SME STANDARDS:
environment

sme
CERTIFICATION CENTRE

INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth issue of SME Standards: Environment, a voluntary environmental Standard for auditable third-party inspection, setting out the requirements to be met by organisations.

The Standard has been developed for use by Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and voluntary organisations, of all size and sector.

SME Certification Centre provides interpretations of SME Standards: Environment, guidance on how to implement the requirements and document templates. Full details are available at www.smecertificationcentre.co.uk

SME Standards: Environment is reviewed and revised periodically, in response to changing conditions, other relevant Standards and feedback from interested parties.

ENVIRONMENT

Managing environmental performance helps an organisation to operate more efficiently and reduces the risk of pollution incidents and legal non-compliance.

More and more customers and stakeholders are expecting organisations to demonstrate their commitment to managing their impact on the environment.

This might be investors/grant funders or customers wanting to ensure their suppliers are taking their responsibilities seriously.

The Standard offers two options:

SME Standards: Environment (Committed), is a basic step towards making improvements in environmental performance.   It is suitable for small organisations that want to show intent before working towards a fully-fledged management system (Certified).   This is recognised as a simple commitment only.

SME Standards: Environment (Certified), is based on the core principles of ISO 14001. It provides a framework for embedding environmental management into an organisation's decision making and daily operations, through the development of a simple Environmental Management System.   The Management System is intended for certification purposes, as demonstration of conformity with the requirements of this Standard.

SME Standards: Environment (Certified) is made up of 4 sections; Join and Commit, Assess, Do, Review. Each section focusses on the essential aspects of operating an effective Environmental Management System.
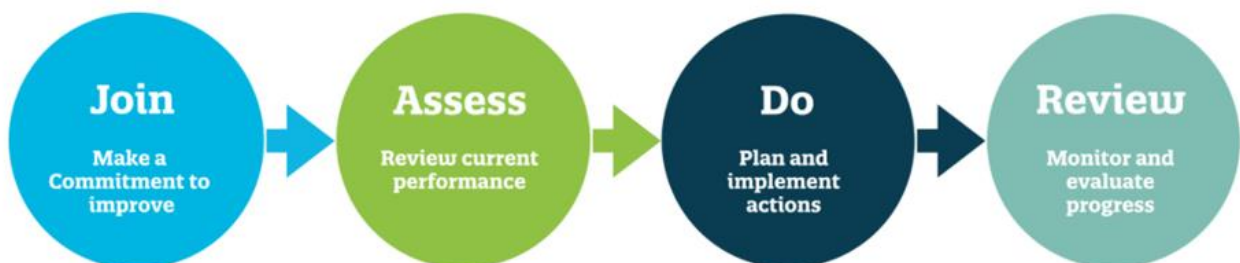
CORE THEMES

All organisations working to SME Standards: Environment (Certified), will be expected to address each of the themes below.

Environmental Action
Ensuring the organisation's day-to-day operations are environmentally responsible such as reducing resource use and minimising waste.

Preventing Pollution
Reducing the likelihood of harm to the environment from substances such as oil and chemicals being released into the air, water or land.

Compliance
Identification, understanding and compliance with relevant environmental legislation and other obligations.

Continual improvement
Always striving to identify and make changes that result in better outcomes.

Option 1: Committed

1. COMMITMENT STATEMENT

The organisation commits to taking action to improve environmental management.

a. The organisation shall produce a Commitment Statement that lists planned improvement actions.

b. A Senior Manager shall authorise and date the Commitment Statement.

c. The Statement shall be updated annually.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

The organisation reports improvements made in environmental management annually (not required for first assessment).

a. The organisation shall produce an Annual Report that describes progress made against each of the actions in the Commitment Statement.

b. The Report shall include the name of the person who completed it and the date completed.

1. JOIN

The organisation commits to the development and implementation of an Environmental Management System.

1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

a. A Senior Manager shall make a commitment to the development of an Environmental Management system, on behalf of the organisation.

b. The Senior Manager's commitment shall be documented and include:

- Being a leader for the Environmental Management System
- Supporting the Environmental Champion and other staff who contribute to the Environmental Management System
- Ensuring adequate resources are available for the Environmental Management System to operate effectively
- Being accountable for legal compliance and the effectiveness of the Environmental Management System
- Approving core Environmental Management System documentation
- Participating in an Annual Review of the Environmental Management System

c. The organisation shall assign the role of Environmental Champion to an appropriate member of staff.

d. The Environmental Champion's responsibilities shall be documented and include:

- Developing and implementing the Environmental Management System
- Ensuring all Environmental Management System documentation is up to date
- Identifying relevant environmental legislation and ensuring compliance
- Coordinating improvement activities
- Collating and analysing monitoring data
- Communicating responsibilities to all staff
- Undertaking an Annual Review of the Environmental Management System

e. Roles and responsibilities of other relevant staff within the Environmental Management system shall be clearly defined.

1.2 Environmental Policy

a. The organisation shall develop and communicate a documented Environmental Policy that is appropriate to the nature and scale of the organisation.

b. The Policy shall:

- Contain a short description of the organisation's products and/or services
- Contain a commitment to:
    - Protecting the environment
    - Preventing pollution
    - Complying with environmental legislative requirements
    - Continual improvement
- Include the date the Policy was approved, version number and be signed by a Senior Manager
- Be communicated to staff and other stakeholders
- Be reviewed annually and revised if necessary

2. ASSESS

An Initial Environmental Review shall be undertaken to review the organisation's interactions with the environment, risk, current environmental performance and compliance obligations.

2.1 Initial Environmental Review

a. A documented Initial Environmental Review shall be undertaken.
b. The Review shall consider and record:
    - The name of the person who completed the Review
    - The date the Review was completed
    - The scope of the Review
    - Consideration of the organisation's operations and their interaction with the environment, including where relevant:
        - Waste
        - Energy
        - Water
        - Transport
        - Biodiversity
    - A Pollution Risk Assessment
    - Identification of existing good practice and potential opportunities for improvement

c. If there are significant changes to the organisation's activities, location, products or services, the Initial Environmental Review shall be updated to review the impact and opportunities of the change.

2.2 Compliance Register

a. The organisation shall develop and maintain a Compliance Register that lists all relevant environmental legislation and other compliance obligations.

b. The Compliance Register shall include:

- A list of the legislation and other obligations that have been identified
- A summary of the requirements of each obligation
- A short description of actions taken by the organisation to ensure compliance
- Reference to any relevant legal documents/records held
- The date the Register was issued and a version number

c. Where non-compliance with environmental legislation is identified, an action shall be entered in the Corrective Action Log to address it.

d. The Register shall be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary.

3. DO

The organisation shall develop and implement realistic plans that protect the environment and increase staff engagement and understanding of the Environmental Management System.

3.1 Action Plan

a. The organisation shall develop a documented Action Plan that includes:
- Objectives and associated planned activities to improve environmental performance
- Allocation of responsibilities
- Target dates for completion
- The date the Action Plan was issued and a version number

b. Actions required to prevent pollution and comply with legal requirements shall be prioritised.

c. The Environmental Champion shall co-ordinate the implementation of identified Actions.

d. The Action Plan shall be reviewed at least annually, and new actions added when appropriate, to demonstrate continual improvement of the organisation's environmental performance

3.2 Communication Plan

a. The organisation shall develop and deliver a documented Communication Plan to ensure all relevant persons receive an appropriate level of information and/or training for their role and are engaged in the delivery of the Environmental Management System.

b. Communication shall include Working Instructions for business processes, where their absence may lead to a deviation from the Environmental Management System or environmental harm.

c. The Communication Plan shall include:

- Identification of information and/or training needs
- Allocate responsibility for delivery
- Identification of communication channels
- Target dates for completion
- The date the Communication Plan was issued and a version number

3.3 Emergency Plan

a. The organisation shall develop a documented Emergency Plan that:
- Identifies potential situations that may cause environmental harm
- States control measures that are in place to reduce risk
- States the organisation's planned response in the event of an environmental incident
- Records the date the Emergency Plan was issued and a version number

b. The Emergency Plan shall be communicated to all relevant staff

c. The Environmental Champion shall co-ordinate or allocate responsibility for implementation of the Emergency Plan.

d. If an environmental emergency occurs, it shall be recorded in the Corrective Action Log.

4. REVIEW

The organisation shall monitor progress against the objectives in the Action Plan, compliance with legislation and ensure that the whole Environmental Management System is reviewed at least annually, to evaluate performance and update documents as necessary.

4.1 Monitoring

a. The organisation shall record relevant data to measure progress against the objectives in the Action Plan e.g. waste recycled, energy use.

a. Data shall be collated and reviewed annually.

4.2 Internal Audit

b. The organisation shall conduct regular internal audits in order to review its compliance with environmental legislation, pollution prevention and operational control measures.
c. The organisation shall develop an Audit Checklist for the purpose of undertaking internal audits.

b. The Audit Checklist shall include:
    o Issue date and version number
    o How often the Audit Checklist shall be completed
    o Name of the person who undertook the internal audit
    o A record of findings
    o Where problems are recorded, Corrective Actions shall be required
    o Corrective Actions shall be entered in the Corrective Action Log

4.3 Corrective Action

a. Where problems are identified and Corrective Actions are required, these shall be entered into a Corrective Action Log.

b. The Corrective Action Log shall include:
    o The date the problem was recorded
    o Description of the problem
    o The cause of the problem
    o Actions to be taken to address the problem and prevent it recurring
    o Responsibility for ensuring actions are completed
    o Deadline for actions
    o The date the action has been satisfactorily closed

4.4 Annual Review

a. The organisation shall undertake and document an Annual Review that records:
    • Any significant changes to the organisation since the Initial Environmental Review/last Annual Review and the impact on the Environmental Management System
    • Review of the Environmental Policy
    • Progress against the Action Plan
    • Review of the Compliance Register
    • Effectiveness of the Communication Plan
    • Analysis of Monitoring data
    • Review of the Emergency Plan
    • Identification of actions for the year ahead, to be added to the Action Plan

b. The documented Annual Review shall be signed and dated by Senior Management.

SME CERTIFICATION CENTRE

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Appendix 1

A summary of the correlation between SME Standards: Environment and other environmental Standards.

SME Standards: Environment	BS8555	ISO14001
1. Commit 1.1 Roles and Responsibilities – senior management makes a commitment, roles and responsibilities are defined.	P1/S1 Gaining and maintaining management commitment. P4/S1 Finalise management structure and responsibilities.	5.1 Leadership and commitment. 5.3 Organisational roles, responsibilities and authorities.
1.2 Environmental Policy – develop, document and communicate.	P1/S3 Developing a draft environmental policy. P3/S2 Finalising the environmental policy	5.2 Environmental Policy
2. Assess 2.1 Initial Environmental Review -review interactions with the environment, risk, current performance and opportunities for improvement.	P1/S2 Baseline assessment. P3/S1 Evaluation of environmental aspects and impacts.	4.1 Understanding the organisation and its context. 4.3 Determining the scope
2.2 Compliance Register – list relevant legislation and other obligations, requirements, compliance and records.	P2/S1 Identify relevant legal requirements. P2/S2 Identify "other requirements" e.g. relevant industrial codes of practice or contractual obligations). P2/S3 Checking compliance. P2/S5 Developing compliance indicators.	6.1.3 Compliance obligations.
3. Do 3.1 Action Plan – objectives, planned activities, indicators. Periodic review.	P1/S4 Developing environmental indicators P1/S7 Initiation of continual improvement P3/S3 Developing objectives and targets. evaluation.	6.1.1 Actions to address risks and opportunities 6.2.1 Environmental Objectives 6.2.2 Planning actions to achieve environmental objectives.
3.2 Communication Plan – identification of training needs and delivery plans.	P1/S6 Training, awareness and the initiation of culture change P3/S7 Launching environmental policy, objectives, targets and indicators.	7.2 Competence. 7.3 Awareness. 7.4 Communication.

	P4/S2 Training, awareness and competence, plans and records. P4/S3 Establishing and maintaining formal communication.	
3.3 Emergency Plan – identification of potential situations that can cause harm, control measures and planned responses.	P4/S5 Reviewing and testing emergency preparedness and response.	8.2 Emergency preparedness and response.
4. Review 4.1 Monitoring – record relevant data to measure performance against objectives.	P3/S4 Establishing indicators for the environmental performance.	9.1 Monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation.
4.2 Internal Audit – review compliance, pollution prevention and operational control measures.	P5/S1 Establishing audit programmes. P2/S4 Ongoing compliance	9.1.2 Evaluation of compliance. 9.2.2 Internal audit.
4.3 Corrective Action – where problems are identified, corrective actions are initiated and recorded.	P5/S2 Correcting non-conformance and taking preventative action.	10.2 Non-conformity and corrective action.
4.4 Annual Review – a full annual system review with senior management.	P4/S6 Developing indicators for the environmental management system. P5/S3 Management review. P5/S4 Improving environmental performance. P5/S5 Improving the environmental management system	9.2.3 Management review