



S T E P S

to information
instruction
training
and training

This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance as illustrating good practice.

Introduction

Health and safety law requires you to provide information, instruction and training. This leaflet sets out, in five easy steps, what you need to do.

Information

Information means providing factual material to people about risks and health and safety measures.

STEP 1 Decide **WHO** needs information:

- your own employees;
- the employers of any staff visiting or sharing your premises;
- any self-employed people working for you;
- temporary staff;
- any employment business supplying you with temporary staff or contract labour;
- anyone helping you carry out your health and safety duties;
- people visiting the premises.

STEP 2 Decide **WHAT** information is needed to cover:

- health and safety risks;
- precautions for preventing these risks or protecting against them;
- emergency and evacuation procedures;
- responsibilities of employees and others to comply with site rules and safe practices;
- how to use work equipment and personal protective equipment.

STEP 3 Decide **WHEN** information is needed. Basically, the answer is - in enough time for it to be acted on. So

think about what your employees need:

- when someone first starts work;
- when the job they do changes and they face new or increased risks

and think about when other people, eg visiting maintenance staff, need information.

STEP 4 Decide **HOW** you are going to provide the information.

Think about the amount of information, who needs it and when. You can provide it:

- by telling people what they need to know;
- on paper - whether your own information or that provided by suppliers, eg on labels;
- by letting people use information held on computer.

However you do it, the information you provide must be easy to understand. Make sure that the people receiving your information know why they are getting it and what they're expected to do with it. Also, if need be, you could get someone - perhaps an employee or a member of the local community - to translate information for people who may not otherwise understand it.

STEP 5 **CHECK** that the information has been effective:

- Has everyone understood it? If not, you may need to provide instruction or training.
- Is it being used or acted on as intended?

Instruction and Training

Instruction means telling people what they should and should not do. Training means helping them learn how to do it.

STEP 1 Decide **WHO** needs to be trained:

- Do you need some training in health and safety?
- Have you thought about the needs of managers and supervisors? See checklist 1 on page 8.
- Have you considered the needs of all your workers - including young people, new recruits and part-time employees? Do they need training in order to work safely?

STEP 2 Decide **WHAT** training is needed and what the objectives are - giving people the wrong training or too much is a waste of time and money.

- Does the law require you to carry out specific training? See checklist 2 for what the law requires.
- Have you taken account of your firm's experience of accidents and near misses and employees' illness?
- Do you need to provide refresher training or update existing skills?
- What are the standards of competence (that is the knowledge and experience needed to work safely) required for each job?
- Are qualifications such as NVQs/SVQs

(National/Scottish Vocational Qualifications) relevant? Your local Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) or, in Scotland, local enterprise company (lec) can provide information and practical advice.

STEP 3 Decide **HOW** to carry out training (see checklist 3).

- Are your in-house trainers competent in health and safety?
- Will you need to use external training providers?

STEP 4 Decide **WHEN** you need to provide training:

- Have you put your training needs in order of priority?
- Have you set target dates for the training programme to be completed?
- Have you provided adequate resources for training?
- Can you get help? You may be able to get a government-assisted loan to help meet some of the costs of training if you have no more than 50 employees. Contact your local TEC/lec.

STEP 5 **CHECK** that the training has worked:

- Are the standards of competence you set out in Step 2 being met?
- What feedback are you getting from managers/

supervisors and from the people who have been trained?

- Has there been any improvement in your company's health and safety performance?
- What changes could you make to improve your training programme?

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 ('Management Regulations') place **GENERAL DUTIES** on employers and others to provide information, instruction and training, in order to ensure health and safety. In addition, there are a number of regulations dealing with particular hazards or industries which have **SPECIFIC DUTIES**. If those hazards are associated with your work, you must provide the information and training required by the regulations.

Checklist 1

What managers and supervisors need to know

Managers and supervisors need to:

- accept that they have a responsibility to manage health and safety;
- recognise that health and safety is part of good management; and
- take action to ensure good standards of health and safety.

To do this they need to:

- understand the hazards in the work;
- be able to organise or carry out a risk assessment;
- be aware of the ways that risks can be minimised;
- make decisions on how to control risks;
- put across the health and safety message to staff;
- check precautions are put into and remain in place;
- investigate when things go wrong; and
- decide how to make improvements.

Checklist 2

What the law says about training

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 say you have to provide health and safety training for people:

- when they start work;
- when their work or responsibilities change and there are new or greater risks as a result;
- periodically if needed - for instance if the skills do not get used regularly;
- that takes account of any new or changed risks.

You must provide training during working hours and not at the expense of people working for you.

People have training needs throughout their careers, but at these times their training needs will be greater than at others:

- **WHEN THEY START WORKING FOR YOU** All new starters need some form of induction training. They will all need to know the company's safety policy and the arrangements you have made to deal with health and safety matters. Young and inexperienced recruits may need a lot more than that.
- **WHEN THEY ARE EXPOSED TO NEW OR INCREASED RISKS** Whenever something changes in the workplace, you should consider whether the risks have changed, and whether anyone needs extra training

as a result. If the change makes the job safer, or doesn't change the risk, you don't have to provide extra health and safety training - though you might wish to provide training for other reasons.

Make sure that you provide **REFRESHER TRAINING** when people need to bring their skills up to date, especially when the training relates to something they don't often do, such as dealing with emergencies.

Make sure that training materials are kept up to date.

- **PROVIDE TRAINING WITHIN WORKING HOURS** Make special arrangements, if necessary, for part-timers, or shift workers.
- Make sure that you take account of any **SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS** that apply, for example first-aid training.

Checklist 3

Approaches to training

'SITTING BY NELLIE' Learning from an experienced person on the job is a time-honoured form of training, but its value depends on how good 'Nellie' is at passing on correct, up-to-date instruction. If you use this method, it might be useful to consider giving the 'Nellies' some training in how to train.

ON-SITE TRAINING You don't always have to send people off to a training centre or college. Sometimes it may be more economical to ask the trainers to come to your premises and train a group of people.

DISTANCE LEARNING Distance learning can take several forms - books, audio tapes or videos, computer-based learning, or a mixture of all of them. It relies on the person doing the training being very committed, and being prepared to work mostly alone. Someone doing this type of training may need a lot of support and encouragement, but if you can provide this, distance learning is a very economical way of providing training. HSE has published *You can do it - The what, why and how of improving health and safety at work*, a self-help guide for small business managers and employees' safety representatives.

COMPUTER-BASED OR INTERACTIVE LEARNING The training material comes on a computer disc, and the user

reads information and answers questions. This method allows the trainees to interact with the training material. This form of training is designed to be user-friendly.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT TRAINING PROVIDER Any business examines potential suppliers carefully before buying goods and services. Choosing a training provider is no different:

- **BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT** - go back to your risk assessment, and write down your requirements;
- **THINK ABOUT WHETHER YOU HAVE PEOPLE IN-HOUSE** who can provide what you need;
- **TALK TO YOUR LOCAL TRAINING AND ENTERPRISE COUNCIL (TEC) OR, IN SCOTLAND, LOCAL ENTERPRISE COMPANY (LEC)** - they may be able to give you the names of training providers in your area. They can also advise on training grants which may be available to assist smaller firms;
- **SHOP AROUND** - recommendation is often the best way of finding who does a good job at the right price. Business contacts and trade associations may be able to help. Before you agree to purchase training, ask the provider for references, and follow them up. Also, ask in some detail exactly what the trainers are providing, and the basis of their fees, so as to be sure it is what your business needs and can afford. The training industry has its hard sells, just like any other.

Some information about vocational training

National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs and SVQs)

NVQs (in England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and SVQs (in Scotland) are qualifications which rely on the candidates being able to prove that they are competent to do a job and have the background knowledge (called underpinning knowledge) to support that competence. VQs (both NVQs and SVQs) are designed as work-based qualifications, with evidence of competence collected at the workplace.

Anyone can do a VQ - they don't need any previous qualifications, and they can take as long as they need to achieve the competence. VQs are made up of units, and some people find that they don't need a whole VQ, but would rather do just the units which are relevant to their work. Separate units each earn a credit, but to get a VQ you have to do all the units. VQs are available from level 1, for competence in very straightforward work, to level 5, which is designed for senior managers.

Although VQs are qualifications, not training courses, many training schemes are offered which lead to VQs. In theory, if a person is competent already, no extra training would be needed to get a VQ, but most people who go in for VQs will need some training so that they

can get the necessary underpinning knowledge. It is worth knowing that underpinning knowledge can be learned from any source - candidates don't have to attend a particular course, or buy a particular package. However, many people get enrolled for courses which will lead to VQs, as they and their employers find it most convenient to study for VQs in this way.

VQs are developed by industry and relate to specific jobs. Health and safety is an important part of practically all VQs, and there are VQs for Health and Safety Practitioners. If you want to know more about NVQs or SVQs, contact:

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA),
83 Piccadilly, London W1J 8QA
(tel: 020 7509 5555, fax: 020 7509 6666,
e-mail: info@qca.org.uk)

or

Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
(The Scottish Vocational Educational Council),
Hanover House, 24 Douglas Street, Glasgow G2 7NQ
(tel: 0845 279 1000, fax: 0141 242 2244).

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from:

HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA

Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995.

Website: www.hsebooks.co.uk

HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

For information about health and safety ring HSE's InfoLine Tel: 08701 545500 Fax: 02920 859260 e-mail: hseinformationservices@natbrit.com or write to HSE Information Services, Caerphilly Business Park, Caerphilly CF83 3GG. You can also visit HSE's website: www.hse.gov.uk

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