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Operational Assurance Group

Safe Systems of Work & Industrial Risk Control Specialists

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METHOD STATEMENT WRITING GUIDE

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DEVELOPING CLEAR, COMPLIANT
AND USABLE METHOD STATEMENTS.**



**OPERATIONAL
ASSURANCE GROUP**

SPECIALISTS IN SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK
& INDUSTRIAL RISK CONTROL

Method Statement Writing Guide

A Practical Guide to Developing Clear, Compliant and Usable Method Statements

Operational Assurance Group

1. Executive Summary

This guide provides best practice guidance for developing clear, compliant, and practical method statements for industrial operations.

Developed by Operational Assurance Group, it is designed to ensure that method statements are not only aligned with UK regulatory requirements, but are also usable, effective, and relevant within live operational environments.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to:

- Provide a structured approach to writing method statements
 - Ensure consistency and quality across documentation
 - Support compliance with UK health and safety legislation
 - Enable practical application on site
 - Improve communication of safe working practices
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3. Scope

This guidance applies to:

- Construction activities
 - Chemical and petrochemical operations
 - High-risk industrial environments
 - Routine and non-routine tasks
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4. Our Mission

“To protect people and businesses by delivering practical, audit-ready safe systems of work and risk control solutions that enable confident operational delivery.”

5. Core Principles

Safety as Standard

All method statements must prioritise the protection of people.

Built for the Real World

Documentation must reflect how work is actually carried out.

Compliance Without Complication

Meet regulatory requirements without unnecessary complexity.

Operational Alignment

Align with site conditions, sequencing, and constraints.

Audit-Ready by Design

Ensure documentation is structured, traceable, and defensible.

Clear & Direct Communication

Information must be easily understood by the workforce.

6. What is a Method Statement?

A method statement is a document that describes how a specific task or activity will be carried out safely, outlining the sequence of work, associated risks, and control measures.

It forms a key part of a Safe System of Work and is typically supported by risk assessments.

7. Key Objectives of a Method Statement

- Define the task clearly
- Establish a safe sequence of work

- Identify hazards and controls
 - Communicate expectations to the workforce
 - Support supervision and compliance
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8. Step-by-Step Method Statement Development

Step 1: Define the Scope of Work

- Clearly describe the activity
- Identify boundaries and exclusions

Step 2: Gather Information

- Site conditions
- Drawings and specifications
- Risk assessments
- Client requirements

Step 3: Break Down the Task

- Define logical sequence of activities
- Identify key stages of work

Step 4: Identify Hazards and Controls

- Link to risk assessments
- Apply hierarchy of control
- Ensure controls are practical and specific

Step 5: Develop the Methodology

- Write clear, step-by-step instructions
- Include plant, equipment, and materials
- Define safe working practices

Step 6: Define Roles and Responsibilities

- Supervisor responsibilities
- Operative duties

- Specialist roles (e.g. banksman, permit issuer)

Step 7: Include Emergency Arrangements

- Fire procedures
- Spill response
- First aid arrangements

Step 8: Review and Validate

- Ensure alignment with site operations
- Confirm practicality with stakeholders

Step 9: Communicate and Implement

- Brief workforce (toolbox talks)
- Ensure understanding
- Provide supervision

9. Structure of an Effective Method Statement

A well-structured method statement should include:

- Document title and reference
- Scope of works
- Sequence of operations
- Plant and equipment
- Materials
- Hazards and control measures
- PPE requirements
- Roles and responsibilities
- Emergency procedures
- Permits and authorisations
- Sign-off and approval

10. Writing Best Practice

- Use clear, concise language
 - Avoid jargon and ambiguity
 - Write in logical sequence
 - Be specific (avoid generic statements)
 - Focus on how the work is actually done
 - Ensure consistency with risk assessments
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11. UK Regulatory Framework and HSE Alignment

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA)

- Duty to ensure safe systems of work

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR)

- Requires risk assessment and safe working arrangements

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM)

- Requires planning and management of construction work
- Method statements support Construction Phase Plans

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

- Safe use of equipment must be defined

Work at Height Regulations 2005

- Requires safe planning and execution of work at height
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HSE Guidance

- HSG65: Managing for Health and Safety
 - HSG250: Permit-to-Work Systems
 - INDG163: Risk Assessment Guidance
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12. Common Challenges

- Overly generic or copied content
 - Lack of alignment with site conditions
 - Poor sequencing of work activities
 - Insufficient detail on controls
 - Lack of workforce engagement
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13. Continuous Improvement

- Review after task completion
 - Capture lessons learned
 - Update based on incidents or feedback
 - Ensure documents remain current
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14. What Sets Operational Assurance Group Apart

Industry-Specific Expertise

Experience across high-risk industrial sectors

Practical Application

Documentation designed for real-world use

Audit-Ready Outputs

Structured and compliant documentation

Scalable Support

Flexible delivery aligned to client needs

15. Conclusion

Effective method statements are essential for safe and successful operations.

By applying a structured, practical approach, organisations can produce documentation that supports both compliance and operational delivery.

Operational Assurance Group provides the expertise required to achieve this balance.

16. Contact

Operational Assurance Group Specialist Consultancy in Safe Systems of Work & Industrial Risk Control

For further information or support, please get in touch.

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