



**UNITED KINGDOM**



# Workplace Health and Safety Guide



## *Workplace Facilities*

**Provided by:**

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## Workplace Facilities

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, employers have a general duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees at work. There is also a duty for employers (anyone in control of non-domestic premises) to ensure the safety of people not in their employ but use their premises such customers, visitors and third parties.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and related amendments expand on the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and gives more specific requirements. This regulation applies to most workplaces, with exceptions for workplaces involving construction work on construction sites, those in or on a ship and those below ground in a mine. There are separate regulations that govern these specific workplaces.

‘Workplace’ under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations is very broad and applies to factories, shops, offices, schools, hospitals, hotels, etc. It also includes the common parts of shared buildings, private roads and paths in business parks, and temporary worksites.

Several provisions in the Regulations require things to be ‘suitable’, meaning that the workplace should be suitable for anyone—including people with disabilities. This means, where necessary, certain parts of the workplace such as particular doors, passageways, stairs, showers, washbasins, lavatories and workstations should be made accessible for people with disabilities.

## The Regulation

The following is a chart summarising the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations:

<b>HEALTH REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every enclosed workspace must be ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air.</li> <li>- Ventilation should also remove and dilute warm, humid air.</li> <li>- Windows and other openings may be sufficient, but where necessary, mechanical ventilation systems should be provided and maintained.</li> </ul>
Temperatures in Indoor Workplaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Temperatures during working areas during working hours shall be reasonable:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For sedentary work: at least 16C.</li> <li>- For physical work: at least 13C.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- A sufficient number of thermometers shall be provided to determine temperature in any workplace inside a building.</li> </ul>

Work in Hot or Cold Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct a proper risk assessment and actions to control the risks may include: engineering measures, restriction of exposure, personal protective equipment and proper training and supervision.</li> </ul>
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lighting shall be suitable and sufficient, including if necessary, local lighting at individual workstations.</li> <li>- Independent source emergency lighting should be provided where sudden loss of light would create risks.</li> </ul>
Cleanliness and Waste Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The workplace, furniture, furnishings and fitting shall be kept sufficiently clean. This includes floors, walls and ceilings.</li> <li>- There should be an effective method in place to clean and remove waste. All waste should be stored in suitable receptacles.</li> </ul>
Room Dimensions and Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workrooms shall have sufficient floors area, height and unoccupied space.</li> <li>- The HSE recommends that the volume of the room, divided by the number of people normally working in it, should be at least 11 cubic metres. However, the nature and circumstances of the work may require more space.</li> </ul>
Workstations and Seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workstations shall be suitable for the people using them and suitable for the work they do.</li> <li>- Suitable seating shall be provided if a substantial part of the work can or must be done sitting. Suitable seating includes adequate lower back support and foot rests where necessary.</li> </ul>

<b>SAFETY REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The workplace, certain equipment, devices and systems should be maintained in efficient working order.</li> <li>- Maintenance is required for mechanical ventilation systems, equipment that would cause risk if fault occurred and equipment designed to prevent or reduce a hazard.</li> </ul>

<p>Floor and Traffic Routes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every floor and surface of traffic routes (pedestrian traffic included) shall be suitable for the purpose used. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The floor/surface shall have no holes, slopes, be uneven or slippery as to expose any person to a risk.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- As is reasonably practicable, every floor/surface shall be kept free from obstructions and substances that may cause person to fall.</li> <li>- Provide route markings, speed limits, drive-through loading areas for drivers if possible. Also there should be sufficient separation between pedestrians and vehicles if on the same route.</li> <li>- Open staircase sides should be fenced with an upper rail of 900 millimetres or higher.</li> </ul>
<p>Falls and Falls into Dangerous Substances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suitable and effective measures shall be taken to prevent a person falling a distance likely to cause injury or person being struck by falling object likely to cause injury, so far as is reasonably practicable.</li> <li>- Where there is a risk of a person falling into a dangerous substance in a tank, pit or structure, the area should be covered or fenced, so far as is reasonably practicable.</li> </ul>
<p>Transparent or Translucent Doors, Gates or Walls, and Windows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must be made of safety material or protected against breakage.</li> <li>- If risk of people coming into contact with it, it must be appropriately marked.</li> </ul>
<p>Windows</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Non-sealed windows capable of opening.</li> <li>- Skylights or ventilators should be capable of being opened, closed or adjusted safely, and when opened, not pose any risks.</li> <li>- Windows and skylights must be able to be cleaned safely.</li> </ul>
<p>Doors and Gates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Doors and gates should be suitably constructed and fitted with safety devices if necessary. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sliding doors and gates must have a device to prevent it from going off track.</li> <li>- Upward opening doors or gates must have a device to prevent it from falling back down.</li> <li>- Powered doors or gates must have effective features to prevent it from trapping a person and can be opened manually when power fails.</li> <li>- Any door or gate hinged to swing both ways should have transparent viewing panel.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Escalators and Moving Walkways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must function safely.</li> <li>- Be equipped with necessary safety devices.</li> <li>- Be fitted with one or more emergency stop controls which are easily identifiable and readily accessible.</li> </ul>
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<b>WELFARE REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Sanitary Conveniences and Washing Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must be suitable and sufficient, and provided at readily accessible places.</li> <li>- Must be kept clean, adequately ventilated , lit and have separate facilities for men and women unless a person can lock the door from the inside of the room and the room is intended for use by one person only.</li> <li>- Washing facilities must include hot and cold, or warm water, soap (or other means of cleaning), towels (or other suitable means of drying) and showers if required by the nature of the work or for health reasons.</li> </ul>
Drinking Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate supply shall be provided to all persons, readily accessible, and conspicuously marked with an appropriate sign where necessary for reasons of health and safety.</li> </ul>
Accommodation for Clothing and Facilities for Changing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate, suitable and secure space should be provided to store own clothing and special clothing.</li> <li>- As far as is reasonably practicable, facilities should allow for drying clothing.</li> <li>- Changing facilities required if person has to wear special clothing for work.</li> </ul>
Facilities for Rest and Eat Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suitable, sufficient, readily accessible rest and eating facilities with seats should be provided.</li> <li>- Suitable rest facilities should be provided for pregnant women and nursing mothers.</li> </ul>

For more detailed information on workplace facility requirements, click [here](#).