



Health & Safety Guidelines for Learners

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Introduction

This booklet is designed to be used to raise the awareness of Health and Safety for learners (learners include Apprentices and Adult Trainees) attending training courses and to give them general information to ensure they have a healthy and safe learning experience. Specific course and training location Health and Safety information and requirements will be provided over the duration of the course.

The contents of this booklet are based on the **Health and Safety Authority's** publication "**Health and safety matters for students embarking on work experience - A short guide for teachers**" and are reproduced with their permission.

This guide will assist trainers in preparing their learners for the health and safety aspect of their learning and work experience programme. It offers practical information and advice on workplace health and safety that can be taught and discussed with learners in the classroom before they embark on learning and work experience. This process will enable learners to commence work/training with a greater appreciation and awareness of health and safety issues.

Legislation

Health and safety legislation is in place to protect employees (this includes learners on training and work experience) or those who may be affected by work activities.

The safety, health and welfare of employees are covered principally by the **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007** and any subsequent amendments. These laws place general duties of care on employers, the self-employed and employees.

This guide is not intended as a legal interpretation of the law.

Safety Statement

One of the key health and safety requirements for any workplace is a Safety Statement. Trainers should help learners identify what a safety statement is and its purpose.

The Safety Statement is prepared by the employer and is a written programme for managing safety and health in the workplace. It should begin with a Safety Policy Statement on how the employer intends complying with the law.

The Safety Statement should be based on an identification of the hazards and an assessment of the risks in that particular workplace.

The controls/precautions necessary to combat these hazards and reduce these risks (including the controls/precautions necessary to protect young or inexperienced employees) should also be included.

Employers must consult with their employees and make the Safety Statement accessible to them. They must also review the statement particularly when there is a major change in the place of work, or in the work to be carried out, to ensure that there is no significant risk to the safety and health of employees or others who may be affected by the work activity.

Hazards and Risks

Learners will encounter unfamiliar risks from the jobs they will be doing and from the working environment. They may also lack experience or be unaware of how to raise concerns. It is therefore important that everyone involved in the employment/training of young or inexperienced people understands the hazards and risks involved.

- ➔ A **Hazard** is anything at work which has the potential to cause harm
- ➔ A **Risk** is the likelihood that harm could occur from a particular hazard and its consequences

Risk Assessment is the process of identifying and evaluating the risks in the workplace and putting in place the most appropriate controls/precautions in order to prevent accidents and work-related illness.

Listed below are examples of some of the most common hazards found in workplaces. Learners will find some or all of these hazards addressed in the Safety Statement which should also explain the measures/precautions taken to prevent accidents and ill health arising from these hazards.

Slips

- Spillages on floors and surfaces
- Icy conditions
- Slipping on a highly polished floor surface



Trips



- Tripping over something left on the floor such as a box or a stray cable
- Tripping over loose matting or carpet tiles
- Tripping over unseen raised surfaces

Falls

- Falling down steps or stairs
- Falling off stepladders or chairs
- Falls from heights



Manual Handling and Ergonomics

- ➔ Lifting and carrying any load incorrectly
- ➔ Lifting a very heavy load
- ➔ Poor workstation and equipment design – visual display units/computer workstations
- ➔ Poor posture
- ➔ Repetitive work injuries



Working with Hand Tools

- ➔ Cuts and lacerations can occur when you work with knives, chisels, etc.
- ➔ Impact injuries, bruises, fractures, etc.



Equipment and Machinery

- ➔ Cuts and lacerations
- ➔ Amputation
- ➔ Entanglement hazards
- ➔ Crush hazards



Working With Hot Substances or Objects



- Burns from water or steam; hot fats, oils or other food products - typically these injuries involve hot equipment such as pots, pans, or trays
- Working with welding equipment can also be a risk in this area

Hazardous Substances

- Chemicals
- Gases and petrochemicals
- Dusts and fumes



Electricity

- Electrical shocks – fatalities, burns
- Fire and explosion



Noise



- ➔ Hearing injuries - tinnitus
- ➔ Psychological effects including stress if exposed to high noise levels over long periods of time
- ➔ High noise levels can also interfere with communications in the workplace, leading to an increased risk of accidents

Temperature and Environment

- ➔ Hot or cold working conditions
- ➔ Inadequate ventilation or quality of air



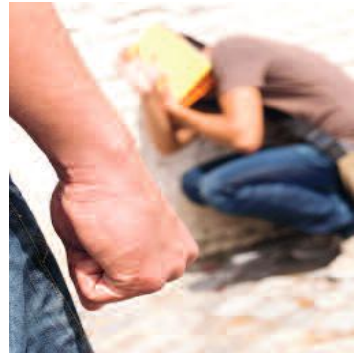
Fire and Emergency

- ➔ Fire is a major hazard in any workplace
- ➔ Pandemic – illness, bird flu etc.
- ➔ Major accident – First Aid



Human Behaviour

- ➔ Horseplay
- ➔ Bullying and Harassment
- ➔ Violence and Aggression



Work Experience

The following FAQs should help trainers to clarify Health and Safety matters with learners. Trainers and learners will also find these useful for:

- ➔ Selecting suitable work experience companies
- ➔ Preparing learners to become safety aware prior to starting work experience

What are the health and safety responsibilities of (a) the employer and (b) the employee?

Employers are responsible for:

- ➔ Creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace
- ➔ Safeguarding the health and safety of their employees
- ➔ Providing information, training and instruction to their employees
- ➔ Ensuring a written Safety Statement is prepared and made available to all employees

Employees/learners have a duty to protect themselves and others. They must co-operate with their employer and must ensure that they:

- ➔ Are not under the influence of an intoxicant or in such a state that they might be a danger to themselves or others (an employer may prevent an employee/learner from working if it is apparent that he or she would be such a danger)
- ➔ Make correct use of any article or substance provided for their use or protection, including protective clothing and equipment
- ➔ Report to their employer or supervisor any matter that could increase the likelihood of an accident or work related-illness occurring

How can learners in Training or on work experience access the company's safety statement?

The safety statement must be made available to learners. Some employers give each employee a copy of the statement. Others make it available at a central location e.g. on the company notice board or intranet site. Sometimes the employer may refer to the safety statement as the safety policy.

Learners must read the safety statement carefully, particularly the risk assessment sections relating to their job, and ensure that they fully understand this information. **If in doubt, ASK.**

Should all new employees (including learners on training or work experience) receive induction training?

Yes, employers must provide instruction, training and supervision. Induction training is an essential part of the learning process when starting in a new job or training programme and the nominated supervisor will tell the learner how to work safely and will arrange training for each job.

If a learner has an accident at work who should report it?

If a learner is injured in the course of his or her employment or training and prevented from performing the normal duties of their work for more than three calendar days, not including the date of the accident, the employer must report the incident to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA).

What is Safe Pass?

Safe Pass is a one-day safety awareness programme aimed at all who work on construction sites. The Safe Pass programme raises employees' awareness of the hazards on construction sites so that they will not be a danger to themselves or their co-employees. You must successfully complete a Safe Pass programme if you plan to work on a construction site.

Training courses in training centres are not classed as construction sites

Do learners and seasonal employees need Safe Pass before working on a construction site? If so, who should pay?

Yes, the Safe Pass programme is aimed at everyone who works on a construction site, including new entrants. Learners who want to apply for a job on a construction site for seasonal work must have the Safe Pass card. In this instance they would have to pay for it themselves before they are employed.

What is PPE? Who should supply this?

PPE means 'personal protective equipment' and includes items such as ear protection, eye protection, safety shoes, and high-visibility vests.

Employers must supply PPE where risks cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled. If PPE is supplied, this information will be contained in the risk assessment section of the safety statement. During your training course, appropriate PPE will be provided to you. It is your responsibility to look after the PPE supplied to you and use it appropriately.

PPE must be used correctly. Employees/learners must comply with the training and instruction given on its correct usage. PPE must be replaced and maintained by the employer when required.

What are the rules in relation to sitting and standing at work?

As a general rule, if the job or a substantial proportion of the job can be done properly whilst sitting, the employer shall provide suitable facilities for sitting. A decision on whether you sit or stand will depend on the work activity and a site-specific risk assessment.

What health and safety provisions should be in place for employees with disabilities?

Safe access to and egress from and circulation within the workplace should be provided as necessary. Access to all welfare areas, e.g. sanitary facilities, washing facilities, facilities for taking meals, should also be provided. Employers should ensure that adequate assistance is available for the safe evacuation of those with a disability in the event of an emergency.

What should learners look for when selecting companies for work experience?

Learners selecting a company for work experience will find it beneficial to know what its main business activity is and where the learner is likely to be employed.

Learners may also wish to find out if there is a health and safety contact person - perhaps a safety coordinator has been appointed or the employees may have elected a safety representative.

The company may have a Human Resources (HR) department with responsibility for health and safety matters and may also employ an occupational health nurse.

Some companies may have one or more safety personnel, others have none; however this is not an indication of how well or how poorly health and safety issues are managed. Companies have different requirements and vary in size and operations. In some cases, particularly in small or low-risk businesses, the employer may manage all health and safety operations.

A safety coordinator is appointed by the employer to manage health and safety in the workplace. The employer maintains overall responsibility for health and safety in the workplace.

A safety representative is selected and appointed by the employees to represent them in consultation with the employer on matters of safety, health and welfare at the place of work. Learners may also wish to check if the company has previously taken on learners and if so, ask about the outcome.

The checklist on **page 12** in **Appendix 1** can be used to assist learners attending work experience to collect essential health and safety information from their host company.

Appendix 1

HEALTH AND SAFETY CHECKLIST

Location:

The name of the Health and Safety Coordinator is:

Contact Number:

I have been made aware of the:

Safety Policy Statement	Yes ☐	No ☐
Safety Statement	Yes ☐	No ☐
Risk Assessments	Yes ☐	No ☐
Safe Work Methods	Yes ☐	No ☐
Fire & Emergency Procedures	Yes ☐	No ☐
First Aid Procedures	Yes ☐	No ☐
Accident Reporting Procedures	Yes ☐	No ☐

In the event of an accident I must report it to:

Contact Number:

I have been given induction on how to do my work safely:

Yes ☐ No ☐ NA ☐

I have been given instruction on safe use of equipment:

Yes ☐ No ☐ NA ☐

I have been issued with appropriate Protective Equipment:

Yes ☐ No ☐ NA ☐

Signed & Dated: _____

