

LANCS39

Conduct site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector



Overview

This standard covers conducting site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector. It includes both the gathering and analysis of data. The standard assumes that you are working within a survey design and plan developed by someone else.

Sites may be assessed for a wide range of reasons such as for the development of commercial activities, for amenity purposes, for the preservation of historical areas or to help plan landscape or marine conservation.

You must ensure that you have appropriate permissions, consents and licences prior to carrying out surveys. Permissions may relate to access to sites or access to information. Consents or licences may be required by relevant local, national or European legislation.

This standard is suitable for those who have responsibility for conducting site assessments in the land-based and environmental sector.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 clarify the purpose, scope and objectives of the site assessment and the information that it aims to produce
- P2 clarify your own role and responsibilities in the assessment process and your relationship to others
- P3 ensure you have any required permissions, consents or licenses
- P4 conduct the site assessment using methods that are consistent with the specifications provided and are appropriate to the identified sources of data
- P5 carry out data-collection methods correctly when conducting a site assessment
- P6 carry out all work in accordance with relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and organisation policies
- P7 confirm that the data gathered is valid and reliable
- P8 confirm that there is sufficient data prior to the start of the analysis
- P9 clarify the analysis methods to be used
- P10 where the analysis of data reveals problems with its sufficiency, reliability or validity, take the appropriate action
- P11 analyse and record findings in a format that is appropriate to the nature of the data and in accordance with the specifications
- P12 provide valid and justifiable interpretations about the site against the analysed data
- P13 present information about the site in a way that enables it to be used effectively

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 the purpose, scope and objectives of the site assessment and the information it aims to produce
- K2 the implications of relevant site restrictions and designations that are in place
- K3 the importance of having relevant permissions, consents or licenses
- K4 different data-collection methods (written, oral, aural, electronic, visual), which are available for conducting site assessments and the principles of their use
- K5 why different methods are used on different occasions and at different sites and why they should be implemented as specified
- K6 the techniques of counting and estimating
- K7 how to evaluate the validity and reliability of data when conducting a site assessment
- K8 suitable methods for recording the data being collected
- K9 the sources of error and bias in data collection
- K10 how to estimate the sufficiency of data when conducting a site assessment
- K11 the ways in which conducting site assessments may alter and affect the nature of the site itself and how to minimise this
- K12 your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and organisation policies
- K13 the different quantitative and qualitative data-analysis methods and their relative advantages and disadvantages
- K14 how to use data-analysis methods required by the specifications
- K15 the formats for presenting the analysed data and how to use them effectively
- K16 the actions that should be taken when there are problems with sufficiency, reliability or validity of data
- K17 how to justify your interpretation of data using rational argument and supporting evidence
- K18 who will make use of the information, and how best to present it to meet their needs and interests
- K19 methods of presenting information about the site

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Glossary

Scope of assessment: including legal, environmental, ecological, historic, social, cultural, aesthetic and economic factors.

Sources of data:

- primary
- secondary

Types of data:

- quantitative
- qualitative

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