

# Principal Contractor Guidance

## Less than five personnel

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## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to suppliers who are completing the Principal Contractor question set for those with less than five personnel.

The guidance notes are applicable to all suppliers completing the Health and Safety Appendix, whether for an Acclaim Accreditation or as part of their Constructionline registration.

It is hoped that the guidance within this document will provide you with all of the information that you need however if you should have any queries please contact Acclaim Accreditation or visit:

<https://acclaimaccreditation.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0333 3003066

Email: [acclaim@constructionline.co.uk](mailto:acclaim@constructionline.co.uk)

## Further reading / additional resources

The following links are to sites providing guidance on meeting the requirements of undertaking the Principal Contractor CDM duty holder role.

Managing Health and Safety in Construction – Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015  
Guidance on Regulations:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l153.pdf>

HSE summary on website:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/index.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/principal-contractors.htm>

CITB CDM guidance:

<http://www.citb.co.uk/health-safety-and-other-topics/health-safety/construction-design-and-management-regulations/>

### Note to suppliers with fewer than 5 personnel on completing this health and safety question set.

Companies with fewer than 5 personnel are not required by law to have a written health and safety policy. However, in order to satisfy the requirements of an assessment carried out in accordance with Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Appendix 7 – Core criteria for the demonstration of organisational capability, some written evidence is necessary. You cannot simply say “I train my personnel” and expect that to be taken as sufficient evidence to demonstrate that you have an adequately trained workforce.

Therefore, you need to provide a written response to each of the questions that form the assessment.

A health and safety policy comprises a number of documents covering;

- **policy statement** (the company’s commitment to health and safety),
- **organisation** (the responsibility of individuals for health and safety from the most senior director down to members of personnel)
- **arrangements/procedures** (how a company will act to meet its legal obligations on a number of topics e.g. undertaking risk assessments, managing lone working personnel, dealing with asbestos).

Companies should monitor and audit themselves to check that they actually do what they say they should do and look for areas of improvement in health and safety management.

It is recognised that small companies won’t need such comprehensive systems in place as looking after a small team of just a few people can be managed more easily. In addition, for the very small companies with less than 5 personnel, there is no legal requirement to write down how you manage health and safety.

Your responses should demonstrate that you understand what is required of you and how you achieve that.

This should be in sufficient detail that someone else, i.e. Acclaim Accreditation, can assess you as meeting the requirements. Where the question set makes reference to a policy or arrangements/procedures, you may take this as meaning you should provide a statement **describing** what you do.

Your responses can take the form of text typed directly into the box provided, a document that you upload or a combination of both. Where we can, we have provided some links to documents prepared by the HSE to assist you. If you use these documents you should understand that you are committing yourself to complying with the points made in them.

When considering how you should respond, you should be aware that we are not looking for long, overly detailed statements. You should check to ensure that each of the matters raised in the ‘Guidance Note text’ is covered adequately by your response. If you believe that a particular issue is not relevant to your organisation, and therefore your response does not need to cover one of the items listed as ‘evidence required’, you should say so but you must give a reason why.

**If you do not provide an item of evidence requested without an explanation as to why, you will be asked for it by the assessor which will delay your assessment.**

### Changing Circumstances

**If you are a self employed person** who works on his/her own (sole trader), all the references to ‘your personnel’ are not relevant and you should state this where necessary. This assessment will then be completed on this basis. Should you find that your circumstances change and you engage one or more personnel, you must reapply for a new SSIP certificate as any certificate issued will be invalidated. By clicking on the 'Yes' button and proceeding with the assessment you are confirming your agreement that you will do this.

Similarly, **if you are a company with fewer than five personnel** this assessment will be completed on this basis. If you increase your workforce such that you have five or more personnel, you must reapply for a new SSIP certificate as any certificate issued to you will be invalidated. By clicking on the 'Yes' button and proceeding with the assessment you are confirming your agreement that you will do this.

## Question 1: Policy and Organisation

**Are you able to demonstrate that you have a policy and organisation for health and safety (H&S) management?**

You are expected to have and implement an appropriate policy, regularly reviewed and signed off by the Managing Director or equivalent.

The policy must be relevant to the nature and scale of your work and set out the responsibilities for health and safety management at all levels within the organisation.

## Guidance

### Policy

Your policy should be:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from your work activities;
- to consult with your personnel on matters affecting their health and safety;
- to provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- to provide information, instruction and supervision for personnel;
- to ensure all personnel are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

It can be stated as outlined in the bullet points above, or written to cover these, and any additional aspects, in your own words. For this purpose you may use the form from the HSE (click [here](#)) provided you **complete, sign and date it**.

**Your policy should be signed** by the most senior person responsible for health and safety e.g. Managing Director **and be dated within the past 12 months**.

### Organisation

You should clearly indicate how your company is organised and how responsibilities are allocated throughout the company in sufficient detail to illustrate how health and safety obligations are discharged. The information should include details of:

- Key post holders (outlining specific 'health and safety' duties) and personnel generally so that the line of responsibility is clear throughout your company. The form from the HSE may be used (click [here](#)) although as a small company you may choose to make a simple statement yourself.

Your response may include an organisation chart to demonstrate this, although for smaller companies this may not prove necessary.

## What you need to provide

1. Either H&S Policy signed and dated within last 12 months  
or a signed and dated p10 from INDG449
2. Either Organisation for Health and Safety  
or completed p10 from INDG449

## Question 2: Arrangements for Health and Safety Management

**Are you able to demonstrate your arrangements/procedures for ensuring that your H&S measures are effective in reducing/preventing incidents, occupational ill-health and accidents?**

These should set out the arrangements/procedures for health and safety management within the organisation and should be relevant to the nature and scale of your work.

They should set out how the company will discharge their duties under CDM2015.

There should be a clear indication of how these arrangements/procedures are communicated to the workforce.

### Guidance

#### General Arrangements/procedures

Your arrangements/procedures should have regard to Planning, Organisation, Control, Monitoring and Review as set out in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 regulation 5 ([click here for further details](#)).

You should include the index of your arrangements/procedures, but there is no need to provide all the arrangements/procedures themselves unless identified below.

Your arrangements/procedures should include at least the following:

- risk assessment
- consultation with personnel
- safe plant and equipment
- hazardous substances
- information, instruction and supervision
- training
- accidents, first aid and work related ill health
- monitoring
- emergency procedures
- fire and evacuation

The 'arrangements/procedures' noted above are not task specific 'risk assessments' but should describe your general arrangements/procedures for addressing each subject relevant to your business.

#### Principal Contractor arrangements/procedures

You must provide details of your arrangements/procedures for the following. How you:

- plan, manage and monitor the work of your subcontractors
- communicate health and safety information to the workforce.
- ensure all personnel are inducted before working on site
- prevent access by unauthorized persons to site
- provide adequate welfare facilities
- manage asbestos
- manage fire risks
- comply with your duties under CDM2015

You must also provide details of one arrangement for health and one for safety most appropriate to your work. Examples you may wish to choose from include:

#### Health

- manual handling
- noise
- vibration
- hazardous substances

#### Safety

- working at height
- working with electricity
- working on gas systems
- managing traffic

For suppliers undertaking very specific activities (e.g. demolition, work on gas installations or asbestos removal) you must include arrangements/procedures relating to these.

You may be asked for more evidence if you do not provide sufficient detail in the first place.

You must demonstrate how this information is communicated to the workforce.

### What you need to provide

1. Index of arrangements/procedures
2. Principal Contractor arrangements/procedures for eight bullet points listed
3. One arrangement for health
4. One arrangement for safety
5. Your means of communicating this information to the workforce

## Question 3: Competent Health and Safety Advice

**Do you have access to competent H&S advice/assistance – both general and construction sector related?**

Your organisation, and your personnel, must have ready access to competent health and safety advice, preferably from within your own organisation.

The advisor must be able to provide general health and safety advice, and also (from the same source or elsewhere) advice relating to construction health and safety issues.

### Guidance

Your answer must demonstrate:

- An appropriate source (one or more)
- Examples of such advice

For example new or amended legislation, manual handling in the office, use of computer screens; and also for construction related issues, e.g. lone working, dealing with asbestos.

Although Suppliers may use their own personnel for the provision of advice, these individual(s) must be competent to give this advice. Regardless of whom you use, you must include details of their H&S qualifications and experience (which should be commensurate with the role) – see HSE guidance on competent advice (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/business/competent-advice.htm>).

Individuals that provide competent health and safety advice to contractors are expected to be qualified to NEBOSH Construction Certificate level, or equivalent, with at least two years appropriate experience.

Smaller contractors may obtain health and safety advice from trade bodies that have a recognised health and safety helpline. If this is the case you must provide the name of the organisation, its contact details and how health and safety advice is obtained from the organisation. The name of the organisation alone is insufficient.

In every case you must demonstrate access to both general and construction health and safety advice.

You must include **evidence** of such advice provided within the previous 12 months.

### What you need to provide

1. **Either**

Details of competence of H&S advisor(s) **including CV**

**Or**

Details of trade body providing advice

2. **Evidence** of health and safety advice received from within last 12 months

## Question 4: Training and Information

**Do you have a policy and process for providing your workforce with training and information appropriate to the type of work for which your organisation is likely to bid?**

You should have in place, and implement, training arrangements/procedures to ensure your personnel have the capability and necessary skills, knowledge and experience to discharge their duties as contractors, designers or principal designers.

You should have in place a programme for refresher training, for example a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme or life-long learning which will keep your personnel updated on new developments and changes to legislation or good health and safety practice. This applies throughout the organisation - from Board or equivalent, to trainees.

### Guidance

You should have a training policy that demonstrates that you consider the needs of all your personnel by:

- Determining the appropriate training and information that they require.
- Monitoring the delivery of information and training

#### Information

You should explain how you determine what information is required and how this is provided e.g. leaflets, notices, talks.

#### Training

This should cover both the introduction to a subject and also on-going 'refresher training'. This may be presented in a number of ways e.g. team meetings, on-the-job, on-line approaches or formal training sessions. Whatever manner is used it should demonstrate a considered approach.

Such instruction should be sufficient to provide the requisite skills and understanding for the tasks to be undertaken.

All those who regularly visit sites should also hold a CSCS/CSR card or equivalent to demonstrate that they have achieved at least this level of understanding, although this on its own is not sufficient to demonstrate that adequate training has been provided.

#### Training Records

You should provide sample training records from across all personnel levels to demonstrate that you implement your training policy. These records should include general health and safety training, training in CDM2015, asbestos awareness training etc.

**If you are a sole trader and have no personnel your response should relate to your own training records.**

Where your personnel are likely to come into contact with asbestos containing materials you must provide evidence of annual asbestos awareness refresher training.

### What you need to provide

1. How information is provided to personnel
2. Training policy
3. Training matrix/records and certificates

## Question 5: Qualifications and Experience of Workforce

**Does your workforce have H&S or other relevant qualifications and experience sufficient to implement your H&S policy to a standard appropriate to the work for which your organisation is likely to bid?**

Personnel are expected to have the appropriate qualifications and experience for the assigned tasks, unless they are under controlled and competent supervision.

### Guidance

The nature of this 'qualifications, training and experience' will vary, depending upon the tasks e.g. an operative excavating a hole or driving plant; a site manager responsible for a site (small or large).

You should have in place a policy which clearly sets down the health and safety qualification required for all levels of personnel.

The holding of a recognised 'competence' card is a simple way to demonstrate this requirement. Appropriate card schemes include:

- Certification of Competence of Demolition Operatives (CCDO)
- Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS)
- Construction Skills Register (CSR)
- Electrotechnical Certification Scheme (ECS)
- Engineering Services (SKILLcard)
- UK Plumbing Heating and Mechanical Engineering Services Registration Scheme (JIB-PMES in England and Wales, SNIJIB in Scotland and Northern Ireland)
- Construction Plant Competence Scheme (CPCS)
- Assuring Competence in Engineering Construction (ACE)
- Energy & Utility Skills Register (EUSR)
- Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS)
- Construction Skills Register (CSR)

A card is recommended but not mandatory. However, in situations without recognised cards you will need to provide more underlying evidence for all levels within your company.

Site managers and supervisors are expected to hold qualifications such as SMSTS or SSSTS or equivalent. You are required to provide information on the proportion of your workforce that hold relevant cards or SMSTS and SSSTS qualifications. Where this proportion is not 100% of those that should hold them you must provide a statement of how you will achieve this.

**If you are a sole trader and have no personnel, the information you provide should relate to yourself.**

Suppliers being assessed as asbestos removal contractors must provide a copy of their license which must be in the same name as the supplier making this application.

Suppliers whose personnel are required to be registered to undertake particular types of work (e.g. Gas Safe) must provide evidence demonstrating full compliance with this requirement.

### What you need to provide

1. Policy
2. Proportion of your workforce that hold CSCS/CSR cards.
3. Proportion of your site managers and supervisors who hold SMSTS, SSSTS or equivalent qualifications.
4. Details of how you operate, at all levels, if you do not use cards/SMSTS/SSSTS.
5. Statement on achieving 100% qualification if necessary.
6. Copies of Licences/memberships/certificates.

## Question 6: Monitoring, Auditing and Review

### Do you check, review and where necessary improve your H&S performance?

You should have a system for monitoring your arrangements/procedures, for auditing them at periodic intervals, and for reviewing them on an ongoing basis.

### Guidance

You should have a policy that demonstrates how you:

- monitor your procedures,
- check or audit your procedures,
- review your practices in the light of experience, and look to improve where this is appropriate

These activities should be carried out by a competent person.

You should provide information on how, when and who you use to implement the following:

As a small company you do not have to do all that is indicated below but you need to demonstrate that you regularly check your health and safety performance and attend to areas that need it.

#### Monitoring

Pro-active monitoring (usually relates to specific tasks, or work locations); re-active monitoring (usually occurs after accidents or incidents).

#### Review

A review should be annually or when there is a need e.g. after an accident or near miss. It may include a review of policy, procedures, risk assessments and any changes to the nature and scope of your work.

#### Audit

An audit is a more formal review of the overall process: hazard identification, risk assessment, safe system of work and its implementation in the workplace and provision of supervision. This process should include the investigation of accidents and the incorporation of any lessons learnt into your method of working.

You must provide evidence of a health and safety audit or review undertaken within the past 12 months.

Alternatively, the provision of an OHSAS 18001 compliance certificate issued by a UKAS accredited certification body is sufficient evidence to demonstrate competence in this area.

### What you need to provide

1. Policy for monitoring audit and review
2. **Evidence** of your last H&S performance check/review and action taken

## Question 7: Consultation with Workforce on Health and Safety Matters

**Do you have procedures in place to involve your workforce in the planning and implementation of H&S measures?**

You should have, and implement, an established means of consulting with your workforce on health and safety matters.

### Guidance

This may be achieved in a number of ways; for example, team meetings, questionnaires, office discussions, via safety or union representatives. Your arrangements/procedures should include details of how this is achieved, and how you deal with any concerns expressed by personnel over health and safety, who deals with them and how you give feedback.

You must provide your arrangements/procedures for consulting with your workforce together with evidence to demonstrate that you implement it. The evidence should comprise at least two of the following:

- a) Toolbox talks / briefings (showing workforce attendance)
- b) records of health and safety committees
- c) notes of personnel meetings where health and safety matters were discussed
- d) screen shots of company intranet pages relevant to health and safety
- e) records of concerns raised and how they were dealt with.

**of which should be no more than 12 months old.**

As a small company it may not be appropriate for you to comply with the requirements stated above. If this is the case you need to demonstrate how you consult on health and safety issues with your workforce.

**If you are a sole trader and have no personnel, you may state this question is not applicable for this reason.**

### What you need to provide

1. Arrangements/procedures
2. Evidence of implementation
  - **TWO** examples from within the last 12 months

## Question 8: Accident/Incident Reporting

### Do you conduct accident/incident reporting and undertake follow-up investigation?

You should have records of all RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable events for at least the last three years. You should also have in place a system for reviewing all incidents, and recording the action taken as a result.

You should record any enforcement action taken against your company over the last five years, and the action which you have taken to remedy matters subject to enforcement action.

## Guidance

### Accidents

Learning from accidents is a vital element of good safety risk management.

It is expected that you will have a formal means of recording and keeping records of accidents for at least the last three years. You should also comply with the requirements of the [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations \(RIDDOR\)](#).

Your records should also show how (and by whom) these accidents were investigated and how your work methods changed as a result.

You must provide:

- RIDDOR statistics for the last three years
- an explanation of how you record and keep accident records e.g. accident book
- two examples of accident investigation and details of how you amended your procedures (if applicable) as a consequence

### Enforcement action

You must provide details of any enforcement action taken against you over the last five years.

Enforcement action can be in the form of:

- a) an Improvement Notice
- b) a Prohibition Notice
- c) Prosecution

You must also provide details of the action you took in response to the enforcement action and how this was communicated to your personnel. If no enforcement action has been taken against you in the last five years you should say so and this is all you need to do.

## What you need to provide

1. RIDDOR statistics
2. Keeping accident records
3. Two examples of accident investigation
4. Enforcement action
  - details
  - your action

## Question 9: Appointing Competent Sub-Contractors

**Do you have arrangements/procedures for ensuring that your suppliers apply H&S measures to a standard appropriate to the work for which they are being engaged?**

You should have arrangements/procedures in place for appointing competent sub-contractors / consultants.

You should be able to demonstrate how you ensure that sub-contractors/consultants will also have arrangements/procedures for appointing competent sub-contractors or consultants.

You should have arrangements/procedures for monitoring sub-contractor/consultant performance.

### Guidance

It is expected that when you appoint sub-contractors, the standards you apply when assessing their H&S competency should match the requirements of the Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Appendix 7 – Core criteria for the demonstration of organisational capability. These standards should be appropriate for the nature and scale of the work for which they are being contracted.

You should be able to demonstrate how you ensure that your sub-contractors, will also have arrangements/procedures for appointing competent sub-contractors, themselves.

Your arrangements/procedures should also include the on-going monitoring of the H&S standards of your appointed sub-contractors.

If you have not engaged a sub-contractor, in the last three years a statement to this effect is adequate and you do not need to provide a completed sub-contractor assessment. However if the possibility exists then you should still have procedures in place should the need arise.

You should provide details of your procedures for ensuring:

- the competence of your sub-contractors
- the same standards are applied throughout your supply chain (this would normally be through pre-contract enquiries and then a contract requirement)
- the monitoring of your sub-contractor's performance

You should also provide a completed sub-contractor health and safety competence assessment that is in accordance with the requirements of Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) Appendix 7 – Core criteria for the demonstration of organisational capability.

**If you do not engage sub-contractors at all then you must provide a statement to this effect.**

This assessment will then be completed on the basis that you do not engage sub-contractors. Should you find that your circumstances change and you engage sub-contractors, you must reapply for a new SSIP certificate as any certificate issued on the basis of the above will be invalidated.

### What you need to provide

1. Competence assessment arrangements/procedures
2. **Completed** sub-contractor assessment
3. Statement about not engaging sub-contractors, if appropriate

## Question 10: Risk Assessments and Safe Systems of Work

**Do you operate a process of risk assessment capable of supporting safe methods of work and reliable project delivery where necessary?**

You should have procedures in place for carrying out risk assessments and for developing and implementing safe systems of work/method statements and Construction Phase Plans.

The identification of health issues is expected to feature prominently in this system.

### Guidance

Your arrangements/procedures must ensure your personnel and others under your control have safe methods of work. The risk assessments you use to achieve these must show how:

- They address specific tasks and how you apply the principles of Prevention and Protection
- They cover issues of occupational health, including health surveillance where relevant.

Generic risk assessments are acceptable, but you must explain how these are adapted for specific tasks or work circumstances. You must provide **TWO** examples **from within the past 12 months** of actual risk assessments and **TWO** safe methods of work (method statement) and also an example Construction Phase Plan. They must address both the safety and health issues appropriate to your work.

If you are a sole trader and have no personnel you must still carry out risk assessments and produce safe methods of work, but these will relate to your own activities.

### What you need to provide

1. Arrangements/procedures
2. **TWO** examples of risk assessments and **TWO** method statements
3. Example Construction Phase Plan from within the past 12 months

## Question 11: Co-Operation and Co-ordination

**Do you have arrangements/procedures for co-operating and co-ordinating your work with others (including clients, other suppliers and contractors)?**

You should be able to illustrate how co-operation and co-ordination of your work is achieved in practice, and how you involve the workforce in drawing up method statements/safe systems of work.

### Guidance

Effective co-operation and co-ordination are two vital aspects of good (and safe) projects. You should have arrangements/procedures which encompass these issues.

#### Co-operation

This will include your meetings, emails and other discussions, exchange of safety information, and agreements on issues which affect other site users such as emergency arrangements/procedures, deliveries, traffic routes, design interfaces and the like.

#### Co-ordination

This will address how you ensure that health and safety is not compromised by a lack of thought about what will happen when you work with other parties, or from a lack of consideration of how the various aspects of a project (each the responsibility of individual parties) come together.

In each case the post holder responsible should be stated.

### What you need to provide

1. Arrangements/procedures
2. Example meeting notes, emails or similar

## Question 12: Provision of Welfare Arrangements

**Do you have arrangements/procedures for ensuring that on-site welfare provision meets legal requirements and the needs/expectations of your personnel?**

You should be able to demonstrate how you will ensure that appropriate welfare facilities will be place before people start work on site.

### Guidance

It is important that compliant welfare facilities (i.e. toilets and washing facilities, rest facilities, and, as necessary, drying facilities), are provided at commencement of work on site (see [Schedule 2 of the CDM2015 Regulations Guidance](#) and serviced and maintained throughout the construction period.

As principal contractor you have a duty to ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided which may include circumstances when they are provided by others (e.g. the client).

You will need to explain how, you ensure that they are:

- available on the first day of work
- of sufficient size to accommodate all those on site who will use them
- adequately cleaned and maintained.

Or if provided by others, how you check that the above will be implemented.

### What you need to provide

1. Arrangements/procedures