



Scope: the regulations below are for **Great Britain** (England, Scotland, Wales). Northern Ireland has a separate but broadly comparable framework enforced by HSENI — see page 2.

1. The foundations — apply to every business with employees

Legislation	What it means for you
Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 HSWA — the umbrella Act	Ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees and anyone affected by your work (visitors, contractors, public). Provide safe equipment, systems, information, instruction, training and supervision. 5 or more employees: a written H&S policy (s.2(3)). Employees must co-operate and take reasonable care (s.7).
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999	Carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments — record significant findings if you have 5 or more employees. Appoint a competent person , set emergency procedures, provide training. Specific assessments for young persons and new & expectant mothers . Covers work-related stress and mental health — an HSE enforcement focus (use the HSE Management Standards).
Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992	Toilets and washing facilities, drinking water, rest and eating areas, lighting, ventilation, cleanliness, safe floors and traffic routes. Reasonable temperature — ACoP guide minimum 16°C (13°C for strenuous work).
Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 England & Wales · Scotland: Fire (Scotland) Act 2005	The "Responsible Person" must complete a fire risk assessment and keep it under review. Since 1 Oct 2023 the full FRA must be recorded in writing for all premises within the scope of the Order , regardless of workforce size, including who completed it. Maintain alarms, emergency lighting, escape routes, extinguishers; train staff; share fire information with other responsible persons in shared buildings.
Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 RIDDOR 2013 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences	Carry out a first-aid needs assessment . Minimum: a suitably stocked kit, an appointed person to take charge, and information for staff on the arrangements. Higher-risk or larger sites need trained first aiders. Deaths, specified injuries and dangerous occurrences: notify HSE without delay , report received within 10 days . Over-7-day worker incapacitation: within 15 days . Also reportable: certain occupational diseases, and members of the public or other non-workers injured by a work activity and taken directly to hospital for treatment — key for shops, hospitality and venues. Record over-3-day injuries; keep records 3 years . Report online at hse.gov.uk/riddor (accepts all reports); for deaths and specified injuries to workers you can phone 0345 300 9923 instead.
Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969	Minimum £5 million cover for almost all employers. Display the certificate where staff can read it — electronic display is allowed if staff know where to find it.
H&S Information for Employees Regulations 1989	Display the HSE-approved "Health and safety law – what you need to know" poster, or give every worker the matching leaflet.
Consultation with Employees Regs 1996 / Safety Representatives & Safety Committees Regs 1977	Consult staff (directly or via representatives) on anything affecting their health and safety. Recognised unions can appoint safety reps.

2. Activity-specific regulations — apply where the activity or hazard exists

Legislation	Key duties
Display Screen Equipment Regs 1992	Workstation assessments for regular users (including home and hybrid workers), breaks or changes of activity, free eye test on request and basic glasses if needed for screen work.
Manual Handling Operations Regs 1992	Avoid hazardous lifting where possible; assess what can't be avoided (task, individual, load, environment) and reduce the risk.
COSHH 2002 incl. legionella — ACoP L8	Assess hazardous substances (cleaning chemicals, dusts, fumes). Control exposure, use safety data sheets, provide PPE and health surveillance where needed. Assess and control legionella in water systems.
PUWER 1998 / LOLER 1998	Work equipment must be suitable, maintained, inspected and used by trained people. Lifting equipment needs thorough examination (6-monthly for people-lifting and accessories, otherwise 12-monthly or per a written scheme).
Work at Height Regs 2005	Avoid where possible; plan, supervise and use competent people and suitable equipment (including ladders and steps) where it can't be avoided.
Electricity at Work Regs 1989	Keep systems and equipment safe. Neither PAT testing nor fixed-wiring inspection (EICR) has a single statutory interval — set frequencies by risk, the installation's condition and guidance such as the IET Codes of Practice and BS 7671.
Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regs 1998	Gas appliances and pipework maintained in safe condition; work only by Gas Safe registered engineers.
Control of Asbestos Regs 2012	Duty to manage in non-domestic premises and the common parts of certain shared residential buildings. Buildings constructed before 2000 are likely to contain asbestos: find it, record it (asbestos register), assess risk, share the plan with anyone who might disturb it.
PPE at Work Regs 1992 amended 6 April 2022	Provide suitable PPE free of charge as a last resort. Since 2022 the duty also covers individuals who meet the legal definition of "limb (b)" workers — not necessarily every self-employed contractor.
Control of Noise at Work Regs 2005	Daily or weekly personal exposure: lower action value 80 dB(A) — information, training, hearing protection available. Upper action value 85 dB(A) — hearing protection mandatory, zones marked. Exposure limit 87 dB(A) , taking hearing protection into account.
Safety Signs and Signals Regs 1996	Use standard safety signs wherever risks can't be adequately controlled by other means, including fire exit and equipment signs.
Also check, where relevant	DSEAR 2002 — flammable gases, liquids, vapours and combustible dusts. Control of Vibration at Work Regs 2005 — hand-arm and whole-body vibration from tools, machinery and vehicles.

EMPLOYMENT & EQUALITY LAW (EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT 2025 · GREAT BRITAIN)

- Friday 30 Oct 2026 · Comes into force this week**

The duty to prevent sexual harassment rises from "reasonable steps" to "**all reasonable steps**" (Equality Act 2010, s.40A). Employers also become **liable for harassment of staff by third parties** — customers, clients, suppliers — where they haven't taken all reasonable steps. These provisions cover **sexual harassment and harassment related to relevant protected characteristics** under the Equality Act 2010. *Action:* review your harassment policy and risk assessment, train staff, add customer-facing signage and contract wording, and log what you have done.
- Already in force · 1 Oct 2026** — Time limit for most employment tribunal claims arising on or after 1 October doubles to **6 months** (less one day); some Scottish breach-of-contract claims follow from 9 November 2026. Keep incident, complaint and training records accordingly.
- Already in force · 6 April 2026** — Disclosures about sexual harassment may qualify for whistleblowing protection where the statutory conditions (including the public-interest test) are met.

HEALTH, SAFETY & SECURITY

- Expected spring 2027 (date not yet confirmed) · Martyn's Law — Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 · whole UK, including Northern Ireland**

Standard tier generally covers qualifying premises expecting **200–799** people at the same time; **enhanced tier** covers **800+**. **Qualifying events** generally require 800+ people, public access and entry checks such as tickets or passes. Staff count towards thresholds; exclusions and special rules apply (e.g. places of worship, some education settings). The SIA will regulate compliance. Home Office statutory guidance was published 15 April 2026. *Action:* check whether your premises or events qualify, identify the legally responsible person (set by who controls the premises or event) and, where applicable, prepare to designate a senior individual.
- Proposals only — NOT law yet — RIDDOR reform** (HSE consultation closed 7 July 2026, after an extension — wider reportable diseases and dangerous occurrences; no date set). **Asbestos changes** (consultation closed 9 January 2026 — independent clearance, accredited surveyors). RIDDOR 2013 and CAR 2012 still apply.

4. Compliance checklist

- ☐ H&S law poster displayed / leaflets issued
 - ☐ EL insurance certificate displayed (or online)
 - ☐ Written H&S policy, signed and dated (5 or more employees)
 - ☐ Risk assessments recorded (5 or more employees) — covering the activities and hazards that actually arise, e.g. stress, DSE, manual handling, lone working
 - ☐ Fire risk assessment recorded in writing (all premises in scope, England & Wales)
 - ☐ First-aid needs assessment, kit, appointed person
 - ☐ Accident book — legal requirement with 10 or more employees, and for mines, quarries and factories regardless of size; good practice for all
 - ☐ Competent person appointed for H&S advice
 - ☐ Induction and training records kept
 - ☐ Equipment inspection/maintenance logs (PAT, EICR, LOLER, gas)
 - ☐ Asbestos management plan and register where applicable
 - ☐ Harassment policy updated for 30 Oct 2026
 - ☐ Contractor checks — RAMS, insurance, competence
 - ☐ Staff consulted on H&S matters

5. Key numbers

5 employees	Written H&S policy and recorded risk-assessment findings required
£5m	Minimum employers' liability cover
16°C / 13°C	Guide minimum workplace temperature (sedentary / physical)
10 days	RIDDOR report for deaths, specified injuries, dangerous occurrences
15 days	RIDDOR report for over-7-day incapacitation
3 years	Keep RIDDOR records
40 years	Keep applicable COSHH health-surveillance records and specified asbestos-work health records
80 / 85 / 87	Noise action values and limit, dB(A) daily/weekly exposure
Unlimited	Fines for H&S offences (England & Wales); prison possible for individuals

6. Who enforces?

- HSE:** factories, construction, warehouses, farms, schools, hospitals.
Local authority (EHO): offices, shops, hotels, restaurants, pubs, leisure.
Fire & rescue authority: fire safety.
Employment tribunals / EHRC: harassment and equality claims.
SIA: Martyn's Law (from 2027).
HSE recovers costs through **Fee for Intervention** when it finds a material breach.

Scotland & Northern Ireland: the detailed regulations above apply across Great Britain; fire safety in Scotland falls under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. Northern Ireland has its own separate but broadly comparable H&S legislation enforced by HSENI, and the Employment Rights Act 2025 harassment changes do not extend there. Martyn's Law applies UK-wide.

SH Health and Safety — Practical Health & Safety Consultancy

Proportionate compliance and documentation that actually works: risk assessments, method statements and RAMS, safety policies and documentation, compliance support and ongoing advice.

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