

Steps To Environmental Management for business STEM

Steps To Environmental Management (STEM) helps businesses to improve their environmental performance through a series of assessments and certificates (blue, silver and gold). STEM is developed and run by Kent County Council and the Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) programme that ECC are a delivery partner. It is currently being refreshed and updated to include new modules and allow for a more effective online delivery. Read on to see the real value of signing up.

The STEM scheme can:

- enhance your green credentials
- help you achieve nationally recognised accreditations [such as ISO 14001](#)
- help you to comply with the law
- save your business money by removing inefficiencies.

STEM has 3 levels - blue, silver and gold.

Each level involves a workshop session and follow up time to complete and we estimate that businesses can reach gold level in around 12 months. Some businesses may be able to achieve this faster if they have already started on the journey to benchmarking and improving their environmental performance.

• STEM Blue

A business that has top management support for its environment programme and has carried out a baseline assessment of their current situation.

➤ STEM Silver

A business that has measured its carbon footprint and taken action to reduce it. The business has identified the resources, legal requirements, training, and communications needed for its environmental programme.

➤ STEM Gold

A business that is measuring and monitoring its environmental impacts and has taken action to reduce them. The business has reported its progress to [Low Carbon Kent](#) and other stakeholders.



SME Case Study: Premaberg Manufacturing Ltd.

The opportunity

What attracted you to STEM?

We already have quality and H&S accreditations and we were keen to add an environmental standard. What we saw in STEM was guidance towards getting ready for ISO14001 accreditations.

We are continually asked by clients if we have ISO14001, whilst this hasn't stopped them awarding us contracts, we anticipate these affecting contracts in the future.

We don't have the money to pay for consultants or the staff resource for this so we saw STEM as something we could commit limited resource to move us in the right direction.

How did you find the process and workshops?

The workshops occurred frequently and did not require a huge amount of time to complete. The content was good and well supported by those delivering the course. We were able within the workshops to answer and meet the requirements of the level and begin to address the issues there and then through discussions with the course delivery team and other businesses. We came out with decisions and ideas for actions to move forward without further work in the office which was a benefit.

The results

How has this benefitted your business?

STEM inspired us to work towards fulfilling our legal requirements and understanding these further as we didn't fully prior to these workshops. It enabled us to state we had STEM accreditation on tenders and may have contributed us to winning contracts where environmental considerations were required. We are seeing this more and more on tenders.

We have since reduced our water consumption, reduced our cleaning chemical consumption, reduced labour requirements for washing and the associated costs for these. It provided a focus on effluent disposal, and the reason why we wash our units. This led us to change our internal processes which did not create as much dust and as a result did not require as much water/cleaning chemical as well as staff time.

Other accreditations (Fit For Nuclear) contributed to this consideration and to Health and Safety issues such as hand/arm vibration trigger times as these need to be considered for reduction when changing our processes and cleaning routines.

Not directly as a result of the workshops but has affected the decision to approve, the Sales Representative has an Electric Vehicle for business use, and this is a future consideration for business fleet.

The lessons learned

Would you advise others to do it?

Yes, I would, we are keen to attend the upcoming workshop. On a personal note, at the STEM workshop there was low emissions vehicles show through LoCASE and I bought an electric bike after testing one out!

Case study based on interview held on March 2021.

Where can I find out more information about STEM?

- [Steps To Environmental Management Scheme \(STEM\) - Kent County Council](#)
- [LoCASE - Low Carbon Across the South East](#)