure work environment. Effective hazard management involves continuously identifying both new and existing risks related to products, social factors, and work processes. This proactive approach allows organizations to design and implement control measures, including redesigning workflows or introducing safety protocols to eliminate or minimize hazards.

Moreover, management must ensure that employees are provided with the necessary tools and support, such as free personal protective equipment (PPE), along with clear instructions on its proper use and maintenance. In addition, contingency plans for emergency situations must be in place, accompanied by regular training and simulation exercises to ensure employees are prepared for potential risks.

The assessment criterion examines whether management takes a proactive, comprehensive approach to identifying H&S hazards and providing the necessary controls, equipment, and training to ensure employee safety in all circumstances.

Criterion 7:

The organization proactively deals with potential H&S risks by any of the following:	Points
a Constantly identifying (new) Health & Safety hazards.	2
b Promoting attention to hazards related to social factors and creating policy to this effect.	1
c Designing and updating control measures or reorganizing work to eliminate hazards.	2
d Provision of free personal protective equipment (PPE) and instructions for the use and maintenance of the PPE.	2
e Creating and maintaining contingency plans and training for emergency situations.	2
f Staging periodic exercises and/or tests to simulate potential emergency situations.	1
g None of the above.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about the organization's hazard management and identification of risks.

- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (f) and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence that you can upload to support your answer includes an emergency response plan, risk assessments or for example a simulation exercise record.
- If none of the options are applicable, select "None of the above." In this case, no evidence is necessary.

Helpful notes

- Social factors include workload, work hours, victimization, harassment and bullying.

SECTION 3 – CHECK (Evaluate)

H&S Performance

Evaluating your organization's Health & Safety (H&S) performance is essential for understanding what's working, where improvements are needed, and how to move forward with a stronger safety culture. With increasing regulatory pressure and a growing focus on worker well-being, this evaluation becomes even more crucial for ensuring compliance and minimizing risks.

A thorough evaluation is not just about identifying failures—it also highlights successes. It's an opportunity to recognize what's working well in your H&S practices and pinpoint areas where additional focus is required. By doing so, organizations can not only improve safety standards but also demonstrate their commitment to a safe working environment to stakeholders. Moreover, it provides a clear roadmap for setting future safety goals and continuing to enhance performance, ensuring ongoing improvement in both the short and long term.

Criterion 8:

Health & Safety performance is measured, monitored and assessed with quantitative targets:		Points
a	Yes.	10
b	No.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about your organization's evaluation process of H&S plans, targets and outcomes.
- This is a single-select criterion, you can answer "Yes," or "No," and elaborate in the context box.
- Evidence you can upload to support your answer includes H&S target documentation and H&S policy plan.

Helpful notes

- The criterion asks you to demonstrate that you have set specific targets related to Health & Safety (H&S) performance and that the progress towards the targets is regularly monitored.
- These targets should be quantitative and aligned with your organization's priorities.

- A good practice is to use the SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) to ensure that targets are clear and achievable, while also reflecting your organization's broader goals for continuous improvement in safety standards.

SECTION 3 – CHECK (Evaluate)

Auditing of the H&S Assessment

In an era where accountability is key, it's essential for organizations to build and maintain trust with their stakeholders. One effective way to do this is by actively auditing and reviewing your Health & Safety (H&S) performance. Independent audits of H&S efforts demonstrate that your organization is committed to transparency, continuous improvement, and the well-being of its employees.

Conducting internal audits is a useful method for tracking progress and identifying areas for improvement. However, an external audit provides an added level of credibility, offering an independent evaluation of your H&S practices. This not only helps to identify gaps or shortcomings in safety protocols but also reassures stakeholders that your organization is genuinely committed to providing a safe working environment.

Criterion 9:

Is the organization's performance on Health & Safety monitored annually?	Points
a Yes, with an internal audit.	4
b Yes, with an external audit.	6
c No, it is not.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about your organization's audit strategy with regard to H&S performance assessment.
- This is a multi-select criterion, you can select one or more options that are applicable to your organization, from options (a) through (c) and elaborate in the context box. .
- Evidence you can upload to support your answer includes internal and/or external audit reports.

Helpful notes

- The criterion asks you to confirm the organization's audit policy. The evidence uploaded should reflect support statements. The content of the evidence itself (e.g. an audit) is not the topic of the evaluation.

SECTION 4 - ACT (Improve)

Conclusions: Continuous Improvement

Health & Safety (H&S) management is an ongoing journey that requires constant attention and refinement. For organizations committed to improving their H&S performance, this means taking ownership of safety outcomes and continually refining strategies to enhance workplace safety.

Progress in H&S can come in many forms, from small, incremental changes to significant improvements in safety protocols. Staying informed about best practices, new safety technologies, and evolving regulations ensures that organizations remain at the forefront of safety management. Remember, every step forward—whether it's a minor adjustment or a major breakthrough—contributes to creating a safer, healthier work environment for all employees. Continuous improvement in H&S is not just a goal; it's a commitment to the long-term well-being of the workforce.

Criterion 10:

The organization draws conclusions from its H&S performance monitoring and works towards continuous improvement:		Points
a	Yes.	10
b	No.	0

Observations

- This criterion asks about your organization's improvement strategy with regard to H&S measures.
- This is a single-select criterion, you can answer "Yes," or "No," and elaborate in the context box.
- You can upload any internal/external documents to support your answer.

Helpful notes

- The criterion asks you to confirm your organization's improvement policy and the actions taken to review performance and make adjustments as required for continuous improvement. The evidence uploaded should reflect support statements. The content of the evidence itself (e.g. a report) is not the topic of the evaluation.