

## The Impact of an Occupational Safety and Health Module on University Students' Safety Attitudes

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**Abstract:** *This paper defines safety attitude as a person's mental state pertaining to safety, which is cumulatively shaped from inputs such as experiences, observations and learning about safety, and which influences how that individual perceives safety, behaves, and makes decisions in safety-related situations in work and other spheres of life. Safety attitude research has typically been done in the context of workplace safety culture and little focus has been placed on evaluating safety attitudes before an individual enters the working world. This paper reports on how a taught safety module impacted the university student safety attitudes and makes recommendations based on the findings. The module addressed hazard identification and risk assessments, using face-to-face and online teaching and assessment modes along with real-world risk assessments. Following collection of pre- and post-intervention data, a t-test identified 15 statistically significant improvements to students' safety attitudes within five areas, namely attitudes to learning about safety, personal safety outlook and behaviours, focus on safety of others, outlook on safety and safety leadership, and state of safety knowledge. Recommendations are made to research how workplaces shape safety attitudes, as well as what levels of safety awareness and safety attitudes exist before students enter the workplace or the university system.*

**Keywords:** *Safety attitude, Safety culture, Safety education, Occupational safety and health, University teaching*