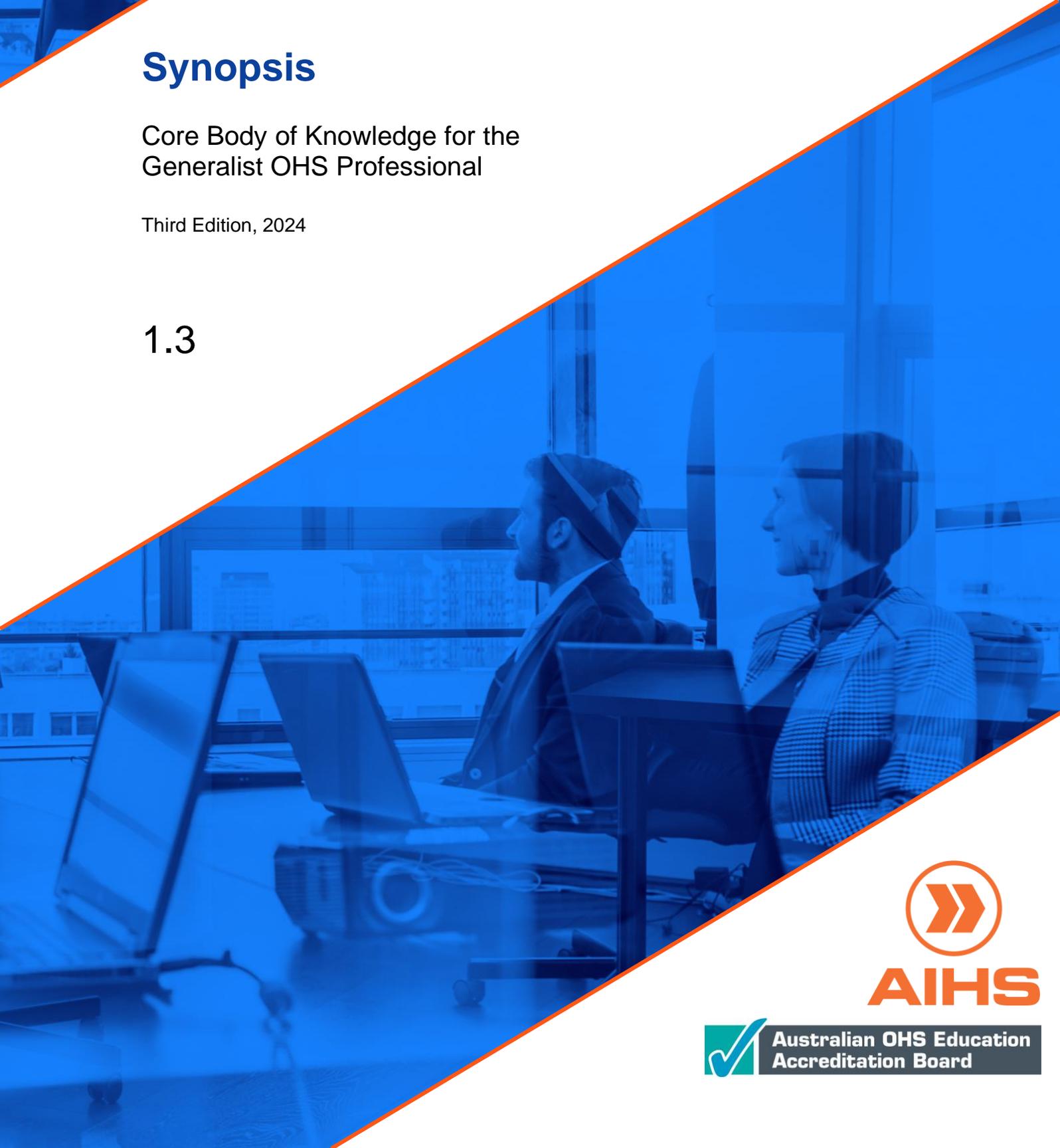


Synopsis

Core Body of Knowledge for the
Generalist OHS Professional

Third Edition, 2024

1.3



AIHS



Australian OHS Education
Accreditation Board

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The Manager, OHS Body of Knowledge
Australian Institute of Health and Safety,
PO Box 1376, Kensington, Victoria, Australia, 3031
Manager@ohsbok.org.au

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The Australian Institute of Health and Safety (AIHS) financially and materially supports the *OHS Body of Knowledge* as a key requirement of the profession.

The *OHS Body of Knowledge* forms the basis of the AIHS OHS capability agenda and informs the other platforms of the agenda: education assurance through accreditation; role clarity, capability assurance through individual certification and continuing professional development.

Thus, the *OHS Body of Knowledge* is strategically important to the AIHS and vital for the profession.

(www.aihs.org.au).



The *OHS Body of Knowledge* provides a framework for OHS professional education and continuing professional development. As the body managing accreditation of OHS professional education, the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board influences, supports and monitors the *OHS Body of Knowledge*, and has a major role in the development and review of individual chapters to ensure that the quality and evidence base reflects current OHS research and leading-edge thinking, and so provides a suitable standard for OHS education and professional development.

www.ohseducationaccreditation.org.au

Bibliography

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SYNOPSIS

Background

A defined body of knowledge is required as a basis for professional certification and for accreditation of education programs, giving entry to a profession and providing a benchmark for continuing professional development.

The *OHS Body of Knowledge for Generalist OHS Professionals* was developed in response to an identified need to define the collective knowledge that should be shared by Australian Generalist OHS Professionals as a basis for understanding the causation and control of work-related fatality, injury, disease, and ill-health. With reference to significant literature and best practice, each chapter of the OHS BoK gives a synoptic overview of a concept, its development and its application to understanding the causation and control of work-related fatality, injury, disease and ill-health (FIDI). The Body of Knowledge is not a textbook detailing all that the OHS professional needs to know; rather, it provides a 'picture' of current thinking that highlights key concepts and how thinking on these evolved.

WorkSafe Victoria funded the development of the first edition of the *OHS Body of Knowledge for Generalist OHS Professionals* published in 2012, assigning the copyright to the Safety Institute of Australia, with the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board being the custodian responsible for managing updating processes to ensure currency. Four further chapters were developed during 2013-14 with the support of Safe Work Australia. Additional chapters continue to be developed to address identified gaps and as OHS knowledge and conceptual thinking evolve.

Development

The development and structuring of the *OHS Body of Knowledge's* initial content were overseen by a Technical Panel, which included representatives from Victorian universities teaching OHS and members from the Safety Institute of Australia. This panel crafted an initial conceptual framework, subsequently refined based on input from tertiary-level OHS educators across Australia and the broader OHS community. Specialist authors were invited to draft chapters, which underwent rigorous peer review and editing. Over time, as the subjects within the *OHS Body of Knowledge* have grown in complexity, the development models have evolved to address the topics more effectively, incorporating extensive consultation and content validation.

For the third edition, we are establishing a sub-committee composed of globally respected safety and educational experts. This group will be tasked with formulating the concepts for new chapters, ensuring that our content continues to reflect the latest global safety standards and educational practices.



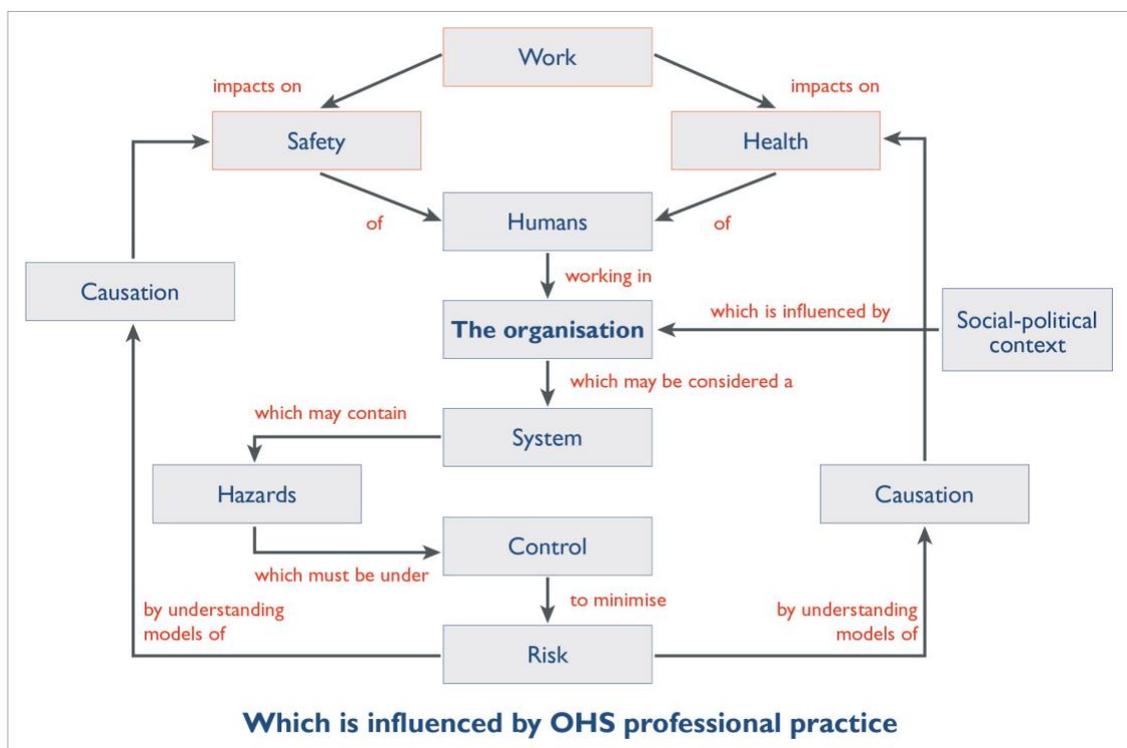
Conceptual structure

The *OHS Body of Knowledge* takes a 'conceptual' approach. As concepts are abstract, the OHS professional needs to organise the concepts into a framework to solve a problem. The overall framework used to structure the *OHS Body of Knowledge* is that:

Work impacts on the **safety** and **health** of **humans** who work in **organisations**.

Organisations are influenced by the **socio-political context**. Organisations may be considered a **system** which may contain **hazards** which must be under control to minimise **risk**. This can be achieved by understanding **models of causation** for safety and for health which will result in improvement in the safety and health of people at work. The OHS professional applies **professional practice** to influence the organisation to bring about this improvement.

This can be represented as:



Audience

The *OHS Body of Knowledge* provides a basis for accreditation of OHS professional education programs and certification of individual OHS professionals. It guides OHS educators in course development and for OHS professionals and professional bodies in developing continuing professional development activities. Also, OHS regulators, employers, and recruiters may find benchmarking of OHS professional practice useful.

Application

The *OHS Body of Knowledge* does not serve as a textbook or a curriculum; instead, it outlines the fundamental concepts, core theories, and supporting evidence essential for generalist OHS professionals. This foundational knowledge is acquired through a blend of formal education and practical experience, ensuring professionals are well-equipped to handle the complexities of occupational health and safety.

In this 3rd edition, we emphasise a broader global application of the *OHS Body of Knowledge* through expanded case studies within chapters that illustrate its relevance across diverse international contexts. We have enriched our authorship with contributions from a wider range of global experts, enhancing the universality and adaptability of the knowledge presented. This global perspective aims to enrich our understanding and ensures that our content remains at the forefront of global safety standards and practices. Promoting the *OHS Body of Knowledge* to a worldwide audience can foster a more cohesive and comprehensive approach to workplace health and safety, encouraging international collaboration and sharing best practices across borders.

Accessing and using the OHS Body of Knowledge for generalist OHS professionals

The *OHS Body of Knowledge* is published electronically. Each chapter can be downloaded separately. However, users are advised to read the introduction, which provides background information in individual chapters. Before using or acting on the information, they should also note the copyright requirements and the disclaimer.