



European Workplace Health Promotion Standard

Employers Manual

European Network
for Workplace Health Promotion
(ENWHP)

Perugia - Italy

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1. The Need for a European Level Standard

1.1 The current European situation

The past 10 years has seen a large growth in interest in workplace health promotion (WHP) across Europe. For a number of reasons public and private sector employers have been implementing a range of actions and programmes that address employee health and wellbeing. These have included activities that come from the health and safety tradition, actions designed to target employees health related behaviours actions designed to improve the health promoting properties of the work environment and actions to address specific health issues such as mental health.

The need to undertake workplace health activity has become increasingly clear, with reasons for this including the ageing of the workforce, an increase in sickness absence due to preventable causes and employees leaving the workforce due to preventable (lifestyle related) illness. These are all important issues that need to be addressed within workplaces. Of course, the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic has also brought into sharp relief the need for employers to take constructive action in the field of prevention and promotion of good health practices.

Increasingly, employers see the need to bring together their health related activities under one banner and to gain accreditation for these activities. Accreditation in this context should be seen as a developmental process whereby organisations moving through the accreditation system are progressively supported in the improvement of their workplace health practice. Each candidate organisation is supported by an assessor who will support the organisation in the improvement of practice and documentation of WHP. The level of support offered varies according to the level of Award sought.

1.2 About the ENWHP

The European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (ENWHP) has been to the forefront in supporting the development of WHP throughout Europe since 1998. It is now continuing that support through providing an accreditation service that will enable employers to obtain a constructive, comprehensive and unique accreditation that incorporates best practice in the area and which is based on Europe wide experience of WHP.

ENWHP are a network of agencies and organisations that reaches into all Member States who are concerned with promoting, developing and supporting a comprehensive form of WHP. We have specific expertise in policy, research, training and evaluation of WHP since 1996.

"We are a network of organisations and individuals committed to developing and promoting good workplace health practice, which in turn contributes to sustainable economic and social development in Europe."

This vision is based on a broad and comprehensive perspective on health which aims to address personal and environmental factors that can maintain and improve the health of the individual while at the same time improving the way in which work is organised and carried out – the concept of Healthy Work is key here. Workplace Health Promotion is seen as the way to achieve Healthy Work and it includes a number of convictions, values and judgements which ENWHP members share:

Healthy work is the result of interplay of various factors. The most important workplace health determinants include:

- The values and policies of decision-makers inside workplaces and outside organisations involved in social security and policy making.
- The form of the culture of participation inside and outside workplace.
- Leadership and management practices
- The production concept and principles for daily work organisation
- The provisions for job security
- The quality of the working environment
- Personal health practices & lifestyle habits

Healthy work is a social process and is the result of action of stakeholders inside and outside workplaces.

Healthy work is developed and influenced at various levels which are not independent of each other:

- Personal level
- Workplace level
- Local - regional level
- National level (social security provisions, national health policy, labour and social affairs policy)
- European policy level

Healthy work impacts on both the quality of working life and non-working life, and contributes to the level of health protection of communities and populations. It also impacts on microeconomic performance (productivity and innovation) and macroeconomic performance (efficiency of the health care, welfare and education sectors, competitiveness of businesses at company, national and European level).

Healthy work contributes to social cohesion.

Healthy work is organised through processes both inside and outside workplaces which are situated within the general management cycle, and specifically include infrastructure building and marketing.

Healthy organisations combine:

- Individual and organisation health;
- Physical, mental, environmental, social and economic health at all levels.

The ENWHP and models of good practice:

There are already a number of award and accreditation schemes in some countries which provide some level of recognition of good practice. These may be national or regional schemes but, unlike the ENWHP Standard, they are not based on a common concept of WHP. The ENWHP Standard is centred on a widely accepted definition of WHP ([The Luxembourg Declaration](#)) and extensive experience in assessing the quality of WHP actions ([Quality Criteria for WHP](#)).

The Luxembourg Declaration defines WHP as:

'... the combined efforts of employers, employees and society to improve the health and well-being of people at work. This can be achieved through a combination of:

- *improving the work organisation and the working environment*
- *promoting active participation*
- *encouraging personal development'*

The Quality Criteria for Good practice in WHP that were used in describing a wide range of Models of Good Practice were:

1. *WHP should be a management responsibility with:*
 - *support and integration of management and executive staff*
 - *integration in company policy corporate policies*
 - *provision of sufficient financial and material resources*
2. *Employee participation in planning and implementation of the WHP measures.*
3. *WHP should be based on a comprehensive understanding of health.*
4. *WHP should be based on accurate analysis and continually improved.*
5. *WHP should be professionally coordinated and information should be made available to all the staff on a regular basis.*
6. *The benefits of WHP are evaluated and quantified on the basis of specific indicators.*

These approaches to the assessment of WHP have now been developed into a full and comprehensive accreditation process that builds upon past experience and introduces an innovative element which respects local standards while providing a trans-European approach. Documents will be translated into a range of European languages over time.

1.3 The Philosophy of Accreditation

The Accreditation Process is concerned with celebrating success and improving practice. It is not an 'audit' or 'examination', rather it aims to recognise good practice and enable organisations to improve on their current level and quality of health and wellbeing related activity.

The Accreditation criteria developed by ENWHP are robust and reflect good WHP practice. While the assessment process does involve questions being posed by the ENWHP assessors, the assessment process is positive in nature and ethos and highlights and commends good practice while drawing attention to areas where practice could be enhanced further.

Underlying the Accreditation process is the requirement that an organisation adopts a comprehensive approach in the management of its workplace health practice. This means that it should undertake good practice in relation to health and safety, occupational health, health promotion and rehabilitation and return to work.

1.4 Support to organisations

Support is available to applicant organisations to help ensure that they successfully meet the criteria for accreditation. This takes the following forms:

- Online support - The level of support offered depends on the level of accreditation that is sought. Online support is available for all three levels of the award (a greater level of support is offered at the higher the award levels)
- Review of documentation prior to submission - This is available for the silver and gold level awards – advice is given to applicants on how to improve their application
- Site visits – This is available for applicants for the highest level of the award – the Gold award. Generally this will involve a visit(s) by an assessor from within the applicant country as well as a visit by an international assessor.

1.4 Who are the Accreditors?

The ENWHP Accreditation system has been developed and is overseen by Members of the Board of ENWHP, who between them have more than 150 years of experience in the field of WHP across 6 countries in Europe. You can find out more about the Board members on the ENWHP website here <https://www.enwhp.org/?i=portal.en.members-of-the-board>

2. How the Accreditation process works

2.1 Aims of Accreditation

The accreditation process is progressive – you can begin by applying for the Bronze Award and then progress through the Silver level to ultimately achieving the Gold Award. The process supports organisations as they seek to improve practice and provides widespread recognition that they engage in good WHP practice.

It also provides participating organisations with the opportunity to learn from the experience and practice of others – ENWHP will build up a network of participating organisations and maintain a database of models of good practices identified in the organisations that have achieved the different levels of the Award. It is also proposed to arrange meetings and conferences between interested organisations. Ultimately, the Standard aims to create a community of Good WHP Practice in Europe.

2.2 What kinds of organisation can take part?

The ENWHP Accreditation Process is designed for the following types of organisations:

- Large and supra large organisations > 500 employees
- Medium organisations 250 - 500 employees
- Public and Private sector organisations
- Members of the ENWHP

The Accreditation process is not currently available to smaller organisations (those with <250 staff), though plans are in place to address this in the near future.

2.3 Levels of Accreditation

The Accreditation Process has three levels of excellence: Bronze, Silver and Gold. These require different levels of commitment by applicant organisations and reflect the quality and sophistication of the WHP activities undertaken by the applicant.

Bronze – Commitment

Self-certification using online checklist

The Bronze Award is an entry level Award. In order to qualify for the Bronze award, organisations must demonstrate their commitment to implementing WHP and also declare their commitment to improving their practice. This is done by:

- Registering with the ENWHP website <https://www.enwhp.org/?i=portal.en.membership>
- Completing the self-assessment questionnaire
- Signing the Luxembourg Declaration, thereby demonstrating their commitment to good practice
- Making an initial application for the Silver Award, thereby demonstrating their interest in continuous improvement

Applicant organisations will receive a profile of their activities which outlines areas of good practice and areas for improvement.

Applicants for this Award will have their organisational profile published on the ENWHP website.

The Bronze Award will be made to organisations that show a sufficient level of development of WHP, based on the responses provided to the self-completion questionnaire.

Silver - Excellence

Self-certification with external validation of documentary evidence

The Silver Award is designed to recognise excellence in the practice of WHP. It is designed for organisations that demonstrate a comprehensive approach to implementing WHP, that undertake a wide range of WHP activities and that are prepared to undergo a critical (but supportive) review of these activities. Applicant organisations will receive support from ENWHP and its local partners to help them achieve the award.

Organisations will be expected to submit documentary evidence of their WHP activities and their commitment to the further development of those activities. The support available to applicant organisations will take the form of feedback being given either via e-mail or telephone, but may also include site visits in some circumstances.

The kinds of evidence that organisations are asked to submit in support of their application can include:

- WHP action plan
- Copies of relevant policy documents
- Copies of relevant organisation procedures e.g. OH screening
- Examples of return to work assessments
- Catering contract
- Marketing and awareness raising materials linked to health and wellbeing topics
- Testimony from workers / workers reps

This evidence would be reviewed by ENWHP (or the local accrediting body) and an assessment made of whether the criteria for the award have been met.

Applicant organisations will receive written feedback on their activities which will enable them to identify areas for improvement and how improvements can be implemented.

Gold – Exceptional Practice

External validation through site visits, higher and more extensive level of activity.

The Gold Award is designed for organisations that are engaged in widespread and targeted WHP for their workforce and can produce a wide range of evidence which confirms and illustrates their WHP activities. Site visits by members of the ENWHP accreditation team will be required to verify the level, range and quality of the applicant organisation's WHP activities and the extent of their implementation.

The site visit will involve:

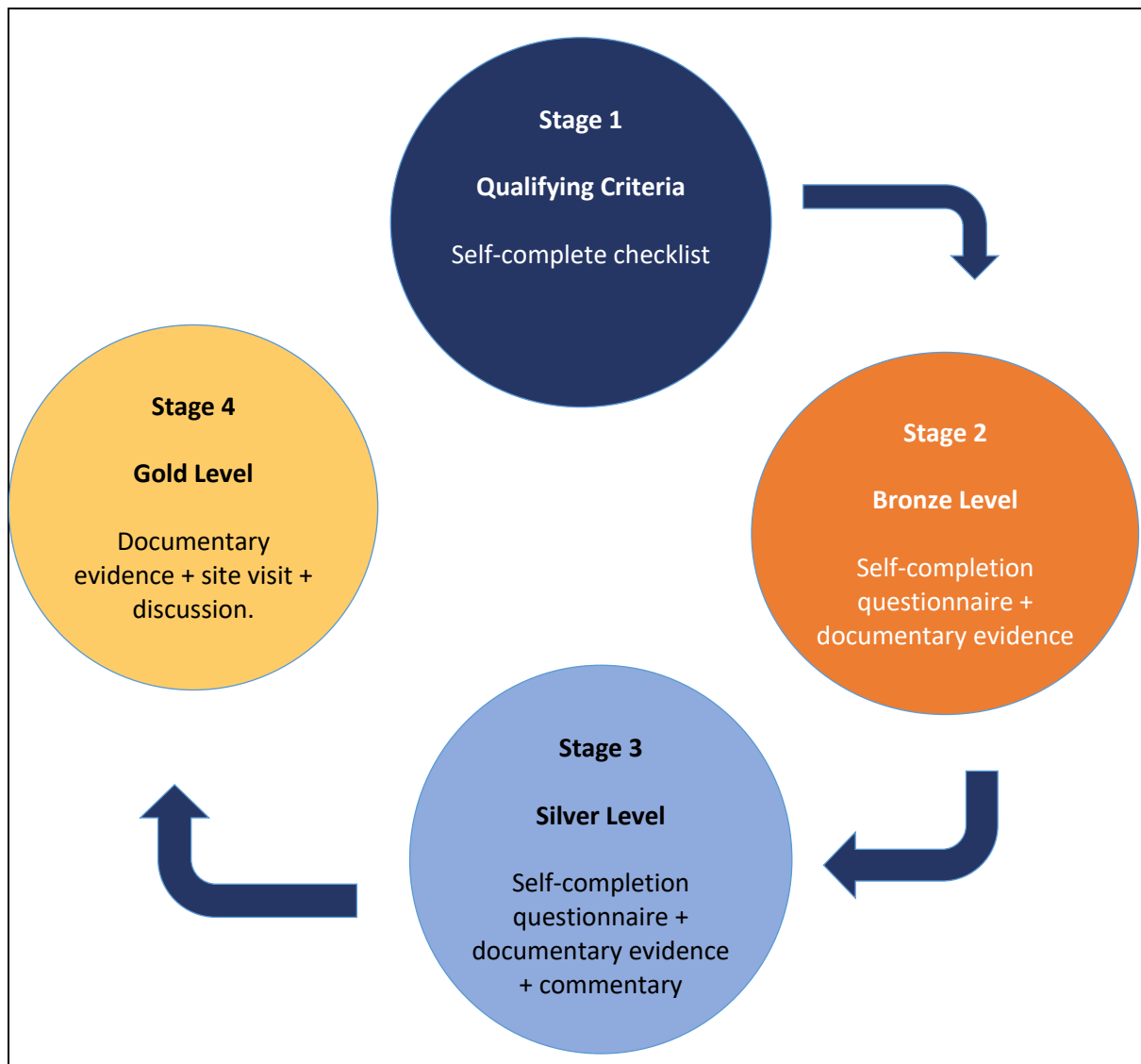
1. Hosting a one or two day visit from ENWHP assessors.
2. Creating a portfolio of documentary evidence in either hard copy or electronic form for on-site review by the ENWHP assessors.
3. Providing access to representatives of the senior management team.
4. Providing access to representatives of the works council, trades unions or equivalent
5. Providing access to leaders of the WHP programme.
6. Providing access to OH, H & S and HR staff.
7. Organising a site visit (walk and talk) that enables the assessors to view the site, see evidence of WHP activities and talk to employees.
8. Providing access to staff who have benefitted from phased return to work practices.
9. Providing access to staff who may lead specific activities e.g. 5 a side football, yoga, mindfulness etc.

Applicant organisations will be supported by the ENWHP team in submitting their application for the award. This will be done remotely and as part of the site visit.

2.4 An organisations' journey through the ENWHP Accreditation Process

The diagram below illustrates the stages of the Accreditation process. Generally, applicant organisations will go through each of these stages, but in exceptional circumstances, where the organisation can make a convincing case, it may be possible to skip a stage.

Figure 1. The 4 stages of the Accreditation process



2.5 Maintaining your Accreditation

Reaccreditation is required on a three yearly basis in order to ensure that the standards required are continuing to be met. It is therefore recommended that a record of the enterprise's activities in relation to the relevant award criteria are maintained to help streamline the process.

2.6 A Note on Data Protection

All data collected as part of the accreditation process will be treated with full confidentiality in line with the provisions of the General Data Protection regulation (GDPR).

3. Accreditation Criteria for good practice in WHP

There are 2 main types of criteria that form the basis of the Accreditation system. These are:

1. Corporate Supports for WHP.
2. Specific Health Topics.

Corporate Support for WHP is divided into 8 dimensions and the aim of this section is to assess the extent to which WHP is appropriately planned, managed and integrated into organisation policy and practice. Specific Health Topics is divided into 6 dimensions, the aim of which are to assess the ways in which the organisation is tackling health issues and their associated risk factors.

The dimensions are set out below:

Corporate supports

- Senior management commitment
- Statutory responsibilities
- The approach to health and safety
- Occupational Health service provision
- Meeting the needs of specific groups
- Rehabilitation and return to work
- Communication and staff engagement
- Evaluation

Health Topics

- Tobacco
- Alcohol and substance misuse
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Physical activity
- Nutrition
- Infectious diseases

Within each of these broad categories of criteria, there are a number of sub-criteria which detail the requirements needed to pass the accreditation process. These are detailed in the Annex to this document.

4. Links to existing Award Schemes

National Award schemes exist in many countries. ENWHP accreditation looks to build upon existing national Award schemes – it does not look to replace them.

Organisations that have already attained national level awards, will have these taken into account when applying for an ENWHP award at the Silver or Gold Level. (The Bronze level award is self-assessed).

As time passes, ENWHP will look to develop formal relationships with National Award schemes to ensure that the effort involved in applying for multiple awards is kept to a minimum.

5. How can you apply?

Applications can be made by completing the application form at Annex 2 and emailing it to info@enwhp.net. It is also recommended that you consider applying for membership of ENWHP which can be done at <https://www.enwhp.org/?i=portal.en.join-us-now>

6. Costs of accreditation

Accreditation costs are based on the level of the award and comprise a flat rate plus a cost per employee that is (capped at 2,500 employees) as follows:

Level of Award	Base Cost	Cost per Employee
Bronze	€250	0
Silver	€1000	€1.00
Gold	€2000	€2.00

Reaccreditation is required on a three yearly basis to retain the award

The cost reflect the relative complexity of the assessment process for each level, and at Gold level includes the cost of a site visit, additional site visits may be required for large companies with multiple sites.

7. Contact Details

You can find out more about the Accreditation process from:

Steve Bell steve@enwhp.net
John Griffiths john@enwhp.net
Richard Wynne richard.wynne@enwhp.net

Annex 1: Detailed assessment criteria

Corporate criteria

1. Senior Management Commitment
 - Board Level
 - SMT Papers
 - Corporate Strategy
 - Business Plan
 - Individual Performance targets
 - Recruitment
 - Worker involvement
2. Minimum legal requirements
 - Statutory responsibilities
 - Minimum Pay
 - Disability, equality and human rights
3. Health and safety
 - Organisational approach
 - Training
 - Practice
 - Personal testimony
 - Information systems
 - Organisation
4. Workplace health provision and organisation
 - Access to OH Services
 - Description of service provision that includes WHP
5. Meeting the needs of specific groups within the workforce
 - Long term conditions
 - Gender related health issues
 - Providing access to health screening
 - Family friendly working practices
6. Rehabilitation and return to work
 - Return to work (RTW) policy in place
 - Training offered to managers and staff on RTW
 - Processes operational
 - Information system and monitoring
7. Communication and staff engagement
 - Information on health topics and workplace health activities
 - Information collection
 - Awareness raising events
8. Evaluation
 - Measurement of WHP inputs, outputs and impact (outcomes)

Health Criteria

1. Tobacco
 - Tobacco policy
 - No-smoking signage
 - Participation in national and or international awareness raising campaigns
 - Promotion of smoking cessation
 - Provision of cessation advice and support
2. Alcohol and substance misuse
 - Alcohol, drug and or substance misuse policy is in place
 - Alcohol and substance use signage
 - Participation in national and or international awareness raising campaigns
 - Promotion of safe limits of alcohol consumption and being drug free
 - Provision of cessation advice and support
3. Mental and emotional wellbeing
 - Corporate policy to protect and promote mental and emotional wellbeing at work is in place
 - Policy implementation
 - Risk assessment for stress and bullying
 - Control measures implemented when work related stressors identified
 - Managers and staff trained on mental and emotional wellbeing
 - Information and monitoring systems
 - Mental wellbeing initiatives
 - Access to services
 - Work life balance
4. Physical activity
 - Corporate physical activity policy
 - Employees can take exercise during the working day
 - Promotion of physical activity
 - Organisation has links to local sports clubs and exercise facilities
 - Active travel is promoted and supported
5. Nutrition
 - Corporate nutrition policy is in place
 - Awareness raising activities to promote healthier eating
 - Weight loss programmes are promoted
 - For organisations where food is not sold
 - For organisations where food is served or sold
6. Infectious diseases
 - Corporate infectious disease policy is in place
 - Staff health protection and promotion
 - Client protection and promotion
 - Work organisation changes
 - Awareness raising activities on infectious diseases

Annex 2: Application form

Organisation name:	
Address:	
Website:	
Applicant name:	
Job title:	
Address:	
e-mail address:	
Level of Award you are applying for:	