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UNIT GC3: HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICAL APPLICATION

**For NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety
and NEBOSH International Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety**

Guidance and information for accredited course providers and candidates

This document provides comprehensive guidance on the presentation and submission of the Unit GC3 practical application. It includes guidance on the structure and style of the report. Candidates should study this document carefully before submitting their practical application.

The guidance should be read carefully in conjunction with the practical application mark scheme, which is included in this guidance document, to provide a clear guide to the requirements of the practical application.

Introduction

The aim of this unit is to assess a candidate's ability to complete successfully two activities:

- To carry out, unaided, a safety inspection of a workplace, identifying the more common hazards, deciding whether they are adequately controlled and, where necessary, suggesting appropriate and cost effective control measures.
- To prepare a report that persuasively urges management to take appropriate action, explaining why such action is needed (including reference to possible breaches of standards and identifying practical legislation and control measures that should be implemented).

This will require candidates to apply the knowledge and understanding gained from their studies of elements of Units NGC1 and GC2 or Units IGC1 and GC2 in a practical environment and to carry out an evaluation of information gathered during the inspection. The time allowed to complete the assessment is not restricted but NEBOSH suggests that candidates aim to complete the assessment in two hours (one hour for the inspection and one hour for the report writing). Please note that the suggested timescales are for guidance only. The practical application may be submitted in the candidate's own handwriting or be word processed.

The submission must include:

- completed observation sheets covering a number and range of hazards and good practice, identifying suitable control measures and timescales;
- an introduction and executive summary;
- main findings of the completed inspection;
- conclusions which summarise the main issues identified in the candidate's workplace;
- completed recommendations table.

The practical application must be carried out in the candidate's own workplace. The workplace should be large enough to provide a sufficient range of hazards in the areas covered to provide an adequate range for identification. If the workplace is very large, in order that the practical application is manageable the candidate should limit the area considered.

Where the candidate does not have access to a workplace, the course provider should be consulted to help in making arrangements for the candidate to carry out the practical application at suitable premises. Providers seeking to run the practical in this way should contact NEBOSH for advice and approval.

Management at the premises should be consulted to ensure the candidate can carry out the inspection without endangering their own health and safety.

Where confidentiality requires, locations and company names may be omitted from the report, or alternatively guidance should be sought from NEBOSH.

Candidates do not require supervision when carrying out the practical application but the candidate must sign a declaration that the submission is their own work (Appendix 1). If this declaration is not submitted the candidate's result may be declared void. A signature can be electronic or can be faxed.

Candidates must note that accredited course providers cannot comment on practical applications before submission or marking.

Candidates, employers and internal assessors should be aware that the status of the inspection undertaken to fulfil the requirements of Unit GC3 is for **educational purposes only**.

What to do if an accredited course provider's staff, family members or friends are sitting a NEBOSH examination or assessment

Accredited course providers **must** declare in writing to NEBOSH any employment and/or familial, spousal or other close personal relationship with any examination or assessment candidate.

For any such candidate declared, the accredited course provider must select one of the following options, inform NEBOSH of their choice in writing, and bear all necessary costs:

- The candidate may sit their NEBOSH assessments as an (external) candidate at another accredited course provider; or
- Accredited course provider may arrange with NEBOSH for an independent invigilator appointed by NEBOSH. Any practical assessment will need to be marked by a Practical Assessor appointed by NEBOSH.
- If outside of the UK the accredited course provider may arrange for the candidate to sit their examinations with the British Council. Any practical assessment will need to be marked by a Practical Assessor appointed by NEBOSH.

Date of Assessment

Assessment of the practical unit (GC3) must normally take place **within 10 working days** of (before or after) the date of the NGC1/IGC1 and/or GC2 written papers (the 'date of the examination').

If a candidate is absent from the written papers because of illness corroborated by a doctor's note, but successfully completes the GC3 unit within the 10 working day deadline, the result will stand. If a candidate is unable to complete the GC3 unit under similar circumstances, NEBOSH may allow it to be taken at a later date beyond the normal 10 working day deadline.

The accredited course provider should advise the candidate of the latest date by which the completed report and observation sheets must be received by the course provider for marking. It is the responsibility of the course provider to ensure that the results of the practical (GC3) are available to NEBOSH by no later than 15 working days after the date of the examination for NGC1/IGC1 and/or GC2.

Completion of study for both NGC1 and GC2 or IGC1 and GC2 is recommended in order to undertake the practical application unit GC3.

Candidates planning to post their reports to the course provider should be reminded of the need to guard against loss in the post by sending their work by trackable delivery. Candidates are therefore advised to retain copies of both their completed observation sheets and report.

Tutor support

Tutors and candidates should ensure that they understand fully the requirements of the guidance document. There are two hours of teaching time available for tutors to explain the assessment requirements to candidates. Following this the assessment must be the candidate's own work; tutors must not read and/or amend drafts of the practical and must not provide a 'pre-mark'.

Marking

Practical applications will be marked by an internal assessor – a person proposed to NEBOSH by an accredited course provider and approved by NEBOSH. The internal assessor can also be a tutor. Please note (as detailed above in 'tutor support') the candidates' practical assessment (including drafts) must not be pre-read or pre-marked.

Internal assessors will be at least Grad IOSH of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health or equivalent and working towards chartered membership, CMIOSH, (or similar).

A marking sheet (Appendix 2) will be completed by the internal assessor for each candidate and attached to the candidate's report. The total percentage mark for each candidate will be entered onto the CPI by no later than 15 working days after the examination date of NGC1/ICG1 and/or GC2.

Candidates must achieve the pass standard (60%) in this unit in order to satisfy the criteria for the qualification.

Moderation

Marked GC3 assessments are subject to external moderation by NEBOSH to monitor the standard being set and marks awarded by the internal assessor may, therefore, be subject to adjustment; this could result in a higher or lower final mark.

The observation sheets and report should not be sent to NEBOSH unless they are called in. However, the observation sheet and report should be retained with the mark sheet for each candidate for at least six weeks following the date of issue by NEBOSH of the examination results to which they relate. Practical applications may be called in at any time from the date of examination until six weeks after the issue of results.

Candidates may lodge an EAR (enquiry about result) within the timeframe as advised on their URN (unit result notification).

Retention of practical samples by accredited course providers

NEBOSH monitors the consistency of internal assessment by accredited course providers (eg practicals marked by the course provider) over time. Accredited course providers are therefore required to retain representative samples of practical applications (eg high pass, low pass, refer) for each standard sitting or cohort for a **rolling three year period**.

The sample of practicals to be retained by accredited course providers will be no more than 24 scripts per year per qualification, but providers may choose to retain more for internal quality assurance purposes. Providers should retain the archived sample for three years in a manner that makes them easily retrievable. This is intended to enable course provider staff to monitor the standards of candidate performance in the practical application over time, and make improvements to their delivery when necessary. Additionally, the samples will serve as exemplar materials for practical application assessors appointed by accredited course providers to use as guidance in their assessment decisions.

Sampling of accredited course provider-marked scripts enables NEBOSH to ensure that the standard of marking for internal assessment remains consistent over time both within and between accredited course providers. Using archived materials in this way is intended to maintain marking standards and enhance parity between the marks before and after moderation.

Other scripts should be disposed of as confidential waste.

Completion of observation sheets

Candidates will be supplied with a sufficient number of observation sheets from a course provider which may be photocopied for the purpose. An example observation sheet is given at Appendix 3. The observation sheets must be completed during the inspection. Only brief details of each hazard are required including where the hazard was located and the consequences of the hazard. For example, 'housekeeping could be better' does not give enough information about the particular hazard.

The observation sheets should be completed by:

- identifying, in the left hand column, any hazards, unsafe work practices and examples of good practice observed during the inspection;
- commenting in the next column, on the adequacy of existing controls and identifying any immediate and longer term remedial actions needed;
- stating, in the right hand column a reasonable timescale for the actions identified.

There should be sufficient information on the observation sheets to enable the candidate to complete a report to management on their findings. Candidates are also advised to make notes on the area inspected, including activities taking place, in order to complete the introduction to their report. Whilst poor spelling and grammar will not be marked or penalised, if the assessor is unable to read or to understand the notes made by candidates during their inspection then invariably fewer marks will be awarded than would otherwise have been the case. The practical application may be submitted in the candidate's own handwriting or word processed.

Marking of observation sheets

Candidates are advised to refer to the marking sheet given at Appendix 2 and the marking matrix given at Appendix 5.

Range and outline of hazards and consequences (15 marks)

Candidates should outline 20 uncontrolled hazards to gain maximum marks, but are strongly recommended to outline more than 20 (but no more than 30) in case of duplication or inappropriate hazards being outlined. Candidates must demonstrate their understanding of how identified hazards have the potential to cause harm, for example, boxes stored on the floor may cause obstruction of access, egress routes and / or a potential of musculoskeletal injury if lifted. This information must be recorded in the 'Hazards and consequences' column. Candidates are expected to outline different types of hazards such as hazardous substances, fire, electrical, work equipment, ergonomic, housekeeping, noise, vibration, transport, manual handling and health hazards and should also consider if there are any welfare and environmental problems. At least five different types of hazard must be included for maximum marks. In addition candidates are expected to comment on situations where there is adequate control of hazards and where good practice is being observed, although candidates should place the emphasis on uncontrolled hazards. A maximum of 1 mark is available for good practice.

Candidates who repeat identical hazards will only be awarded ONE mark for that hazard (eg inadequate labelling of an unknown chemical substance). Candidates should focus on physical conditions and not on poor policies and procedures.

It is important to note that credit can only be gained in this section for clearly outlined hazards.

Identification of suitable control measures and timescales (15 marks)

Candidates are expected to give thought to what is required to immediately control the risk from each outlined hazard **AND** to identify the need for long term actions to control the risk.

This requires candidates to distinguish between the symptoms and the root causes of hazards.

For example, the immediate action on a spillage may be 'clean up spillage and inform supervisor' whereas longer term actions might include appropriate supervisor training, regular inspections, and investigation of the source of the leak. A further longer term action may be to modify the work process to tackle the root cause. The proposed control measures must not only remove or control the hazard but must also be realistic in terms of timescales. Candidates should indicate a measure of time eg supervisor training to be completed within three months.

If existing controls are in place and considered adequate, candidates should consider any measures required to maintain this level of control.

Candidates should avoid generic phrases being repeatedly used eg 'monitor' and 'train staff'. Candidates should give appropriate clarification by giving examples of appropriate monitoring and the type of training required.

Candidates should be aware that if unsuitable control measures are suggested full marks cannot be awarded. Short term measures to improve housekeeping will do little to improve the lack of safety management systems and procedures evidenced by materials and equipment left lying around.

Candidates should also note that where the hazard is not clearly outlined full credit cannot be gained for control measures as assessors will be unable to determine appropriateness of the measures proposed.

Completion of report

Candidates should use the 'Candidate report template' given at Appendix 4 to structure their report. The recommended word count for the report is between 700 and 1000 words; however, candidates will not be penalised for reports which are shorter or longer than the recommended length. Candidates must, however, bear in mind that the report should address each of the marking matrix's criteria. This will allow candidates to attract the complete range of marks available as shown in the marking matrix. Candidates should not simply duplicate the observation sheets. Candidates can consult reference books when preparing the report, but plagiarism will be dealt with as malpractice.

The report should not contain photographs, printed text or any other extraneous material.

The report should contain sufficient evidence to convince senior manager/s to implement the recommendations and be written in such terms that a manager would be able to take reasonable action based on facts. Reports which are too short or too long may lose the reader due to there being too little or too much information. Reports based on unsupported generalities and those that simply reiterate the contents of the observation sheets will be awarded low marks.

Candidates should aim to complete their report in one hour.

If none of the criteria to award marks is met, then zero marks will be awarded.

Marking of report

Candidates are advised to refer to the marking sheet given at Appendix 2 and the marking matrix given at Appendix 5.

Report – Introduction and Executive Summary

Introduction providing an overview of the chosen area (5 marks)

Candidates should start with the details of the inspection, stating where and when the inspection took place. A clear and appropriate description of the chosen area and of the activities occurring in the area should be given.

Executive summary (5 marks)

The executive summary should be written after the candidate has completed the rest of the report but it should be inserted at the beginning of the report. The purpose of the executive summary is to provide a **concise** overview of the important points arising from the work and **summarise** the main conclusions and recommendations arising from it.

An executive summary should provide sufficient information to enable a busy manager to make a decision as to whether or not to read the full report and to provide a persuasive case for implementation of recommendations made.

Report – Main findings of the inspection

The main findings of the inspection should form the main body of the report and include the following aspects:

The report should be well structured, the appropriate length and not duplicate observation sheets. The report should be concise, readable and highly selective in terms of action required by management. Candidates should include balanced arguments on why action is needed and explain the effect it would have on the standards of health and safety at the workplace and the possible effects on the business overall.

Quality of interpretation of findings (15 marks)

There should be a logical progression from the hazards outlined on the observation sheets. The key issues should be appropriately selected and discussed, and should not include any hazards not outlined on the observation sheets and does not duplicate the observation sheets.

Identification of possible breaches of legislation and standards (5 marks)

Candidates should be able to identify legislation eg Manual Handling Operations Regulations, standards and conventions listed in the syllabus that may have been infringed eg Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems (ILO-OSH) 2001. Credit will also be given for reference to appropriate local standards.

Candidates must ensure that any legislation, standards or convention referred to is relevant to the area/location inspected and hazards outlined and must demonstrate a clear understanding of the reasons for the breaches. Candidates should identify a minimum of five breaches.

Persuasiveness / conciseness / technical content (10 marks)

The candidate must explain why management need to take action including clear legal, moral and financial arguments. Issues requiring urgent action by management with associated explanations containing convincing arguments why such action is needed should be included. Reference can be made to the list of observations and recommended actions, calling particular attention to any recommendations which could have a high cost in terms of finance, inconvenience or time.

Financial benefits, such as increased productivity, may also accrue from making appropriate changes to safety systems. The possible costs of not taking action should be included.

Report – Conclusions and Recommendations

Clear and concise conclusions which are clearly related to report findings and are effective in convincing management to take action (15 marks)

This section should provide a concise summary of the findings identified in the main body of the candidate's report to persuade management to take action. The conclusions should not introduce new issues or additional factors.

Recommendations which present realistic actions to improve health and safety in the chosen area (15 marks)

Candidates must include recommendations based upon their conclusions. Recommendations must be presented using the recommendations table included at Appendix 4. The recommendations must be realistic, appropriately prioritised and have appropriate resource implications. Candidates are not expected either to know or to estimate actual costs but should demonstrate that they are aware of cost implications. For example, candidates recommending the complete resurfacing of a site roadway because of a small pothole, without commenting on its overall condition, will receive low marks. If training is recommended as a solution to a problem, candidates should indicate if this is likely to require a few hours of work-based instruction or several days of more costly off-the-job training. It is the assessment of magnitude of the cost that is important, rather than precise figures, eg candidates may refer to the number of worker hours as a measure of cost.

Recommendations must be prioritised. The most pressing issues, those which present the highest risk levels and those that can be done immediately at little or no cost, should be addressed first. Target date should be included, for example, 'plus one week' or 'plus three months'.

If none of the criteria to award marks is met, then zero marks will be awarded.

APPENDIX 1

GC3 – The Health and Safety Practical Application

Candidate and course provider declarations:

For completion by the candidate:

I declare that the work submitted for this practical application assessment ie. the completed observation sheets and the report to management, is my own work. I recognise that contravention of this statement constitutes malpractice and may result in my being subject to the penalties set out in the NEBOSH Malpractice policy.

Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

For completion by a course provider representative (eg internal practical assessor):

I declare that the work marked is identical to that received from the candidate. I recognise that contravention of this statement constitutes malpractice and may result in my being subject to the penalties set out in the NEBOSH Malpractice policy.

Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

For completion by the course provider's internal practical assessor:

I declare that I have marked this work and am both qualified and approved by NEBOSH to do so. I recognise that contravention of this statement constitutes malpractice and may result in my being subject to the penalties set out in the NEBOSH Malpractice policy.

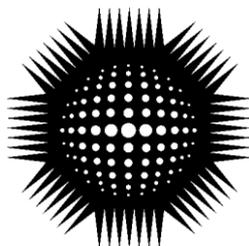
Name (Print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

NB: This declaration must be completed in full, submitted and retained with the candidate's script. If this declaration is not submitted the candidate's result may be declared void.

APPENDIX 2



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GC3 – THE HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Assessor's marking sheet

Date of practical application _____

Name of assessor _____

Course provider
number

Course provider
name

Student number

Student name

	Criteria	Maximum marks available	Assessor's marks awarded	NEBOSH moderated marks (if different)
1	Completion of observation sheets			
1.1	Range and outline of hazards and consequences	15		
1.2	Identification of suitable control measures and timescales	15		
2	Report - Introduction and Executive Summary			
2.1	Introduction providing an overview of the chosen area	5		
2.2	Executive summary	5		
3	Report - Main findings of the inspection			
3.1	Quality of interpretation of findings	15		
3.2	Identification of possible breaches of legislation and/or standards	5		
3.3	Persuasiveness / conciseness / technical content	10		
4	Report - Conclusions and Recommendations			
4.1	Clear and concise conclusions which are clearly related to report findings and are effective in convincing management to take action	15		
4.2	Recommendations which present realistic actions to improve health and safety in the chosen area	15		
	TOTAL MARKS	100		

Outcome: PASS (60% or more)

REFER (less than 60%)

Date assessed ____ / ____ / ____

Assessor's signature _____

Date received by course provider ____ / ____ / ____

Date received by NEBOSH

(if applicable) ____ / ____ / ____

Assessor's additional comments on the practical application:

ASSESSED BY (name in block letters) _____

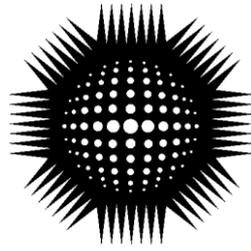
The mark sheet must be retained by the Course Provider and sent to NEBOSH only if requested. A copy of the mark sheet can be given to candidates if requested.

NEBOSH USE ONLY

NEBOSH Moderator's comments:

APPENDIX 3

GC3 – THE HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICAL APPLICATION



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Candidate's observation sheet

Sheet number ____ of ____

Student name _____

Student number _____

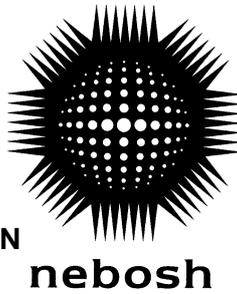
Place inspected _____

Date of inspection ____ / ____ / ____

Observations Hazards and consequences	Control measures Immediate and longer term actions	Timescale

APPENDIX 4

UNIT GC3 – THE HEALTH AND
SAFETY PRACTICAL APPLICATION



Candidate report template

Student number _____

Location _____

Date of review ____/____/____

Structure report under the following headings:

Introduction including overview of area inspected and activities taking place

Executive Summary

Main findings of the inspection

Conclusions

Recommendations – include as a table in the following format:

Recommendation	Likely resource implications	Priority	Target date

APPENDIX 5

GC3 Marking Matrix

For each element, 0 marks should be awarded if that aspect of the report fails to meet the criteria for 1 mark.

		Marks to be awarded		
		11 - 15	6 - 10	1 - 5
1 Completion of observation sheets	1.1 Range and outline of hazards and consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4-5 different types of hazards outlined 14-20 uncontrolled hazards / consequences outlined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 different types of hazards outlined 7-13 uncontrolled hazards / consequences outlined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 type of hazard outlined 1-6 uncontrolled hazards / consequences outlined
	1.2 Identification of suitable control measures and timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate and longer-term actions identified for majority of hazards Majority of recommended actions effective in reducing risk and realistic in terms of timescales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of immediate and longer term actions for some of the identified hazards Some recommended actions generally effective in reducing risk and realistic in terms of timescales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference to immediate actions only Recommended actions limited in reducing risk and unrealistic in terms of timescales

1. Typical issues are listed in Table 1 and internal assessors must complete Table 1 to assist in allocating marks.

Marks to be awarded			
	4 - 5	2 - 3	1
2 Management Report – Introduction and Executive Summary	2.1 Introduction providing an overview of the chosen area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear and appropriate description of the chosen area and of the activities occurring in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some description of the chosen area and of the activities in area
	2.2 Executive Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concise overview of important points and main conclusions / recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overview of some important points and some conclusions / recommendations

		Marks to be awarded			
		11-15	6-10	1-5	
3	3.1	Quality of interpretation of findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Logical progression from the observation sheets does not duplicate observation sheets ▪ Majority of key issues identified in observation sheets have been appropriately selected and discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Logical progression from the observation sheets but some duplication of observation sheets ▪ Some key issues identified in observation sheets have been appropriately selected and discussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited progression from the observation sheets and duplication of observation sheets ▪ Minority of the key issues identified in the observation sheets have been appropriately selected and discussed
Management Report –	Main findings of the inspection				

		Marks to be awarded				
		5	4	3	2	1
3	Management Report – Main findings of the inspection	3.2 Identification of possible breaches of legislation and/or international standards				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate references to 5 possible breaches with a clear understanding of the reasons for the breaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate references to 4 possible breaches with a clear understanding of the reasons for the breaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate references to 3 possible breaches with a clear understanding of the reasons for the breaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appropriate references to 2 possible breaches with a clear understanding of the reasons for the breaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A list of legislation and/or international standards with no explanation of how the legislation/ international standards were breached, or how they relate to the hazards, unsafe conditions or work practices selected

		Marks to be awarded		
		8-10	4-7	1-3
3	3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clear legal, moral and financial arguments ▪ Convinces management to take action ▪ Report is well structured and appropriate length 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some legal, moral and financial arguments ▪ Some persuasion in management action ▪ Report is reasonably well structured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited legal, moral and financial arguments ▪ Limited persuasiveness in management action ▪ Report is poorly structured
Management Report-	Persuasiveness/ conciseness / technical content			
Main findings of the inspection				

