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# Health and Safety Standards for Learners

June 2011

Of interest to those involved with Skills Funding Agency  
funded learners in work placements

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## Standards for Health and Safety

### Guidance leaflet on the Skills Funding Agency's health and safety Standards for Learners

The health, safety and welfare of learners are fundamental values for the Skills Funding Agency.

These health and safety standards are designed to assist colleges, other providers and employers in ensuring that all learning takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

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#### Introduction

The Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) provides funds to many organisations ('funded organisations'): colleges; training providers; schools; Local Authorities; voluntary organisations and employers. The Agency undertakes this to help provide the skills the country needs through the provision of high-quality training and learning for individuals or 'learners'. The term 'learners' includes trainees, apprentices, students, pupils and others, including in some cases an employer's own employees who receive training or learning funded by the Agency.

The Agency requires that all the training and learning that it funds takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment, regardless of where it is delivered. Much of the training and learning it funds is vocational and takes place for a time with employers. Funded organisations must judge the suitability of health and safety in the place where training and learning is conducted. This often means carrying out health and safety assessments of employers and the work locations where learners are going to train, learn and work.

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The Agency has agreed an approach with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), and the Department for Education (DfE) to use these standards for all those involved with Agency-funded learners. This document provides clarity, consistency of standards and the assurance that learners are in safe, healthy and supportive environments.

The Agency standards reflect the main health and safety legal requirements that exist to protect persons at work and others affected by work (and should be no more than employers do already). By the Agency setting clear standards, small and medium-sized companies in particular will better understand their obligations.

The Agency contract requires the assessment of health and safety for learners to be undertaken using a proportionate approach (depending on the level of risk, type of learning, and the kind of learner) and to use an informed judgement on what is reasonable. This is to avoid funded organisations having to duplicate assessments if some existing information can be used. An actual visit to a premise is not always needed since it will depend on what must be considered for that particular assessment and how detailed the assessment needs to be for the kind of learning taking place.

There are nine core standards, and these are set out in this leaflet. The tenth standard is specific to the learner and will need to be agreed for each learner because of individual needs and the duty of care owed to them – this can be done by ‘exception’ however (where specific needs are recorded and used for an individual or small group if specific requirements only apply to a small group or an individual. Supervisors need to be aware of specific needs if there are any). It is not mandatory that an individual record is made for every learner as some of the time all considerations will be generic. This standard is to ensure any specific needs for a particular learner are considered and accommodated for their learning experience to be a positive one that is in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

For employers who do not meet all the standards, the assessor should signpost the employer to appropriate sources of advice and assistance. The assessor may agree actions or development areas with the employer to help achieve the standards.

## Safe, Healthy and Supportive Environment: The Agency Standards

### The employer has a health and safety policy

- There is a demonstrable commitment to health and safety (and a written policy statement where there are five or more employees).
- Responsibilities for health and safety are clearly stated (and recorded where there are five or more employees).
- Arrangements for health and safety are clearly stated, including accident reporting, first aid, safety representatives/committees.
- The commitment, responsibilities and arrangements for health and safety are communicated to all employees and their understanding/awareness checked. (This standard should be read in conjunction with standard 9).

### The employer has assessed risks, eliminated them or put in place control measures to reduce them to an acceptable level

- Risk assessments have been carried out covering both adult employees and young persons with all significant risks identified.
- Significant risks have been recorded (this is optional where there are fewer than five employees).
- Suitable control measures have been identified and implemented as a result of risk assessment.
- The significant risks and control measures are explained to employees (and others as appropriate).
- Risk assessments are reviewed and active monitoring takes place and the findings acted upon.

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### The employer has made adequate arrangements for dealing with accidents and incidents, including the provision of first aid

- Adequate arrangements for first aid materials have been made.
- Adequate arrangements for first aid personnel has been made.
- All accidents and first aid treatments rendered are recorded.
- Arrangements exist for employees to report to management accidents/near misses and so on to enable suitable remedial action.
- All legally reportable accidents, incidents and ill-health are or will be reported to the enforcing authority and investigated.
- Accident, incident, ill-health and first aid arrangements are made known to all employees and others as appropriate.

### The employer provides employees with effective supervision, training, information and instruction

- Employees are provided with adequate competent supervision.
- Appropriate health and safety information, training and instruction are given to all new employees on recruitment.
- Ongoing health and safety information, training and instruction are provided to all employees and others as appropriate.
- Information, instruction and training are recorded.
- The effectiveness of training and competence in the workplace are both assessed and the assessments recorded.

### The employer provides and maintains suitable and appropriate equipment and machinery

- The employer provides the correct equipment to the appropriate standard.
- Equipment is maintained adequately.
- Guards and control measures are in place as determined from risk assessment.
- Safe electrical systems and equipment are provided and maintained.

### The employer has made arrangements for the provision and use of personal protective equipment and clothing (PPE/C) suitable for the individual

- PPE/C is provided for employees as determined from risk assessment.
- Training and information on PPE/C use has been provided to employees.
- The proper use of PPE/C is enforced.
- PPE/C is maintained, replaced and, where appropriate, inspected.

### The employer has fire precautions and made arrangements for other foreseeable emergencies

- A means of raising the alarm and fire or emergency detection is in place.
- Appropriate means of fire fighting are in place.
- Effective means of escape are in place, including escape routes and unobstructed exits.
- There is a named person (or persons) for emergencies.
- Arrangements are maintained, which include tests and drills.
- A fire log book is kept.

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### The employer provides a safe and healthy working environment

- Premises (structure, fabric, fixtures and fittings) are safe and healthy (suitable, maintained and kept clean).
- The working environment (temperature, lighting, space, ventilation, noise) is appropriate, safe and healthy.
- Welfare facilities (toilets, washing, drinking, eating, changing) are provided as appropriate and maintained.
- Exposure to hazards from physical, chemical and biological agents is controlled adequately.

### The employer manages health and safety

- The employer consults and communicates with employees on health and safety and allows them to participate in health and safety.
- The employer provides medical or health screening as appropriate and any required medical surveillance.
- The employer has access to competent advice.
- The employer reviews health and safety regularly, ideally on an annually basis or following changes to processes.
- The employer provides and displays necessary signs or notices.
- Notification has been given to the enforcing authority as appropriate.
- Employers' liability insurance is current and other insurance is in place, as appropriate to the business undertaking. This includes informing insurers and/or brokers where appropriate of the learner(s)' presence and programmes.
- The employer assesses, reviews and updates employees' capabilities.
- The employer manages the employee's work when it is away from the employer's own premises or when the employee is placed with another employer or site.

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## The employer manages learners and young person's health, safety and welfare

- The employer has assessed the risks to any learner and/or young person taking account of their age (and inexperience, immaturity and lack of awareness of risk) and any other special needs or circumstances, including any disability and/or medical condition.
- The employer has put in place control measures for learners and/or young persons as a result of risk assessment and informed the learner and his or her supervisor.
- The employer has identified any necessary prohibitions and restrictions that apply to any learner and/or young person as part of the above 2 no. items.
- The employer provides competent supervision for any learner and young person and has a designated person to take overall responsibility for any learner or young person. In cases where the learner is a child or vulnerable adult (as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act), compliance with legislation should derive from a risk-assessment process to establish if vulnerable learners are present and actions required to protect them. Policy and procedures must reflect any control measures required.
- The employer provides an induction and ongoing information, instruction and training to any learner or young person, reflecting the result of the risk assessment; environment, tasks and the learner or young person's age, experience and any special needs.
- The employer provides free of charge any necessary PPE/C to the learner (determined from the risk assessment) and ensures its proper and effective use.

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### Further Information

For further information on health and safety  
please visit:

[www.safelearner.info](http://www.safelearner.info)

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)



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