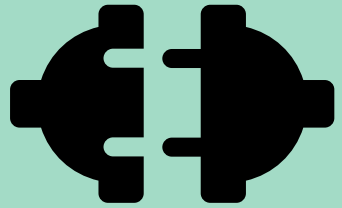


TIPS

Workplace assessment (APV) at AAU

A good mapping process



The good mapping

Introduction

Every workplace assessment process starts with a mapping of the working environment. At AAU, the mapping work also marks the start of the workplace assessment year.

For many employees at AAU, the annual mapping process represents their main opportunity to raise issues and express hopes and wishes in relation to their working environment. The mapping work must therefore be systematically planned and implemented to enable you to identify all of the essential working environment conditions that have an impact on your employees' health and safety and well-being.

The mapping work can be a big task, so it is also important to consider how it should be carried out and to allocate the resources needed to achieve your objective without anyone feeling overlooked.

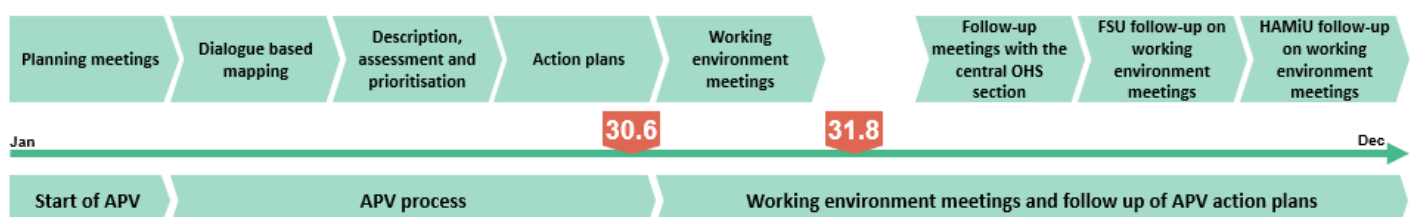
On these pages, you can read about the requirements and framework for the mapping work – both from the law and within AAU. The tips should be read in conjunction with a good action plan', which gives advice on further work using the results of the mapping process.

Who should carry out the mapping work?

The responsibility for planning and organising the mapping work lies with the manager responsible for the working environment/health and safety –typically the head of department or head of unit – in collaboration with your working environment committee or your works council and working environment committee in units that have these.

At the start of the workplace assessment year, the committee should decide how you should organise the mapping work and when and how it should be implemented. As planning and preparing workplace assessments is a core task of the working environment groups, it is natural for you to leave the mapping work to them. You can also set up a special working group, in which other employees or managers with a special interest or relevant qualifications can participate.

Either way, it is advisable to appoint a contact person or coordinator for the work, so it is clear who is responsible the progress and for pulling it all together. You should also consider who should actually talk to the employees. In general, it is important for the employees to be comfortable with the dialogue and for the person facilitating the dialogue to have sufficient knowledge to do this.



How mapping is done at AAU

You can use any method for your mapping work. However, it is important that the annual mapping work should always involve all of your employees, and that this should be achieved through dialogue.

Dialogue is a fundamental principle behind the workplace assessment work at AAU. This includes dialogue among employees and between management and employees. One of the pillars of the mapping process at AAU is to encourage your employees to take a more active part in the working environment work, and to use dialogue to influence their attitudes and behaviour so that they think more about health and safety and well-being. A dialogue-based approach also enables actions to be raised directly through the mapping process. The dialogue allows the employees to come up with potential solutions or talk about good experiences that can be brought into play.

The dialogue should be supported by checklists to ensure that it touches on all relevant issues related to the working environment. You are welcome to use your own checklists or forms, but the Working Environment Section has prepared a number of checklists that together cover the most important health and safety issues at a university – thus ensuring that the authorities see the mapping work as being relevant to health and safety.

You can find the checklists on the Working Environment Section's website under 'APV at AAU'. The checklists are meant to be used as dialogue forms for you to note the comments that employees make during the mapping process, e.g. during an inspection or at a joint meeting.

The Working Environment Section's website also describes other methods that you can use for mapping.

How far should you go?

At AAU, the central working environment committee (HAMiU) has chosen a workplace assessment concept where the health and safety work continues more or less all year round in order to meet statutory requirements to implement and regularly review the workplace assessment whenever there are changes in the work or in working methods and processes with a bearing on the working environment.

Your mapping work should touch on the relevant topics in the organisational, social and physical working environments. These topics are:

- Training, instruction and supervision
- Ergonomics
- Organisational and social
- working environment Indoor climate and noise
- Chemistry and biology Accident
- prevention Sick leave

You may assign different importance or weight to these topics in the mapping work, depending on what your employees perceive as being most important to them. So one year you may choose to focus on a particular subject in your mapping work – and you may therefore also use specific mapping methods for the selected topic. For example, you may choose to map the organisational and social working environment through employee interviews conducted by an external consultant rather than using checklists for the dialogue. It is important, however, to touch on all relevant issues in your mapping work – even when focusing on specific topics.

Conflicts and offensive behaviour

If you run into conflicts or offensive behaviour during the course of the mapping process, you must bear in mind that specific individual issues are never a matter for a committee. Neither the works council nor the working environment committee should deal with personal matters or isolated instances of offensive behaviour.

Bullying, harassment, threats, violence, etc. are all management issues. The manager has a duty to deal with such cases.

Make it clear during the mapping process which 'channels' the victim can use. The victim should primarily be referred to the manager. If this is not appropriate, they can also talk to a union official, a health and safety representative or other specially designated persons. With the victim's consent, the matter can also be brought to the manager's attention. It is important for employees to be familiar with which channels are available and should be used, so they do not find that offensive behaviour is overlooked in the mapping of the working environment.

Read more about handling offensive behaviour in the AAU Handbook.

Pregnancy and workplace assessment

Pregnancy is not one of the fixed items to be addressed in the mapping process work, but according to the law, an employer who becomes aware that an employee is pregnant must assess whether that employee could be exposed to factors at work that could pose a risk during pregnancy or breastfeeding.

The Working Environment Section has prepared 'Pregnancy and working environment' for employees doing office/teaching work, laboratory work, etc. In the hints and tips, you can read about the physical, chemical and biological working environment, the organisational and social working environment and returning to work after pregnancy. This can be found at arbejdsmiljoe.aau.dk/gravid.

From mapping to action

When the mapping process is complete, you can start the process of addressing the priority areas that you have identified.

You can read more about this work in 'A good action plan'.