

Things to consider when planning a new production area

Simple steps to get it right first time

Is the area set up to be as efficient as possible?

Does the location support the flow of production? Is the area in an appropriate location? Is it situated in sequence of operation or near similar tasked areas?

How are current areas performing?

Have workers in similar areas experienced problems? They are able to offer valuable feedback. Listen to past experience and improve any difficulties identified.

Will necessary equipment be available?

The tasks to be carried out in the area should have access to tools and equipment needed, reducing unnecessary time wastage. Personnel to carry out the tasks should be adequately trained and equipment subjected to regular testing and maintenance. Remember to order items with a long lead time counting back from the project completion date.

Are human factors considered?

A poorly designed working environment can impact on performance. Will the area have adequate lighting and heating? Is adequate space allowed to carry out tasks and store work equipment? Personnel in a noisy environment must be provided with PPE to avoid hearing damage. Vibration risks must be controlled and ventilation equipment must be provided in harmful conditions?

Will the area be regulation compliant?

Internal quality compliance systems should be continued through the new area. Carry out a risk assessment of the completed area to identify any causes for concern. Implement alterations to correct this.

Is the area ergonomically sound, with suitable workstations and floor surfaces?

The area should be designed with benches or desks to allow for neutral posture. Correct alignment places less stress on the body. There should be space for the worker to move freely. When the task involves repetitive motion, does the layout of the space reduce excessive or unnecessary motion? The floor surfaces should be comfortable and safe for use. Increasing physical health benefits productivity.

Are hazards and fire exits clearly marked?

Workplaces are required to have clearly identified means of escape in the event of a fire. The routes must be kept clear in case of emergency. Once a hazard is identified on site, if it cannot be removed, controls must be put in place to reduce the associated risk. Once these are clearly defined, ensure that workers are aware of the fire procedure and are adequately trained in safe working practices.

Allow for alterations after implementation

If key factors are considered in the plans, the area should be as effective as possible. Allow for a test period, for the area to be used and make any minor alterations required.

