# OHS Assurance Program — New for 2022

The new [OHS Assurance Program](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/audits-reviews-assurance-programs-schools/advice) provides proactive support to schools in determining whether their safety management practices are consistent with the department’s OHS Management System (OHSMS), and in line with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic).

## The new OHS Assurance Program (previously known as the OHS Audit Program) has undertaken a series of improvements, which will continue to provide a structured assessment of each school’s safety management practices — but with a refreshed, supportive approach.

## Launched as an opt-in pilot in Terms 1 and 2, the program has been in full implementation from Term 3, 2022 onward.

## OHS Assurance Program improvements

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| **School participation and selection** |
| School participation is scheduled with reference to when other audits are occurring to avoid overloading the school.  Selection is influenced by the length of time since the last OHS audit, but may be influenced by other safety data, such as the management of incidents, injuries, and level of risk in the school. |
| **Modular and needs-based approach** |
| The main requirements of the OHSMS will continue to be assessed in most instances; however, some schools may only require specific sections of the OHSMS to be assessed. This needs-based focus will “zoom in” on safety management topics and actions that will bring about safety and wellbeing improvements with the most benefit, such as high-risk work and safety. |
| **Increased positive and proactive support** |
| Ongoing support to manage all aspects of safety and wellbeing, including leading up to and after participation in the OHS Assurance Program, will be increased for all schools.  On the day of the assessment, the assessors will provide positive and proactive advice to build each school’s safety management performance. After the assessment ongoing increased support will be available to assist schools to implement any management actions identified. |

**Available OHS support**

The department’s dedicated teams of locally based [Regional OHS Support Officers and OHS Advisory Service Consultants](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/occupational-health-safety-wellbeing-management/guidance/useful-contacts) are available to provide schools with targeted OHS support and advice leading up to and after the Assessment Visit. These visits can be planned flexibly in response to your greatest areas of need and priorities via a combination of telephone, email, remote or onsite school visits — to best suit school staff availability.

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See also: [Audits, Reviews and Assurance Programs in Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/audits-reviews-assurance-programs-schools/advice)