

# Workforce information, instruction, training and supervision

Guidance

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Employers are legally required to provide information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of employees. For youth work organisations, this extends to all those directly affected by the delivery of services, including young people.

All workers, including volunteers need to be trained in matters of health and safety relevant to their role. The level of training required will vary with the extent of the role and the nature of the service delivery, including the level of risk and any specific needs of the individuals/group. Much training and instruction may be able to be delivered in-house where the necessary competencies exist. Where this isn't possible, external advice and support should be sought.

Youth work organisations should have processes in place to help them identify training needs and how to effectively meet those requirements and larger organisations may have dedicated human resources professionals to do this. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) outlines a five step process for the application of training need as follows:

1. **Identify training requirements** taking into consideration the skills and knowledge required for each role, any current gaps, incident history and risk assessment output
2. **Prioritise specific training** considering training that is required by law and areas of highest risk
3. **Choose training methods and appropriate resources** taking into account different learning styles and individual needs, and to ensure that information is presented in an accessible way
4. **Deliver the training** providing a variety of methods where possible
5. **Review and confirm understanding** to evaluate the effectiveness of training, apply learning and ensure workers are aware of what is required of them and that they feel supported

Further detail can be found in the [HSE's guide to Health & Safety training](#).

As a minimum, youth work organisations should ensure that workers have access to and understand organisational policies, procedures and practises relevant to their work, including but not necessarily limited to health & safety policy; safeguarding policy; welfare policies; data management policies and any risk assessments. Organisations must ensure that workers have understood the relevant information, how it affects them and their associated responsibilities, such as the implementation of practice or control measures against a particular risk.

It will rarely be sufficient to simply provide workers with access to documentation. Organisations should consider how best to share and present information to workers taking into account different learning styles and individual needs including disabilities, sensory impairments as well as those for whom English is not a native language. Workers should be given sufficient opportunity both in terms of time and support to ask questions in order to supplement and confirm their understanding.

It is good practice for all workers as well as young people to be well briefed on safety matters ahead of any programme or service delivery. Briefings should highlight key hazards or safety concerns and confirm responsibilities and behavioural expectations.

# Worker supervision

Worker supervision is important to support and promote effective practice in youth work, and it should be provided to support all workers, not just those with lower levels of experience. Effective supervision can support the welfare of workers in what can be a stressful and high pressure work environment and can help workers to do their job well by encouraging reflective practice and supporting professional development.

There is not necessarily a particular 'blueprint' or model that works best and youth work organisations are encouraged to consider supervision arrangements that meet the needs of their organisation, workers and young people. Supervision can be carried out remotely via telephone calls and email but face-to-face meetings and observations of practice are likely to yield better results for the organisation and worker, thereby helping to reinforce the management commitment to supporting workers.

It is important that workers feel supported by their organisation, and feel that they can access support and advice as may be required and this is particularly important with regards to health & safety and safeguarding. Individuals with specific skills and responsibilities in health and safety or safeguarding may need more formal supervision plans due to the nature of the work, scenarios and sensitive information they may be exposed to. This could involve access to external professionals.