



**Protect
lives,
shape the
future:
start
your career in
occupational
safety and
health**



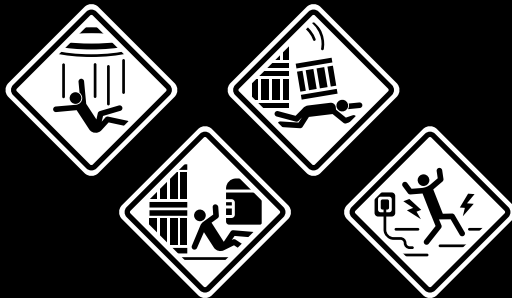
iosh.com/jobs

What is health and safety at work ?

If you want a job where you keep people safe, stop them from getting injured or ill, and make sure their work helps them stay healthy, then you might like working in health and safety, otherwise known as 'occupational safety and health (OSH)'.

Did you know?

Almost three million workers worldwide still die unnecessarily each year. Many more are made ill through carrying out their daily work duties.



Health and safety is all about protecting people from accidents, injuries and health problems in the workplace, as well as promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. As the workplace adapts to new hazards like global pandemics, the changing climate, and increasing mental health challenges, safety and health professionals are there to respond.

" OSH isn't just a job to me, as safety professionals our role goes beyond enforcing regulations or conducting inspections – we're here to serve others." Bethany Holroyd CMIOSH, Senior safety professional and children's author

A career in-demand:

Health and safety is a future-proof career as every workplace and industry needs it.

For example, from

May 2017

to

May 2023,

vacancies in

health and safety rose by

54%

in the UK (ONS data), and health and safety advisors are 10/15 for the top roles growing in demand in Ireland (Indeed 2024).

" There is massive scope for opportunity within health and safety and development is encouraged and nurtured by most companies."
Isobel Humphreys CertIOSH, Health and Safety Co-Ordinator working in facilities at a law firm

Make an impact – choose a job where you can directly improve workers lives and protect their physical and mental health.

Join an expanding profession – with global crises like Covid-19 and climate change, businesses are more focussed on protecting their workers than ever before.

Easy to learn, exciting to master – the basics of health and safety are straightforward, covering things like risk assessments. You'll be solving real world problems, making your work engaging and rewarding.

Grow your skills – Health and safety careers offer endless opportunities for learning and specialisation. You can tailor your skills to an industry and keep growing with training and development.

Work anywhere in the world – it's a global profession with opportunities in virtually any country and industry. You could work for global companies or even at global sporting events.

Forget the cliches about clipboards and hi-vis jackets.

Break the stereotype!

The modern health and safety professional is a facilitator, enabling organisations to reach their potential without causing harm.

They help businesses stay legally compliant as well as promoting a sustainable, healthy, and productive work culture.

So, it's not about saying
'don't do that'
– rather, it's
'let's try a
better way!'

There's still lots of work to be done for a safe and healthy world of work:



181 workers
killed in
work-related
accidents in UK and
Ireland, 2023/24



1.8 million
workers
in the UK
suffering from
work-related
ill health
in 2022/23



17.1 million
working days lost
in the UK due to
work-related stress,
depression, or
anxiety in 2022/23

Where can I work



With opportunities in every industry and almost every country – the sky isn't even the limit; health and safety professionals are even involved in space exploration. It's a diverse profession with wide variety allowing you to be a part of myriad industries in your career.

“ The amazing thing about the health and safety industry is that it's required by law – and so it spans every single industry you can think of.” Bethany Holroyd CMIOSH

Because it is such a broad profession, there are many different roles to consider.

Typical key words in job titles:

health wellbeing safety

environment quality operations

facilities hygiene risk

sustainability

Example roles

Administrator

Keeping records and systems organised



Assistant

Supporting a colleague or team



Co-ordinator

Manages tasks and pulls together different workflows



Technician

A more technically focussed role in a specific industry e.g. engineering



Advisor/officer

Guides an organisation on safe work practice, and develops/ implements policies and procedures





Manager

Increased responsibility, and may manage a team



Trainer

Teaching others about health and safety at work, sometimes at their own workplace



Lecturer

Working in colleges, universities etc. to teach more advanced health and safety principles



Consultant

Providing expert advice and solutions to many organisations, usually on a specialist topic



Director/Head

Leads and directs the overall health and safety strategy, usually in a larger or high-risk organisation

Global reach

Working in health and safety can open doors. Many professionals move into consultancy and find themselves working on projects across the world.



“ IOSH professionals are often found on different sites, getting directly involved in dynamic environments. Whether you’re ensuring safety on a movie set, overseeing operations at a stadium, or managing risks in an automotive garage.”
Tor Bennett Williams CMIOSH, Health And Safety Partner for Mercedes AMG Petronas Formula 1

How do I start my career



"I've spoken to thousands of professionals and no two routes/industries/experiences are the same."

Bethany Holroyd
CMIOSH

Apprenticeship

If you want a combination of work and learning, then an apprenticeship may be right for you. Apprenticeships in safety, health, and environment are a popular way to start your career in health and safety. Degree apprenticeships are becoming increasingly popular.

Degree

If you are drawn to an academic route, you could take an undergraduate degree in health and safety, environmental health, or a specific industry such as construction or manufacturing.

Entry level roles

Some organisations offer entry level roles that provide opportunities to take qualifications.

Vocational qualifications

There are many health and safety specific qualifications available, from entry level up to higher level diplomas. Many awarding organisations offer qualifications through approved trainers. These are also helpful if you have started to work and want to study alongside the day job.



There are many different routes into occupational safety and health.

OSH

"Networking on platforms such as LinkedIn have been instrumental to my success, and I strongly recommend getting involved and speaking to those in the positions you wish to achieve."

Logan Holmes TechIOSH, Health and Safety Advisor working in the events industry



"Starting a career in OSH is accessible at any age and offers numerous entry points. It's all about finding the right pathway that suits your skills and circumstances."

Tor Bennett Williams CMIOSH

Visit
[iosh.com/which-qualification](https://www.iosh.com/which-qualification)
or search
'OSH qualifications'



Would this career suit me



You might think you need to know everything about safety and health legislation to get started – but that's not true. It's about having the right attitude and skills to thrive in the industry.

"We're a profession that relies on effective communication, visible leadership and dynamic approaches. To inspire and coach others we need to be passionate and empathetic." Bethany Holroyd CMIOSH



Communication
Talking to workers,
influencing others

Listening
Hearing what workers have
to say without judgment



Adaptability
Changing direction or updating
a process after feedback

Problem solving
Identifying an issue and
finding ways to make it better



"A good OSH professional is a positive and pro-active individual, who is not afraid to speak up." Isobel Humphreys CertIOSH

Creativity
Thinking
outside the
box and being
playfully
curious

Technical
Reading and
applying
health and
safety law

**IT and
digital**
Being
comfortable
using
computers,
software, and
using data

"Those who work in health and safety are welcoming and kind people, who are happy to help." Isobel Humphreys CertIOSH

Professional memberships can help you with:
career support **networking opportunities** **finding a mentor**

"IOSH offer a mentorship programme which provided me with essential direction when I entered my first position in OSH." Logan Holmes TechIOSH



Many kinds of people find a home in the health and safety profession. Whether you are an empathetic and proactive person with a drive to make positive change, or an analytical thinker with a passion for problem-solving, **there is a place for you.**



 Day to day

you may find yourself visiting various sites,

“Developing strong behavioural skills are essential to being a successful health and safety professional, as OSH is fundamentally about people.”

Tor Bennett Williams CMIOSH

“Everyone has a unique take on situations and each one is invaluable to hazard perception and continuous improvement in organisations.” Logan Holmes TechIOSH

 providing advice and guidance to workers, attending meetings, providing reports,

 creating and reviewing policies, delivering training, or conducting risk assessments.

“They are forward thinking and logical, finding it easy to be adaptable and understanding to any challenges they may face.” Isobel Humphreys CertIOSH



Hear from professionals



**Bethany
Holroyd
CMIOSH**

Senior safety professional
and children's author

What is occupational safety and health (OSH)?

OSH fundamentally for me is ensuring that those around you return home safe to their families at the end of everyday.

OSH careers – what’s in it for you? – including principles, salaries, types of work

OSH is a bit of an adventure to me. Often viewed as an industry that can be a little bit dull – my experience of it like many others, see how important it is to us all and the variety of experiences it can offer. It’s cliché, but every day genuinely is a school day. In safety you must have a growth mindset, lifelong learning is an important aspect of what we do, as we have to adapt to changes to legislation and regulations. AI, technology, and methods of working are constantly changing, so what worked 20 years ago may not work now, and this can all happen within career lifetimes. Overall, it’s a very rewarding industry.

How do I start my career? – including apprenticeships, vocational qualifications, degrees, specialising on the job, and career changers

So many health and safety professionals end up ‘falling’ into their roles – which is why it’s often viewed as a secondary vocation particularly for ex-serving members of the armed forces or construction industries. However, more focus is being placed on it as a first option career choice and you can enter the industry through apprenticeships/traineeships dedicated to health and safety.

What makes a good health and safety professional? – key workplace skills with a focus on soft skills

I would say the importance of what are often called ‘soft skills’ here are incredibly important. We’re an industry that relies on effective communication, visible leadership, and dynamic approaches. The person who ‘poached’ me into safety said during my interview ‘I don’t care that you don’t have health and safety qualifications they can be taught, but passion and enthusiasm can’t’ and it’s so true. To inspire and mentor others we need to be emotionally intelligent, passionate, and empathetic. All of these ‘soft’ skills are what really sets you apart from the rest as a safety professional.

Where can I work? – including popular and emerging industries

The amazing thing about the health and safety industry is that it’s required by law – and so it spans every single industry you can think of. I’ve spoken to thousands of health and safety professionals and no two routes/industries/experiences are the same. It’s a wonderfully diverse industry and one I’m very proud to be a part of.

What does health and safety mean to me?

Health and safety isn’t just a job to me, as safety professionals our role goes beyond enforcing regulations or conducting inspections – we’re here to serve others. In order to do this well we have to be committed to continuous learning, as the industry changes and evolves we must too and in doing so striving for excellence in promoting a culture of safety amongst the staff we support. Ultimately, safety is a caring role where we can positively impact people’s lives by ensuring they return home safe at the end of every day.





Logan Holmes

TechIOSH

Health and Safety Advisor
working in the events
industry



How do I start my career?

This is always a daunting prospect and to simplify it, there is no right or wrong way to begin. I fell into health and safety through an apprenticeship at 16 years old after realising that college was not the pathway for me, it ended up being the best decision I have ever made. Historically, Health and Safety as a profession has lacked diversity, incredible work has been implemented over the past few years and there has never been a better time to get started! Commonly type cast as a career switching role, not an entry level opportunity, schemes like the [IOSH Future Leaders](#) have challenged the stereotype. In this industry, everyone has a unique take on situations and each one is invaluable to hazard perception and continuous improvement in organisations.

So a bit more information on the opportunities this industry offers, now more than ever there is a plethora of apprenticeships, graduate schemes and, entry level positions that can be found with a simple Google search! – To support that approach, health and safety is pivotal in every sector in the world, which one would you want to work in?

Networking on platforms such as LinkedIn have been instrumental to my success, and I strongly recommend getting involved and speaking to those in the positions you wish to achieve. IOSH also offer a mentorship programme which provided me with essential direction when I entered my first position in health and safety, this is accessible through their website!



As many will mention, the pathway to success is never a straight road, there are challenges along the way so try and enjoy the process, love the work that you do as after all it's an ethically rewarding role. It is all achievable with the right determination!

Starting as a 16-year-old with a dream to understand the world of events safety, an extreme passion of mine, through networking and hard work I am now working in my dream position at 21 years old! It is possible, utilise the resources made available to you and remember that we are all in this together... And don't forget to enjoy the journey.

”



Isobel Humphreys CertIOSH Health and Safety Co-Ordinator working in facilities at a law firm



Occupational safety and health refers to the safety, health and welfare of people when they are at work. It is a fundamental and legal responsibility for companies in the UK, and both employers and employees are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all in the workplace.

There is a wide variety of careers in OSH in many industries, such as:

- Construction
- Engineering
- Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Hospitality
- Education

The job titles include:

- Health and Safety co-ordinator
- Health and Safety Advisor
- Health and Safety Manager
- Director

Within this type of work, you may:

- Attend various sites.
- Provide advice and guidance to clients.
- Offer and conduct health and safety training.
- Create and review policies and procedures.
- Work with a wide array of people.
- Work individually and as part of a team.

The salaries within OSH can vary and start at around £24,000 for an assistant health and safety co-ordinator and progress up to around £80,000+ for health and safety directors. There is massive scope for opportunity within occupational health and safety and development is encouraged and nurtured by most companies.

There are many ways to start your career as an OSH professional. For me, I attended university and completed a degree in BSc (Hons) Health, Safety and Environmental Management. This degree led me to my current career, but there is so many ways to start, including:

- **Apprenticeships** – Keep a look out for apprenticeships online, as you will gain experience, knowledge and earn money whilst doing so.
- **Degrees** – Numerous universities in the UK, as well as globally, offer undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in health and safety, providing you with a high standard of Knowledge upon completion.
- **Specialising on the job** – Whilst working, you may find yourself completing risk assessments and completing audits with external companies. Through this, you will gain experience and knowledge which will enable you to specialise in this area.
- **Career changes** – Many people enter a career in OSH following a long-time career in a different area. Some may have no experience with health and safety, but there is an abundance of careers out there for individuals who are after a career change.

Becoming a member of IOSH is a great way to start this career journey as you will be able to liaise with like-minded individuals and gain knowledge which can lead you into a great OSH career.

A good health and safety professional is a positive and pro-active individual, who is not afraid to speak up. They are forward thinking and logical, finding it easy to be adaptable and understanding to any challenges you may face. It is helpful to be confident, however, this comes with experience and those who work in health and safety are welcoming and kind people, who are happy to help.

You can work anywhere from an office, to a school, to a hospital, to a construction site. Health and safety is a massive industry and there is scope for roles in many different work environments, meaning there is something to suit everyone. I am a Health and Safety Co-Ordinator working in facilities at a law firm. I thoroughly enjoy my job as every-day is different. Careers in OSH are engaging and ever-changing. Health and safety welcomes everyone, from those who have recently graduated to those who are after a change in careers.

My top tips to kick start your career in OSH are:



Reach out to other health and safety professionals.

Join IOSH and become a member as through this, you can engage with like-minded individuals who will be able to assist with your career progression.



Keep up with current legislation and think creatively.





Tor Bennett Williams

CMIOSH

Health And Safety Partner for Mercedes AMG Petronas Formula 1



To me occupational safety and health is about being a facilitator to allow people to work at their peak performance.

A career in occupational safety and health offers a unique opportunity to work across diverse and exciting industries, allowing you to be at the heart of the action! Unlike many roles that are confined to desk or office settings, OSH professionals are often found on different sites, getting directly involved in dynamic environments. Whether you're ensuring safety on a movie set, overseeing operations at a stadium, or managing risks in an automotive garage, the versatility and variety of OSH careers are limitless. This hands-on approach gives you up-close experience, satisfaction, and fulfilment.

How do I start my career?

Starting a career in OSH is accessible at any age and offers numerous entry points. It's all about finding the right pathway that suits your skills and circumstances. University degrees in STEM subjects can open doors to internships and job placements. After graduating from university with a BSc in Environmental Science, I started my journey with a Health Safety and Environmental Internship. In 2022 I was able to combine my passions of athletics and safety by working as a Health and Safety Advisor at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

You can pursue OSH through various routes. Apprenticeships provide hands-on experience while you earn and are a great way to start in OSH. Vocational qualifications are also available from many institutions that offer courses specifically focused on health and safety.

Developing strong behavioural skills are essential to being a successful health and safety professional, as OSH is fundamentally about people. Whether it's encouraging good health and safety practices within the workplace, negotiating with stakeholders for new equipment, or writing procedures that staff can easily understand and follow, effective communication and stakeholder management are essential skills.

Leadership and management skills are also important. As a health and safety professional, you often need to lead by example and navigate challenging situations. This role requires maintaining professional integrity and demonstrating the ability to handle complex issues with confidence.

One of the great advantages of a career in health and safety is its universal applicability. As long as an industry involves people, there will always be a need for health and safety professionals. This means there are virtually no restrictions on where you can work!

I've spoken to OSH professionals who have worked in diverse fields, from aerospace and museums to health products. Whether you aspire to work in a cutting-edge industry or a field you're passionate about, there's a place for health and safety. You can make a meaningful contribution to your dream industry with a career in OSH.

What does health and safety mean to me?

To me, health and safety is a role that embraces ethics and goes beyond merely meeting minimum standards. It's about striving to do what's best for everyone involved and is a profession where you can make a difference to somebody's life. When implemented correctly, health and safety creates a sound environment where people and processes can thrive and contribute positively.



Our vision

We're the voice of the occupational health and safety profession. We support our members in delivering our simple vision of a safe and healthy world of work.





Photo used by kind permission
of Tor Bennett Williams



**"Love the work that
you do as after all
it's an ethically
rewarding role."**
Logan Holmes
TechIOSH



Find out more

There are plenty of opportunities to
get involved in health and safety,
whatever stage you're at.



Visit [iosh.com/jobs](https://www.iosh.com/jobs) or search
'OSH career support'



Email
careerhub@iosh.com

About IOSH

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is a global Chartered body. The largest membership organisation for health and safety professionals worldwide. We connect our members with resources, guidance, events, and training, and we're the voice of our profession, campaigning on issues that affect millions of working people.

As a qualifications Awarding Organisation, a developer of training, and an advocate for positive transformation, we seek to build excellence in our profession, drive action from everyone who can influence occupational safety and health standards and ensure that protecting people is at the heart of sustainability.

IOSH was founded in 1945 and is a registered charity with international NGO status.

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