

Construction Hazards and Risks Control

Lecture Title: – Health and Safety Auditing in Construction

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Undergraduate Diploma in
Occupational Health and Safety

What is an Audit?

A health and safety audit is an assessment of the health and safety standards of an organisation.

It assesses your workplace policies, processes, procedures, and systems effectiveness, ultimately, audits highlight areas for improvement.

Why are health and safety audits important?

- Safety remains a primary concern in the construction sector. With hazards ranging from falls from heights to equipment malfunctions, construction sites are inherently risky.
- Implementing safety inspections can mitigate these dangers and foster a safety-oriented culture.



Objectives of Construction Safety Audits

- Verify compliance with legislation and best practices.
- Assess effectiveness of risk controls.
- Identify any gaps in implementation.
- Improve Safety Culture
- Prevent incidents and enforcement action



Audit Scope on a Construction Site

- Site Induction & training
- Risk Assessments & Method Statements
- Plant and equipment (certification, pre use checks, etc)
- Work at height controls
- PPE and welfare facilities
- Emergency preparedness



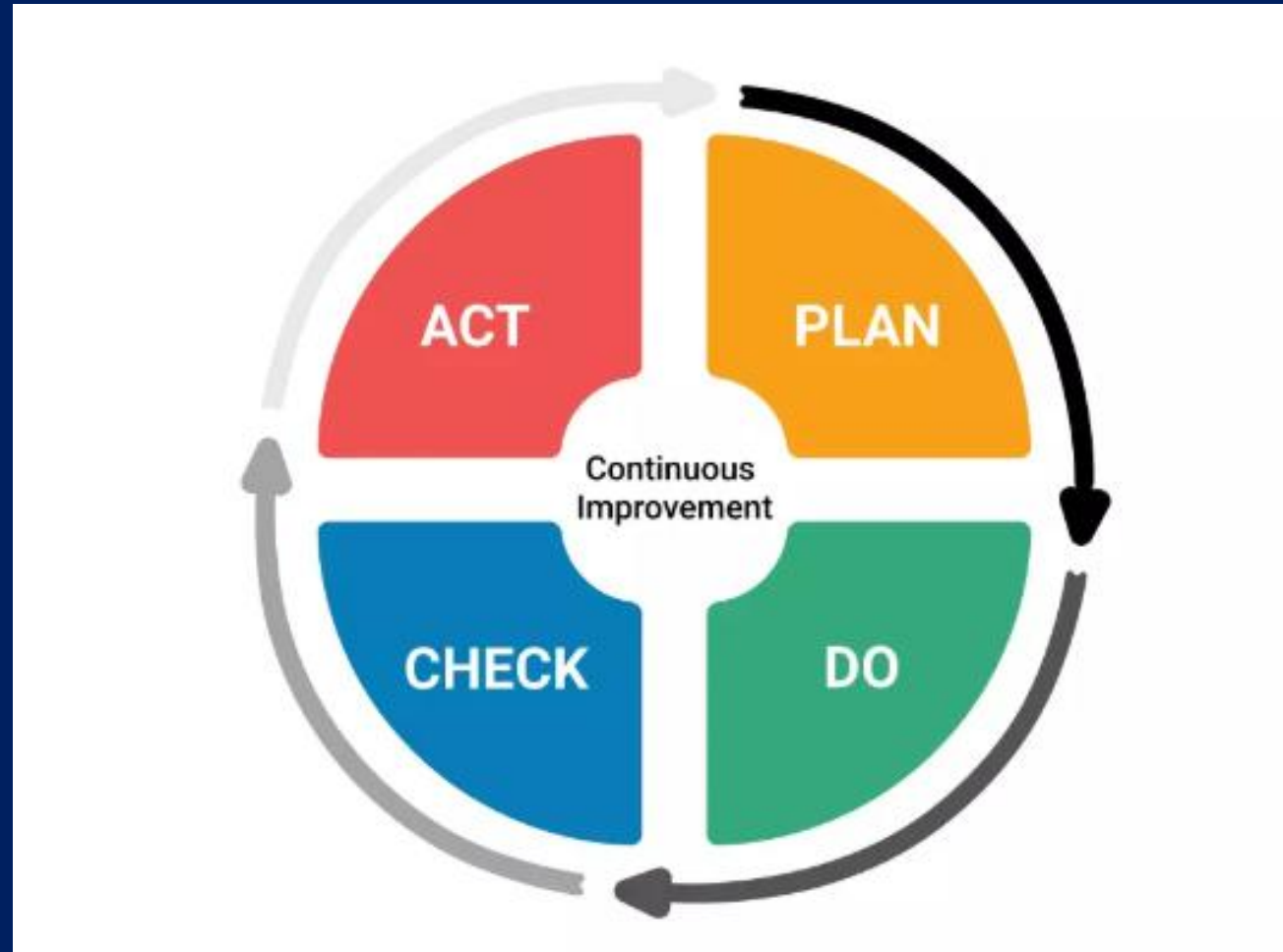
What is the difference between inspections and audits?

- Inspections involve taking action, while audits focus on verification. Inspections are generally mandatory tasks a site must perform to meet compliance requirements. Conversely, an audit is the process of confirming that these compliance obligations have been fulfilled, which includes verifying that the necessary inspections have been conducted.



Inspection VS Audit

Inspection	Audit
Task/site specific	System-wide
Short-term snapshot	Strategic review
Finds hazards	Finds root causes
Often reactive	Proactive



Plan, Do, Check & Act

1. Plan: Recognise an opportunity and plan a change.
2. Do: Test the change. Carry out a small-scale study.
3. Check: Review the test, analyse the results, and identify what you've learned.
4. Act: Take action based on what you learned in the study step



Different types of Audits

- Internal Audits: Conducted by company personnel
- External Audits: Conducted by third-party organisations
- Certification Audits: Conducted by certification body
- Compliance Audits: Focus on regulatory adherence



Internal vs External Audits

Internal Audits

- Conducted by employees within the organisation.
 - Focus on compliance with company policies and procedures
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- External Audits:
 - Performed by independent third-party auditors.
 - Assess adherence to industry standards and regulations



Internal vs External Audits

Internal

Pros:

- Familiarity with company processes and culture.
- Cost-effective since they utilize existing staff.
- Can be conducted more frequently for ongoing improvement.

Cons:

- Potential bias due to familiarity.
- Limited perspective on best practices outside the organisation.



Internal vs External Audits

External

Pros:

- Objective assessment from an outside perspective.
- Access to industry benchmarks and expertise.
- Can enhance credibility with stakeholders..

Cons:

- More expensive than internal audits.
- May disrupt regular operations during the audit process.



Documents for Audits (Examples)

- Previous Audits
- Legal gap analysis
- Risk Assessment register
- Risk area plan (Focusing on high-risk areas)
- PPE matrix
- Training matrix
- Inspection register



Documents

- Make sure your safety procedures are current and well-documented.
- Offer regular training sessions for everyone, including orientation for all site personnel and visitors.
- Routinely check and maintain all equipment.
- Perform internal audits to pinpoint and resolve potential issues prior to the official audit.



Non-Conformance and Corrective Actions

Document the nonconformity

- Clearly document what the non-conformity is, including specific details such as location, date, and the individuals involved

Classify the Non-Conformity

- Determine the severity of the non-conformity (e.g., minor, major, critical) based on its potential impact on health and safety.

Prioritise

- Classify based on urgency and risk to prioritise the response.



Classifying Audit Findings

- Critical – Immediate Danger
- Major – Serious breach
- Minor – System Weakness
- Observation – Improvement Opportunity



Developing Corrective Actions

- Good corrective actions are:
 - Specific
 - Assigned to responsible persons
 - Time-bound
 - Linked to root causes
 - Proportionate to risk



Communicate Findings

- Share the findings with relevant team members and management. Organise discussions with involved parties to explain the non-conformities and their implications.

Develop Corrective Action Plans

- Create a clear plan outlining the steps needed to correct the non-conformity.
- Assign specific individuals or teams to implement corrective actions.
- Establish timelines for completion of corrective actions.



Implement Corrective Actions

- Ensure that the corrective actions are carried out as per the plan.
- Regularly check on the status of the implementation to ensure adherence.

Review and Verify Effectiveness

- After implementation, assess whether the corrective actions effectively resolved the non-conformity.
- Conduct follow-up audits or inspections to confirm compliance and effectiveness.
- Keep track of the corrective action register and communicate outcomes
- Update Risk Assessments and procedures as required.



Update Documentation and Procedures

- Update health and safety procedures or policies to prevent recurrence of similar non-conformities.
- Provide training to employees if changes in procedures are significant.

Communicate Changes

- Inform All Stakeholders: Ensure that all relevant parties are aware of the changes made and the reasons behind them.
- Documentation: Maintain records of non-conformities, actions taken, and outcomes for future reference.



Remember

- Audits are not fault-finding exercises
- They improve systems, not blame people
- Construction auditing must be practical and site-focused
- Effective audits save lives, time and money.

