Choosing a Health and Safety Consultant in Leicestershire: A Practical Guide

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Why the Right Consultant Matters

Bringing in external health and safety support is one of the most valuable decisions a business can make. The right consultant helps you stay compliant, reduces the risk of accidents and enforcement action, and frees you up to run your business rather than wrestle with paperwork. The wrong one leaves you with a folder of generic documents that nobody has read, that do not reflect how your site actually works, and that offer no real protection when something goes wrong.

Choosing well matters because the cost of getting it wrong is not just financial. A business that relies on poor advice can end up with risk assessments that miss the actual hazards on site, training records with no system for renewal, and a false sense of security that only becomes obvious after an incident or an enforcement visit. Knowing what to look for before you appoint anyone helps you avoid all of that.

What the Law Actually Requires

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, every employer must appoint one or more competent persons to help them meet their health and safety duties. That person does not have to be an employee. Many businesses, particularly smaller ones, meet this duty by appointing an external consultant. What matters is that the person or organisation appointed has the training, knowledge and experience to identify and assess the risks relevant to

your business.

It is worth being clear about where responsibility sits. Appointing a consultant does not transfer your legal duty to them. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the employer, and ultimately the directors and senior managers, remain responsible for health and safety in the business. A good consultant gives you competent advice and helps you build the right arrangements; they do not, and cannot, take that legal responsibility off your shoulders. Anyone who implies otherwise is misunderstanding their own role.

Some activities bring additional specific duties on top of this general requirement. Construction projects, for example, fall under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015, which set out separate duty holder roles such as principal designer and principal contractor. A health and safety consultant can advise duty holders on meeting their general obligations and can audit a site, but appointing someone to formally act as principal designer or principal contractor is a distinct role that needs to be filled by a suitably resourced organisation, not assumed as part of general consultancy support.

Check Qualifications and Professional Membership

Health and safety is not a protected profession, so technically anyone can call themselves a consultant. This is exactly why checking credentials matters. Look for recognised qualifications such as a NEBOSH Diploma, and professional membership with the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. Chartered Membership (CMIOSH) is the benchmark for a senior, experienced practitioner, while Graduate and Technician membership (Grad IOSH, Tech IOSH) indicate progression through a recognised competence framework.

The Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register (OSHCR) lists consultants who meet set entry requirements on qualifications and professional membership. It is a useful starting point for any search. Do not be afraid to ask directly for proof of qualifications, membership grade, insurance cover and how the consultant keeps their own knowledge current through continuing professional development. A competent consultant will answer these questions without hesitation.

Why Sector Experience Matters

A good consultant should understand the particular risks your industry involves, not just health and safety in general. A construction site has entirely different hazards, from working at height to plant movement, than a care home, where manual handling, infection control and lone working tend to dominate. Manufacturing and engineering environments bring machinery guarding, noise and chemical exposure into play, while warehousing and logistics sites are shaped by vehicle movements, racking safety and shift patterns.

Ask any prospective consultant for examples of similar businesses they have worked with and what changed as a result. A consultant who has only ever worked in offices will struggle to properly assess a workshop floor, and vice versa. This is not about ruling out a generalist entirely, since the core legal framework is the same across sectors, but experienced sector knowledge speeds up the process and catches risks that a generic checklist will miss.

What a Properly Tailored Arrangement Looks Like

Good health and safety support is specific to your premises, activities and people, not a set of templates copied from one client to the next. A tailored risk assessment describes your actual work processes, names your actual equipment, and reflects how your site is laid out. If a document could be handed unchanged to a completely different business in a different industry, it is not doing its job.

Review frequency matters too. Risk assessments are not a one-off exercise; they should be reviewed regularly, at intervals that suit the level of risk, and sooner whenever there is a change in process, equipment or premises, or after any accident or near miss. A policy statement, which the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires in writing for any business with five or more employees, needs to be a living document that is actually communicated to staff, not just signed once and filed away.

Records worth keeping include your written policy, site-specific risk assessments, training certificates with renewal dates, inspection and audit reports, and notes of any advice given following a consultant's visit. These need to be accessible, current and reviewed on a defined schedule, not simply accumulated. A common failing in smaller businesses is a drawer full of outdated paperwork that nobody has looked at since the day it was produced.

- Risk assessments reflect what actually happens on your site, not a generic template
- Reviews happen on a set schedule, and immediately after any significant change or incident
- Training records show renewal or refresher dates, not just a single certificate
- Advice from consultant visits is written down and actioned, not just discussed verbally
- Someone in the business is clearly responsible for keeping records current

The Value of a Local Consultant

A consultant based nearby can get to your premises quickly after an incident, attend site visits without charging for hours of travel, and build a genuine working relationship with your team over time. They also tend to understand the local business community and the kinds of premises and sectors common to the area. For businesses across Leicestershire and the wider region, working with a health and safety consultant in Leicester or more broadly across the East Midlands means help is never far away when you need it.

Continuity also matters more than many businesses expect. A consultant who already knows your site, your staff and your history gives far better advice than one starting from scratch on every visit. Look for a relationship built around ongoing support rather than a single transactional visit, whether that is periodic auditing, help after an accident, or support renewing accreditation standards.

Questions Worth Asking Before You Appoint Anyone

Before signing anything, it is worth putting a handful of direct questions to any consultant you are considering. Their answers will tell you a great deal about how they actually work.

- What qualifications do you hold, and are you listed on OSHCR?
- Have you worked with businesses in my sector, and what changed as a result?
- How quickly can you attend site if we have an incident?
- Will our documents be written specifically for us, or adapted from a standard template?
- How often will you review and update our risk assessments and policies?
- What ongoing support do you provide after the initial work is complete?

Integral Safety supports businesses across Leicestershire and the East Midlands from its base in Coalville, offering tailored health and safety consultancy delivered by qualified, locally based consultants who take the time to understand your business. If you would like an honest conversation about what good support should look like for your organisation, get in touch.

Talk to Integral Safety Ltd

We are health and safety consultants based in Coalville, Leicestershire, working with businesses across the East Midlands. If anything in this guide applies to your workplace, we can help.

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This guide is general information about UK health and safety law and practice, correct as at 11 November 2026. It is not advice on your particular circumstances. The latest version is at https://integralsafetyltd.co.uk/blog/choosing-a-health-and-safety-consultant-in-leicestershire-what-to-look-for.