
4 Unit 4: Health and Safety in Care Settings [AS level, double award, optional, externally assessed]

4.1 ABOUT THIS UNIT

This AS level unit is an optional part of the double award and is externally assessed.

If you are considering a career in health, social care or early-years settings, it will be important to know about health and safety practices that need to be followed.

This unit links with Unit 1: *Promoting quality care*, Unit 4: *Health and safety in care settings*, Unit 5: *Caring for people with additional needs*, Unit 6: *Working in early-years care and education*, Unit 9: *Caring for older people*, Unit 11: *Understanding human behaviour* and Unit 14: *Mental health issues*.

This unit is assessed through an external assessment. The mark on that assessment will be your mark for the unit.

4.2 WHAT YOU NEED TO LEARN

You need to learn about:

- the influence of current legislation on safe practice in care settings;
- safety and security;
- safe moving and handling techniques;
- contribution to infection control.

4.2.1 The Influence of Current Legislation on Safe Practice in Care Settings

In the UK, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the main body responsible for enforcing legislation and providing guidance on health and safety in the workplace.

You need to know:

- the names, dates, purpose and key features and principles of legislation intended to safeguard health and safety in care settings and how these influence practice in the workplace, including:
 - Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 and significant amendments;
 - Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1992;
 - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR);
 - Health and Safety (signs and signals) Regulations 1996 and;
 - the role of the Health and Safety Executive in enforcing these in the workplace;

- health and safety information that needs to be available to employees, including:
 - the Health and Safety Law poster/leaflet; including the details which need to be put on the poster:
 - name of an employee representative, if there is one;
 - name of the manager representative – this could be the employer in small businesses;
 - contact details of the enforcing authority;
 - the requirement for first-aiders;
 - the location of the accident book and how to use it;
 - a health and safety policy document and its purpose – sets out the employer’s general policy in respect of health and safety, and describes the organisation/settings/arrangements for carrying out that policy which should be reviewed as often as is appropriate, e.g. annually.
- the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 1999 Regulations (COSHH) – need to be able to recognise what these substances are and how they need to be stored.

You need to be aware that the law states that:

- a person in the workplace who can take charge in an emergency needs to be identified;
- a first-aid box must be available;
- a notice stating where the first-aid box is located, and whom is the approved person, should be clearly visible;
- a trained first-aider and a first-aid room should be available if the workplace gives rise to special hazards.

4.2.2 Safety and Security

You need to understand the importance of maintaining safety and security in health, care and early-years settings.

You need to be aware that there are **five** key stages to risk assessment. These are:

- Stage 1: look for hazards;
- Stage 2: assess who may be harmed;
- Stage 3: consider the risk – whether precautions are adequate;
- Stage 4: document the findings;
- Stage 5: review the assessment and revise it if necessary.

You need to consider in some detail what actually happens at each stage.

You also need to know about:

- carrying out formal risk assessments – the actions associated with each stage, and how to keep a written record of the risk assessment;
- reducing risks in different types of settings (early years, residential homes, hospitals, etc.) – training, early warning systems, health and safety policies, use of warning/safety signs, safety features, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and how these benefit service users and care workers;
- a broad overview of 'The Fire Precautions (Workplace)(Amended) Regulations 1997';
- fire safety (smoke and fire alarms, different types of fire-fighting equipment) and how to evacuate buildings;
- security in early-years settings, e.g. preventing unwanted visitors, safe collection of children;
- security in residential homes against intruders, in respect of privacy and unwanted visitors, etc.

4.2.3 Safe Moving and Handling Techniques

An employer has the responsibility to examine and assess all procedures which take place in the working environment and involve risk. All risks must be minimised. You need to know:

- the key features of current regulations and laws relating to moving and handling:
 - Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, Revised 1998;
 - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER);
- how to assess risks when moving and handling people, using an *appropriate* check list;
- how to work with an individual who is to be moved, and how to prepare them and yourself for moving and handling through discussion with them on how best to manage the procedure, asking their opinions – preparation for moving and handling a service user needs to include the handler's clothing, equipment checks and encouraging independence;
- how to use the equipment for moving and handling – hoists and slide boards.

You may NOT move or handle service users unless formally trained to do so and only then if you meet the age and training requirements. You must always work with equipment for moving and handling, and with another care worker.

4.2.4 Contribution to Infection Control

When working in care settings, it is most important that precautions are taken to prevent the spread of infection, particularly 'cross-infection'. The precautions that can be taken are called 'standard precautions'. You need to understand:

- the importance of wearing protective clothing and knowing its purposes:
 - gloves;
 - plastic aprons;
 - masks;
 - overshoes;
 - personal hygiene;
 - special precautions;
- what is meant by 'standard precautions';
- how to maintain personal safety when dealing with, and disposing of, clinical waste and instruments.

You need to know the details required when completing an accident report form and how to complete one. You also need to show why the form and the details are necessary.

4.3 GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS

4.3.1 Guidance on Delivery

The influence of current legislation on safe practice in care settings

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to carry out actions that are reasonable and practicable in order to protect their workforce. Candidates need to have a broad understanding of the Act in relation to the responsibilities of employers and employees. They do not need to know the details of the Act.

Only those regulations that are mainly relevant to health and social care settings have been included in the specifications. Candidates only need to have a broad overview of the key features of each of those included in the specifications. However, you may wish to raise candidates' awareness of all those regulations included in the 'Six Pack' 1992.

These **six** sets of regulations are:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, updated 1999;
- Workplace (Health and Safety, and Welfare) Regulations;
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations, updated 1998;
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations, updated 1998;
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations;
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations.

The test for this unit will focus on knowing the name of the Act/Regulations, their purpose and key features. Candidates need to be able to apply this information to show how the Act/Regulations affect workplace practice. It would also be useful to obtain a copy of the Health and Safety Law poster which is published by the Health and Safety Executive since the test may focus on the purpose of the poster and the information required on it.

Safety and security

Candidates should be provided with at least **two** diagrams/illustrations on which they could carry out a risk assessment. Ideally, a visit to a care setting to carry out a risk assessment of **one** particular area could be very helpful. Group visits or work experience could be used for this purpose. For example, **one** group of **four** candidates could visit a pre-school, while others visited a day-care setting or sheltered accommodation.

The test could require candidates to examine a diagram or illustration to identify potential risks, and to describe/explain how the risks could be reduced. They will also be required to discuss safety features and measures that could be applied in care settings.

Safe moving and handling techniques

Candidates may not, *under any circumstances*, move and handle service users. Recent laws and directives give very strict guidelines relating to moving and handling of people. Candidates could be given a demonstration of how to use equipment such as hoists, slings, slide boards etc, but service users must not be involved. They need to know the theory relating to moving and handling, but will be unable to put this into practice.

Contribution to infection control

The Environmental Health Officer could be invited to give specialist input relating to the control of infection. He/she may also be able to supply video material to introduce the topic, particularly when covering how infection is spread and the major disease-causing agents. The emphasis, however, should be on how infection is spread in health, social care and early-years settings.

When considering the disposal of waste, candidates do not need to study the topic in detail, but need to have an overview of how to deal with clinical waste, soiled linen and recyclable instruments.

4.3.2 Guidance on Assessment

This unit is externally assessed.

4.3.3 Resources

Organisations	<p>British Safety Council National Safety Centre, 70 Chancellors Road, London W6 9RF Health and Safety Executive PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2AW</p> <p>Red Cross 9 Grovenor Crescent, London SW 1X 7EJ</p> <p>Royal Society For the Prevention Of Accidents (ROSPA) Edgebaston Park, 115 – 123 Pentonville Road, London N1 9 LZ</p> <p>St Andrew's Ambulance Association 74 Menzies Road, Torry, Aberdeen, AB119AJ</p> <p>St John Ambulance National Headquarters, 27 St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BU</p>
Publications	Health and Safety publications
Textbooks	<p>Duncan M <i>et al</i> <i>Health and Safety At Work – Essentials</i> LawPack Publishing Ltd</p> <p>Nazarko L <i>NVQs In Nursing and Residential Homes</i> Blackwell Science</p> <p>Nolan Y <i>Care S/NVQ</i> Heinemann</p> <p>Five Steps to Risk Assessments (INDG 163)</p> <p>The Food Hygiene Handbook (The Institution Of Environmental Health Officers) – Highfield Publications or local Environmental Health Officers</p>
Websites	<p>www.britishsafetycouncil.org</p> <p>www.firstaid.org.uk</p> <p>www.hsebooks.co.uk</p> <p>www.hse.gov.uk – free leaflets to download</p> <p>www.open.gov.uk/hsehome.hrm</p> <p>www.redcross.org.uk</p> <p>www.rospa.co.uk</p> <p>www.sja.org.uk</p>